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(54) **JEWELRY ARTICLE HAVING A CODED MESSAGE**

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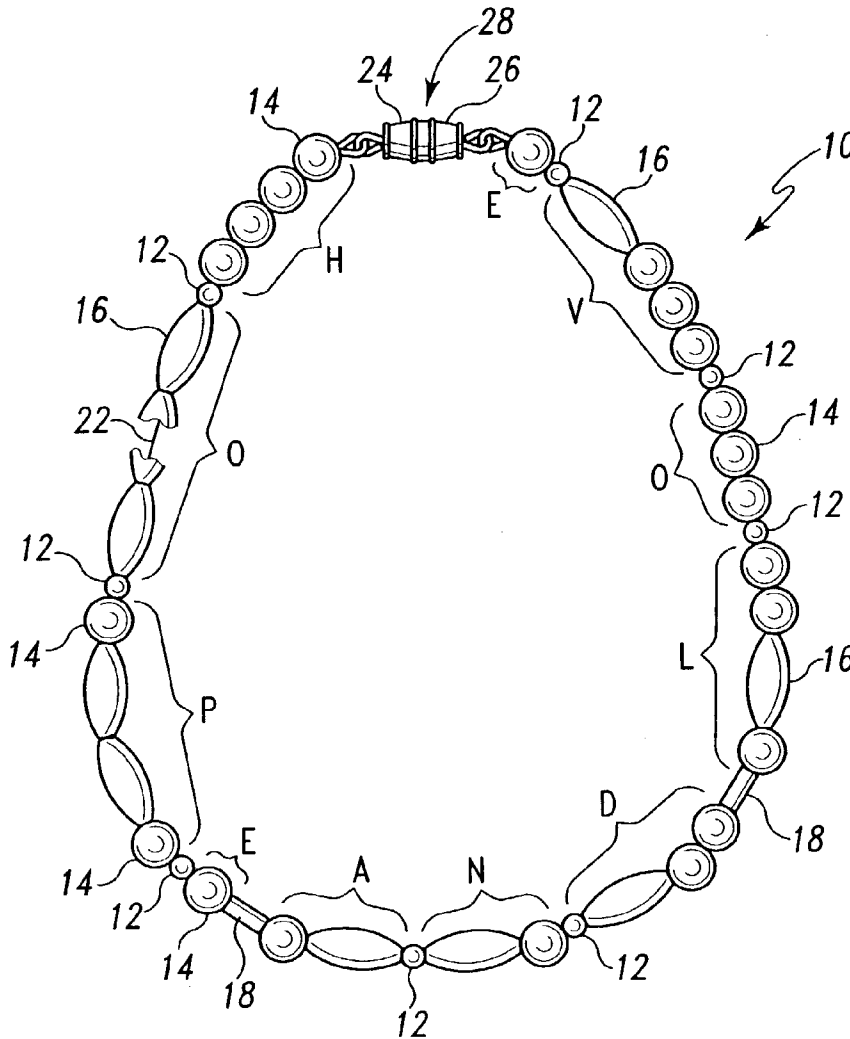
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A jewelry article includes a coded message.



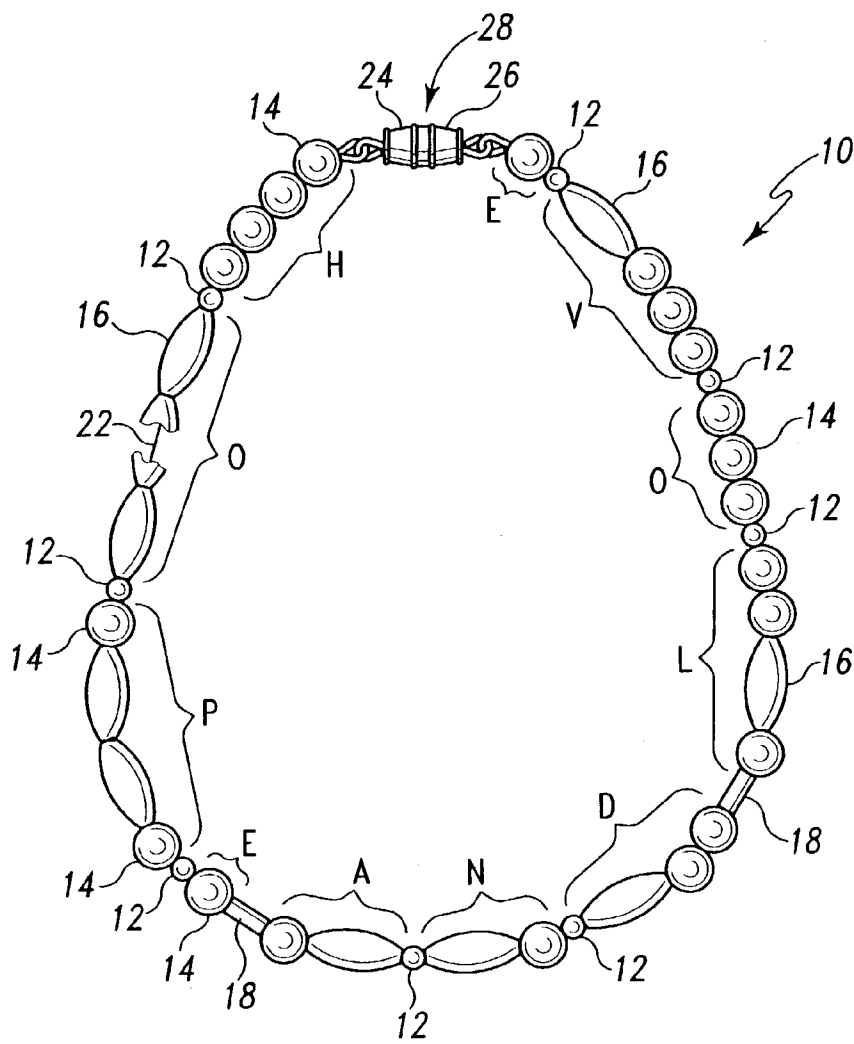
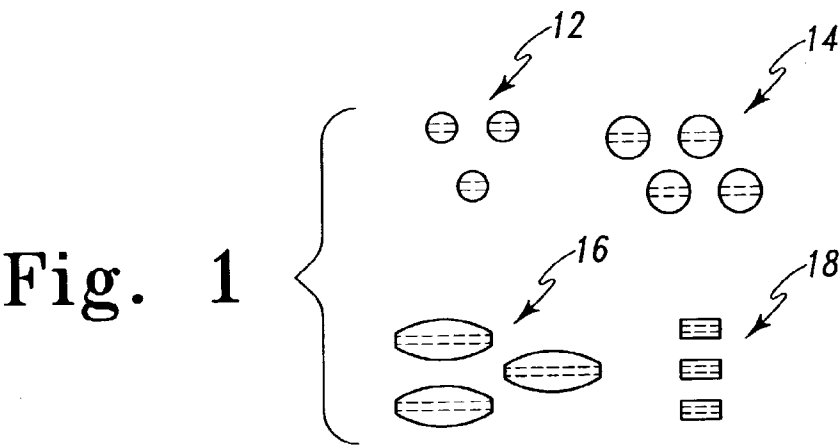


Fig. 2

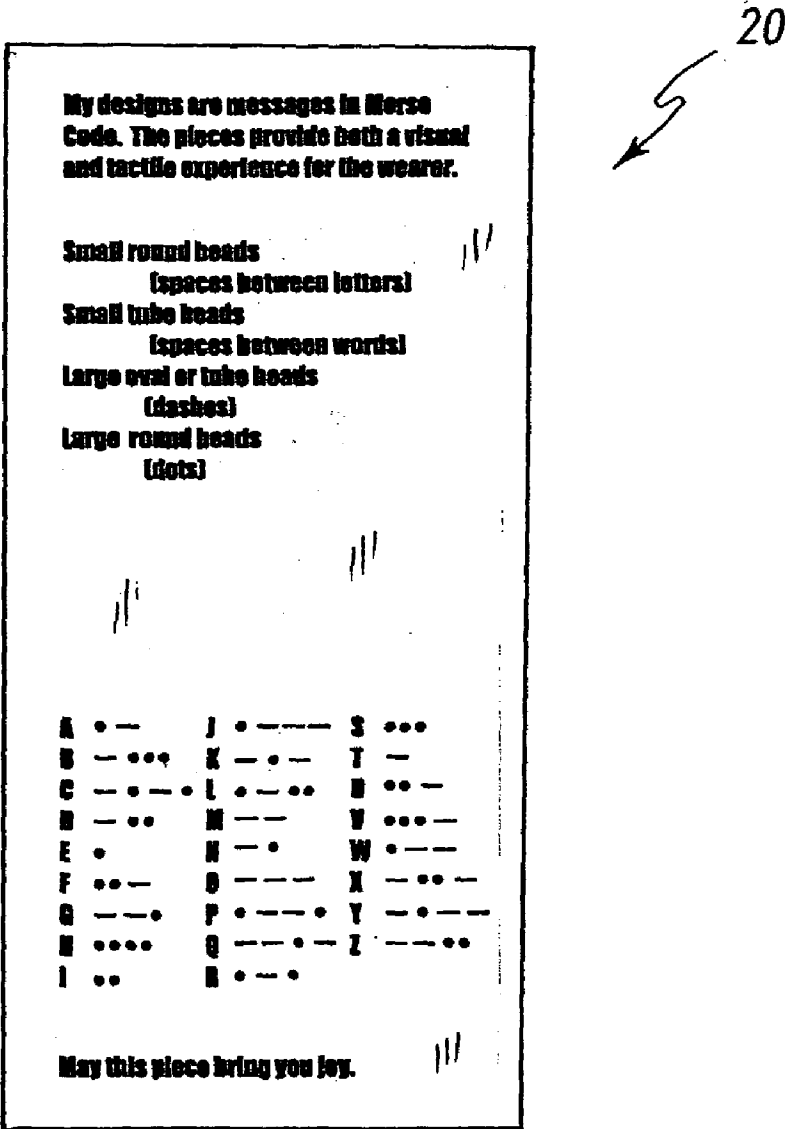


Fig. 3

JEWELRY ARTICLE HAVING A CODED MESSAGE

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/351,945, filed Jan. 24, 2002, which is expressly incorporated by reference herein.

[0002] The present invention relates to a jewelry article. More particularly, the present invention relates to a jewelry article having a coded message thereon.

[0003] It is well known to provide jewelry items that include a plurality of beads. Beaded jewelry has been present in all cultures throughout known history. The present invention provides a message in a predetermined code on a jewelry article and a kit for making such a jewelry article. The present invention provides a plurality of jewelry elements, such as beads, which provide symbols used in a secret writing on the jewelry article. Such symbols are given certain meanings based on the predetermined code.

[0004] In an illustrated embodiment of the invention, a jewelry kit is provided for making a jewelry article. The kit comprises a support structure, a plurality of first beads having a first shape representing dots in a Morse code sequence, a plurality of second beads having a second shape representing dashes in a Morse code sequence, a plurality of third beads having a third shape representing spaces between adjacent letters, a plurality of fourth beads having a fourth shape representing spaces between adjacent words, and an instruction sheet providing a key for the Morse code to permit the first, second, third, and fourth beads to be placed on the support structure in a predetermined sequence to provide a coded message thereon.

[0005] In another illustrated embodiment, a jewelry article comprises a support structure, a plurality of first elements having a first common characteristic, and a plurality of second elements having a second common characteristic different from the first common characteristic. The first and second elements are positioned on the support in a selected sequence based on a predefined code to provide a coded written message on the support structure.

[0006] Illustratively, the article further includes a key. The key identifies the code to permit the selected sequence of the first and second elements to be decoded.

[0007] In another illustrated embodiment, a method is provided for assembling an article of jewelry. The method comprises providing a plurality of elements having a plurality of different characteristics, providing a support structure, and providing an instruction sheet having a code based on the different elements. The code provides a predefined sequence of elements representing each letter of the alphabet. The method also comprises assembling a plurality of elements in a selected sequence using the instruction sheet as a reference to form an article of jewelry having a coded written message thereon.

[0008] Additional features of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon consideration of the following detailed description of the best mode of carrying out the invention as presently perceived.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] The detailed description particularly refers to the accompanying figures in which:

[0010] **FIG. 1** illustrates a plurality of components used to make an illustrated embodiment of a jewelry article of the present invention;

[0011] **FIG. 2** illustrates a jewelry article with a coded message made in accordance with an illustrated embodiment of the present invention; and

[0012] **FIG. 3** is an instruction sheet of the present invention providing a key for decoding the coded message on the jewelry article or for selecting beads to provide a coded message on a jewelry article.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0013] Referring now to the drawings, **FIG. 1** illustrates a plurality of components or elements used to make one embodiment of a jewelry article **10** of the present invention. Illustratively, a plurality of beads having different shapes and sizes are used to make a coded message on the jewelry article **10**. The plurality beads are placed on the article in a selected pattern corresponding to a predetermined code. In the illustrated embodiment, the beads represent letters which form words of the coded message on the jewelry article **10**. Illustratively, a plurality of small round beads **12**, a plurality of large round beads **14**, a plurality of large oval or tube-shaped beads **15**, and a plurality of small oval or tube-shaped beads **18** are provided.

[0014] The illustrated embodiment also includes an instruction sheet **20** shown in **FIG. 3** that provides a key for the code. In the illustrated embodiment, Morse code is used to provide the message. However, it is understood that other codes may be used in accordance with the present invention. In the Morse code embodiment, the small round beads **12** indicate spaces between adjacent letters. The large round beads **14** represent the "dots" or short sounds of the Morse code, and the large oval or tube-shaped beads **16** represent the "dashes" or long sounds of the Morse code. The small tube-shaped beads **18** represent spaces between adjacent words. In some codes, more than two different types of code characters or elements are used. Therefore, the present invention is not limited to only two different bead types **14** and **16** to define letters.

[0015] In the illustrated embodiment, beads are selected to provide desired letters of a message using Morse code as shown on sheet **20** in **FIG. 3**. Small round beads **12** are placed between each letter, and small tube-shaped beads **18** are spaced between each word. In the illustrated embodiment, beads are strung on a support structure **22** shown in **FIG. 2**. Opposite ends of the support structure **22** are coupled together by first and second portions **24** and **26** of a clasp **28** in a conventional manner.

[0016] It is understood that the support structure **22** may be made from any suitable structure such as wire, string, rope, leather, fabric strips, thread, rubber strands, or elastic. The beads **12**, **14**, **16** and **18** have distinctive shapes that represent the different elements of the code. The shapes are not limited to the specific shapes shown in **FIG. 1** and **2**. Beads may be made from any suitable type of materials

including glass, metal, clay, polymers, stone, bone, and natural substances such as nuts, seeds, wood, shells, plastic, paper, fabric or leather.

[0017] In one embodiment of the present invention, the jewelry articles **10** are pre-made and sold to purchasers with preselected messages. In another embodiment, jewelry kits are sold in which a plurality of beads **12**, **14**, **16**, **18**, a support structure **22**, and a clasp **28** are provided in a bag or other container along with an instruction sheet **20**. Therefore, the end user makes his or her own message on the jewelry article **10** in accordance with the key on instruction sheet **20**.

[0018] The visual appearance of the jewelry article **10** varies depending upon the selected message and the types of beads used. The wearer can keep his or her personal messages private, except to others who also know the code. Therefore, friends can exchange jewelry articles and provide each other with secret messages, if desired.

[0019] In an illustrated embodiment of **FIG. 2**, the jewelry article **10** is coded with the Morse code message "HOPE AND LOVE" in a counter-clockwise direction. See the Morse code key on sheet **20** in **FIG. 3** for the key to decode the letters in the message of **FIG. 2**. As shown in **FIG. 2**, the small round beads **12** separate each adjacent letter. The small tube-shaped beads **18** separate each adjacent word of the message. The jewelry article **10** may be any desired type of article including a necklace, bracelet, anklet, broach, or other accessory item.

[0020] Although the invention has been described in detail with reference to certain illustrated embodiments, variations and modifications exist within the scope and spirit of the present invention as described and defined in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A jewelry kit for making a jewelry article, the kit comprising:

- a support structure;
- a plurality of first beads having a first shape representing dots in a Morse code sequence;
- a plurality of second beads having a second shape representing dashes in a Morse code sequence;
- a plurality of third beads having a third shape representing spaces between adjacent letters;
- a plurality of fourth beads having a fourth shape representing spaces between adjacent words; and
- an instruction sheet providing a key for the Morse code to permit the first, second, third, and fourth beads to be placed on the support structure in a predetermined sequence to provide a coded message thereon.

2. The kit of claim 1, wherein the support structure is formed from one of a wire, a string, a rope, a piece of leather, a fabric strip, a thread, a rubber strand and an elastic material.

3. The kit of claim 1, wherein the first and second beads are formed from at least one of glass, metal, clay, polymer, stone, bone, nuts, seeds, wood, shells, plastic, paper, fabric and leather.

4. A jewelry article comprising:

- a support structure;
- a plurality of first elements having a first common characteristic; and
- a plurality of second elements having a second common characteristic different from the first common characteristic, the first and second elements being positioned on the support in a selected sequence based on a predefined code to provide a coded written message on the support structure.

5. The article of claim 4, further comprising a plurality of third elements having a common characteristic different from the first and second characteristics, the third elements representing spaces between portions of the coded written message.

6. The article of claim 5, wherein the plurality of third elements represent spaces between adjacent letters of the coded written message.

7. The article of claim 6, further comprising a plurality of fourth elements having a fourth common characteristic different from the first, second and third characteristics, the plurality of fourth elements representing spaces between adjacent words of the coded written message.

8. The article of claim 4, further comprising a key, the key identifying the code to permit the selected sequence of the first and second elements to be decoded.

9. The article of claim 8, wherein the key is an instruction sheet providing a predetermined sequence of first and second elements representing portions of the code.

10. The article of claim 8, wherein the key provides a predetermined sequence of first and second elements representing each letter of the alphabet.

11. The article of claim 4, wherein the plurality of first elements are a plurality of first beads having a first shape representing dots in a Morse code sequence, and the plurality of second elements are a plurality of second beads having a second shape representing dashes in a Morse code sequence.

12. The article of claim 4, wherein the support structure is formed from one of a wire, a string, a rope, a piece of leather, a fabric strip, a thread, a rubber strand and an elastic material.

13. The article of claim 4, wherein the first and second elements are formed from at least one of glass, metal, clay, polymer, stone, bone, nuts, seeds, wood, shells, plastic, paper, fabric and leather.

14. A method for assembling an article of jewelry comprising:

- providing a plurality of elements having a plurality of different characteristics;
- providing a support structure;
- providing an instruction sheet having a code based on the different elements, the code providing a predefined sequence of elements representing each letter of the alphabet; and

assembling a plurality of elements in a selected sequence using the instruction sheet as a reference to form an article of jewelry having a coded written message thereon.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the plurality of elements includes a first plurality of beads having a first shape representing a first symbol of the code and a plurality

of second beads having a second shape representing a second symbol of the code, the first shape being different from the second shape.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the plurality of elements further includes a plurality of third beads having a third shape representing spaces between adjacent letters in the coded written message, the third shape being different from the first and second shapes.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the plurality of elements includes a plurality of fourth beads having a fourth shape representing spaces between words in the coded written message, the fourth shape being different from the first second and third shapes.

18. The method of claim 14, wherein the support structure is formed from one of a wire, a string, a rope, a piece of leather, a fabric strip, a thread, a rubber strand and an elastic material.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein the plurality of elements are formed from at least one of glass, metal, clay, polymer, stone, bone, nuts, seeds, wood, shells, plastic, paper, fabric and leather.

20. The method of claim 14, wherein the code is Morse code.

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