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(54) **DECORATIVE THEME SLIPCOVER FOR PATIO AND BEACH UMBRELLAS**

**Publication Classification**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

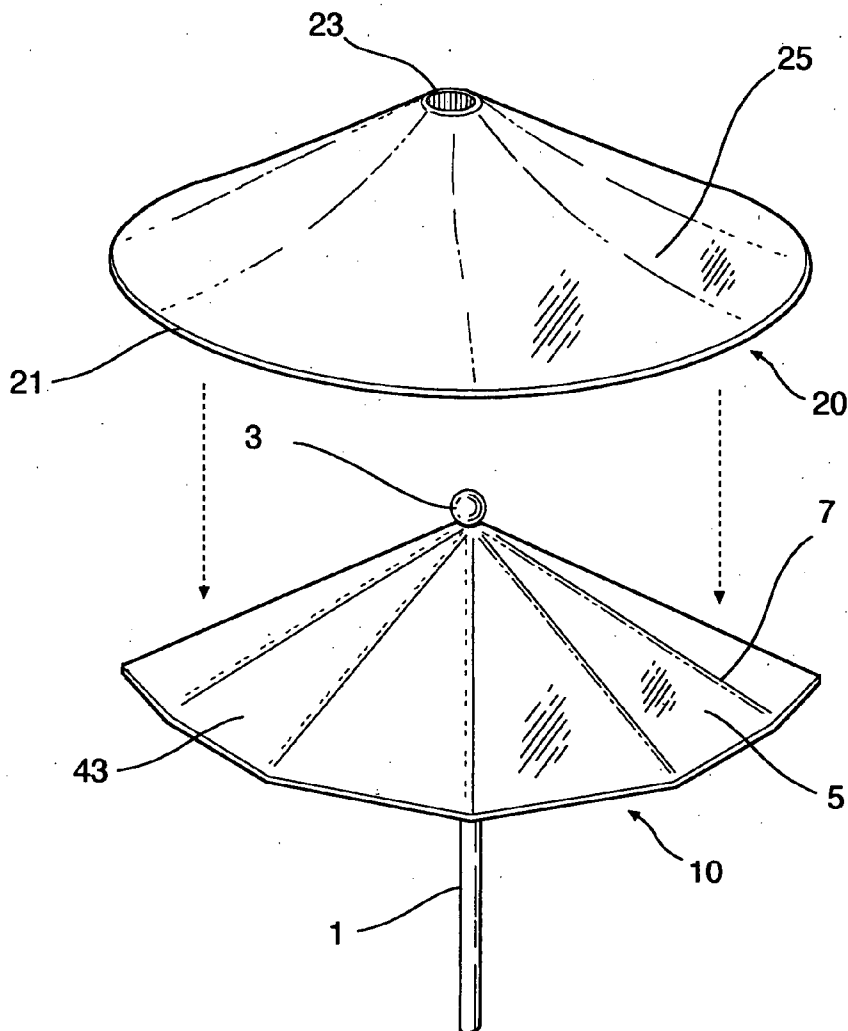
A decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover includes: (a.) a flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet member having a top view of footprint area of a patio umbrella and having a center orifice adapted to permit an elongated top center member of the patio umbrella to pass therethrough; and, (b.) a connection mechanism for removably affixing the flexible sheet member atop said patio umbrella. The connection mechanism may be for connection to the permanent top fabric or the ribs of the umbrella, or both. It may be a single element, such as a band or pull, or it may be a plurality of disparate elements, such as clips.

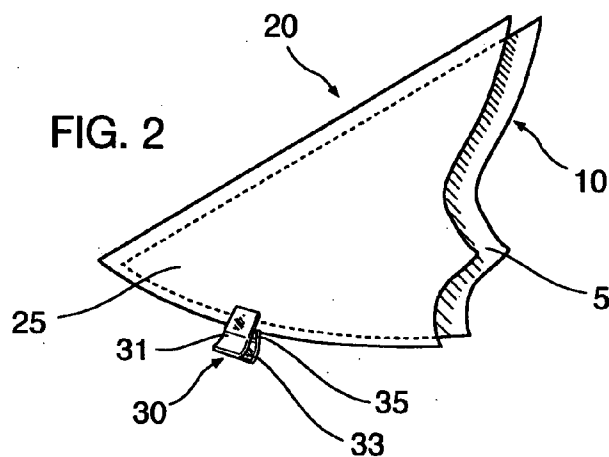
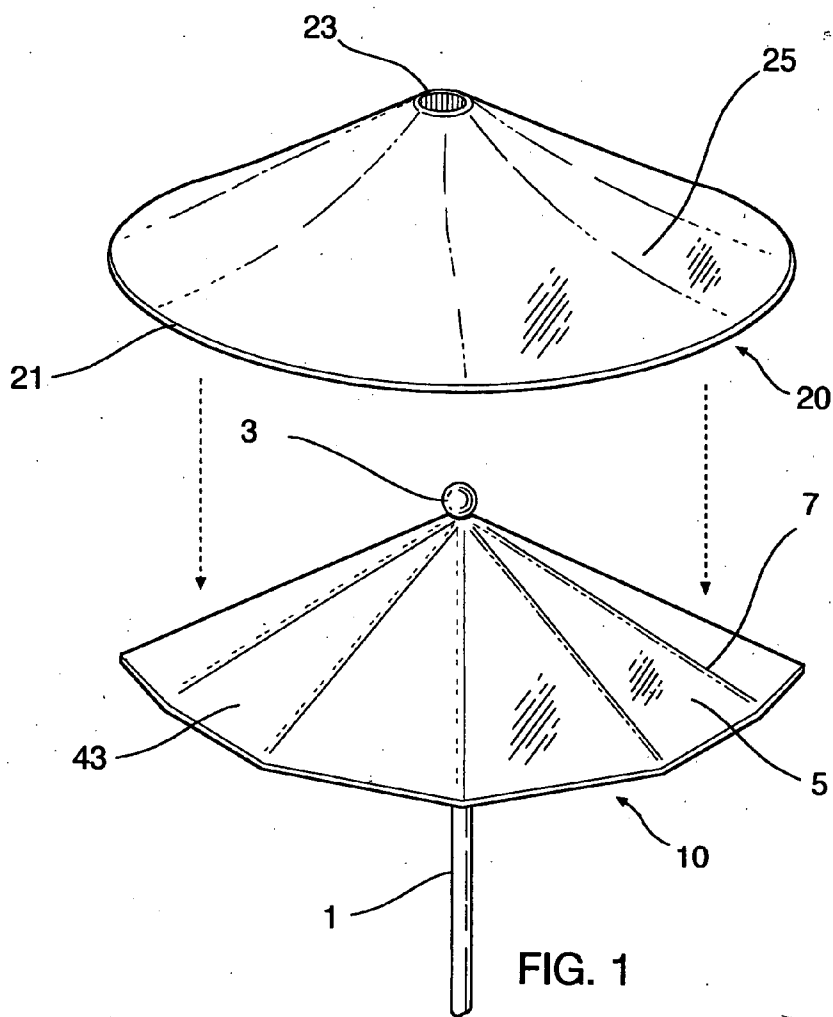
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**Related U.S. Application Data**

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 11/131,675, filed on May 18, 2005.





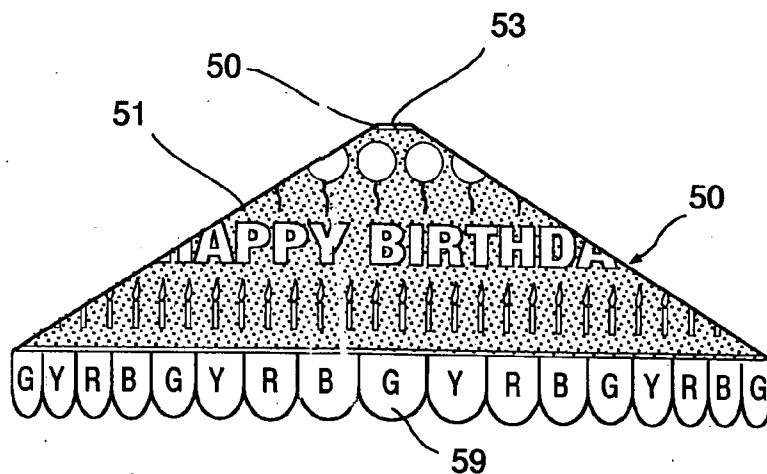


FIG. 3

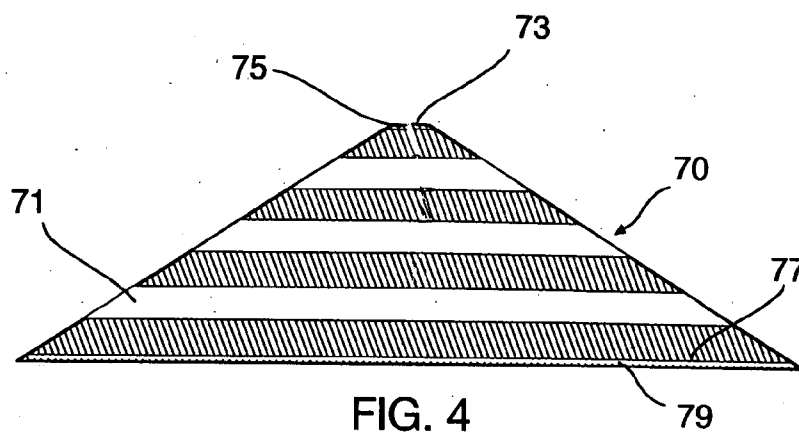


FIG. 4

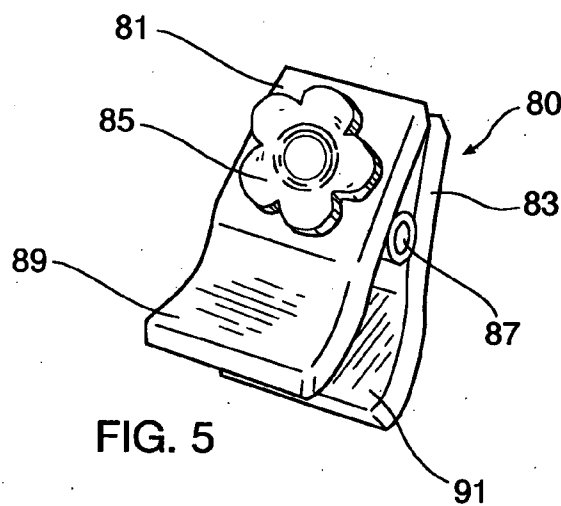


FIG. 5

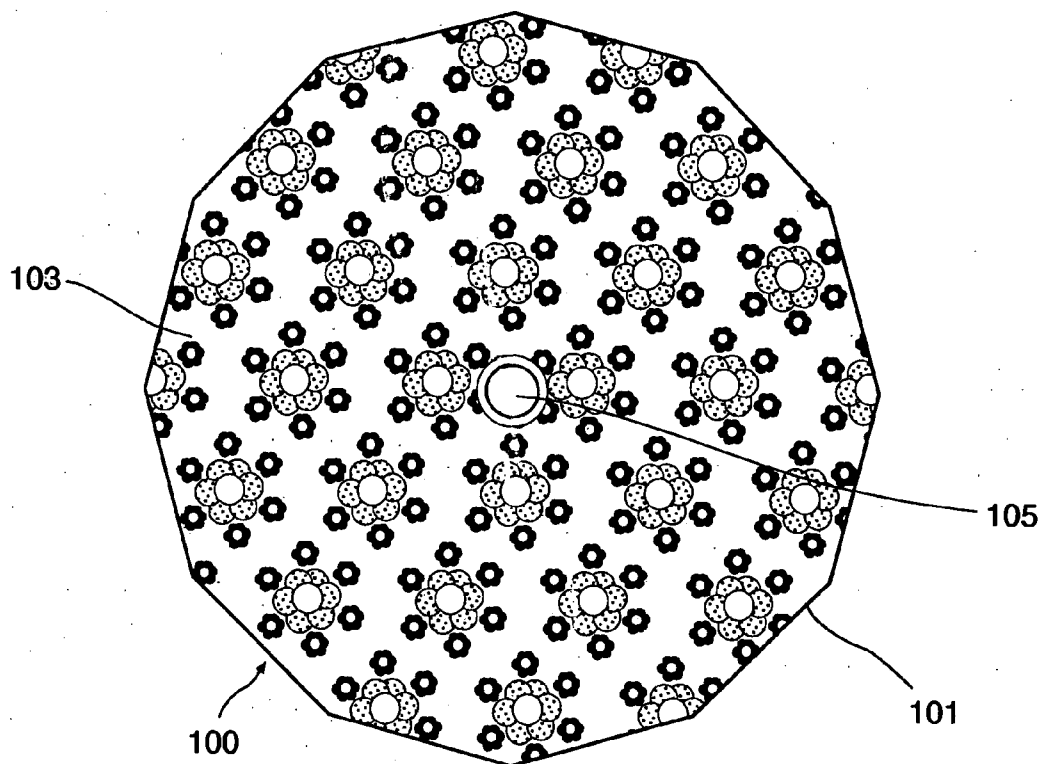


FIG. 6

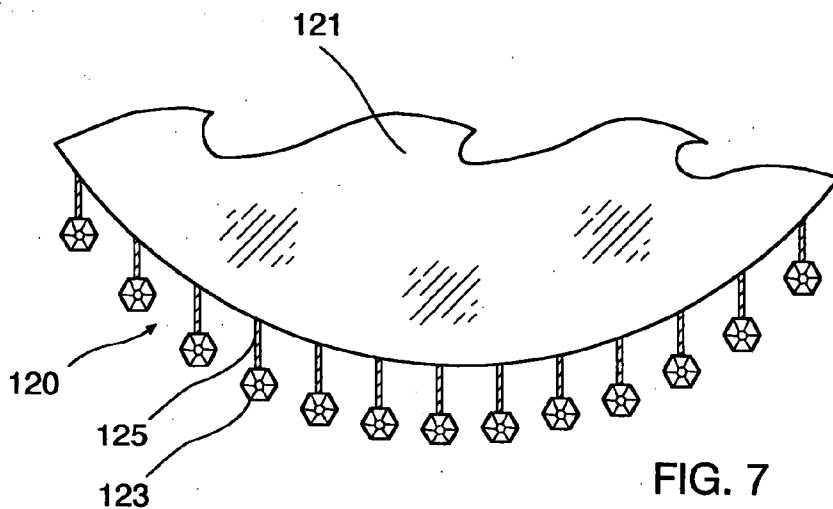


FIG. 7

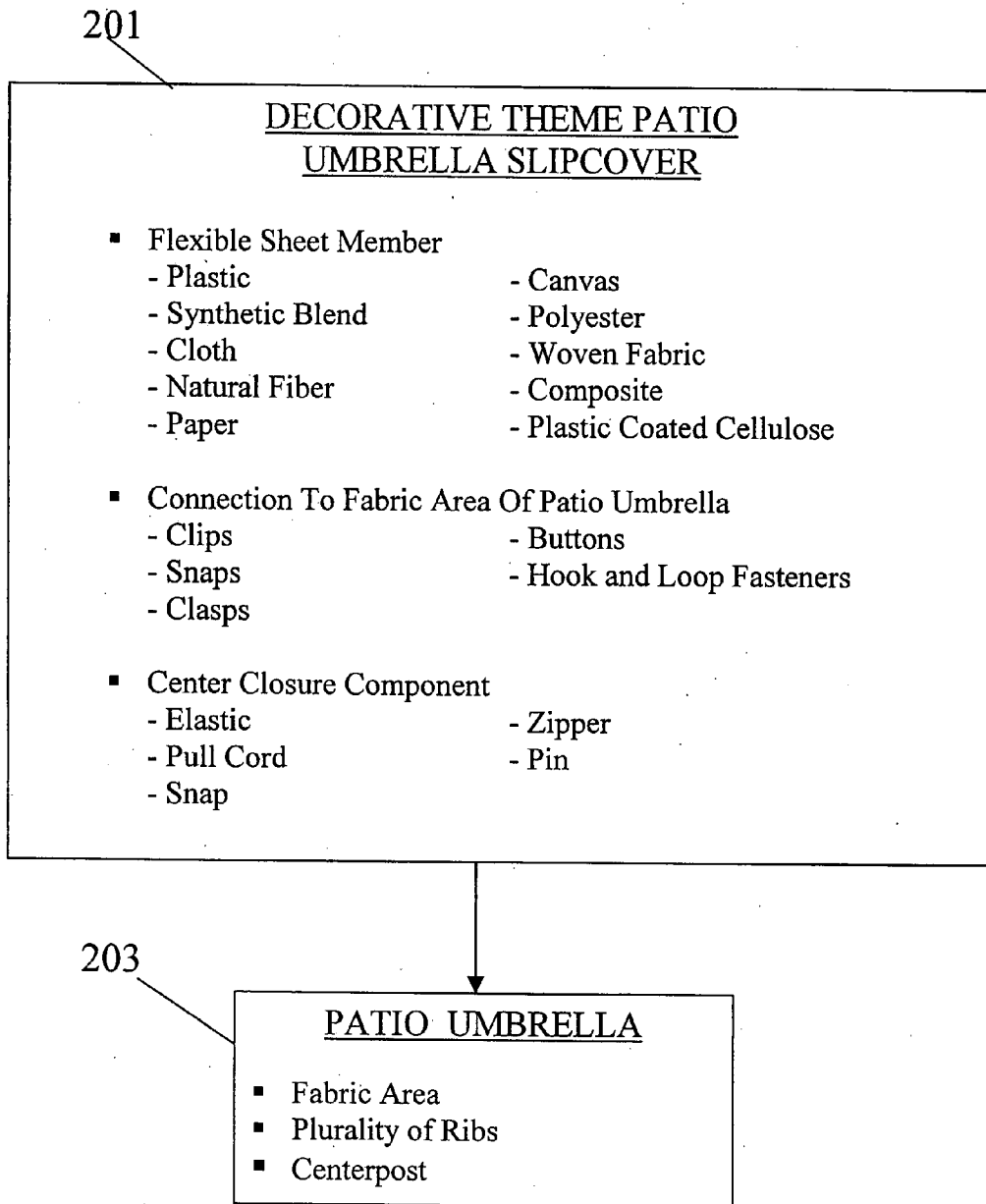


FIGURE 8

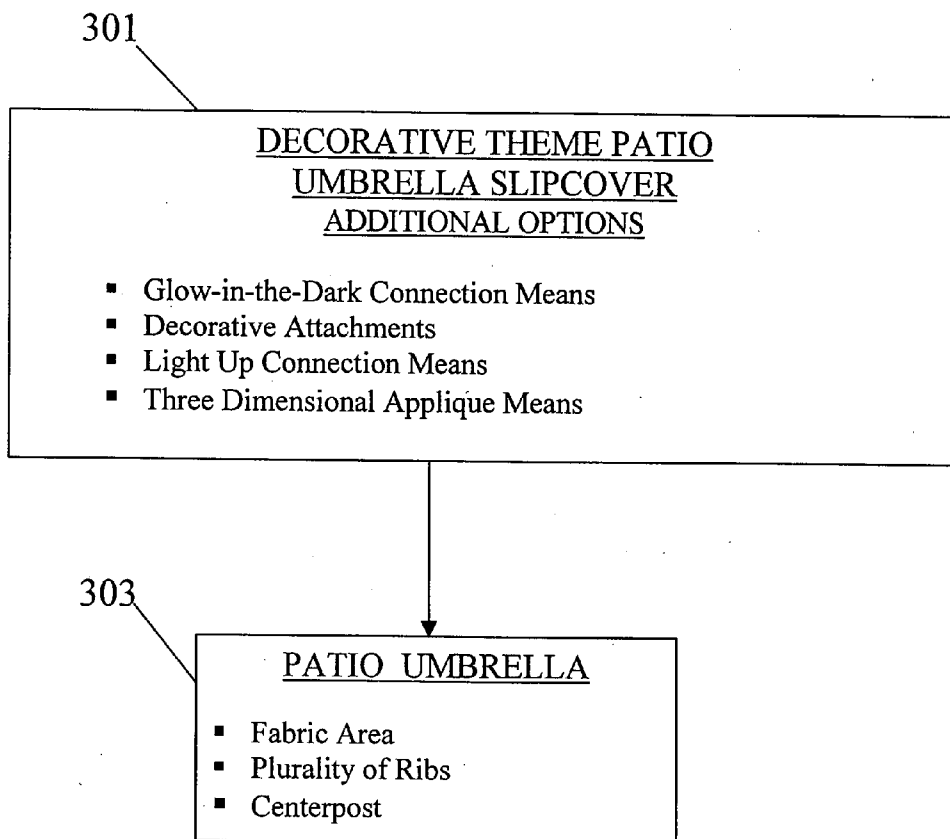


FIGURE 9

## DECORATIVE THEME SLIPCOVER FOR PATIO AND BEACH UMBRELLAS

### REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of copending U.S. application Ser. No. 11/131,675, entitled "Decorative Theme Umbrella Slipcover" and filed on May 18, 2006 by the same inventor herein.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### [0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to improvements in stationary umbrellas, such as beach, pool and deck umbrellas, as well as market and café umbrellas, all generically referred to herein as "patio umbrellas". More specifically, the present invention relates to slipcovers for these umbrellas that provide a second layer of protection from the elements, cut down on sunlight penetration and provide umbrella owners with the opportunity to utilize interchangeable covers for specific theme presentations. Thus, the present invention patio umbrella covers are both functional and decorative.

#### [0004] 2. Information Disclosure Statement

[0005] The following patents are presented to show the state of the art of umbrellas:

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 5,678,587 to Bilotti describes an umbrella net for use in covering a patio umbrella, the umbrella net having an upper panel having a peripheral edge and a sleeve provided along the peripheral edge. The sleeve has an exposed section, and a first opening and a second opening positioned about the exposed section. The umbrella net further includes a drawstring held within the sleeve and having a first end extending from the first opening and a second end extending from the second opening. The umbrella net also has a wall panel having a top edge connected to the peripheral edge of the upper panel and a bottom edge, the wall panel being adapted to enclose a space defined under the patio umbrella. The drawstring may be used to adjust the height of the wall panel with respect to the ground.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 5,305,770 to DeMarco describes an umbrella which opens into a noteworthy enlarged expanse due to outer fabric-supporting struts being urged through sliding movement along inner fabric-supporting struts, so that the two fabrics cooperate to provide the enlarged expanse to the umbrella.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 5,115,827 to Lee describes a two-tier umbrella which has upper and lower series of radially extending ribs supporting upper and lower canopies, respectively. The inner ends of the upper ribs are pivotally connected to the pole and the inner ends of the lower ribs are pivotally connected to respective upper ribs at medial locations while stretchers are pivotally connected at respective opposite ends to a pole slider and to the lower ribs at medial locations thereof. The upper and lower ribs maintain upper, circular, and lower, annular canopies in dome-shape and spaced apart in imbricating condition with an annular wind escape aperture defined between the overlapping canopy portions.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 5,078,166 to Lee describes an umbrella having a wind escape opening which provides and consists of a collapsible frame structure supporting a two tiered canopies with the wind escape opening therebetween so that the umbrella can be handled better and steadier in the wind without the wind causing destruction to the umbrella while at the same time protecting the user from the rain.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 4,674,524 to DeMarco describes an A-folding umbrella in which articulately connected inner and outer rib members are supported by a single slideably disposed strut providing a large diameter in use, and a substantially reduced size when closed. The paired rib members are covered on their exterior by a fabric and are foldable against the rod so as to be all parallel to the rod.

[0011] U.S. Pat. No. 3,960,162 to Noel describes an umbrella having uniquely designed and located vents for the protection of its structural components when used in open spaces where winds of medium and high velocities are encountered. The vents comprise pivotal flaps fabricated of semi rigid material and resiliently seamed to the ribs being caused to open due to the air pressure exerted against the underside of the umbrella sufficient to cause the ribs to flex in the normal manner under such conditions. The vent attachments to the ribs are located at a distance from the peak of the umbrella near the swinging connections of the ribs and struts whereby pressure on both components may be relieved at these critical points.

[0012] U.S. Pat. No. 3,732,879 to Okuda describes an umbrella construction that is disclosed having lower links radiating from a lower ferrule mounted on a shaft and upper links radiating from a middle ferrule mounted on the shaft. The upper and lower links support the main ribs of the umbrella. Auxiliary links connect an upper link with an upper ferrule on the top of the shaft. The lower and middle ferrules are adapted for upward and downward sliding movement on the shaft during opening and closing of the umbrella, thus permitting the ribs, links and umbrella cover to be smoothly collapsed and folded when the umbrella is closed.

[0013] U.S. Pat. No. 3,557,809 to Colon et al. describes an umbrella having a frame with the two covers mounted thereon in superimposed relation, with the respective covers having their peripheral edges attached to the ends of alternative ones only of the ribs of the frame.

[0014] U.S. Pat. No. 2,985,179 to Givens describes an umbrella or the like, having a central post, a plurality of ribs secured to and radiating from the post, ornamented bands secured to and joining the respective ribs, and a transparent flexible plastic cover disposed over said ribs and bands.

[0015] U.S. Pat. No. 2,923,449 to Sund describes a garment drying rack comprising an elongated standard, a stationary member positioned on the upper end of the standard, ribs pivotally mounted in the stationary member and positioned to extend longitudinally of the standard, a pair of opposed material gripping clips on each of the ribs and positioned inwardly from the ends thereof, the clips having openings therein through which the ribs extend and the openings being complementary in shape to the outer configuration of the ribs and slightly larger than the ribs to permit a slight tilting of the clips as they sit astride the ribs, sleeves mounted on the ribs, a sliding collar positioned on

the standard, braces pivotally connected to the sliding collar and also pivotally connected to the sleeves on the ribs, and latching means on the standard for retaining the sliding collar in operative positions for retaining the ribs in extended positions.

[0016] U.S. Pat. No. 570,285 to Kaupman describes a combination in a canopy for bicycles, of the frame for the covering consisting of curved side bars or strips pivoted to each other and to plates, curved transverse strips pivoted to said plates and to an intermediate fixture having a socket and thumb-screw; together with a sectional supporting-rod adapted to engage the socket, substantially as described.

[0017] Notwithstanding the prior art, the present invention is neither taught nor rendered obvious thereby.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0018] The present invention is a decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover. Patio umbrellas are generally of circular, oval, square, rectangular or other polygonal shape from a top view and have a center pole that extends downwardly for insertion into the ground, e.g. sand at a beach, or into a stand or other base support device. The top of these umbrellas has a plurality of radial support members, called ribs, which may have non-radial secondary support braces. The ribs may be metal, plastic, wood or other materials or combinations of any of the foregoing. Flexible, water resistant, air tight material, such as fabric or plastic, is permanently attached to top of the ribs to establish the sunscreen, and these umbrellas are typically folding and have provision for opening and closing the ribs and top.

[0019] Extending upwardly from the top of patio umbrellas is an elongated top center member. This elongated top center member may merely be the top end of the pole protruding beyond the umbrella top, or it may be a separate attached tip, decorative or otherwise, or a combination of both. Sometimes air vents or multiple tier tops are provided to release upward wind that might otherwise dislodge or harm the umbrella.

[0020] The present invention patio umbrella slipcover includes: (a.) a flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet member having a top view of footprint area of a patio umbrella and having a center orifice adapted to permit an elongated top center member of the patio umbrella to pass therethrough; and, (b.) connection means for removably affixing the flexible sheet member atop said patio umbrella. The connection means may be for connection to the permanent top fabric or the ribs or both.

[0021] The flexible sheet member of the present invention decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover may be made of any flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet material, including woven and non-woven materials, synthetic and natural materials, and any combination of the foregoing. In some preferred embodiments, the flexible sheet member is selected from the group consisting of plastic, e.g. polyethylene or polyester (woven or non-woven), synthetic blend (e.g. polyethylene/polypropylene or polyester/cotton), cloth, such as cotton or canvas, natural fiber and coated paper. One preferred flexible sheet member is a woven fabric. Another is composite layers; another, plastic coated paper or other cellulose.

[0022] In some embodiments, the flexible sheet member is symmetrical with respect to a central axis. It may have a top

view shape selected from the group consisting of a circle, an oval, a rectangle and a polygon (including triangle, square, pentagon, etc.). In other embodiments, it may be asymmetrical.

[0023] In some preferred embodiments, the flexible sheet member includes a center closure component at the orifice for tightening the flexible sheet member about the elongated top center member of the patio umbrella, the closure component being selected from the group consisting of elastic, pull cord, zipper, pin and snap.

[0024] The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of connection means may be any that functions to hold the slipcover sheet member onto the top of the umbrella so that it is easily removable. The connection means may be selected from the group consisting of clips, snaps, buttons, clasps and male and female hook and loop fasteners. In some embodiments, the connection means is selected from the group consisting of spring clips and tie down cords. The connection means is at least partially hidden by a decoration presentation, such as flags for Fourth of July, birthday candles, flowers, or any other decoration that fits a desired theme.

[0025] The present invention slipcover may have a flexible sheet member that includes at least one representation of a theme selected from the group consisting of holidays, holy days, religious ceremonies, personal events and nature themes, or the flexible sheet member may include at least one representation of a theme selected from the group consisting of sports, seasons, children's interests (such as children's story scenes, logos, titles, characters, cartoon characters, etc.), business interests (company names, logos, ads, trademarks, products, etc.) and artist decorations.

[0026] In some preferred embodiments, the connection means are glow-in-the-dark connection means.

[0027] In some preferred embodiments, the slipcover includes decorative attachments.

[0028] In some preferred embodiments, the slipcover includes three-dimensional appliques.

[0029] In some preferred embodiments, the connection means are light up connection means with batteries.

[0030] The present invention also includes the combination of a patio umbrella and decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover. It includes:

[0031] (a.) a patio umbrella having a centerpost, ribs, a fabric area connected to said ribs, and an elongated top center member extending above said fabric area; and,

[0032] (b.) a flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet member having a top view of footprint area of a patio umbrella and having a center surface adapted to permit an elongated top center member of said patio umbrella to pass therethrough; and,

[0033] (c.) connection means for removably affixing said flexible sheet member atop said patio umbrella.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0034] The present invention should be more fully understood when the specification herein is taken in conjunction with the drawings appended hereto wherein:



[0035] FIG. 1 illustrates an oblique front view of a present invention patio umbrella slipcover and an umbrella;

[0036] FIG. 2 shows a partial view of a present invention slipcover attachment means, here a clamp, connected to a portion of a patio umbrella;

[0037] FIG. 3 illustrates a side view of another present invention patio slipcover specifically designed for birthday celebrations;

[0038] FIG. 4 illustrates a side view of another present invention patio slipcover;

[0039] FIG. 5 shows a clip attachment means component of a present invention patio slipcover;

[0040] FIG. 6 shows a top view of a present invention slipcover with a floral design; and,

[0041] FIG. 7 shows a partial side view of a present invention slipcover with crystal side ornaments that also function as anchoring weights.

[0042] FIG. 8 illustrates in block form the various slipcover features of the present invention and the patio umbrella type to which the present invention slipcover is to be attached.

; and,

[0043] FIG. 9 illustrates additional present invention options schematically in block form for the present invention slipcovers, to be applied to the specified patio umbrellas.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

[0044] FIG. 1 illustrates an oblique front view of a present invention patio umbrella 10 and an umbrella slipcover 20. The patio umbrella 10 has a pole 1 an elongated top center member 3, a plurality of ribs 7 with fabric 5 attached to the top side of the ribs in a standard umbrella fashion. The slipcover 20 has flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet material 25, such as coated paper, cloth, plastic or composite or layered materials, e.g. plastic coated paper, with a decorative theme printed, embossed, sewn or otherwise created, to protect the umbrella from dirt and to enhance shading, as well as to provide the user with a theme cover for any event desired. There is an orifice 23 so that the slipcover 20 will fit over the top center member 3 of the umbrella. The flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet material may have pleats or be flat, may be a single sheet or connected sections or layers, and may have the same or a different shape than the umbrella to which it is attached. Note that in this case, the slipcover 20 has a circular periphery 21, while the umbrella 10 has an octagonal shape. When the slipcover 20 is attached to the umbrella 20, the slipcover periphery will overhang to create a decorative scalloped edge.

[0045] The attachment means in this case is set forth in FIG. 2. However, other means, such as hook and loop attachments, sometimes referred to as Velcro, could be located on the underside of the slipcover 20 and on the top side of the umbrella 10. Thus, one of a slipcover and the umbrella could have sets of female loops and the other have sets of male hooks coincidentally aligned with one another.

[0046] FIG. 2 shows a partial view of a present invention slipcover attachment means, namely, a clamp 30 connected to a portion of the patio umbrella 10 and the slipcover 20, with their parts numbered identically as shown in FIG. 1. The clamp 30 is a spring clamp that operates much like a spring clothespin. It has two opposing parts spring-biased to be closed at one end by spring 35. As mentioned above, these could have theme-related elements or features to make these functional attachments also decorative and attractive.

[0047] FIG. 3 illustrates a side view of another present invention patio slipcover 50 specifically designed for birthday celebrations. It has a main flexible, water resistant, air tight fabric 51 with birthday decoration thereon, a top orifice 53 and an elastic 55 for tightening to an umbrella top. A plurality of weight-containing tabs 59 act both as an attachment means and as further decoration. In this Figure, the tabs, such as tab 59 have repeated color patterns that make a very colorful and festive slipcover (G, Y, R and B represent green, yellow, red and blue).

[0048] FIG. 4 illustrates a side view of another present invention patio slipcover 70. In this embodiment, the flexible, water resistant, air tight slipcover fabric 71 has rainbow-colored rings and has a top orifice 73 with a top end elastic band 75. At the bottom periphery 77 is another elastic band 79 that acts as the attachment means when stretched over the top of an umbrella.

[0049] FIG. 5 shows a clip attachment means component of a present invention patio slipcover. Spring clip 80 has a front plate 89 and a back plate 91 connected by spring 87 so as to bias top ends 81 and 83 closed. A decorative flower 85 could be used with a spring theme, a wedding or shower theme, or even a prom or other theme. Instead of the flower, any decorative representation or ornament may be used. As an extreme example, for Christmas in warm climates, a present invention slipcover could have a Santa theme and the clips could have small elves or reindeer! For Fourth of July, clips could have flags, firecrackers or stars.

[0050] FIG. 6 shows a top view of a present invention slipcover 100 with a floral design 103 on its top 101. Central orifice 105 is provided to slip over an umbrella top. This Figure shows that the slipcover need not be round, as here it is a polygon, and it shows the floral pattern. The shape need not even be symmetrical, as a large rectangle, oval or irregular shaped slipcover, e.g. a pumpkin, or a religious drape, could function as a slipcover and would be within the scope of the present invention.

[0051] FIG. 7 shows a partial side view of a present invention slipcover 120 with a theme sheet material 121, with crystal side ornaments, such as glass or synthetic crystal 123 and hanging cord 125, that also function as anchoring weights. In place of the glass or synthetic crystal could be other hanging decorations, ornaments, or theme presentations. For example, polished or natural stone, wood, metal or plastic could be used. Prismatic or holographic presentations could likewise be used.

[0052] FIG. 8 illustrates in block 201 the various slipcover features of the present invention and in block 203, the patio umbrella type to which the present invention slipcover is to be attached.

[0053] FIG. 9 illustrates additional options schematically in block 301 for the present invention slipcover to be applied

to patio umbrella 303. As shown in block 301, these additional options include glow-in-the-dark attachments, connection means and decorations, decorative attachments, light up features with batteries and three-dimensional appliques.

[0054] Obviously, numerous modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light of the above teachings. It is therefore understood that within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described herein.

What is claimed is:

1. A decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover, which comprises:

(a.) a flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet member having a top view of footprint area of a patio umbrella and having a center orifice adapted to permit an elongated top center member of said patio umbrella to pass therethrough; and,

(b.) connection means for removably affixing said flexible sheet member atop said patio umbrella.

2. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said flexible sheet member is selected from the group consisting of plastic, synthetic blend, cloth, natural fiber and coated paper.

3. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said flexible sheet member is selected from the group consisting of canvas, polyester, woven fabric, composite material and plastic coated cellulose.

4. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said flexible sheet member is symmetrical with respect to a central axis and has a top view shape selected from the group consisting of a circle, an oval, a rectangle and a polygon.

5. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said flexible sheet member includes a center closure component at said orifice for tightening said flexible sheet member about said elongated top center member of a said patio umbrella, said closure component being selected from the group consisting of elastic, pull cord, zipper, pin and snap.

6. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said connection means is selected from the group consisting of clips, snaps, buttons, clasps and male and female hook and loop fasteners.

7. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 6 wherein said connection means is at least partially hidden by a decoration presentation.

8. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said connection means is selected from the group consisting of spring clips and tie down cords.

9. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said flexible sheet member includes at least one representation of a theme selected from the group consisting of holidays, holy days, religious ceremonies, personal events and nature themes.

10. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said flexible sheet member includes at least one representation of a theme selected from the group consisting of sports, seasons, children's interests, business interests and artist decorations.

11. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said connection means are glow-in-the-dark connection means.

12. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said slipcover includes decorative attachments.

13. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said slipcover includes three-dimensional appliques.

14. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 1 wherein said connection means are light up connection means with batteries.

15. A patio umbrella and decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover, which comprises:

(a.) a patio umbrella having a centerpost, ribs, a fabric area connected to sail ribs, and an elongated top center member extending above said fabric area; and,

(b.) a flexible, water resistant, air tight sheet member having a top view of footprint area of a patio umbrella and having a center orifice adapted to permit an elongated top center member of said patio umbrella to pass therethrough; and,

(c.) connection means for removably affixing said flexible sheet member atop said patio umbrella.

16. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 15 wherein said flexible sheet member is selected from the group consisting of plastic, synthetic blend, cloth, natural fiber and coated paper.

17. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 15 wherein said flexible sheet member is selected from the group consisting of canvas, polyester, woven fabric, composite material and plastic coated cellulose.

18. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 15 wherein said flexible sheet member is symmetrical with respect to a central axis and has a top view shape selected from the group consisting of a circle, an oval, a rectangle and a polygon.

19. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 15 wherein said flexible sheet member includes a central closure component at said orifice for tightening said flexible sheet member about said elongated top center member of a said patio umbrella, said closure component being selected from the group consisting of elastic, pull cord, zipper, pin and snap.

20. The decorative theme patio umbrella slipcover of claim 11 wherein said connection means is selected from the group consisting of clips, snaps, buttons, clasps, male and female hook and loop fasteners, spring clips and tie down cords.

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