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(57) ABSTRACT

A multi-function cooler apparatus and system integrated with one or more of the following elements: clock/time piece, flashlight, compass, CD/DVD player, IPOD®, speakers, lantern, computer and the like. The clock may be mounted in several different ways (Velcro®, snaps, threads) and may take on various appearances (round or square). The flashlight may be detachably mounted into the handle using snaps or Velcro®. The compass may be mounted in a similar fashion as the timepiece. Similarly, the cooler and the lid may take on a variety of configurations in support of the on-board features.
MULTI-FUNCTION COOLER APPARATUS AND SYSTEM

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] To the full extent permitted by law, the present Patent Cooperation Treaty Application claims priority to and the benefit of United States Provisional patent application entitled “Multi-Function Cooler Apparatus and System,” filed on Aug. 3, 2006, on behalf of inventor Patrick McCance, and having assigned Ser. No. 60/835,222.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to the field of coolers and ice chests and more particularly to a multifunction cooler apparatus and system.

BACKGROUND

[0003] In general, in camping and other outdoor recreational activities, it is desirable to have a cooler to store food and other perishables. It is also well-known that during these activities, it is desirable to bring many other types of equipment such as standard camping equipment and entertainment equipment. It is further appreciated that a user can quickly become encumbered with all of the above-discussed equipment. As such, outdoor recreational activities can quickly become burdensome by the same equipment that was intended to contribute to the enjoyment of the outdoor recreational activities.

BRIEF SUMMARY

[0004] In general, the invention features a cooler integrated with one or more of the following elements: clock/time piece, flashlight, compass, CD/DVD player, MP3 player such as an iPod®, speakers, and a lamp or lantern. The clock may be mounted in a number of different ways (Velcro®, snaps, threads) and may take on various appearances (round or square). The flashlight may be detachably mounted into the handle using snaps or Velcro®, or the flashlight may be permanently installed. The compass may be mounted in a similar fashion as the timepiece. The lamp or lantern may be integrally installed within the body, the lid and/or the handle of the cooler.

[0005] In general, in one aspect, the invention features a cooler apparatus, including a main body, a lid hingably disposed on the main body and a removable handle coupled to the main body. The lid could be lockable, wherein the main body of the cooler apparatus could include an extension, such as a ring, that could extend through an aperture in the lid in order to receive a lock therethrough, thus preventing unauthorized access to the contents of the cooler apparatus. Additionally, the lid could be rotational, wherein access to the interior of the cooler could be achieved without removal of the lid and/or without disturbing the plane of the lid. Further, the lid could be completely removable, thereby enabling stacking of a plurality of main bodies for shipping.

[0006] In one implementation, the removable handle is disposed on the lid.

[0007] In another implementation, the removable handle is disposed on the main body.

[0008] In another implementation, the removable handle is a flashlight.

[0009] In another implementation, the removable handle is coupled to the main body via the lid.

[0010] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a handle clip disposed on the lid.

[0011] In another implementation, the handle clip comprises a first end and a second end.

[0012] In another implementation, the handle clip has a generally cylindrical profile.

[0013] In another implementation, the handle clip has an open side.

[0014] In another implementation, the open side of the handle clip faces the lid.

[0015] In still another implementation, the open side of the handle clip faces from the lid.

[0016] In yet another implementation, the second end of the handle clip includes an opening to provide a path for the transmission of light from a flashlight.

[0017] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a handle clip having an open side facing the main body.

[0018] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a flashlight disposed in the clip, the light transmitting end of the flashlight disposed in an opening on one end of the clip.

[0019] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a timepiece disposed on the lid.

[0020] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a time piece disposed on the main body.

[0021] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a compass disposed on the main body.

[0022] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a compass disposed on the main body.

[0023] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a music player disposed on the lid.

[0024] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a music player disposed on the main body.

[0025] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a DVD player disposed on the lid.

[0026] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a DVD player disposed on the main body.

[0027] In another implementation, the lid further includes a movable hatch disposed on an upper planar surface of the lid.

[0028] In another implementation, the hatch is slidable along the upper planar surface.

[0029] In another implementation, the hatch is pivotable with respect to the upper planar surface.

[0030] In another implementation, the hatch covers a storage recess within the lid.

[0031] In another implementation, the hatch is a video screen.

[0032] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a computer disposed on the lid.

[0033] In another implementation, the apparatus further includes a computer disposed on the main body.

[0034] In another implementation, the lid comprises a first lid and a second lid, pivotally connected to one another and to the main body.

[0035] In another implementation, the first lid covers a hollow interior of the main body.

[0036] In another implementation, the second lid covers a storage section within the first lid.

[0037] In another aspect, the invention includes a cooler system, including a cooler body, a lid hingably connected to the cooler body, a handle disposed on the lid having a clip and
a flashlight disposed in the clip, the flashlight being removable from the clip, the ability to receive entertainment electronics disposed on the cooler body and the ability to receive camping equipment disposed on the cooler body.

[0038] In another aspect, the invention features a cooler system including a cooler body, a lid hingely connected to the cooler body, a handle disposed on the cooler body having a clip and a flashlight disposed in the clip, the flashlight being removable from the clip, the ability to receive entertainment electronics disposed on a cooler body and the ability to receive camping equipment disposed on the cooler body.

[0039] In one implementation, the lid is a rotationally mounted lid such that access to the interior of the cooler body is accomplished by swinging the lid away from the cooler body, yet maintaining the lid within a single plane.

[0040] In another implementation, the lid is a dual lid having a first lid connection hingely connected to the cooler body and a second lid section hingely connected to the first lid section.

[0041] In another implementation, the lid is removable from the cooler body, wherein a plurality of cooler bodies may be nested, such as to minimize necessary storage and/or shipping space.

[0042] In another implementation, the system further includes a hatch disposed on the lid.

[0043] In another aspect, the invention features a cooler system having an on-board storage area inside the lid, wherein, for example, utensils, fishing tackle, a DVD player, an MP3 player docking station, and the like may be stored.

[0044] In another aspect, the on-board storage area inside the lid could be formed as an insert, wherein a plurality of interchangeable design configurations could be accommodated.

[0045] In another aspect, the on-board storage area could be a tray, wherein the tray could be slidably related to the cooler body, and wherein the tray could slide lengthwise from the interior of the cooler body.

[0046] In still another aspect, the on-board storage area could provide suitable and accessible storage space for a rechargeable battery pack, wherein such a pack could be utilized to power and/or recharge electronic equipment, such as cellular telephones, DVD players, MP3 players, and the like.

[0047] One advantage of the invention is that a central cooler can incorporate several types of ancillary equipment.

[0048] Other objects, advantages and capabilities of the invention are apparent from the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings showing the preferred embodiment of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0049] FIG. 1 illustrates an overhead view of an embodiment of a multifunction cooler apparatus;

[0050] FIG. 2 illustrates a side view of an the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 1;

[0051] FIG. 3 illustrates an overhead view of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 1, showing the exterior lid in an open position and exposing storage features;

[0052] FIG. 4 illustrates a top view of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 1;

[0053] FIG. 5 illustrates a first end view of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 1;

[0054] FIG. 6 illustrates a second end view of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 1;

[0055] FIG. 7 illustrates a perspective view of a lid embodiment of a multifunction cooler apparatus, showing the interior organization space of an open lid;

[0056] FIG. 8 illustrates a stacked relationship for a plurality of multifunction coolers, showing a partial cross-sectional view of a multifunction cooler apparatus with a plurality of multifunction coolers stacked therewith;

[0057] FIG. 9 illustrates a partial cut-away, perspective view of the first end of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 5, showing the flashlight removed from the handle;

[0058] FIG. 10 illustrates an overhead view of a multifunction cooler apparatus according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention;

[0059] FIG. 11 illustrates a side view of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 10;

[0060] FIG. 12 illustrates an end view of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 10, showing the flashlight removed from the handle;

[0061] FIG. 13 illustrates a stacked relationship for a plurality of multifunction coolers;

[0062] FIG. 14 illustrates a perspective view of a multifunction cooler apparatus according to another alternate configuration of the present invention;

[0063] FIG. 15 illustrates a side view of the multifunction cooler apparatus of FIG. 10, showing the DVD player in an open position; and

[0064] FIG. 16 illustrates an overhead view of a multifunction cooler apparatus according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0065] To the full extent permitted by law, the present Patent Cooperation Treaty Application claims priority to and the benefit of United States Provisional patent application entitled “Multi-Function Cooler Apparatus And System,” filed on Aug. 3, 2006, on behalf of inventor Patrick McCunce, and having assigned Ser. No. 60/835,222.

[0066] Referring to the drawings wherein like reference numerals designate corresponding parts throughout the several figures, reference is made first to FIG. 1 that illustrates an overhead view of an embodiment of a multifunction cooler apparatus 100. FIG. 10 illustrates an overhead view of an alternate embodiment of a multifunction cooler apparatus 200.

[0067] Referring now to FIGS. 1-6, in a typical embodiment apparatus 100 includes main body 105 and lid 110, preferably hingely disposed on the main body 105 via pivot points 106. Main body 105 can be a variety of shapes and sizes, typically square, rectangular, any similar parallelepiped and the like. It is appreciated that main body 105 has a preferably hollow interior for receipt of goods to be stored and kept cool. Correspondingly, main body 105 is typically insulated. Similarly, lid 110 can be any variety of shapes and sizes and is also preferably insulated. In general, in the present embodiment, lid 110 is pivotally attached to main body 105 at pivot points 106, thus allowing lid 110 to open to the side, exposing the hollow interior without removal of lid 110.

[0068] It is understood that in other embodiments, lid 110 can be disposed on main body 105 in a variety of other ways. For example, lid 110 can be hinged to main body 105 at a slidable and/rotational configuration (not shown), wherein for example, lid 110 could be slidably mounted within rails or track members to facilitate length-
wise or crosswise movement relative to main body 105. Further, rotational movement of lid 110 could be facilitated via alternate hinges, wherein lid 110 could swing outwardly from main body 105 in an arc defined within a single plane. Each such alternate lid configuration would facilitate access to the interior compartment of main body 105 without necessitating a disturbance of the plane of lid 110. Further, each such alternate lid configuration could allow for complete removal of lid 110, or could simply allow for a limited range of movement relative to main body 105. That is, lid 110 could be removable from main body 105 such that a plurality of main bodies 105 of a plurality of apparatus 100 could be nested or stacked together. Such a configuration advantageously minimizes storage and/or shipping requirements.

0069] Typically, and preferably, apparatus 100 further includes handle 115 coupled to main body 105. In one implementation, handle 115 is disposed on main body 105. In another implementation, as discussed further below, handle 115 is disposed on lid 110. In general, handle 115 can also be coupled to main body 105 via lid 110. In a typical embodiment, handle 115 comprises removable flashlight 120, which in FIGS. 1-6 is disposed on main body 105.

0070] Referring now to FIGS. 1, 2, 5 and 9, handle 115 is preferably and generally disposed on an upper end of main body 105. Handle 115 typically includes first end 126 and second end 127. In a typical embodiment, handle 115 has a generally cylindrical profile and is generally tubular between ends 126, 127. In a typical implementation, flashlight 115 is slidable and removably retained within handle 115, therefore enabling full functionality of handle 115 for apparatus 100, wherein first end 126 permits removal of flashlight 120.

0071] It is also understood that flashlight 115 could be integrally formed in the handle 115, lid 110 or main body 105, wherein the arrangement could be such that operation of flashlight 115 from such integral formation would enable the beam to exit from apparatus 100, as apparatus 100 is repositioned to the desired point to be lighted thereby. Additionally, handle 115, instead of retaining flashlight 120 via a tubular structure, could be clip-like, as further described hereinbelow.

0072] As shown in the Figures, several embodiments of apparatuses 100, 200, 300 are illustrated. It is appreciated that the apparatuses 100, 200, 300 can include a variety of types of equipment, including entertainment equipment and useful and/or otherwise desirable camping equipment. In one embodiment, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 14, the apparatuses 100, 200, 300 can include timepiece 150, preferably disposed on lid 110. Timepiece 150 can be any variety of watch, clock and the like, both digital and analog, that can be powered by battery, electrical outlet, solar source and the like. In one implementation, timepiece 150 can be disposed on main body 105. In another implementation, timepiece 150 can be disposed on lid 110.

0073] In another embodiment, apparatuses 100, 200, 300 can include compass 160. In one implementation, compass 160 can be disposed on main body 105. In another implementation, compass 160 can be disposed on lid 110, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 14.

0074] In another embodiment, apparatuses 100, 200, 300 can include music player 170, as shown in FIG. 14. Music player 170 can be any type of music player now understood or any type of music players that may be developed. For example, music player 170 can include but is not limited to audio tapes players, compact (CD) players, MP3 players such as an IPod® and the like. Music player 170 can further be a docking station for an insertable player such as one of the above-mentioned music players, or any other suitable player. Such a docking station can include, for example, speakers, ports to transmit music data and power outlets. In one implementation, music player 170 can be disposed on main body 105, as shown in FIG. 14. In another implementation, music player 170 can be disposed on lid 110 (not shown).

0075] In another embodiment, the apparatuses 100, 200, 300 can include a digital video (versatile) disc (DVD) player 180, wherein exemplary implementations of DVD player 180 are discussed further below with respect to FIGS. 10 and 15. In one implementation, DVD player 180 can be disposed on main body 105 (not shown). In another implementation, DVD player 180 can be disposed on lid 210, as shown in FIGS. 10 and 15. FIG. 16 also illustrates a view of another alternate embodiment of a multifunction cooler apparatus 400, wherein DVD player 180 is incorporated.

0076] FIGS. 3 and 7 illustrate views of embodiments of a multifunction cooler apparatus 100, showing organization features defined in lid 110. Additionally, lid 110 could be formed to include a flip (not shown), wherein the flap could extend over a ring (not shown) extending outwardly from main body 105. In such manner, a securing device, such as a padlock or cross-bar member may be extended through the ring, thereby preventing unauthorized access to the interior contents of apparatus 100.

0077] Similar to as described above, typical apparatuses 200, 300, 400 include main body 105 and lid 110, 210, 410, respectively, hingedly disposed on the main body 105 via pivot points 106. Main body 105 can be a variety of shapes and sizes, typically square, rectangular, any similar parallel-sided and the like. Similarly, lid 110 can be any variety of shapes and sizes and is also insulated. In general, in the present embodiment, lid 110 is pivotally attached to main body 105 at pivot points 106, which allows lid 110 to open to the side as illustrated in FIG. 3. It is understood that in other embodiments, lid 110 can be disposed on main body 105 in a variety of other ways, including being fully removable.

0078] It is appreciated that main body 105 has a hollow interior for receipt of goods to be stored and kept cool. This hollow interior also facilitates stacking or nesting of main body 105 in order to minimize storage and/or shipping space requirements, especially when lid 110 is entirely removable. Further, main body 105 is typically insulated. Main body 105 can include wheels 108 for efficient transport (exemplarily depicted in FIGS. 2 and 4-6) and conventional handle 107 (FIGS. 2 and 7) as a primary hold for a user during transport and carrying. An extendable handle 109 could also be included in order to facilitate transport, wherein such handle 109 could be pivotal, as shown, or could be telescopic or otherwise extendable according to any suitable means. As shown in FIGS. 8 and 13, each apparatus 100, 200, 300, 400 is preferably dimensioned with components arranged in a manner to facilitate stacking arrangement of a plurality of apparatus for shipping and/or storage.

0079] Additionally, feet 104 can be disposed on main body 105, as shown in FIG. 2, in order to enhance balance and secure positioning during use of apparatus 100, wherein feet 104 could be adapted for height adjustment features in order to adapt to varying terrain. Further, drain 103 could be defined in main body 105 in order to facilitate removal of water and/or other fluids from the interior thereof.
Typically, apparatuses 100, 200, 300, 400 further include removable flashlight 120 relatedly coupled to main body 105. In one implementation, removable flashlight 120 is disposed on handle 115, and in another, on lid 110. In yet another implementation, removable flashlight 120 is disposed on the main body 105. In general, removable flashlight 120 can also be related to main body 105 via lid 110.

In a typical embodiment, shown in FIGS. 10-13, removable flashlight 120 is related to main body 105. Main body 105 thus can further include handle 115 with handle clip 125 generally disposed thereon. Referring still to FIGS. 10-13, and now also to FIG. 14, handle clip 125 typically includes first end 126 and second end 127. In atypical embodiment, handle clip 125 has a generally cylindrical profile and is generally separated into two distinct detached ends 126, 127. In the implementation shown in FIG. 14, for example, flashlight 120 is placed into handle clip 125 and functions as a handle for apparatus 300.

Typically, apparatus 200 further includes removable flashlight 120 coupled to main body 105 via handle 115. In one implementation, handle clip 125 is generally and centrally disposed on handle 115, such that when handle 115 is pivotally extended into a carrying position, handle clip 125 is on an upper end thereof. Handle clip 125 typically has a generally cylindrical profile, wherein flashlight 120 is placed therein, retaining functionality of handle 115 for apparatus 100, irrespective of the inclusion or removal of flashlight 120 from handle clip 120. Handle clip 125 removably secures flashlight 120 in place, preferably via resilient, snap-in arrangement.

As described, handle clip 125 generally has a cylindrical profile, and is typically a half-pipe with the open end of the half-pipe profile facing away from lid 110 and main body 105, as shown in FIGS. 10-13. It is appreciated that handle clip 125 does provide a clamping effect on flashlight 120. Therefore, during movement of apparatus 200, flashlight 120 remains clipped into handle clip 125, as illustrated in FIGS. 1-2. Since handle clip 125 can face upward as described, flashlight 120 can sit directly in handle clip 125 and still transmit light. Furthermore, with handle clip 125 defined as a single integral piece without a detached first and second end 126, 127, when a user engages apparatus 200, an upward force can be placed directly onto handle clip 125 without engaging and applying a force directly on flashlight 120.

Alternatively, as described and shown in FIG. 14, handle clip 125 generally has a cylindrical profile, and is a half-pipe with the open side of the half-pipe profile facing toward main body 105. With the half-pipe profile facing main body 105, placement of flashlight 120 into handle clip 125 provides an efficient handle for apparatus 300. In general, with flashlight 120 placed into handle clip 125, when a user grasps flashlight 120 (essentially becoming removable handle 115), the user can apply a force on apparatus 300 which causes handle clip 125 to apply a force on flashlight 115, which provides the user a secure hold on apparatus 100.

Referring still to FIG. 14, second end 127 of handle clip 125 includes opening 128 to provide a path for the transmission of light from a flashlight 120. Therefore, the light transmitting end of the flashlight 120 is typically disposed in opening 128 on one end 127 of handle clip 125. In this way, when the user grasps apparatus 300 via removable flashlight 120, the user can face opening 128 in the direction in which user is facing or walking and can illuminate flashlight 120 to provide light while walking or otherwise engaging in an activity that may require the user to illuminate an area while holding apparatus 100. Even if the selected embodiment does not result in the light facing in the same direction in which the user is facing or walking when transporting apparatuses 100, 200, 300, 400, the immediately surrounding area can be illuminated, and the user can still have flashlight 120 readily available if needed to provide light while walking or otherwise engaging in an activity that may require the user to illuminate an area while holding apparatus 100. In the presently described embodiments, handle clip 125 is a single integral piece, typically U-shaped and pivotally connected to main body 105.

In a further alternate, apparatus 200 could be formed such that handle 115 could be generally tubular, and without handle clip 125, (not shown) wherein flashlight 120 could slide within handle 115 in a removable fashion, such that light could be transmitted essentially from within or proximate the upper end of handle 115.

As shown in the Figures, several embodiments of apparatuses 100, 200, 300, 400 are illustrated, wherein it is appreciated that a variety of types of equipment may be included, such as entertainment equipment and useful and/or otherwise desirable camping equipment. In one embodiment 400, shown in FIG. 15, lid 410 further includes a movable hatch 190 disposed on an upper planar surface of the lid. In general, hatch 190 can be slidably along the upper planar surface of lid 110 as shown by directional arrows A in FIG. 16. In another implementation, a portion of lid 110 can be pivotable with respect to the upper planar surface of lid 110, such as shown in FIGS. 3 and 15. Thus, in certain implementations, hatch 190 and/or other defined portions and/or sub-regions of lid 110 can cover a storage recess 191 within lid 110. As shown in FIG. 15, video screen 192 can be disposed in hatch 190. Video screen 192 can be a display for DVD player 180 or a laptop computer (not shown) or any other device requiring a video screen such as a gaming console and the like.

In one embodiment, lid 110 can be composed of two lid portions, as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. First lid portion 111 and second lid portion 112 are typically pivotally connected to one another and to main body 105. In a typical implementation, first lid portion 111 covers a hollow interior of main body 105 and second lid portion 112 covers a storage section 191 within first lid portion 111, thus second lid portion 112 relatedly defining hatch 190. Turn locks or snap locks (not shown) can lock lid portions 111, 112 with respect to one another.

In general, the recesses 191 within first lid portion 111 can have a variety of uses, functions and form factors. Recesses 191 can be used to store picnic equipment such as utensils, grill utensils, plates, table cloths, spices/condiments napkins and the like. Recesses can further include any of the entertainment equipment as described above, either integrally connected or removable. A separate pop-up section can include a video screen similar to as described above, and similar to as depicted in FIG. 15.

Therefore, in the embodiments described above, a cooler system is provided including a cooler body, a lid hingely connected to the cooler body, a handle disposed on the lid having a clip and a flashlight disposed in the clip, the flashlight being removable from the clip, the ability to receive entertainment electronics disposed on the cooler body and the ability to receive camping equipment disposed on the cooler body. A cooler system is also provided, including a cooler...
body, a lid hingably connected to the cooler body, a handle disposed on the cooler body having a clip and a flashlight disposed in the clip, the flashlight being removable from the clip, the ability to receive entertainment electronics disposed on the cooler body and the ability to receive camping equipment disposed on the cooler body. In a typical implementation, the lid is a dual lid having a first lid connection hingably connected to the cooler body and a second lid section hingably connected to the first lid section. The cooler systems can also include a hatch disposed on the lid.

[0091] In an alternate embodiment, apparatus 100 could be provided with an on-board light, such as a lamp or lantern, in addition to or in lieu of flashlight 110. It will be appreciated that such on-board light can be embedded in the cooler body, the lid of the cooler, and/or the handle, wherein upon operation, light may emanate therefrom.

[0092] Additionally, flashlight 115 may be alternately defined as a permanent and/or detachable component of the cooler body and/or the lid.

[0093] Further, the storage area inside the lid can be formed as a dedicated, permanent storage area for various items, such as, for example purposes only, tailgating utensils, fishing tackle box components, or the box itself, DVD player, MP3/IPOD docking station, or the like. Or the storage area can be provided with optional inserts wherein the manufacturer may provide various options for selectable organization and storage of goods.

[0094] Additionally, the storage tray within the lid could be defined within an exterior access port, such that slidable removal from the interior cooler compartment is facilitated in order to access the items stored within the storage tray without opening the cooler itself.

[0095] Moreover, in another alternate embodiment, apparatus 100 could include a storage compartment for a rechargeable battery pack, wherein such a rechargeable battery pack could enable on-board, remote recharge of electronic goods, such as cellular telephones, DVD players, MP3 players, and the like.

[0096] According to a variety of alternate embodiments, clock 150 and/or compass 160 could be removably mounted in several different ways (Velcro®, snaps, threads) and may take on various appearances (round or square). Further, such means of attachment could also be utilized for flashlight 120 in lieu of, or in addition to, clip 125.

[0097] As discussed, the attachment arrangement for lid 110 can vary for different embodiments. For example, it is anticipated that lid 110 could be hingedly disposed on the main body for traditional upward rotation, or that lid 110 could be hingedly disposed on the main body for slidable rotation within a single plane relative to the upper edge of main body 105. Further, any of such configurations could be lockable. Such lockable configurations can serve to further facilitate the definition of handle 115 within lid 110, maintaining closure of apparatus 100, 200, 300, 400 during transport.

[0098] Lastly, with respect to the various embodiments of apparatus 100, it is intended that the various configurations and sizes thereof are dimensioned in order to allow for stacking during shipping, thereby enabling minimized space requirements and decreased shipping costs per unit through increased capacity per shipment.

[0099] The foregoing description and drawings comprise illustrative embodiments of the present invention. Having thus described exemplary embodiments of the present invention, it should be noted by those skilled in the art that the within disclosures are exemplary only, and that various other alternatives, adaptations, and modifications may be made within the scope of the present invention. Merely listing or numbering the steps of a method in a certain order does not constitute any limitation on the order of the steps of that method. Many modifications and other embodiments of the invention will come to mind to one skilled in the art to which this invention pertains having the benefit of the teachings presented in the foregoing descriptions and the associated drawings. Although specific terms may be employed herein, they are used in a generic and descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation. Accordingly, the present invention is not limited to the specific embodiments illustrated herein, but is limited only by the following claims.

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34. A cooler apparatus, comprising:
a main body;
a lid hingedly disposed on the main body; and
a handle, said handle further comprising a flashlight.
35. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein the flashlight is removable.
36. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a handle clip disposed on the handle.
37. The apparatus as claimed in claim 36, wherein the handle clip has an open side.
38. The apparatus as claimed in claim 36, wherein the handle clip further comprises an opening to provide a path for the transmission of light from a flashlight.
39. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a timepiece.
40. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a compass.
41. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a music player.
42. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a DVD player.
43. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein the lid further includes a movable hatch.
44. The apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein the hatch is slidable along a planar surface.
45. The apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein the hatch is pivotable.
46. The apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein the hatch covers a storage recess within the lid.
47. The apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein the hatch is a video screen.
48. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a computer.
49. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein the lid comprises a first lid portion and a second lid portion, pivotally connected to one another and to the main body.
50. The apparatus as claimed in claim 49, wherein the first lid portion covers a hollow interior of the main body.
51. The apparatus as claimed in claim 50, wherein the second lid portion covers a storage section within the first lid portion.
52. A cooler system, comprising:
   a cooler body;
   a lid removably connected to the cooler body;
   a handle having a clip and a flashlight disposed in the clip,
   the flashlight being removable from the clip;
   means for receiving entertainment electronics; and
   means for receiving camping equipment.
53. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising means for locking the lid.
54. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein the hingable relation of the lid relative to the main body facilitates rotational movement of the lid within a plane.
55. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising an insert, said insert defining an organizational tool for receiving and organizing accessories within the apparatus.
56. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a tray slidably related to the main body.
57. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, further comprising a rechargeable battery pack and a storage compartment therefore.
58. The apparatus as claimed in claim 34, wherein the lid further comprises a flap and the main body further comprises a lock ring, and wherein the lock ring is configured to extend through the flap of the lid upon closure in a manner to enable a lock to be fastened therethrough.
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