

[54] **CASKET WITH INTERNAL BODY SUPPORTS**

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[22] Filed: **Apr. 8, 1974**

[21] Appl. No.: **459,083**

[52] U.S. Cl. 27/2; 27/7

[51] Int. Cl.² A61G 17/00

[58] Field of Search 27/2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 27/9, 35, 1

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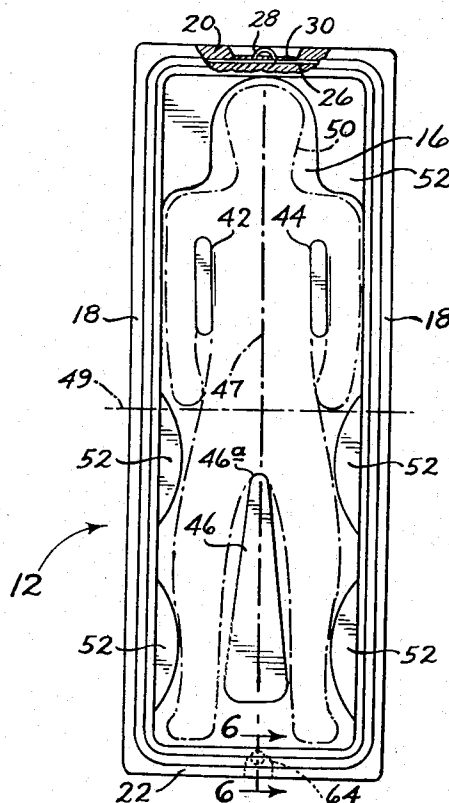
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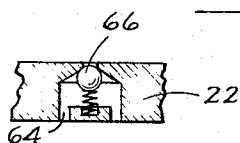
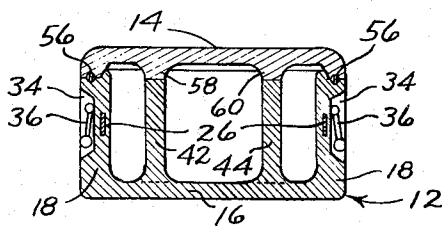
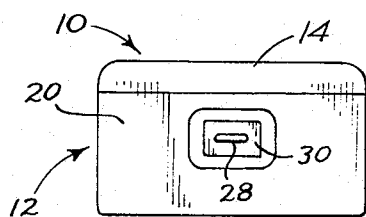
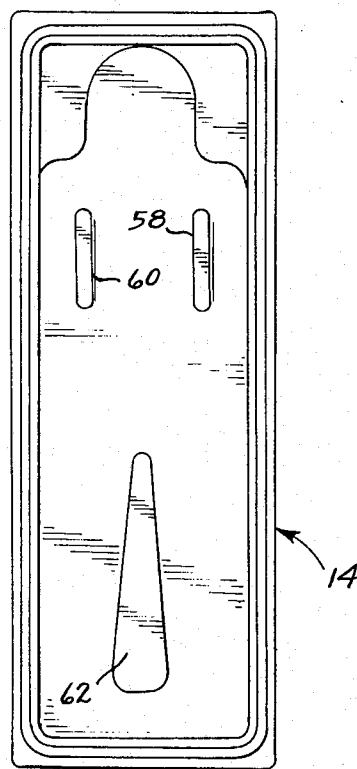
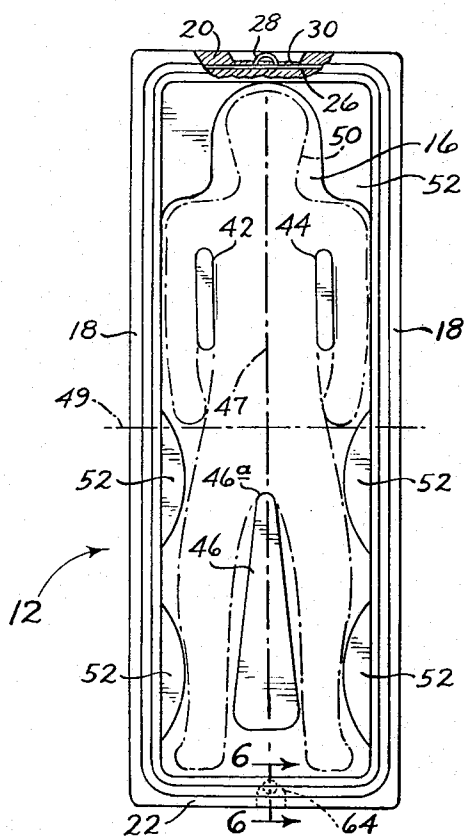
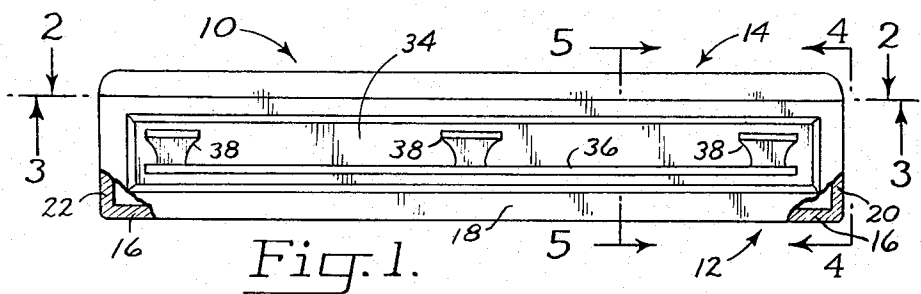
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A casket which is adapted for burial either in a horizontal or vertical position. The casket has supports projecting outwardly from a base wall thereof which are positioned to fit under the arms of a body received in the casket and another support projects outwardly from the base wall of the casket in a position to fit under the crotch of a body received in the casket. Such supports support a body against shifting toward the foot end of the casket. The casket may be made of a molded plastic material with a metal strap embedded in the side and end walls thereof to reinforce the same. A lifting member at the head end of the casket is provided for handling the casket in a vertical position.

4 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures





CASKET WITH INTERNAL BODY SUPPORTS

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a casket, and more particularly to a casket having support means therein for supporting the body against shifting longitudinally of the casket.

In the past, caskets and vaults have been buried in a substantially horizontal position. Burial space, especially in urban areas, is becoming more scarce. A solution to such a problem may be found in burying caskets in a substantially vertical position. With such burial techniques, the amount of space required for each burial is substantially reduced.

While previously known caskets could be buried vertically, rather than horizontally, it should be realized that their use might be found distasteful by those who have been close to the party to be buried. An objection to the use of prior caskets may be found in the fact that in prior caskets generally there is nothing to support the body against shifting toward the foot end of the casket when buried in an upright position. Thus, if a conventional casket is tipped upright the body would slump to the foot end of the casket.

A general object of the present invention is to provide a novel casket having means therein for supporting a body against shifting toward the foot end of the casket, permitting the same to be buried as desired, either in a substantially horizontal or a vertical position.

More specifically, an object is to provide such a novel casket including body supports within the casket which are adapted to fit under the arms of a body in the casket, and beneath the crotch of the body to support the body against shifting toward the foot end of the casket.

Yet another object is to provide a novel casket which has lifting means adjacent the head end thereof providing simple and effective means for handling the casket in a substantially vertical position and permitting lowering of the same into a burial site.

DRAWINGS

These and other objects and advantages will become more fully apparent as the following description is read in conjunction with the drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a side elevation view of a casket constructed according to an embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 2 is an enlarged top plan view taken generally along the line 2—2 of a body receiving portion of the casket;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged bottom plan view taken generally along the line 3—3 in FIG. 1 of the underside of the top for the casket;

FIG. 4 is an enlarged elevation view of the head end of the casket, taken generally along the line 4—4 in FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged cross-sectional view of the casket taken generally along the line 5—5 in FIG. 1; and

FIG. 6 is an enlarged cross-sectional view of a fluid outlet port and check valve therein in the foot end of the casket, taken along the line 6—6 in FIG. 2.

DETAIL DESCRIPTION OF A SPECIFIC EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

Referring to the drawings, and first more specifically to FIG. 1, at 10 is indicated generally a casket con-

structed according to an embodiment of the invention. The casket includes an elongate body-receiving section 12 and a top, or closing wall section, 14.

Referring to FIG. 2, body receiving portion 12 includes an elongate, substantially planar base wall 16 (see FIG. 5 also), and a pair of elongate, spaced-apart, substantially parallel side walls 18 secured to and projecting outwardly in a common direction from opposed longitudinal edge margins of base wall 16. The body-receiving section also includes a head end wall 20 and a foot end wall 22. End walls 20, 22 are substantially parallel to each other and are secured to and project outwardly in the same direction from base wall 16. Contiguous edge margins of the end walls and side walls are integrally joined to each other and to the base wall to provide a substantially fluid-tight body receiving portion for the casket.

The casket may be molded of a plastic material, or other waterproof composition material, in a conventional manner to provide a relatively lightweight, yet strong and fluid tight structure.

As is best seen in FIGS. 2 and 5, an elongate, endless, metal strap 26 is embedded within the side and end walls of the body-receiving section and extends fully thereabout to reinforce the body-receiving section.

A semicircular lifting member 28 is secured to strap 26 at the head end of the body receiving section and is inset in a recess 30 in head end wall 20.

Elongate recesses 34 are formed in and extend longitudinally along the outer surfaces of side walls 28. Elongate pall bearer handles 36 are hingedly connected through connector plates 38 to side walls 18. The connector plates 38 may be spring loaded so that they normally bias handles 36 into a position disposed against the side walls and within recesses 34.

A plurality of elongate body supports 42, 44, 46 are secured to base wall 16 and project outwardly therefrom in substantially the same direction that the side walls and end walls project from the base wall. As is best seen in FIG. 2, supports 42, 44 are laterally spaced to opposite sides of the longitudinal center line 47 of the casket and somewhat inwardly from side walls 18. Further, they are disposed intermediate the transverse center line 49 for the casket and head end wall 20. Supports 42, 44 thus are positioned to fit under the arms, between the arms and trunk portion, of a body, such as that indicated generally in dot-dashed outline at 50.

Support 46 is disposed substantially on longitudinal center line 47 of the casket and intermediate transverse center line 49 and foot end wall 22. As is seen in FIG. 2, support 46 is adapted to fit between the legs of a body received in the casket with an end portion 46a thereof supporting the crotch of the body.

Supports 42, 44, 46 act to prevent shifting of a body in the casket toward the foot end wall of the casket.

As is seen in FIG. 2, padded, contoured inserts, such as those illustrated at 52, are secured to the interior of the body receiving section of the casket to provide additional side-to-side support for the head and lower portions of the body.

Referring to FIGS. 3 and 5, the top, or closing wall, 14 of casket 14 is adapted to fit in sealing relation atop the side and end walls of section 12. As is best seen in FIG. 5, the marginal edge portions of top 14 are contoured to properly position the top on the body receiving section and an elastomeric seal, indicated generally at 56, may be interposed therebetween to provide a

fluid-tight seal. Means for securing the top and body receiving sections together may be provided as required, although such is not illustrated herein for clarity.

As is seen in FIGS. 3 and 5, the underside of top 14 which faces base wall 16 has projections 58, 60, 62 thereon which join with supports 42, 44, 46, respectively, to form substantially continuous body supports extending from base wall 16 to top 14 when the two are joined as shown in FIG. 5.

As a body in such a casket decomposes, gases and fluids collect within the casket. Referring to FIG. 6, a port 64 extends through foot end wall 22. A spring biased ball check valve 66 is positioned within port 64 to control flow of fluid through port 66. The check valve is so positioned that it inhibits flow of fluid through port 64 into the casket, but upon sufficient pressure building up within the casket, the check valve is forced open to allow fluid to drain from the casket with the casket in a vertical position.

Describing the operation of the casket of the invention, a body placed therein is positioned with supports 42, 44 under the arms thereof and support 46 between the legs thereof. These body supports maintain the body substantially in a desired position, preventing it from sliding toward the foot end of the casket.

For burial of the casket in a vertical position, powered lifting means may be connected to lifting member 28 at the head end of the casket to lift the same and then lower it into the ground. With the casket tipped up to a vertical position, supports 42, 44, 46 support the body in its upright position assuring that the body will not slump in the casket to the foot end thereof.

While a specific embodiment of the invention has been described herein, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that variations and modifications are possible without departing from the spirit of the invention.

It is claimed and desired to secure by letters Patent:

1. A casket comprising an elongate body receiving section having an elongate base wall, spaced-apart head and foot end walls secured adjacent opposite end margins of said base wall and projecting outwardly in one direction therefrom, a pair of elongate spaced-apart side walls secured adjacent opposite longitudinal edge margins of said base wall and projecting outwardly in said direction from said base wall, at least a pair of laterally spaced, substantially rigid body support members secured to and projecting outwardly in said one direction from said base wall, said support members being spaced inwardly from said opposite side walls and from said head end wall, each body support member being disposed intermediate a side wall and the longitudinal centerline of the casket and intermediate the head end wall and the transverse centerline of the casket and adapted to fit under the arms of and between the arms and trunk portion of a body placed in the casket for supporting the same against shifting toward the foot end wall of the casket, and another substantially rigid body support member secured to and projecting outwardly in said direction from said base

wall, said other support member being disposed intermediate the transverse centerline and said foot end wall of the casket and substantially centrally between said side walls, with a portion of said other support member facing said head end wall being disposed nearer to said transverse centerline than to said foot end wall adapted to fit between the legs of and to engage the crotch of a body received within the casket further to support the body against shifting toward said foot end wall.

2. A casket comprising an elongate body receiving section having an elongate base wall, spaced-apart head and foot end walls secured adjacent opposite end margins of said base wall and projecting outwardly in one direction therefrom, a pair of elongate spaced-apart side walls secured adjacent opposite longitudinal edge margins of said base wall and projecting outwardly in said direction from said base wall, at least a pair of laterally spaced body support members secured to and projecting outwardly in said one direction from said base wall, said supports being spaced inwardly from said opposite side walls and from said head wall intermediate the head end wall and the transverse centerline of the casket to fit under the arms of and between the arms and trunk portion of a body placed in the casket for supporting the same against shifting toward the foot end wall of the casket, and a closing wall adapted to close the side of the casket opposite said base wall, said closing wall having projections on the side thereof facing the base wall, which projections are positioned to join with said body support members to define substantially continuous underarm body supports extending from said base wall to said closing wall when the casket is closed.

3. A casket comprising an elongate body receiving section having an elongate base wall, spaced-apart head and foot end walls secured adjacent opposite end margins of said base wall and projecting outwardly in one direction therefrom, a pair of elongate spaced-apart side walls secured adjacent opposite longitudinal edge margins of said base wall and projecting outwardly in said direction from said base wall, said side and end walls being formed of a molded plastic material and having an elongate strap embedded therein to reinforce the same, lifting means secured to said head end wall, and at least a pair of laterally spaced, substantially rigid body support members secured to and projecting outwardly in said one direction from said base wall, said support members being spaced inwardly from said opposite side walls and from said head end wall, intermediate the head end wall and the transverse centerline of the casket, adapted to fit under the arms of and between the arms and trunk portion of a body placed in the casket for supporting the same against shifting toward the foot end wall of the casket.

4. The casket of claim 3, wherein said lifting means comprises a lifting member secured to said strap engageable by powered lifting means for handling said casket in a substantially upright position with said head end wall facing upwardly.

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