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## Caller ID 6.0

By **MICHAEL CHANDLER**

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**R**ather than face the embarrassment of misplacing a friend's name or failing to keep up with a conversation, the elderly often avoid social situations, even phone calls. This year, however, a new remedy for social isolation made its appearance: a group of families in Las Vegas and Portland, Ore., began trying out a new caller ID system that's intended to help spark the memories of aging parents.

This enhanced caller ID system, designed by Intel, is meant to ease the stress of social activity for the memory-impaired. When the phone rings, a monitor shows both a number and a photograph of the caller. Some extra details can also be displayed on a screen: Tim is calling; he is your oldest son; you talked to him four days ago about the weather and his daughter's piano recital. In future versions, speech-recognition technology could store and display key words from past conversations.

Prepping for social encounters is nothing new, says Margaret Morris, a clinical psychologist and senior researcher for Intel. Many people, after all, rely on a spouse to brief them before going into a party: "Doris is going to be there. You talked to her last time about her tomato plants, remember?"

The enhanced caller ID system replaces a spouse's knowledge with technology. It belongs to a larger home-monitoring apparatus, involving tiny wireless sensors. Matchbook-size computerized devices, or "motes," track individuals' activities and note behavior patterns.

Researchers say this technology could help people stay in their homes instead of

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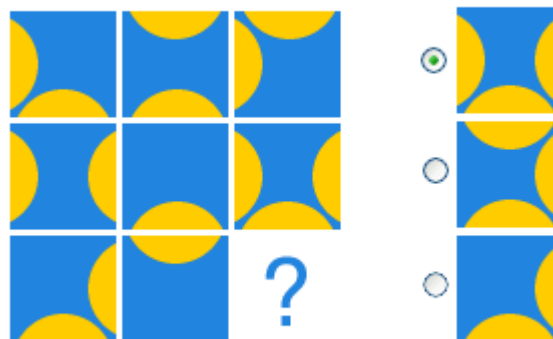
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moving into expensive nursing facilities. These companies hope families unable to keep an eye on the older generation will -- in effect -- pay for virtual eyes instead.

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