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(54) T-SHIRT HANDLING DEVICE

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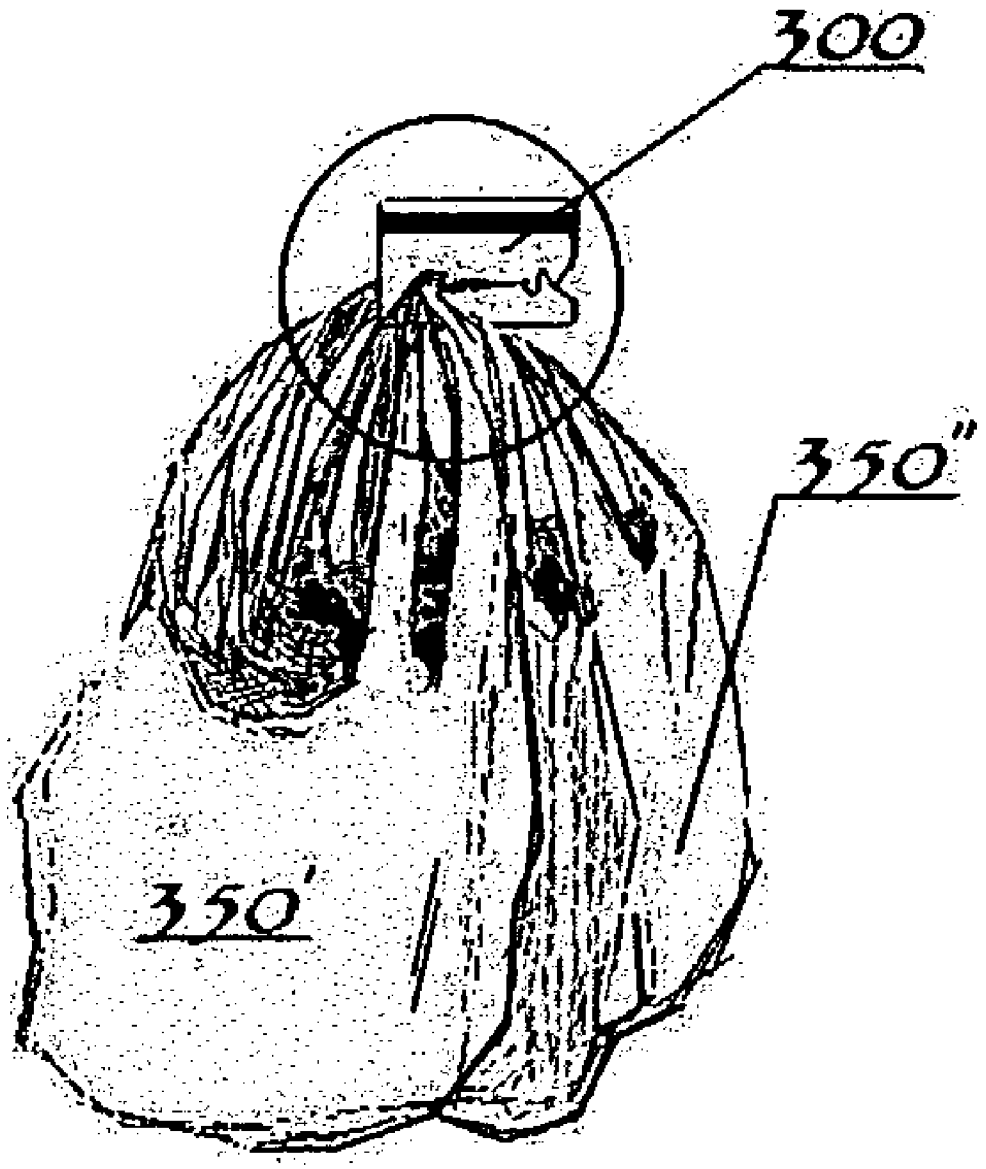
(57) ABSTRACT

A card shaped device for securing, storing and moving a plurality of T-shirt bags has a series of interconnected apertures such that multiple pairs of T-shirt bag are collected by their handles inserted at the edge of the card via a slit or cut that extends from the obverse face to the reverse face of the card. The slit and apertures are located on the card so as not to interfere with printing or machine-readable indicia disposed on other regions of the card.



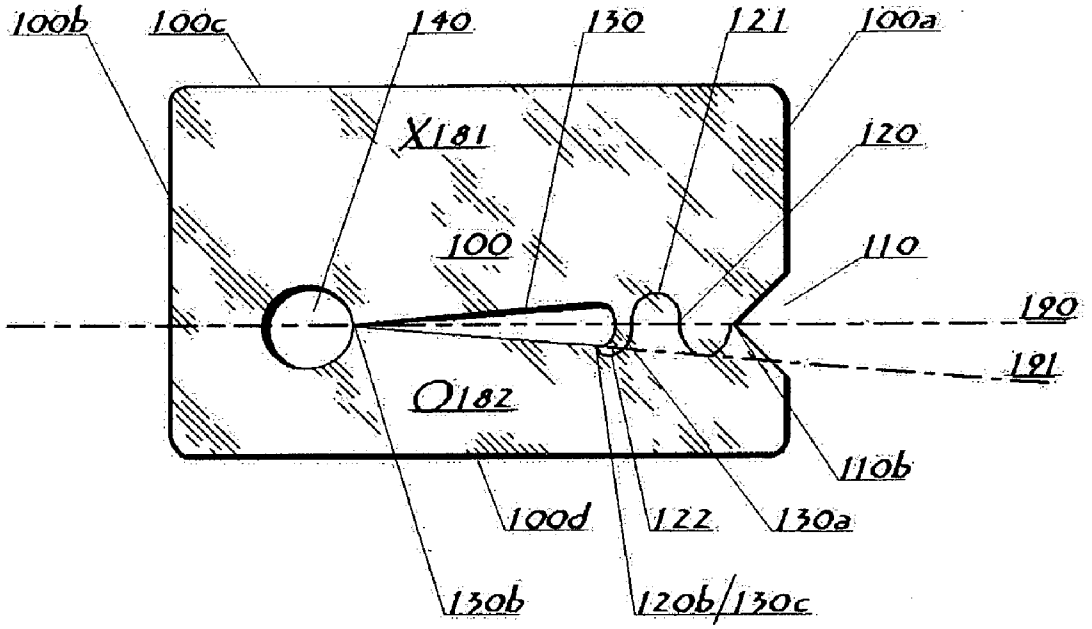

100b
100c
140
130
121
100a
X181
120
100
110
190
191
O182
110b
100d
122
130a
130b
120b/130c

Fig # 1A

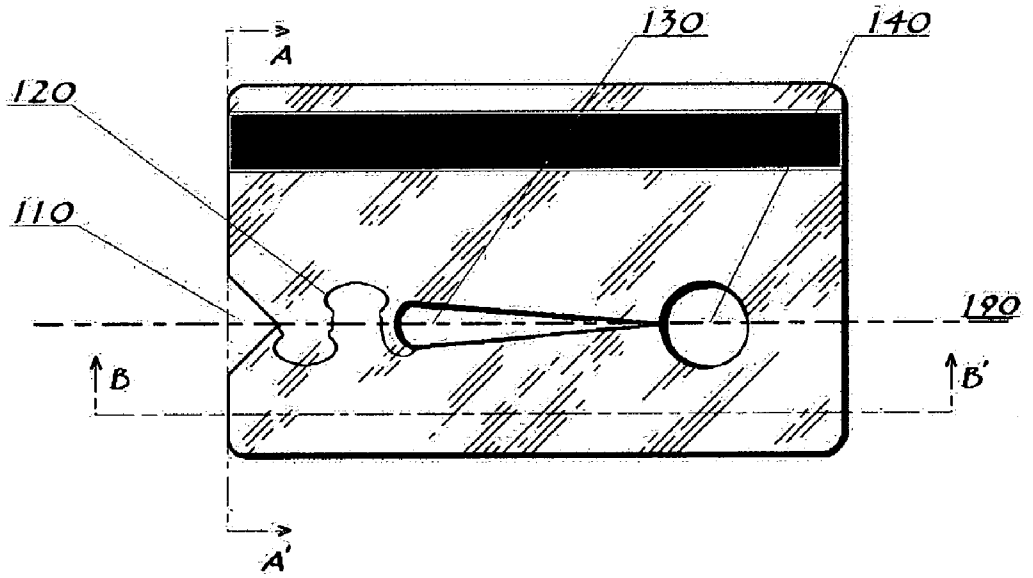

130
140
A
120
110
190
B
B'
A'

Fig # 1B

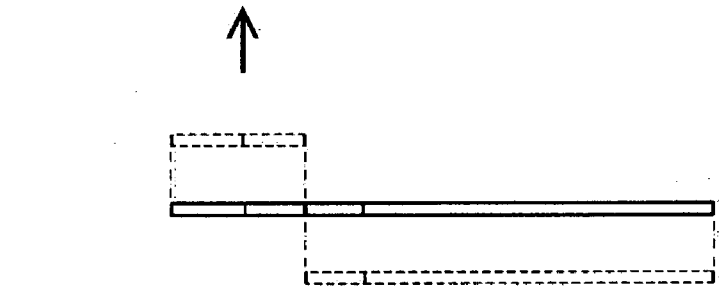


FIG # 2A

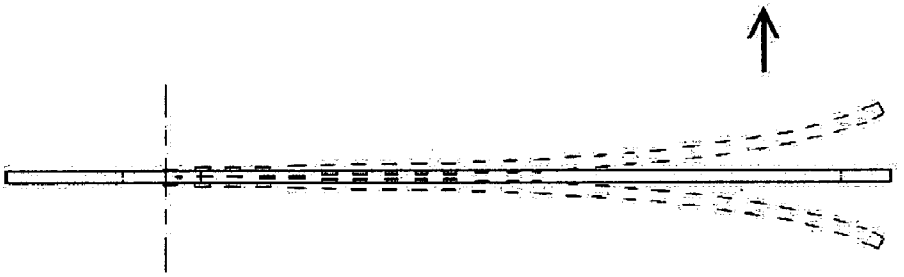


FIG # 2B

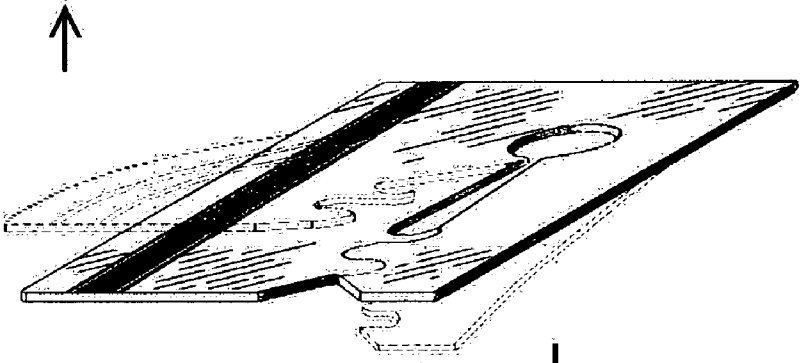
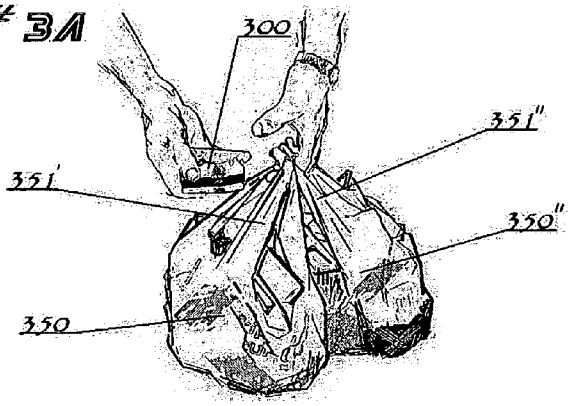


FIG # 2C

Fig # 3A



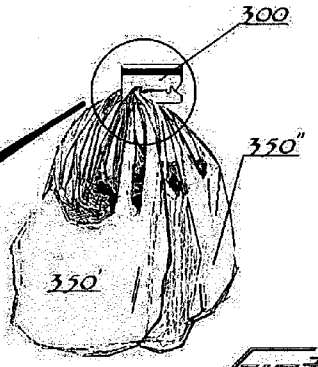
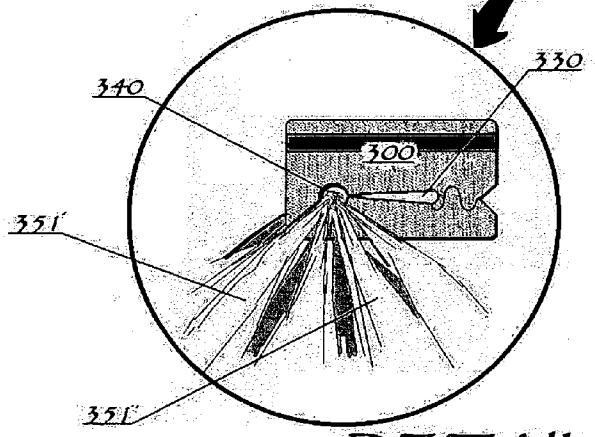




Fig # 3B

Fig # 3D




DETAIL

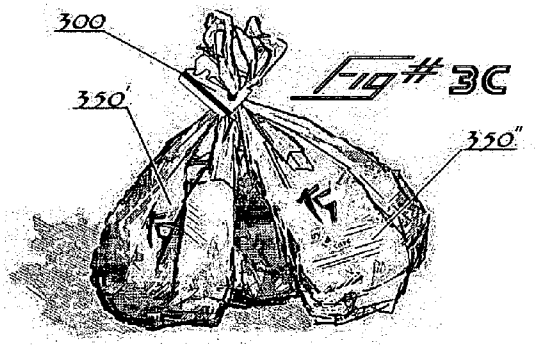
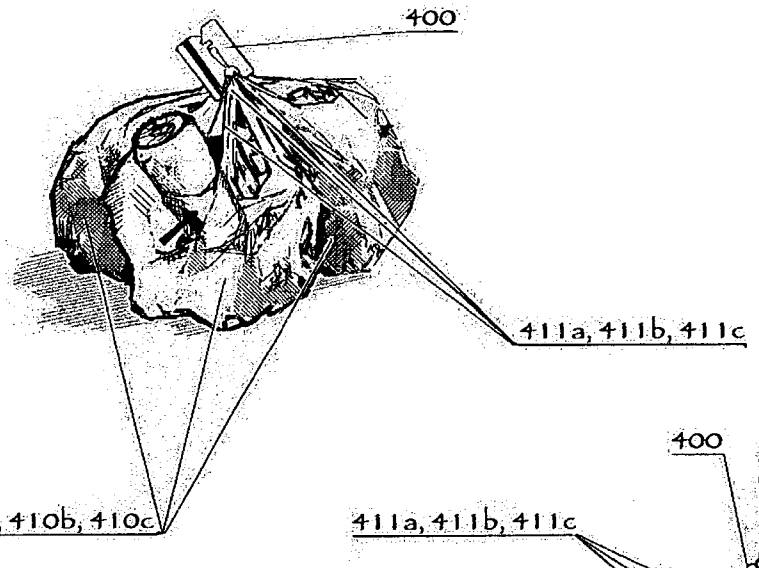



Fig # 3C

Fig #4A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411a, 411b, 411c
410a, 410b, 410c

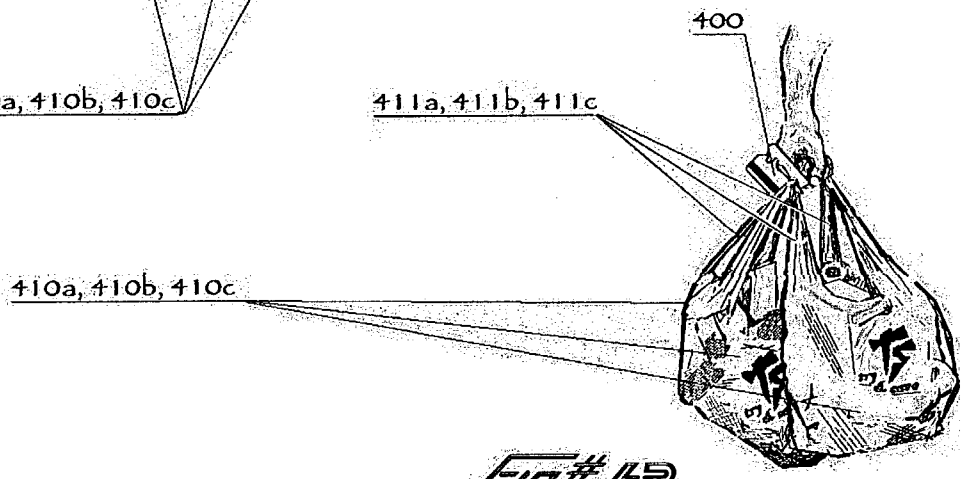
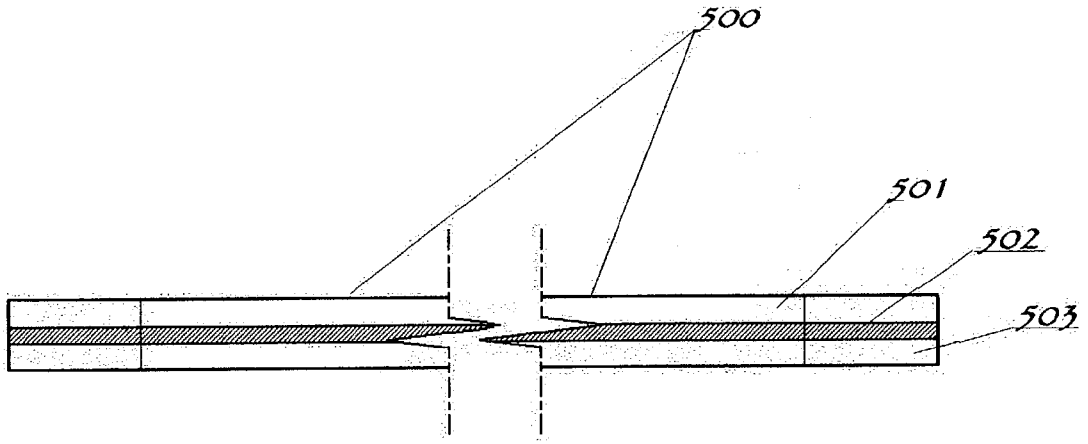

400
411a, 411b, 411c
410a, 410b, 410c

Fig #4B




Fig# 5

Fig # 6A

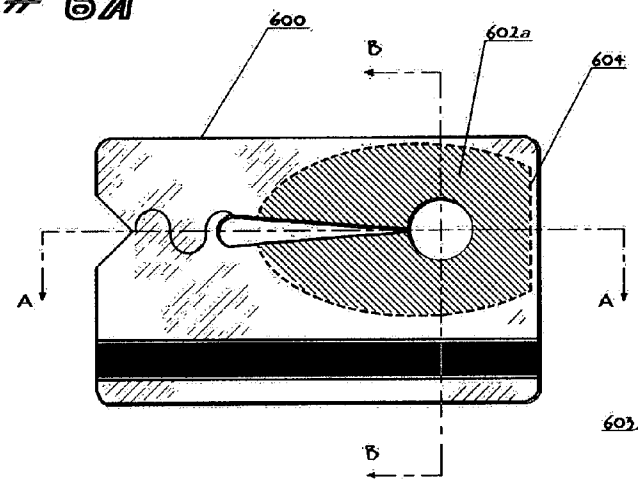



Fig # 6C

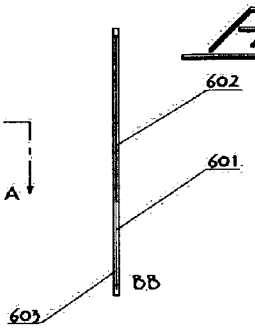
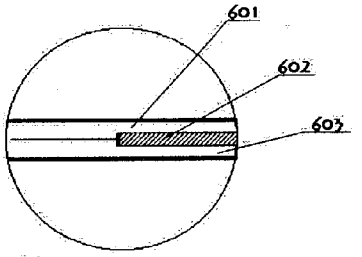




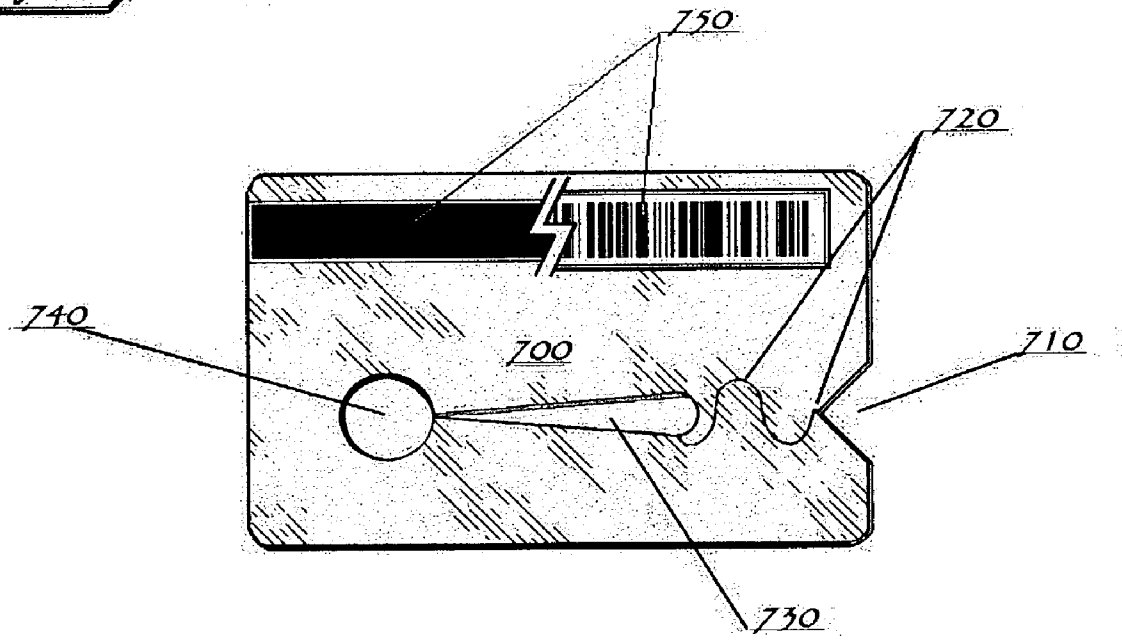
Fig # 6B




DETAIL

Fig # 6D

FIG # 7



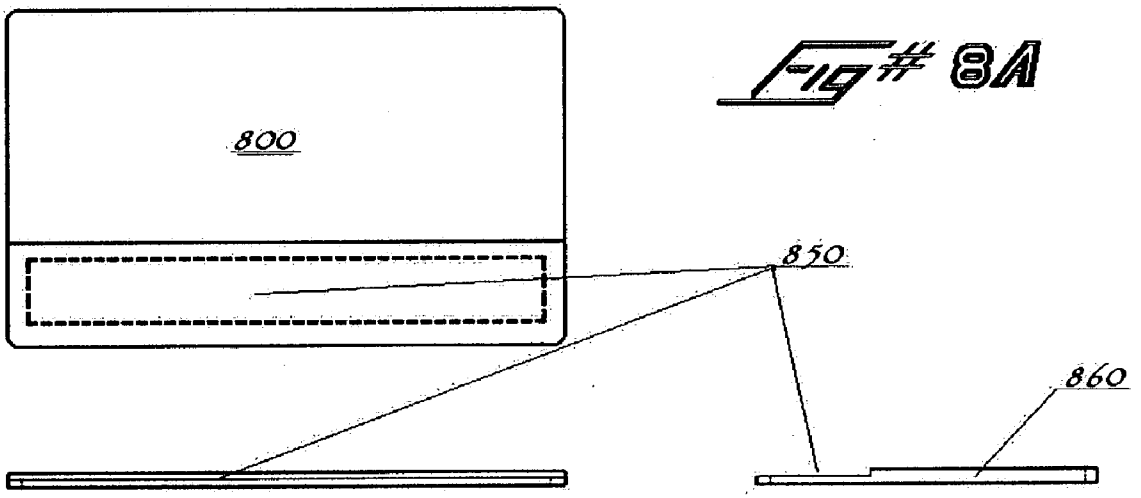



FIG # 8A

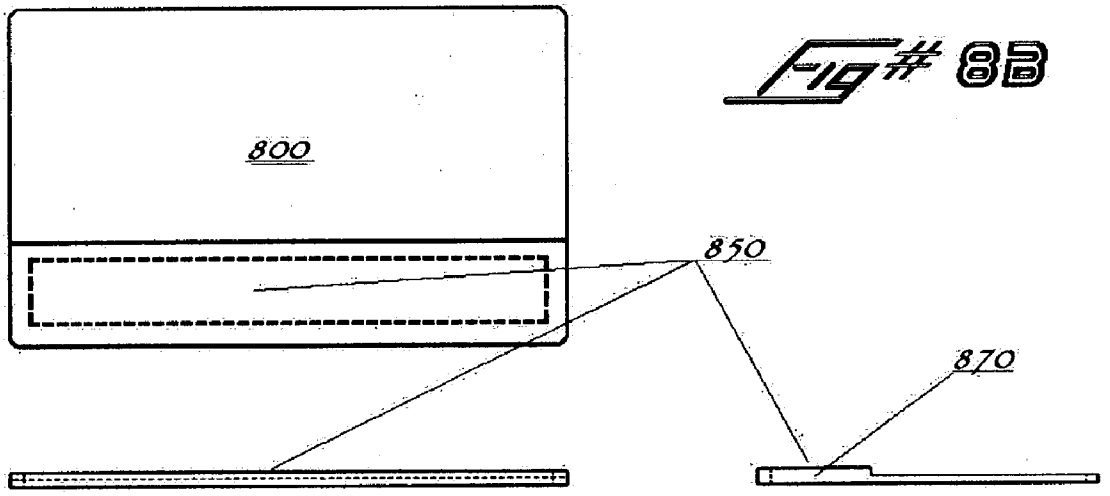



FIG # 8B

FIG # 9A

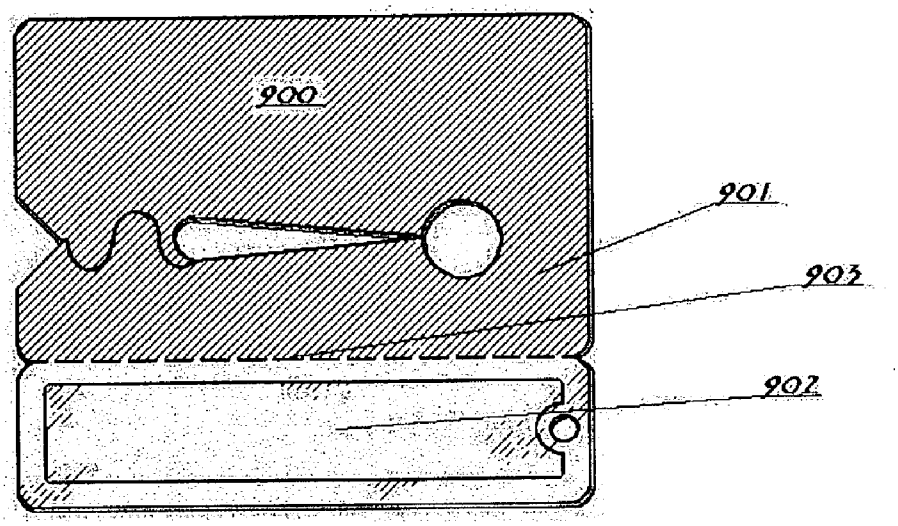
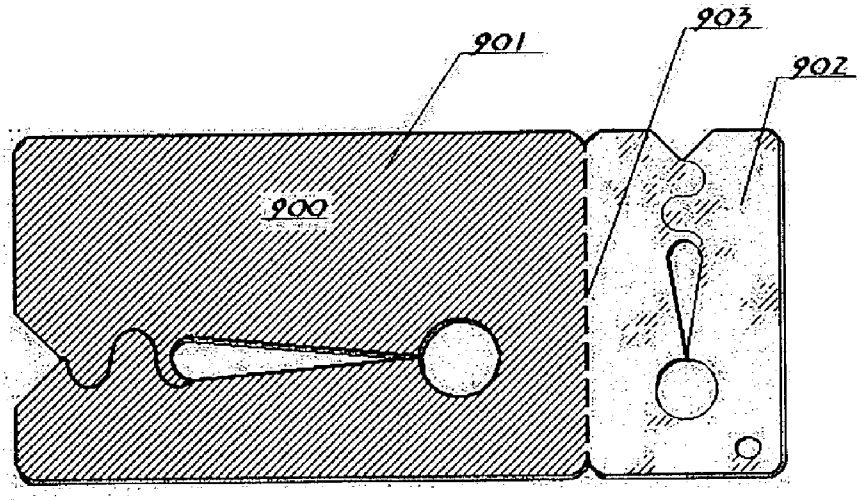



FIG # 9B



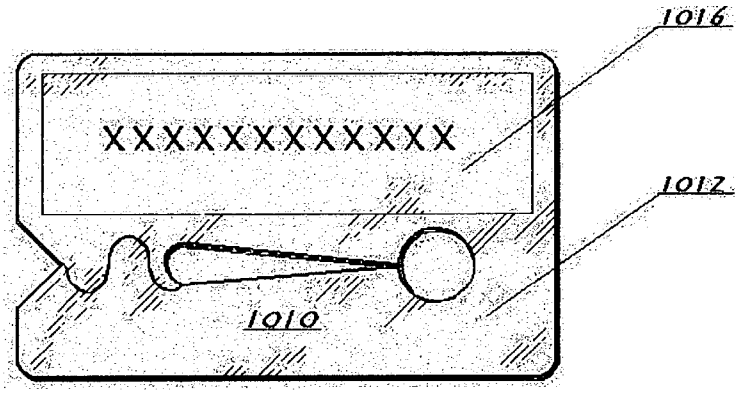



FIG # 10A

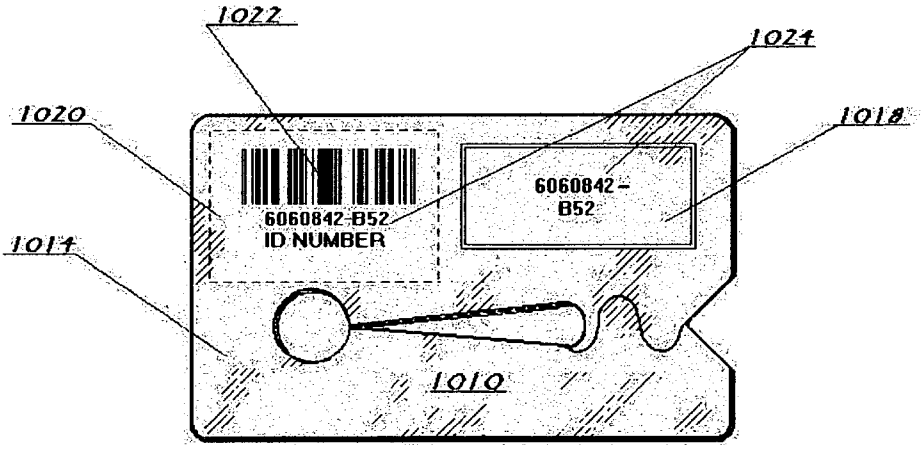



FIG # 10B

# T-SHIRT HANDLING DEVICE

## CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] None

## BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0002] The present invention generally relates to bag closures, and more particularly to a new and improved closure for T-shirt bags commonly used to collect and hold groceries and other merchandise at the point of sale.

[0003] A T-shirt bag includes a bag portion that serves as a container and two loops of flexible material forming straps and extending from the bag portion so as to serve as handles. So configured, the T-shirt bag reminds us of a conventional tank top shirt or undershirt, the bag portion corresponding to the body of the shirt and the loops corresponding to the shoulder straps. We commonly use T-shirt bags made of a strong, thin, plastic material such as polyethylene for carrying such items as groceries, and we do this by simply grasping the uppermost portions of the two loops or handles in one hand.

[0004] Grasping the uppermost portions of the two handles in one hand tends to partially close the top of the bag portion, thereby making it less likely that the contents will fall out. But before the handles are grasped in this manner, and after they are released, the top of the bag portion can remain open so that the contents can more readily fall out or be accessible or viewable when we desire otherwise. While there are various methods and devices that keep the top of the bag portion closed when the handles are not being held, they do not facilitate the carrying of a multiplicity of bags.

[0005] Although various bag closures exist for securing the top or neck of a conventional plastic bag of the type that has no handles, these closures have certain drawbacks when used with a T-shirt bag. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 3,822,441 to Paxton describes a plastic clip that measures one-inch square. Composed of a flat, springy, plastic material, the clip defines an internal bag-neck-confining aperture and a narrow opening in an edge of the clip that provides access to the aperture. The narrow opening divides the clip into a pair of flexible jaws, and the opening is configured to define two inwardly extending bag-neck-trapping tongues.

[0006] In order to apply a closure such as the Paxton clip to the neck of a plastic bag, the bag neck is twisted or bunched in the hand and applied forcibly through the narrow opening into the bag-neck-confining opening. But doing this to a T-shirt bag can intertwine the handles so that they are not easily grasped. Furthermore, placing the top of the bag portion in the clip completely closes the top, while a partial closing may be all that we desire due to the bulk of the T-shirt bag contents.

[0007] Also T-shirt bags are flexible and can flop over, move or open while they are being transported, such that conventional closures are not generally effective in preventing this unwanted motion without twisting and intertwining the bag handles together.

[0008] Several patents disclose devices or clips in the form of planar articles having a central opening connected to the edge by a narrower entry region or opening. For example the edge opening disclosed in U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,760,624 and 4,644,610 to Fish is an interlocking zig-zag shaped slit. It is selectively opened by flexing or twisting the clip out of plane. In U.S. Pat. No. 5,852,851 to Cooper the aperture is connected to the edge of the clip by an elongated slot. In U.S. Pat. No. 4,896,366 to Oxman the clip is more complex, having a pair of openings locked at opposing sides of the clip, each with a separate narrow opening connected to the adjacent edge of the clip. Additionally, each opening is shaped to receive and isolate a segment of straps that comprise the two T-shirt bag handles. Although these clips incorporate a central opening and a narrow entry region, they have limited utility when the objective is to sequentially close and secure the handles of a plurality of bags, the benefits of which are disclosed with respect to the method of using various embodiments of the instant invention.

[0009] Consequently, it is desirable to have a new and improved closure or device that facilitates the closure, asportation and secure stowage of a plurality of T-shirt bags.

[0010] It is therefore a first object of the present invention to provide the device and methods for closing T-shirt bags.

[0011] Yet another object of the invention is to provide a closure device in a physical format that is convenient and desirable to carry.

[0012] It is yet another object of the invention to provide a device and method to facilitate the grasping of multiple T-shirt bags by all of their handles to preclude the unintended opening, falling and spillage of the bag contents.

[0013] Another object of the invention is to provide a device and methods that enable pliable T-shirt bags to become self-supporting, thus maintaining their contents in a substantially upright position, particularly when exposed to external forces and/or motion within a vehicle.

## SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0014] The aforementioned objectives and other benefits accruing from the invention are accomplished by configuring a semi flexible rectangular sheet with a substantially circular aperture in functional communication with the edge of the card. The circular aperture provides an accumulator region for gathering and holding one or more T-shirt bag handle pairs that are inserted through an access port at the edge of the card.

[0015] The objective of providing a means to gather and secure a plurality of T-shirt bag handles for grasping is achieved by offsetting the indentation that defines the access port to one side of the card sufficiently distal from the circular aperture such that flexure of the card readily opens a jaw region that connects the access port indentation to the circular aperture. The closable jaw region is connected to the circular aperture by a second elongated aperture that is narrower than the diameter of the circular aperture. The second elongated aperture allows for the secure confinement of multiple bag handles within the device while additional bag handles are being inserted, thus ensuring that all the T-shirt bag handles are ultimately gathered in close proximity such that they can be readily grasped with a single hand.

[0016] The elongated aperture preferably tapers in width from the side nearest the access port towards the circular

aperture such that the T-shirt bag handles are compressed before entering the circular aperture. Accordingly, the objective of securing multiple bag handles is achieved such that the subsequent expansion of the handles within the circular aperture prevents them from reentering the elongated aperture.

[0017] In an alternative embodiment, the device may further comprise a laminated or selectively reinforced region to provide additional durability from mechanical fatigue resulting from continued use of the device.

[0018] In yet another embodiment the device also comprises printed or machine-readable indicia disposed on one or more faces.

[0019] In a preferred embodiment the machine-readable indicia is a magnetic stripe or bar code type symbol pattern disposed along the long side of the card and disposed offset from the centerline opposite from the side having the access port.

[0020] The above and other objects, effects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description of the embodiments thereof taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0021] **FIGS. 1A and 1B** are plan views of the obverse and reverse faces of the inventive card closing device in the closed configuration.

[0022] **FIGS. 2A, 2B**, and 2C respectively illustrate elevations of orthogonal sections A-A' and B-B' (from **FIG. 1B**) and an isometric view of the device with dashed lines representing the open configuration.

[0023] **FIGS. 3A, 3B**, 3C and 3D are isometric schematics illustrating the steps of inserting T-shirt bag handles within the device to gather one or more bags such that the corresponding assembly of T-shirt bags become self-supporting.

[0024] **FIG. 4A and B** are isometric schematics illustrating a method of using the device to gather T-shirt bag handles and lift the assembly of T-shirt bags off the floor.

[0025] **FIG. 5** is an elevation in cross-section illustrating an alternative embodiment of the device having a laminate construction.

[0026] **FIG. 6A** is a plan view of an alternative laminate construction showing the location of orthogonal elevation cross-section AA' **(FIG. 6B)** and BB' **(FIG. 6C)** detailing a selected region of elevation AA' in **FIG. 6D**.

[0027] **FIG. 7** is a plan view illustrating a preferred location for identification indicia with respect to operative features formed in the sheet.

[0028] **FIGS. 8A and 8B** are elevations in cross-section illustrating alternative embodiments of the card wherein the thickness of the sheet is non-uniform, having been modified to accommodate the durability and readability requirements of the indicia.

[0029] **FIGS. 9A and 9B** illustrate an alternative embodiment of the card having one or more detachable segments.

[0030] **FIGS. 10A and 10B** illustrate an alternative embodiment of the card having one or more detachable labels.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0031] This invention relates to a conveniently rectangular and compact device comparable in size and shape to a credit card with specific features useful for closing, moving and securing a plurality of T-shirt bags.

[0032] In accordance with the present invention the inventive device is a sheet of material in the form of a substantially rectangular shape as illustrated in **FIGS. 1A and 1B**. As the sheet can be constructed from a wide variety of flexible or semi-rigid materials the thickness can vary, but is generally within the range of about 20 to 60 mils (0.020 to 0.060 inches). The material and thickness are preferably selected, taking into account the series of interconnected cutouts or apertures, so as to provide sufficient flexibility to permit a user to selectively open the sheet with moderate force, and thus insert or remove one or more T-shirt bag handles. The interconnected apertures access the edge of the card via a slit or cut that extends from the front face of the card to the rear face. The apertures and the connecting slit are configured with respect to the exterior dimensions of the card to enable yet a further embodiment. Specifically, a method for securing a plurality of T-shirt bags by their handles for secure storage and/or transportation in an upright position.

[0033] The rectangular device **100** in **FIG. 1A** may be either formed or die cut from a larger sheet to create the following regions: an access port **110**, a jaw region **120**, a throat region **130** and an accumulator region **140**. The access port region **110** is disposed on the short edge of the card such that the jaw region **120**, and accumulator region **140** are linearly disposed with respect to the long sides **100***c* and **100***d* of device **100**.

[0034] Access port region **110** is preferably formed by providing an indentation on the first short edge **100***a* of the card in the shape of the letter U or V with the open side of the letter at the edge of the card and the apex of the letter connected to the jaw region **120**. Thus the access port region **110** terminates at an apex corresponding to bottom of the letter shape at the first or proximal side of the jaw region **120**.

[0035] The access port **110** is formed by means common to the art, such as lancing, blanking, or molding. By the lancing process, the main body is sharply pierced to form a slit so that the lanced edges do not form a space or opening along the slit. By the blanking process, the main body is sharply pierced to form a narrow opening at the slit. The molding process forms a narrow opening slit formed in the main body

[0036] Jaw region **120** is characterized by a continuous serpentine pattern of cuts or perforations extending from the obverse face to the reverse face of the card. The serpentine path of the jaw region **120** oscillates about an imaginary line (dashed line **190**) connecting the apex **110***b* of the access port and the opening of the throat region **130***c*. The serpentine path penetrates between about ¼ to ⅓ of the card length into the card, as measured along the dashed line **190**, such that the distal end **120***b* of jaw region **120** terminates at the first or proximal end **130***a* of the throat region **130**.

[0037] Preferably the jaw region **120** is not an aperture within the planar sheet, but rather the loci for separating the planar sheet as it is readily fabricated as a slit or cut that extends from the obverse face to the reverse face of the card. The slit or cut that defines the jaw region **120** terminates in an aperture opening defining the throat region **130**.

[0038] The throat region **130** is a slot aperture having generally linear sides that extend to a distal end **130***b* connecting with a substantially circular aperture that forms the accumulator region **140**. Throat aperture **130** continues to extend along the imaginary line **190** terminating in the accumulator region **140**. The sides of slot aperture preferably taper inward toward the distal end **130***b* of throat region **130** such that the slot width narrows before opening again in the wider aperture that defines accumulator region **140**.

[0039] The accumulator region **140** is defined by a substantially circular aperture that has a diameter greater than that of the throat aperture **130** taken in direction parallel to the short side of the card, which is perpendicular to the imaginary line **190**.

[0040] The width, or diameter, of the accumulator region **140** is substantially larger than the maximum width of the throat region. However, the length of the throat region is comparable in size, and preferably longer than the accumulator region's **140** width or diameter.

[0041] During operation of the device shown in **FIG. 1**, an object to be closed or held is pushed through the access port **110** until it is ultimately seated in the accumulator region **140**. The jaw region **120** and throat region **130** are selectively closed or opened to form a narrow passage from the edge of the sheet at access port **110** to the accumulator region **140**. As the sheet is semi-flexible the jaw region **120** can spread apart to allow the object to be pushed through the access port to the accumulator **140**. The thickness, shape and flexibility of the inventive device depend on the desired closing or holding capability, as well as the intended T-shirt bag dimensions and materials of construction. Thus the sheet or card has an access port **110** that is formed or die cut into one of the sides of the rectangular card, as well as a jaw region **120**, a throat region **130** and an accumulator region **140**.

[0042] The linear array of apertures and slits described with respect to **FIG. 1** are preferably offset from the centerline of the sheet with the accumulator region **140** sufficiently distal from the opposing short edge **100***b* of the card **100** such that the article or device is substantially robust and will resist tearing or fracture during multiple flexure cycles, as described with respect to **FIG. 2**.

[0043] **FIG. 2A** is a plan view of section A-A' from **FIG. 1B** when the inventive device is deployed to receive one or more pairs of T-shirt bag handles. **FIG. 2B** is a plan view of orthogonal section B-B' from **FIG. 1B** illustrating the path by which the T-shirt bag handles are transferred from the outside of the device to the accumulator region **140**. Referring back to **FIG. 1**A, the device **100** is first deployed by applying generally opposing forces normal to the plane of the card or sheet on alternating side of the horizontal dashed line **190**, that is circa the region indicated by the mark X **181** or mark O **182**, flexing the alternating sides out of the plane to separate the internal vertical surfaces defining the jaw region as shown in an isometric view in **FIG. 2C** with dashed lines representing the open configuration. As the nominally closed jaw region **120** is readily opened with a single hand in this manner to provide a channel from the access port **110** to the accumulator region **140** the user can easily use the other hand to grasp together the two T-shirt bags handles and inserts them through the access port **110**, jaw region **120** into the throat region **130**, and finally into the accumulator region **140**. Accordingly, by repetition of this step with each pair of bag handles a plurality of bag handles are secured together within the accumulator region **140**.

[0044] **FIG. 1** shows a preferred embodiment for the jaw region **120**. The slit defining the interlocking segments is formed by a continuous curve or serpentine path such that the T-shirt bag handles encounter relatively smooth or otherwise curved surfaces, avoiding rough surfaces or sharp angles in either design or fabrication variances. Thus depending on i) sheet dimensions, ii) jaw opening width during flexure, and iii) T-shirt bag handle dimensions, an acceptable equivalents to the continuous curves of the serpentine slit might include a saw tooth, zigzag or square pattern of straight lines, or indeed a combination of lines and curves, much like the interlocking pieces of a jig saw puzzle. However, it should also be recognized that it is preferable that the jaw region path takes a jog or turn such that is traverses imaginary line **190** extending toward device side **100***b*, from one side of the slit aperture, at a position labeled **121**, to the opposite side of the slit aperture, at a position labeled **122**. Further, the traverse preferably occurs at a distance from the slit aperture comparable to the aperture width, with the jaw region path terminating by intersecting approximately tangent to the side of the slit aperture, that is along the dashed imaginary reference line **191**.

[0045] Accordingly, multiple T-shirt bag handles **351**' and **351**" can be secured together as shown in **FIG. 3A** (as detailed in **FIG. 3D**) such that one can lift bags **350**' and **350**" by simultaneously grasping handles **351**' and **351**" adjacent to the card device **300** in **FIG. 3B**.

[0046] Alternatively, as illustrated in **FIG. 3**C, rather than inserting the pair of handles together into the accumulator region, the inventive device can be used to close one or more bags by inserting each pair of handles through twice to leave a loop between the device and the upper or central portion of the handles. Thus, by grasping the handles with one hand, palm up from inside of the loop, while simultaneously pushing downward on device **100** with the other hand, the T-shirt bag is closed; the outer shape then conforming to the goods contained within.

[0047] Accordingly, as the preferred method of using the device is to secure and optionally close a plurality of T-shirt bags it should be appreciated that the throat region **330** permits the insertion of a sequence of T-shirt bag handles without interference from the handles previously inserted, as they are segregated within the accumulator region **340**.

[0048] Additionally the tapering of the throat region also contributes to the restraint of the bag handles within the accumulator region. Specifically, as the width of the throat region narrows prior to interconnection with the accumulator region the plastic handles readily fold, intertwine and then compress on translation into the accumulator region. Thus, as the handles can then expand once they reach the accumulator region, they cannot reenter the throat region without applying directed external force, that is when one

wishes to remove the device and either separate the bags or empty one or more of the bags.

[0049] Also, by commonly connecting a plurality of T-shirt bag handles by the aforementioned method the mutual friction between the bag handles themselves and the edges of the accumulator region provide sufficient restraining force so that the contents are held within the bag shape, and no longer determine it.

[0050] Turning to **FIG. 4A** another benefit of using the inventive device **400** to commonly connect a plurality of T-shirt bags **410***a, b* and *c* is illustrated. The simultaneous connection and closure of the bags urge their respective contents to a shape wherein the tension of the bag walls now provide support. Accordingly, the user of the device is readily able to hoist the plurality of bags as shown in **FIG. 4B** by gathering their now adjacent handles **411***a, b* and *c* and carry them from a first location, for instance the grocery store checkout counter, to a second location, such as the trunk of a car or back of a station wagon. Thus, after releasing the collection of bag handles **411***a, b* and *c* in a storage space within the vehicle, as the second location, their self-supporting configuration is maintained. The now self-supporting orientation in the vehicle reduces the likelihood that the contents will be disturbed, damaged or discharged while transported in the vehicle.

[0051] **FIG. 5** illustrates an additional embodiment of the invention wherein the sheet or card **500** has a laminate construction that provides for greater durability of the card. In this laminate the outer layers **501** and **503** can be constructed from plastic material, to provide flexibility, with the central layers **502** constructed of a stronger or more durable material, as will be further described with respect to **FIG. 6**, such that the device withstands multiple flexing cycles as described with respect to **FIG. 2**.

[0052] **FIG. 6** illustrates an alternative laminate embodiment for the construction of the device **600**. **FIG. 6A** shows the device in plan view and define the position of orthogonal sectional views AA' in **FIG. 6**B and BB' in **FIG. 6C**. **FIG. 6D** is a detail of outer layers **601** and **603** in elevated cross-section AA' in **FIG. 6B**. Similar to the construction in **FIG. 5**, outer layers **601** and **603** may comprise sheets, films or thin layers of plastic materials, however; only a portion **602***a* of central layer **602** need be constructed of a stronger or more durable material to provide reinforcement about the perimeter of the accumulator region subject to the highest strain in flexure. Thus in the plan view in **FIG. 6**A, region **602***a* is contained within the dashed line **604**. Thus region **602***a* is preferably constructed of a stronger plastic or a metal sheet, such as brass, bronze, aluminum, steel, copper-beryllium alloys, stainless steel and the like. A further advantage of this construction is that a material with a higher yield stress and modulus will either prevent or minimize the effect of excess flexing of the card, as strain exceeding the yield point of the sheet material would result in permanent distortion. Thus in selecting the material for region **602***a* both the modulus of elasticity and yield strength should be taken in account with respect to the same properties for the materials that form layers **601** and **603**.

[0053] In a most preferred embodiment the inventive card has substantially the same rectangular dimensions as a conventional credit card and also carries a magnetic and/or written indicia indicating the code or identity of the user or possessor. These features make the card particularly attractive to stores and other merchandising establishments as a transaction card, which are used to track the purchase patterns of customers and/or provide discounts or special services. Although such cards are routinely distributed for discount purposes, their lack of additional functionality discourages many customers from routinely bringing them on shopping expeditions. Accordingly, by combining the features of identification, attractive to the merchant, and ease of closing, carrying and storing merchandise, that are attractive to the consumer, the inventive device is more likely to be obtained by consumers and actually brought with them to shopping establishments. This permits the merchant in turn to achieve a wider distribution of their card, and thus more completely track the purchasing activities of customers.

[0054] Yet additional embodiments may include various forms of printed indicia on the obverse and/or reverse faces of the card; which might include promotional materials identifying the provider or merchant (associated with the machine-readable information provided on another portion of the card), written or diagrammatic instructions on safe use of the card, as well as proper disposal or return of the bags or the device itself for recycling.

[0055] Accordingly, **FIGS. 7, 8, 9** and **10** provide further embodiments of the invention wherein the design, materials, construction and fabrication of the card may be adapted to most fully enable the dual consumer and merchant uses described above.

[0056] **FIG. 7** illustrates another embodiment of the invention wherein the unique identifying feature **750** is provided on one or both faces of the card **700**, but offset from the access port **710**, jaw region **720**, throat region **730** and accumulator region **740** so that identifying feature **750** remains intact from multiple flexures of the device, as well as being substantially rigid for compatibility with machine scanners or readers.

[0057] **FIG. 8***a* illustrates another embodiment of the invention wherein at least some portion of the card **800** is provided with indicia **850** and is thinner than the remainder of the card **800**. This configuration is preferred when necessary to maintain compatibility with a conventional machine for reading the indicia, such as a magnetic strip reader having a narrower slot than the thicker region **860** of card **800**.

[0058] **FIG. 8B** illustrates another embodiment of the invention wherein some portion **870** of the card **800** having the indicia is thicker than the remainder of the card, and thus sufficiently rigid to maintain the planarity required for machine reading of the indicia **850**. It should be appreciated by one of ordinary skill in the art that the embodiments of **FIGS. 7 and 8** are not exclusive of the laminate constructions illustrated with respect to **FIGS. 5 and 6**. A range of laminate or monolithic construction can be combined with selective thickness variations so as to adjust the strength or thickness of different portions of the card according to the intended end use.

[0059] **FIGS. 9A and 9B** illustrate other embodiments wherein the sheet has at least one detachable portion that provide other useful benefits. For example in **FIG. 9A** device **900**, a first portion **901** is configured according to the teachings of the invention; a second portion **902** is detach-

able from portion **901** via a scored or partially perforated line **903**. Thus portion **902** can contain a removable and reusable label, redemption coupon and the like, for use in a transaction control system, promotional system or redemption system as taught in U.S. Pat. No. 5,531,482 to Blank.

[**0060**] Alternatively, as shown in **FIG. 9**B, portion **902** can be a convenient novelty item, such as a key ring holder, or small T-shirt bag closure card or clip, and the like.

[**0061**] **FIGS. 10A and 10B** illustrate yet another alternative embodiment showing obverse face **1012** and reverse face **1014** of card shaped sheet device **1010** for use as a transaction card. Either or both of obverse face **1012** and reverse face **1014** of the card may be printed with static promotional graphic fields or personalized graphic fields. Following the teachings of Blank, there is also provided a removable and reusable label **1018** affixed to the reverse face **1014** of sheet device **1010**. Either face of the card can be supplied with at least one label **1018** affixed to the card, wherein the label has two major planar sides, a first side suitable for printing with indicia thereon and a second side coated with an adhesive layer suitable for affixing to the card and for removal from the card without leaving a residue on the card. The label **1018** can be made of paper, plastic or other material. In **FIG. 10**A, there is printed on the obverse face **1012** of the transaction card **1010** an identification field **1016**. The depicted identification field is used to identify a promoter offering such card. Letters, numbers, and other symbols are suitable for use in identifying the promoter. In addition, either planar side of the card may be printed with static graphic fields or personalized. However, it is contemplated by the present invention that the label can be affixed to either planar side of the transaction card, or multiple labels can be affixed to either or both sides of the card.

[**0062**] **FIG. 10B** illustrates the reverse face of the transaction card according to the present invention. In **FIG. 10B** there is printed on the reverse face **1014** a registration field **1020**. The registration field **1020** may include an alphanumeric registration number **1024** and a bar code number **1022** for automatic scanning of the registration field. The removable and reusable label includes two major planar opposing sides. In **FIG. 10B** a first side of the removable and reusable label is optionally printed with registration indicia corresponding to that printed in the registration field **1020** of the transaction card. However, it is also contemplated by the present invention that the label may be printed with indicia which is visibly different than that printed in the registration field of the transaction card. For example, either the card or label may include bar codes, alphanumeric numbers, letters, symbols, check digits and the like. The second side of the label is coated with a reusable adhesive and affixed to the card and may be removed without leaving residue on the card. However, it is contemplated by the present invention that the registration field may be printed on either face of the transaction card or both.

[**0063**] While the invention has been described in connection with a preferred embodiment, it is not intended to limit the scope of the invention to the particular form set forth, but on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

**1**. A closing or holding device comprising:

a) a substantially rectangular planar sheet, said sheet comprising;

b) an access port formed at an indentation on a first side of the sheet and terminating at an apex,

c) a slit through the surface of the sheet defining a jaw region, said slit having a proximal end connected to the apex of the access port wherein the slit oscillates about a direction defined by a line perpendicular to the first side of the sheet.

d) an elongated aperture slot defining a throat region extending substantially co-linear with an insertion direction defined by said slit, and having a proximal end connected to the distal end of said slit,

e) a substantially circular aperture defining an accumulator region connected to the distal end of said elongated aperture slot,

f) wherein flexure of the plane of the sheet separates the slit opening the jaw region to provide access to insert one or more straps from the outside of the device to the accumulator via the access port and throat region.

**2**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein the width of said elongated slot aperture decreases toward the distal end thereof.

**3**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein said slit follows a substantially serpentine path.

**4**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein said slit follows a series of interconnected linear paths.

**5**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein said slit follows a series of interconnected paths having right angle intersections.

**6**. A closing or holding device according to claim 3 wherein the serpentine path terminates via a tangent to the elongated slit.

**7**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein the circular aperture is offset from the centerline of the sheets long axis and a machine-readable indicia is disposed on the opposing side of the centerline offset there from.

**8**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein said indicia uniquely defines the identity of the intended possessor of the device.

**9**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 further comprising written or symbolic indicia.

**10**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein said planar sheet has a laminate construction in at least a part of a cross section therethrough.

**11**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein said planar sheet has a laminate construction that provides reinforcement to a portion of the sheet proximal to said circular aperture.

**12**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 having a planar region of a first thickness and second planar region thicker than the first thickness.

**13**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 having a planar region of a first thickness and second planar region thicker than the first thickness having machine readable indicia selectively disposed on the first planar region.

**14**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 having a first planar region of a first area and second planar region of a second area, wherein the second area is greater than the first area and the first and second region are readily separable along at least a partial channel on one or more faces of the device thus defining the border between the first planar region and the second planar region.

**15**. A closing or holding device according to claim 9 further comprising a removable adhesive label disposed on at least one of the first side and second side.

**16**. A method of using a planar holding device, the method comprising:

a) flexing a planar sheet to open a passage from the edge of the sheet at slit extending to first linear aperture formed in the face of the sheet,

b) inserting at least a first pair of handle straps of a first T-shirt bag through the passage into the first linear aperture,

c) inserting the first pair of handle straps through the elongated aperture into a substantially circular aperture,

d) inserting at least a second pair of handle straps of a second T-shirt bag through the passage into the first linear aperture,

e) inserting the second pair of handle straps through the elongated aperture into the substantially circular aperture such that the first and second handle straps are substantially adjacent,

f) lifting the first and second T-shirt bags by grasping the first and second pairs of handle straps adjacent to the holding device.

**17**. The method of using a planar holding device according to claim 16, the method further comprising drawing the straps upward through the circular aperture to substantially close the T-shirt bag opening around the contents held there within.

**18**. A closing or holding device according to claim 1 wherein the device has a width and length that are less than about 4 inches and greater than about 1.5 inches.

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