United States Patent

Mendez

[15] **3,684,157**

[45] **Aug. 15, 1972**

[54] FOOD CONTAINER CONSTRUCTION

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[22] Filed: **Sept. 14, 1970**

[21] Appl. No.: **71,687**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **229/16,** 229/41, 229/8

[51] **Int. Cl.**.....**B65d 5/00,** B65d 5/36

[58] **Field of Search** .....229/8, 1.5 B, 16 R, 21, 41 B, 229/41 C, 41 D, 41 R; 294/55

[56] **References Cited**

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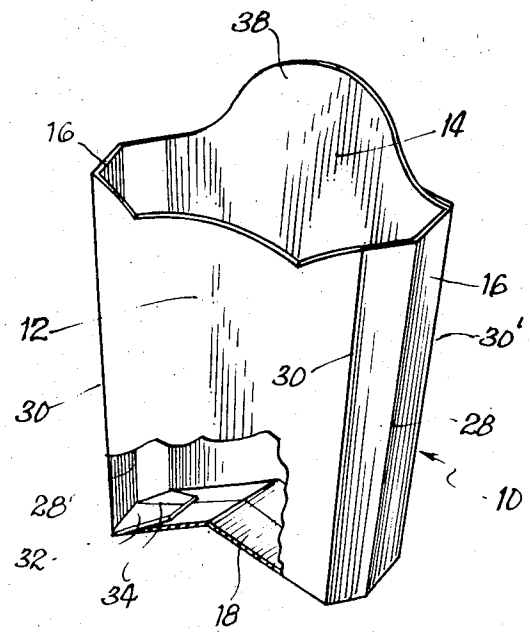
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Attorney—McDougall, Hersh & Scott

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A container construction comprising front, back, side and bottom walls and an open top. The respective walls are separated from each other by means of fold lines, and additional fold lines extend across the bottom and side walls whereby the construction can be folded into a flat configuration. A still further fold line extends across the bottom wall between the front and back walls. When the bottom is pushed upwardly along this fold line, the container will lock in the open position. A caricature is displayed on the outer surface of the front wall and on the inner surface of the back wall. When the side walls are cut away after use of the container, the caricature provides a toy which will change in appearance when the front and back walls are moved relative to each other.

7 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures



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FIG. 1

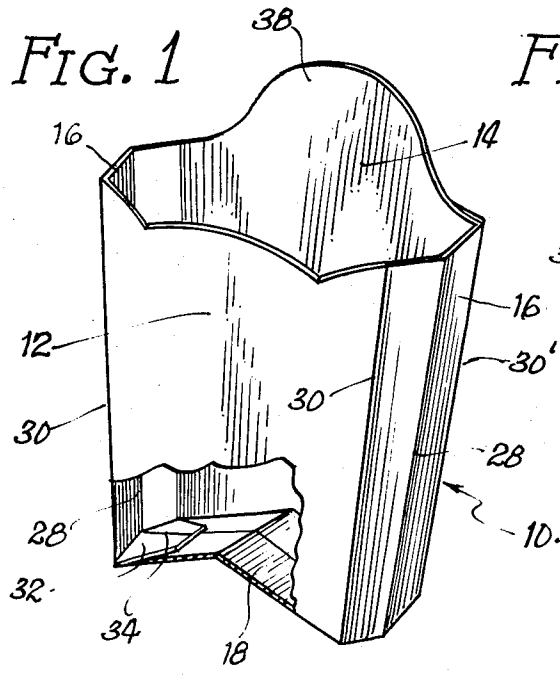


FIG. 2

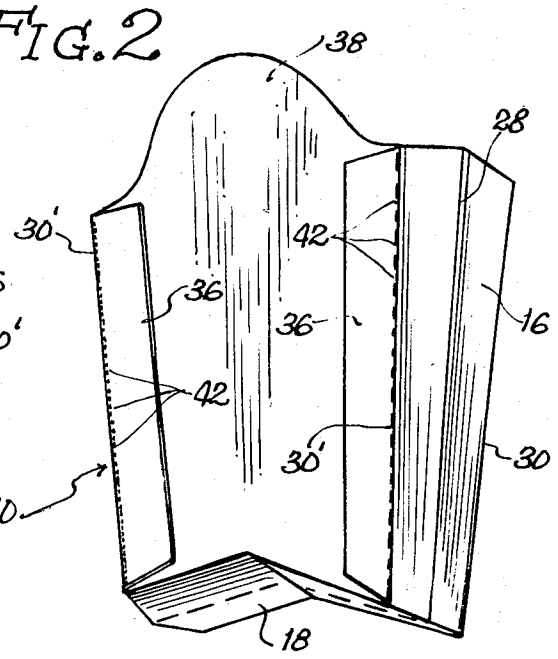


FIG. 3

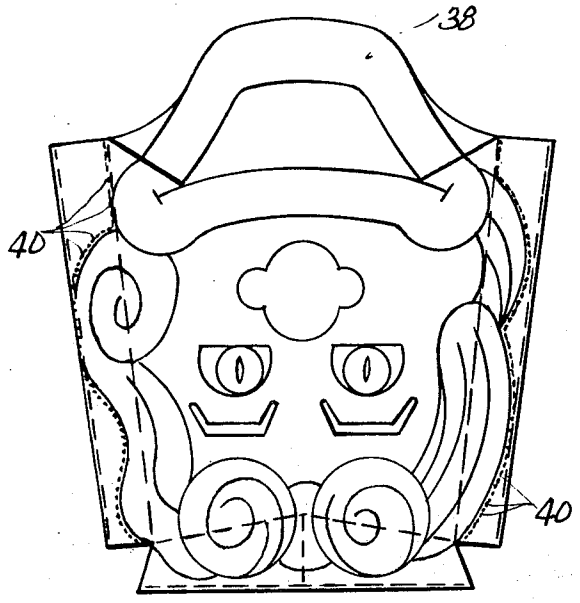
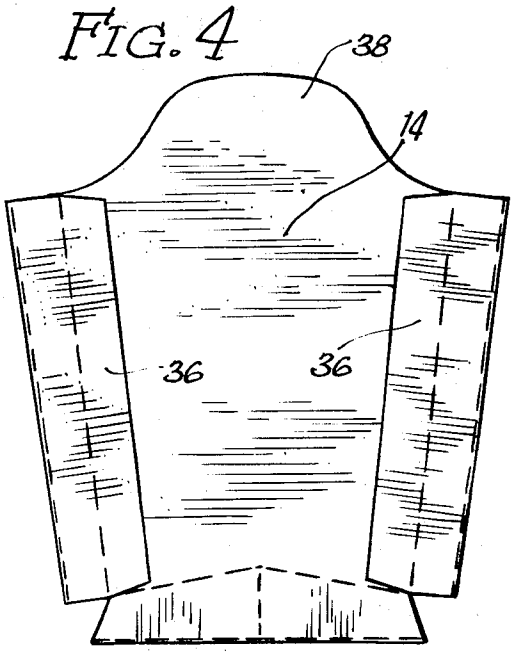
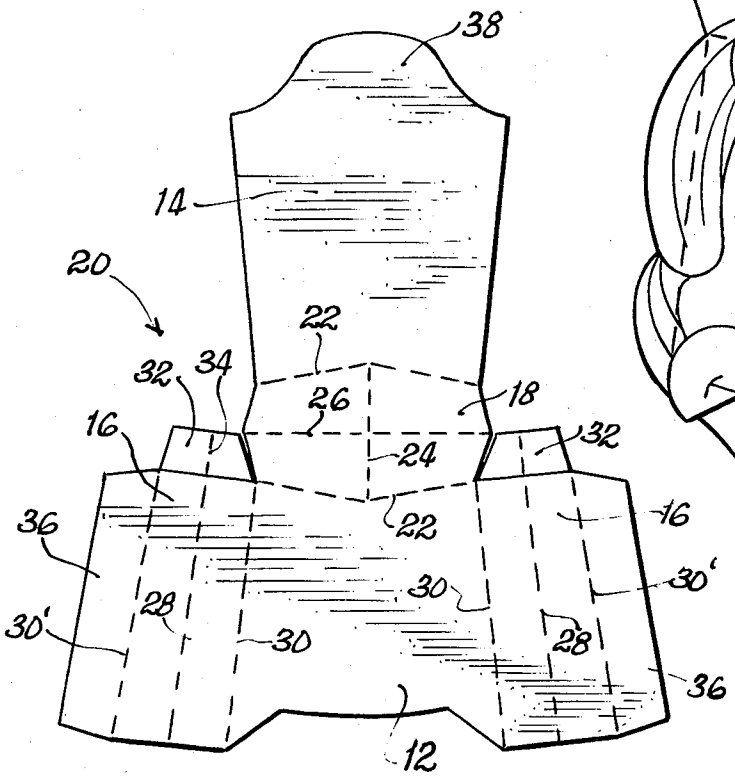


FIG. 4



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FIG. 5



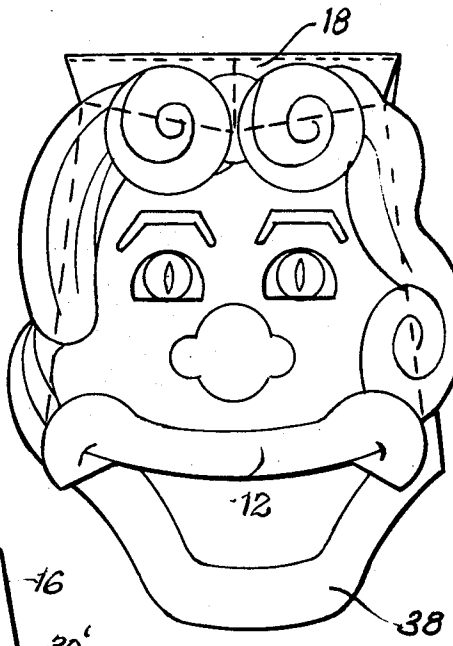


FIG. 6

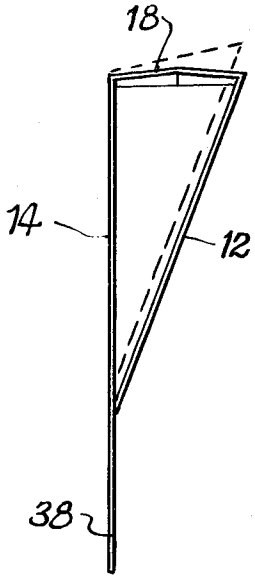


FIG. 7

FOOD CONTAINER CONSTRUCTION

This invention relates to a container construction useful for holding food products. The invention is particularly directed to a container of the disposable type.

Because of the wide popularity of drive-in eating establishments, there has been an increased need for disposable food containers. Such containers must be relatively inexpensive and, therefore, they must be capable of being economically manufactured. Complex cutting or scoring techniques, or containers which require special materials or multiple parts, are totally unsuitable for volume operations of the type referred to.

It is also desirable to provide containers which can be easily marked to identify the establishment using the container. Since heavy paper or cardboard material is relatively inexpensive and can be readily printed, such materials are ideally suited for the production of large numbers of containers. These materials are also easily disposed of after use.

Containers which are compact and which can, therefore, be stored in a minimum of space are preferred. Containers which are held flat during storage and which can then be opened up for use are particularly suitable for holding food products.

It is a general object of this invention to provide an improved design for a container construction which is particularly suitable for use in drive-in type eating establishments or in similar establishments where large volumes of disposable containers are employed.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a container construction which can be economically manufactured from heavy paper or cardboard, which is produced from an easily assembled, one-piece blank, which can be folded flat for storage in compact fashion, and which can be easily snapped into an open and locked position for use.

It is a still further object of this invention to provide a container construction which is readily adapted for the display of a caricature as well as other printed material whereby the container can be used as an amusement device after use as a food container.

These and other objects of this invention will appear hereinafter and for purposes of illustration, but not of limitation, specific embodiments of the invention are shown in the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. **1** is a front perspective view, partly cut away, illustrating a container construction of this invention;

FIG. **2** is a rear perspective view of the container construction shown in FIG. **1**;

FIG. **3** is a front plan view of the container construction having a caricature printed thereon;

FIG. **4** is a rear plan view of the container construction;

FIG. **5** is a plan view of a blank employed in producing the container construction;

FIG. **6** is a plan view of the caricature after it has been cut away from the remainder of the container; and,

FIG. **7** is a side view of the caricature shown in FIG. **6**.

The container construction of this invention comprises front and back walls, side walls, a bottom wall, and an open top. The bottom wall is separated from the front and back walls by means of a fold line, and additional fold lines extend between the side walls and the front and back walls. Still further fold lines extend transversely across the bottom wall and upwardly across the side walls, and this arrangement permits folding of the construction into a flat unit.

An additional fold line extends across the bottom wall between the front and back walls. This fold line permits the bottom wall to be forced upwardly, and this action operates to open the container. Furthermore, the configuration described provides a locking action which holds the container in the open position.

By providing a caricature on the exterior surface of the front wall, and on at least the visible portion of the interior surface of the back wall, the construction can be developed into an amusement device. Specifically, the side walls can be cut away, and relative vertical movement between the front and back walls can then be achieved. If the caricature comprises a face, then the expression thereof can be changed for amusement purposes.

The structure illustrated in the accompanying drawings comprises a container **10** defining a front wall **12**, a back wall **14**, side walls **16** and a bottom wall **18**. The top of the construction is open so that food, for example French fried potatoes, can be loaded into the construction. As best shown in FIG. **5**, the construction is manufactured from a one-piece blank **20**. The front wall portion **12** of the blank is separated from the bottom wall portion **18** by means of a first fold line **22**. A corresponding fold line **22** separates the bottom wall from the back wall portion **14**. A second fold line **24** bisects the bottom wall **18** and extends between the front and back wall portions. A third fold line **26** extends perpendicular to the fold line **24**.

The side walls **16** define a fourth fold line **28**. As shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, this fold line **28** bisects the respective side walls when the structure is in the assembled condition.

Fifth fold lines **30** extend along the intersection of the side walls **16** and front wall **12**. Corresponding fold lines **30'** are formed in the side walls **16**, and as shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, these fold lines **30** and **30'** define the corners of the construction in its assembled condition.

The blank **20** is also provided with a pair of tabs **32** which extend outwardly from the edge of side walls **16** adjacent bottom wall **18**. As shown in FIG. **1**, the tabs **32** extend outwardly over the bottom wall when the structure is in the locked position, these tabs serving as closing means for openings which are defined at the bottom edge of the side walls where they intersect with the bottom wall. The tabs **32** define a fold line **34** which is employed when the structure is in the flattened position.

The blank **20** also includes flap portions **36** formed integrally with the side walls **16**. As shown in FIGS. **2** and **4**, these flap portions extend over the back wall **14**, and a suitable adhesive is employed for securing the flap portions to the back wall. This connection of the flap portions to the back wall represents the sole means for securing the container in the assembled condition.

In the preferred form of the invention, a caricature is displayed on the container construction as shown in FIG. **3**. This caricature may comprise many different arrangements, and in some instances, it may be accompanied by or replaced by printed advertising or other information. The invention is used to best advantage,

however, when the caricature comprises a face having its major portion displayed on the exterior surface of the front wall **12** with the upper lip of the caricature extending along the upper edge of the front wall. The lower lip and mouth of the caricature is then provided by means of the extended portion **38** defined by the back wall.

A plurality of dots **40** extend around the limits of the caricature for defining cut out lines. Similarly, dots **42** are provided on the back wall, and when the structure is cut along the lines by these dots, then the arrangement shown in FIGS. **6** and **7** is achieved. The cutting operation removes substantially all of the side wall portions, and relative vertical movement between the front and back walls can then be achieved. With this arrangement, the expression of the caricature can then be changed. It will be appreciated that this provides increased appeal for the structure once it has been used as a food container.

It will be understood that various changes and modifications may be made in the above described construction which provide the characteristics of this invention without departing from the spirit thereof particularly as defined in the following claims.

That which is claimed is:

1. In a container for holding a food product comprising front and back walls, side walls, a bottom wall and an open top, the improvement wherein said bottom wall is separated from said front and back walls by means of a pair of first fold lines extending transversely across the bottom peripheral edge of the container, said first fold lines each comprising first and second portions extending angularly outwardly from the corners of said bottom wall and intersecting at the opposed centers of the first fold lines, a second fold line bisecting said bottom wall and extending between said centers, a third fold line bisecting said bottom wall and extending between said side walls and a pair of fourth fold lines, said fourth fold lines bisecting each of the side walls and extending between the top and bottom edges of said side walls, said front and back walls being movable into overlying relationship when the container is folded about said first, third and fourth fold lines whereby the container assumes a flat configuration, and wherein said container is adapted to be locked in an open position by forcing said bottom wall upwardly to fold said bottom wall about said second fold line with the bottom wall portions on opposite sides of said second fold line then extending angularly downwardly from said second fold line to the intersections of said bottom wall with said side walls.

2. A container construction in accordance with claim **1** including fifth fold lines, one of said fifth fold lines extending vertically along each intersection of said side walls with said front and back walls.

3. In a container for holding a food product comprising front and back walls, side walls, a bottom wall and an open top, the improvement wherein said bottom wall is separated from said front and back walls by means of a pair of first fold lines extending transversely across the bottom peripheral edge of the container, a second fold line bisecting said bottom wall and extending between said front and back walls, a third fold line bisecting said bottom wall and extending between said side walls and a pair of fourth fold lines, said fourth fold lines bisecting each of the side walls and extending between the top and bottom edges of said side walls, said front and back walls being movable into overlying relationship when the container is folded about said first, third and fourth fold lines whereby the container assumes a flat configuration, and wherein said container is adapted to be locked in an open position by forcing said bottom wall upwardly to fold said bottom wall about said second fold line, and including openings defined between said side walls and said bottom wall, tab members formed integrally with said side walls, a sixth fold line defined at the intersection between said tabs and said side walls, said tabs assuming a blocking position relative to said opening when the container is locked in the open position.

4. A container construction in accordance with claim **1** including a caricature displayed on the exterior surface of said front wall and on the interior surface of said back wall, said back wall including an elongated portion extending beyond the extent of said front wall whereby the display on said front and back walls is visible.

5. A container construction in accordance with claim **4** wherein said caricature comprises a face displayed up-side-down, the portion displayed on said back wall comprising the mouth and lower lip on said caricature with the upper lip of the caricature being displayed along the upper edge of said front wall.

6. A container construction in accordance with claim **5** including indicia displayed around the edges of said caricature for indicating portions of the container to be removed after use of the container, said removed portions including said side walls whereby said front and back walls are vertically movable relative to each other for thereby changing the expression of said caricature.

7. A container construction in accordance with claim **1** wherein the construction is manufactured from a one-piece blank, said blank comprising a portion for forming said front wall with the portions for forming said side walls, said bottom wall and said back wall extending outwardly therefrom, and including flap members attached to said side walls, said flap members overlying said back wall when the blank is folded into the container configuration whereby said flap members can be secured to said back wall.

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