United States Patent [19]

McManus

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[54] **EMERGENCY DATA BAND**

[75] Inventor: **Richard J. McManus,** Denver, Colo.

[73] Assignee: **Hi-Tor Inventions, Corporation,** San Antonio, Tex.

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **40/21 C**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **G09f 3/14**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 40/10, 21 C, 21, 18, 62; 224/4 E; 281/45, 15 B

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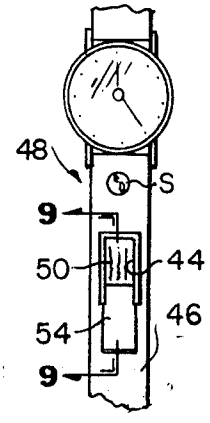
Primary Examiner—Robert W. Michell

Assistant Examiner—Wenceslao J. Contreras

[57] **ABSTRACT**

An emergency data band includes a flexible strap on which is provided compartment means having an opaque cover whereby information recorded on an information card within the compartment is normally unexposed. Various systems are disclosed for moving the opaque cover or information card to expose the information card when desired. An emergency data symbol may be provided on the strap adjacent the compartment means signifying that emergency information is recorded within the compartment means.

1 Claim, 13 Drawing Figures



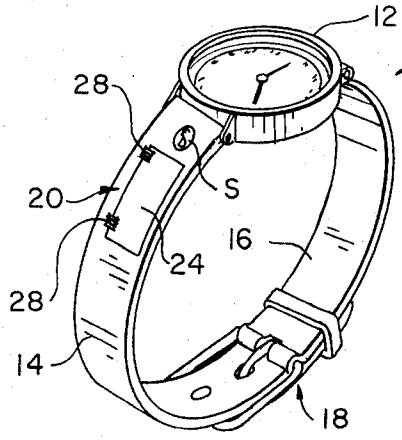


Fig_1

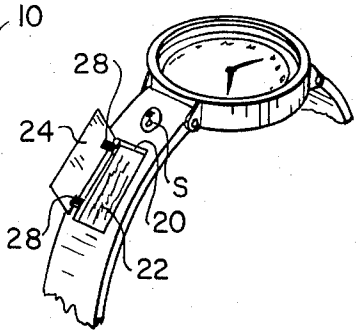


Fig_2

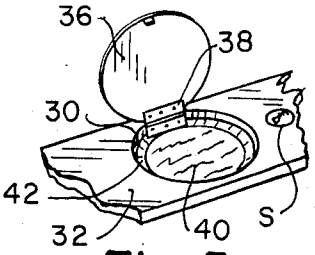


Fig_5

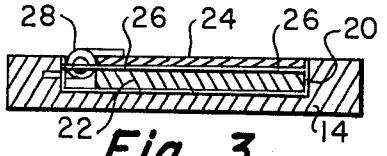


Fig_3

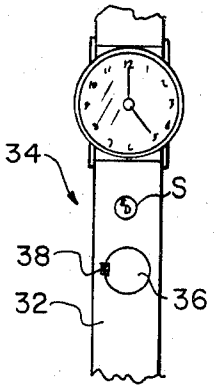


Fig_4

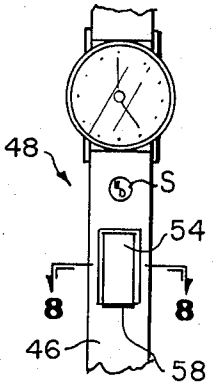


Fig_6

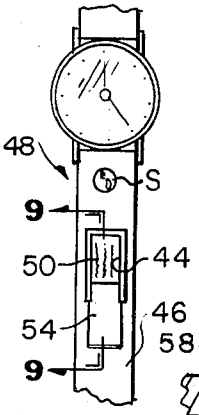


Fig_7

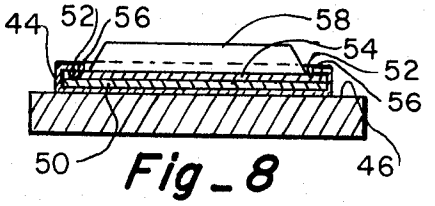


Fig_8

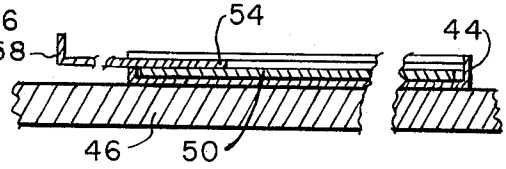


Fig_9

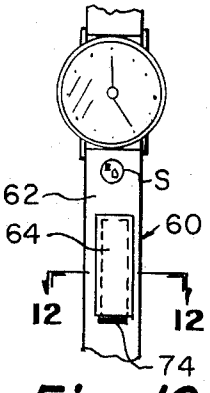


Fig_10

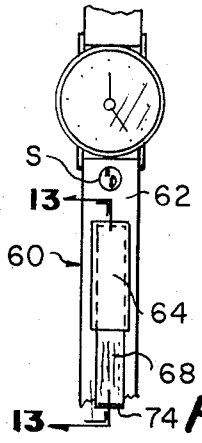


Fig_11

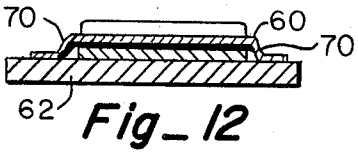


Fig_12

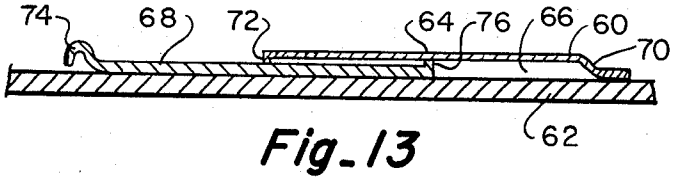


Fig_13

EMERGENCY DATA BAND

The present invention relates generally to bands or straps normally intended to be worn by a person and which includes means on which information may be recorded.

Currently, bracelets or necklaces having metallic information plates are used by individuals to record emergency medical or other personal information which the individual would like to make available to attending personnel in the event the individual is accidentally rendered unconscious whereby he cannot orally inform the attendant of the emergency information. Typical examples of such devices are the so-called "medic-alert" bracelets or necklaces on which medical information, such as for example, diseases, blood type, drug allergies, etc., relating to the individuals health are recorded. While these bracelets and necklaces have enjoyed considerable success as a means of informing attending personnel about an individuals health, they are not attractive in appearance, and are somewhat of a nuisance to the individual users inasmuch as they are accessories which most people do not normally wear and therefore must be worn in addition to accessories or jewelry normally worn.

The band structure of the present invention is designed so that it may satisfy normal utilitarian functions presently satisfied by other types of accessories or articles of dress and includes means for retaining recorded information, such as of the emergency medical type, in such a manner that the appearance of the accessory is not substantially altered. Another highly desirable feature of the invention is that since the information is carried on an accessory which is normally worn by most individuals, the use of additional bracelet or necklace accessories for carrying the emergency information are not necessary whereby individuals needing to have emergency information carried on their person at all times are not burdened with accessories in addition to those which are normally worn.

The invention finds a primary use as a watchband and includes a compartment in which an information card is releasably retained. The compartment is provided with an opaque cover so that normally the information recorded on the information card is unexposed but can be exposed by relative movement of the card or the opaque cover. In the embodiments described in detail hereinafter, various means are provided for exposing the information card so that information on the card can selectively be made accessible and so that the compartment is not distractive to the appearance of the watchband. As a means of signifying that important information is stored on the watchband, a symbolic emblem may be placed on the band adjacent the compartment whereby it will be apparent to attending personnel or other individuals that emergency information is recorded on the band.

Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide a band structure on which important information may be recorded without substantially effecting the appearance of the band.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a band structure suitable for accomplishing traditional utilitarian functions as an article of dress and including means for retaining important data in a manner such that the data is unexposed in a simple manner.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a watchband structure including compartment means for releasable retention of an information card and having an opaque cover which prevents viewing of the information card but which is selectively movable to expose the card.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide an emergency data watchband including a compartment in which an information card may be releasably retained and having an opaque cover to keep the information card out of view except when the information card is slid from beneath the opaque cover into a visible position.

Other objects, advantages and capabilities of the present invention will become more apparent as the description proceeds taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the band structure of the present invention being used as a watchband;

FIG. **2** is a fragmentary view similar to FIG. **1** with the information compartment on the band open;

FIG. **3** is an enlarged transverse vertical section taken through the band shown in FIG. **1**;

FIG. **4** is a fragmentary plan view of a second embodiment of the band structure of the present invention;

FIG. **5** is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view of the band structure of FIG. **4** with the information compartment on the band open;

FIG. **6** is a fragmentary plan view of a third embodiment of the band structure of the present invention;

FIG. **7** is a fragmentary plan similar to FIG. **6** with the information compartment on the band open;

FIG. **8** is an enlarged section taken along line **8—8** of FIG. **6**;

FIG. **9** is an enlarged section with parts broken away taken along line **9—9** of FIG. **7**;

FIG. **10** is a fragmentary plan view of a fourth embodiment of the band structure of the present invention;

FIG. **11** is a fragmentary plan similar to FIG. **10** with the information compartment on the band open;

FIG. **12** is an enlarged section taken along line **12—12** of FIG. **10**; and

FIG. **13** is an enlarged section taken along line **13—13** of FIG. **11**.

Referring first to FIG. **1**, a preferred embodiment of the band structure of the present invention is shown in the form of a watchband **10** connected to a conventional watch **12**. The watchband **10** is seen to be comprised of two band segments or straps **14** and **16** of flexible material, such as leather, which are pivotally attached at one end to opposite sides of the watch **12** and include buckle-type fastening means **18** on the opposite ends so that the straps can be united to form an enclosed loop for encircling the wrist of the user. The band segment or strap **14** is seen to include a rectangular compartment **20**, FIGS. **2** and **3**, in which an information card **22** for recording various types of information can be releasably retained. The strap **14** is preferrably recessed so that the compartment **20** can be inset into the strap whereby an opaque cover **24** for the compartment is flush with the strap surface when closed as shown in FIG. **1**. The compartment **20** has a pair of opposed inwardly extending lips **26** along its longitudinal

sides so that the information card **22** is releasably retained within the compartment beneath the lips.

The cover **24** for the compartment **20** is composed of an opaque material, preferably a light metal or plastic, so that the information card **22** is normally unexposed beneath the cover. However, the cover **24** is pivotally connected to one side of the compartment **20** for movement between open and closed positions. The pivotal connection is made by a pair of longitudinally spaced coil springs **28** which are secured to the side of the compartment so as to allow the cover to be pivoted between closed and open positions while biasing the cover into the closed position.

Accordingly, when it is desired to observe the information card, the opaque cover is manually pivoted into its open position, FIG. **2**, about the coil springs and then automatically returns to its closed position, FIG. **1**, when released.

The information card **22** may take the form of a cardboard or paper strip on which desired information can be printed or typed so that after the desired information is recorded on the card, it can be snapped into position beneath the lips **26** wherein it will be reliably retained until additional information is desired to be recorded on the card. The information card could also take the form of a metal plate on which the desired information is engraved or otherwise imprinted in a more permanent manner.

A primary use of the band is for recording emergency data such as medical information relating to diseases, allergies, drug type, etc. of the individual wearing the band. The band could also be used, of course, for recording personal information such as the name, address, telephone number etc. of the user. In the case where the band is used to record emergency information, a distinctive symbol could be affixed to the band adjacent the opaque cover **24** to indicate that emergency information is recorded within the compartment. In this manner, the appearance of the band is not unduly affected by the included information but rather a subtle symbol designating that the information is recorded on the band is the only obviously visible evidence that the watchband is any different from conventional watchbands. The band **10** thereby retains a substantially conventional look in that the opaque cover **24** preferably blends with the remainder of the band, yet the emergency information is available simply by lifting the opaque cover to expose the information recorded within the compartment.

The advantages obtained by use of a band structure **10** as herein described are numerous. An individual who is allergic to a particular drug, e.g., penicillin, can record this information on the information card and in the event he is accidently rendered unconscious, he can be confident that an attendant examining his person would see the emergency data symbol and would thereby know to look within the adjacent compartment for emergency information. In this manner, the individual could possibly avoid having the attendant inject a drug to which he is allergic thereby possibly causing him harm. Another particularly desirable feature of the band structure of the present invention is that the emergency information is carried on a band which serves other utilitarian purposes as an article of dress, such as in the example previously described, for support of a watch **12** on the wrist of a user. Accordingly, it is felt that the band structure serves an especially useful function in providing its user with a utility band that additionally carries emergency or other information in such a way that it does not substantially alter the aesthetic appearance of the band.

An alternative embodiment of the band structure of the present invention is shown in FIGS. **4** and **5** wherein a circular compartment **30** is embedded in the strap portion **32** of a watchband **34** having an opaque cover **36** which is connected by a hinge **38** to one edge of the compartment **30** so as to be alternately movable between open and closed positions. Of course, in this arrangement an information card **40** takes the form of a circular disc which is retained within the compartment **30** by a circular lip **42** extending radially inwardly from the circular side wall of the compartment.

Another embodiment of the band structure of the present invention is shown in FIGS. **6** through **9** having a rectangular shaped compartment **44** affixed to the surface of the strap portion **46** of the watchband **48** and having an information card **50** retained within the compartment by longitudinally extending lip members **52** in the same manner as described in connection with the embodiment shown in FIGS. **1** through **3.** In this embodiment, however, the opaque cover for the compartment takes the form of a rectangular slide plate **54** retained between overhanging longitudinal edges **56** of the compartment **44** and the longitudinal lip members. The slide plate **54** is free to slide between the longitudinal edges **56** and the lip members **52** whereby fingertip pressure applied against a handle portion **58** at one end of the slide plate will effect movement of the slide plate between an open position wherein the information card **50** is visible within the compartment and a closed position wherein the information card is unexposed.

A still further embodiment of the band structure of the present invention is seen in FIGS. **10** through **13.** In this embodiment, a compartment **60** is fixed to the top of a strap **62** and comprises an integral three sided open-ended rectangular shaped compartment having an integral opaque top cover **64** defining an enclosed space **66** in which an information card **68** is free to slide. The compartment **60** is secured to the strap **62** by any suitable means along the flared bottom edges of the three sides **70** which rest against the surface of the strap. The opaque cover **64** has a depending stop **72** at the open end of the compartment that extends laterally across the width of the compartment and leaves a space between it and the top surface of the strap **63** which is substantially equal to the width of the information card **68.** The information card has an upturned handle **74** at one end so that fingertip pressure applied against the handle enables the user to easily slide the card along the upper surface of the strap between exposed and unexposed positions by movement out of and into the compartment through the open end. The end of the information card opposite the handle has an upstanding laterally extending stop **76** which is adapted to abut against the depending stop **72** on the cover when the information card is slid outwardly from the compartment into its totally exposed position. Due to the structural arrangement of the information card **68,** it is preferable in this embodiment that the card be made of a thin metal or plastic rather than paper or cardboard.

Depending upon the type of information recorded on the information card, the emergency data symbols, such as shown in FIGS. **1, 2,** and **4** through **7,** could be affixed to the strap adjacent the compartment thereon,

to designate that information of an important medical nature is recorded within the compartment. It is contemplated that various adaptations of the present invention are feasible whereby for example, two information compartments could be placed on a watchband, one on each of the strap portions, so that one compartment could be used to store information of a medical nature and the other compartment could be used to store personal information such as relating to the individuals address, telephone number, etc. Also, the component parts of the band structure could be made waterproof to protect the information card from damaging moisture by making the surfaces along the opening edges in the various embodiments of a rubberized material to effect a watertight seal at all times.

Although the present invention has been described with a certain degree of particularity, it is understood that the present disclosure has been made by way of example and that changes in details of structure may be made without departing from the spirit thereof.

What is claimed is:

1. A watchband structure comprising in combination a flexible strap adapted to be secured to a watch to form an enclosed loop for encircling the wrist of a user, said strap having a longitudinal compartment extending longitudinally of said strap, said compartment including overhanging longitudinal edges along opposite sides, an information card disposed within said compartment having emergency information recorded thereon, longitudinal lip members extending along opposite sides of said compartment for releasably retaining the information card in the compartment, an opaque cover for the compartment defined by generally rectangular slide plate means retained between said longitudinal edges and said longitudinal lip members for slidable movement in a lengthwise direction along said flexible strap between an open and a closed position such that information recorded on the information card is exposed when the cover is open but is unexposed when the cover is closed, and finger-engaging handle means disposed at one end of said slide plate means to effect movement of said slide plate in a lengthwise direction along said flexible strap between said open and closed positions.

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