Sept. 27, 1966 C. F. HUTCHEON 3,275,274

MERCHANDISE DISPLAY CARD AND CLIP THEREFOR

Filed Oct. 5, 1965

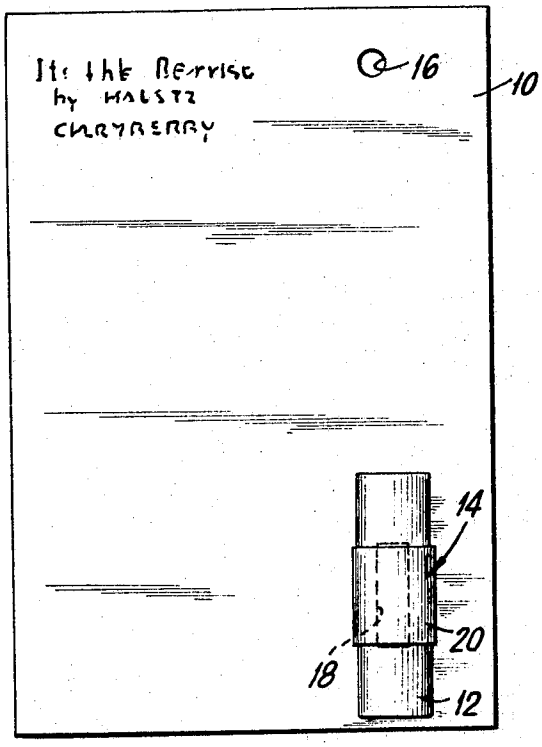
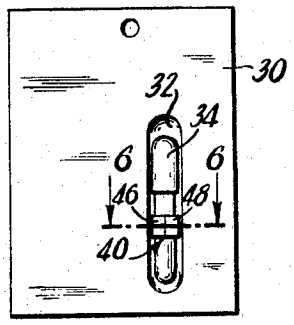


FIG. 1

FIG. 5



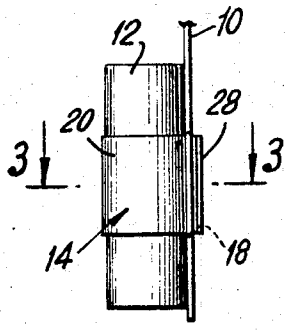


FIG. 2

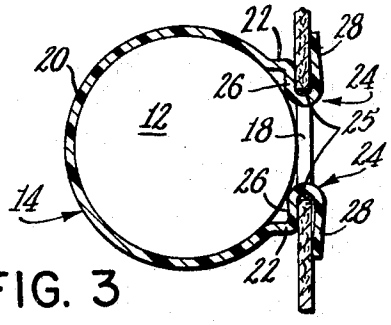


FIG. 3

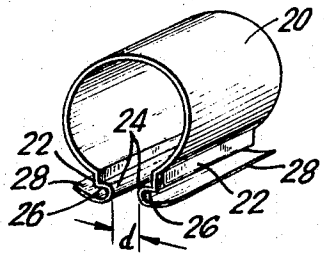


FIG. 4

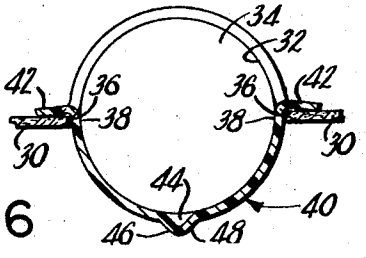


FIG. 6

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MERCHANDISE DISPLAY CARD AND CLIP THEREFOR

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This invention relates to means for supporting an article to be displayed and more particularly to both an improved clip member and to the combination of an improved clip member and an article supporting member.

A major difficulty in the present use of resilient clip members to retain a piece of merchandise on a display card is that the slot in which the clip ends are disposed is not uniformly produced. Steel rule dies are usually used in die cutting the slot in such cards. When a multiple die is used, the several slots so produced frequently have different width dimensions. Even a small difference in the width of the slot tends to make the clip fit loosely enough so that the inherent resiliency of the clip cannot be fully utilized. Therefore, the merchandise will not be securely retained.

In the present invention, an improved merchandise display card is provided because differences in the slot dimensions between cards are compensated for by means of at least one extra convolution provided on the article gripping portion of a resilient clip. The extra spring action obtained by the additional material assures easier packaging of the item and, more importantly, provides a positive grip regardless of the inevitable dimensional variations in the width of the slot.

The improved clip, which may be extruded from a thermoplastic such as cellulose acetate, polypropylene, cellulose aceto-butyrate, etc., has a first article-gripping portion which substantially conforms in shape to the article itself. A second card-gripping portion is comprised of a pair of members arranged to grip the sides of the slot and also to overlay the rear surface of the card. At least one pair of angular or bent legs, which provides a small additional length of material, is integrally formed with the article gripping portion. The inclusion of the angular legs permits the slot-gripping portion to yield slightly with respect to the article-holding portion. The configuration of the legs, in one embodiment at least, also assures that the article is firmly seated on the card without misalignment.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide an improved resilient clip for releasably retaining an article supporting member.

An object of this invention is to provide an improved article display card.

It is another object to provide a clip having increased holding ability.

A further object is to provide an improved clip of the aforementioned type having means for compensating for variations in slot width.

It is an additional object to provide a clip member having at least one additional expandable length of material arranged to compensate for variations in the width of the slot in the article supporting member.

An additional object is to provide an improved resilient clip that straddles both surfaces of the card and which additionally grips the edges of the card slot.

Yet another object is to provide an improved clip having at least one flat portion arranged to seat squarely on the card surface.

It is another object to provide a resilient clip having an article-gripping portion conforming in shape to the shape of the article.

Still another object is to provide a clip as aforementioned that is unobtrusive and which does not detract from the merchandise.

These and other features, objects and advantages of the invention will, in part, be pointed out with particularity and will, in part, become obvious from the following more detailed description of the invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing which forms an integral part thereof.

In the various figures of the drawing, like reference characters designate like parts.

In the drawing:

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of a merchandise display card and article and a clip holding the article to the card;

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary side elevational view of the combination shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged sectional plan view taken along line 3—3 of FIG.2;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the improved clip comprising the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary front elevational view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention; and

FIG. 6 is an enlarged, sectional plan view taken along line 6—6 of FIG. 5.

Referring now to FIGS. 1, 2 and 3 in the first embodiment of the present invention, a display card **10** having the usual advertising information imprinted thereon is shown with the article **12** secured to the front face thereof by means of clip **14**. A first off-center aperture **16** is provided towards the top of the card so that several of the cards may be hung and displayed on a hook. Preferably, the aperture **16** is placed at the center-of-gravity of the loaded card. A second aperture **18** receives the ends of the clip.

The construction of the clip, which advantageously is a clear, extruded plastic, is best illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4. A circular portion **20** conforming, in the particular embodiment illustrated, to the shape and size of the article being displayed, covers an arc of approximately 300 degrees. Legs **22** depend outwardly from the ends of the arc in a plane substantially perpendicular to the plane of the card and terminate in a pair of members **24** adapted to grip the wall of the slot in the card. Stated another way, legs **22** are, in the embodiment illustrated, perpendicular to a theoretical chordal line of the circular article-holding member or body portion **20**. A concave portion **25** of the gripping members, which may be arcuate, engages the side walls of slot **18** while a first flat section **26**, which is substantially at right angles to legs **22**, overlays the front face of the card. The opposite end of the arcuate portion **25** is in the form of a flange **28** which overlays the rear face of the card.

The space *"d"* (FIG. 4) between opposed arcuate portions **25** is dimensioned such that it is slightly smaller than the width of the slot in the card, taking into account normal tolerances and errors in the steel rule cutting die. To assemble the clip, the legs **22** are forced towards each other and the flanges **28** slipped into the slot so that they overlay the rearward face of the card with the edges of the slot disposed in the arcuate portions **25**. The inherent resiliency of the clip material will cause legs **22** to separate until the arcuate portions **25** engage the side walls of the slot. With the article placed in the circular body portion **20** of the clip and tangentially touching the card, a frictional fit between the merchandise and the clip and between the clip and the card is provided.

As may best be seen on a greatly enlarged scale in FIG. 3, a pair of triangular areas are defined by each leg **22**, leg **26**, and a theoretical line tangential to the article. The angularly disposed legs, which act as a gusset, are integral with the body portion of the clip and

provide a small additional length of resilient material. The term gusset as used herein defines an expandable member. Because of the angular relationship of the two legs and the article, the triangular area may flatten out and in effect, stretch, or it may develop a shorter base (the theoretical tangent line) and, in effect, contract, depending upon the width dimension of the slot. Thus, while the article is firmly held by the arcuate portion of the clip, the variable area of the triangular members will change in accordance with the width dimension of the slot.

While two gussets are shown unobtrusively positioned behind the article, it should be clearly understood that this is primarily for purposes of illustration. It is also within the scope of the present invention to provide a single gusset. Where appearance is not a primary consideration, the gusset may be placed almost anywhere on the article-holding portion including the front-facing surface thereof. It will be similarly understood that while the legs of the gusset are shown at right angles to each other, the invention is not necessarily limited to this configuration since other angles could be provided and, in fact, the gusset could be arcuate.

It should be noted that first section **26** overlays the front face of the card. This provides an improved, more attractive display card because the merchandise cannot be twisted or skewed. A degree of gripping action is also provided by the action of members **26** and **28** against the card therebetween.

While the article-gripping portion of the clip has been shown to be a portion of a circle, it is to be understood that this showing is for illustrative purposes only. Portion **20** would of course be shaped and dimensioned to conform to whatever article is being displayed.

FIG. 5 and FIG 6 illustrate an alternative form of the present invention. Therein the article supporting member **30** is provided with a recess **32** to receive, for example, a pen **34**. Slot **36** extends substantially fully across the the recess and accommodates the slot wall gripping portions **38** of clip member **40**. Flanges **42** extending from portions **40** are disposed behind member **30**. FIG. 6 clearly shows a single triangular area **44** defined by a theoretical line tangential to the periphery of the pen and legs **46** and **48** integral with the article gripping portion of the clip. Only one gusset, defined by legs **46** and **48**, is shown in this embodiment, although it is apparent that two or more gussets could also be included if the need arises.

The present invention affords a very low cost and efficient clip member that may be extruded from an attractive plastic material. Increased holding power is presented so that the effect of the advertising message on the card is not diminished. Of particular importance is the fact that the clip portion of the present invention compensates for variation in the slot dimension resulting from normal manufacturing processes, such as the tolerance between the various sections of a multiple steel rule cutting die.

It is to be noted that by the use of the improved clip member disclosed hereinabove, an improved and more attractive display card is provided. Thus the combination of a display card and an improved clip member for an article of merchandise forms a part of the present invention.

It is to be further noted that the reference to a merchandise display card is not intended to limit the invention thereto. The improved clip may readily be used on and in combination with almost any slotted merchandise display surface such as a wallboard, grill, etc. The clip may also be used on and in combination with a slotted display surface having a recess conforming at least partially to the general shape of the article.

There has been disclosed heretofore the best embodiments of the invention presently contemplated and it is to be understood that various changes and modifications

may be made by those skilled in the are without departing from the spirit of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An improved resilient clip for holding an article on a slotted support member, said clip comprising:
- (A) an article-holding member including a body portion sized and shaped to closely envelop at least a portion of an article, said body portion having first and second ends and a longitudinal axis;
- (B) a gripping portion integral with each of said body portion ends; and
- (C) at least one expandable gusset integral with said body portion intermediate the ends thereof and extending substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of said body portion.

2. The device in accordance with claim **1** wherein a gusset is included integral with each end of said body portion.

3. The device in accordance with claim **1** wherein said body portion is substantially circular and covers an arc of approximately 300 degrees.

4. The device in accordance with claim **1** wherein said gusset is comprised of a pair of elongated surfaces joined to each other along a common edge to thereby define a hinge.

5. An improved article support comprising, in combination:
- (I) an article support member having a slot formed therein; and
- (II) a resilient clip having a portion thereof removably positioned in the slot of said support member, said clip comprising:
  - (A) an article-holding member including a body portion sized and shaped to closely envelop at least a portion of an article, said body portion having first and second ends and a longitudinal axis;
  - (B) a gripping portion integral with each of said body portion ends; and
  - (C) at least one expandable gusset integral with said body portion intermediate the ends thereof and extending substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of said body portion.

6. The device in accordance with claim **5** wherein a gusset is included integral with each end of said body portion.

7. The device in accordance with claim **5** wherein said body portion is substantially circular and covers an arc of approximately 300 degrees.

8. The device in accordance with claim **5** wherein said gusset is comprised of a pair of elongated surfaces joined to each other along a common edge to thereby define a hinge.

9. An improved resilient clip for holding an article on a slotted article support member, said clip comprising:
- (A) an article-holding portion having first and second ends, said holding portion being sized and shaped to closely envelop at least a portion of an article to be displayed;
- (B) a leg member extending from each of said first and second ends of said holding portion; and
- (C) a gripping portion integral with each of said leg members, said gripping portions each comprising:
  - (a) a first section integral with each of said leg members, said first sections, in the assembled condition, adapted to be disposed in overlaying relationship on the front surface of an article support member, said first section, said leg member and a theoretical line substantially tangential to an article defining, in combination, a triangular area having a variable length base,
  - (b) an arcuate portion integral with each of said first sections, said arcuate portions being spaced from each other and disposed in oppositely facing directions whereby, in the assembled condi-

tion, said arcuate portions are urged against two opposed slot walls, and

(c) a second section integral with each of said arcuate portions, said second sections, in the assembled condition, being disposed behind the support member in overlaying relationship to the rear surface thereof.

10. The device in accordance with claim **9** wherein said holding portion is substantially circular and covers an arc of approximately 300 degrees.

11. The device in accordance with claim **9** wherein said leg members are substantially parallel to each other and perpendicular to the plane of the article support member surface in the assembled condition.

12. An improved article display comprising, in combination:

(I) an article support member having a slot formed therein; and

(II) a resilient clip having a portion thereof removably positioned in the slot of said article support member, said clip comprising:

(A) an article-holding portion having first and second ends, said holding portion being sized and shaped to closely envelop at least a portion of an article to be displayed;

(B) a leg member extending from each of said first and second ends of said holding portion; and

(C) a gripping portion integral with each of said leg members, said gripping portions each comprising:

(a) a first section integral with each of said leg members, said first sections, in the assembled condition, adapted to be disposed in overlaying relationship on the front surface of said support member, said first section, said leg member and a theoretical line

tangential to an article defining, in combination, a triangular area having a variable length base,

(b) an arcuate portion integral with each of said first sections, said arcuate portions being spaced from each other and disposed in oppositely facing directions whereby, in the assembled condition, said arcuate portions are urged against two opposed slot walls in said support member, and

(c) a second section integral with each of said arcuate portions, said second sections, in the assembled condition, being disposed behind said support member in overlaying relationship to the rear surface thereof.

13. The device in accordance with claim **12** wherein said holding portion is substantially circular and covers an arc of approximately 300 degrees.

14. The device in accordance with claim **12** wherein said leg members are substantially parallel to each other and perpendicular to the plane of said support member surface in the assembled condition.

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