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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Soler(10) **Pub. No.: US 2011/0016748 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jan. 27, 2011**(54) **FOLDABLE FLIP-FLOP****Publication Classification**(76) Inventor: **Ilianna Soler**, Levittown, NY (US)(51) **Int. Cl.**
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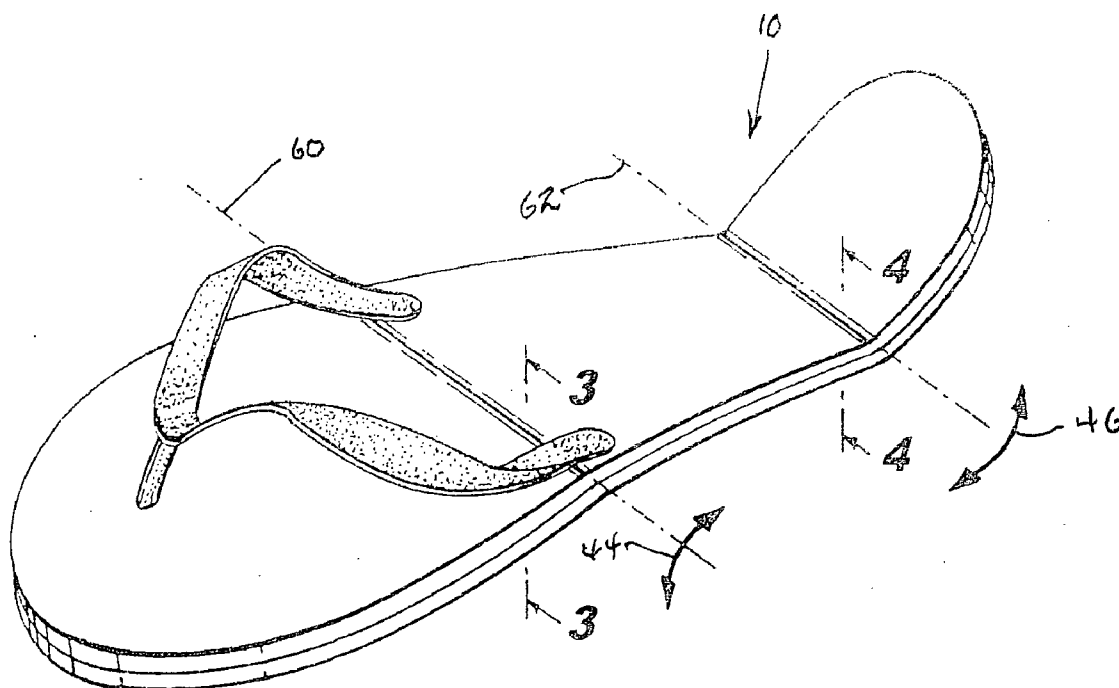
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A foldable flip-flop thong constituted of three adjacently spaced apart stiff plastic panels positioned lengthwise of the thong and sandwiched between elastomeric top and bottom plies to form an axis at the sites of spaces between the plastic panel so that partaking of pivotal traverses thereat results in a non-use folded condition of $\frac{1}{3}$ the dimension of the thong.



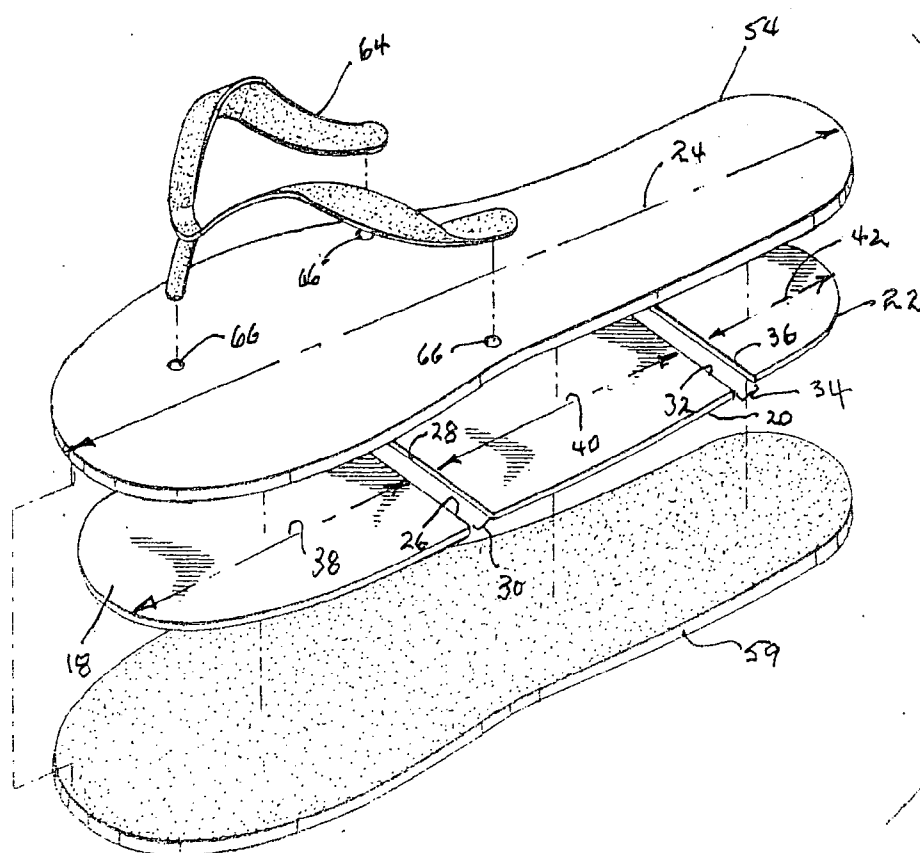
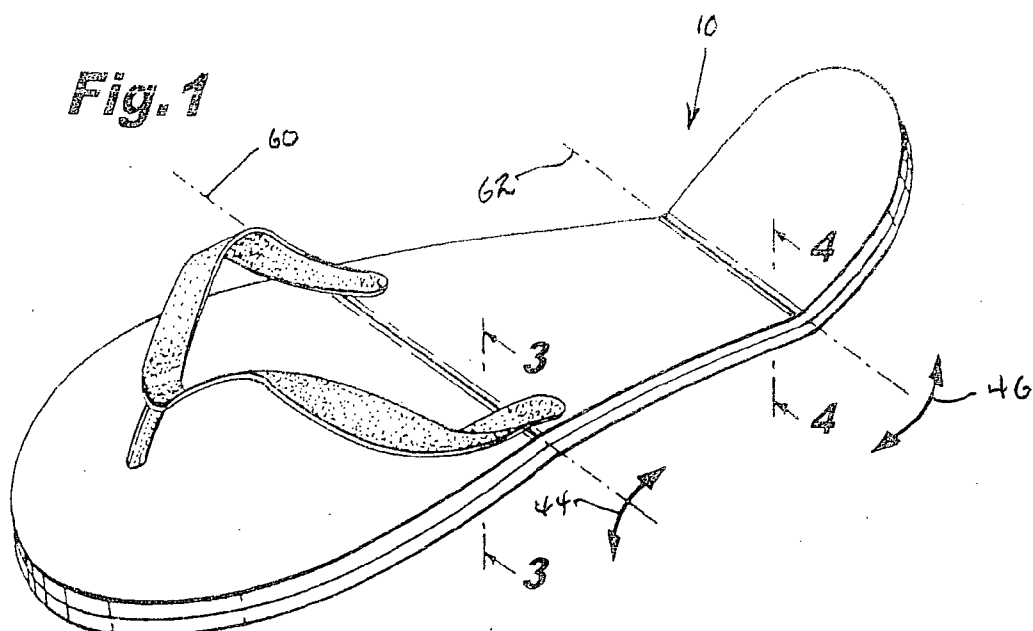


Fig. 2

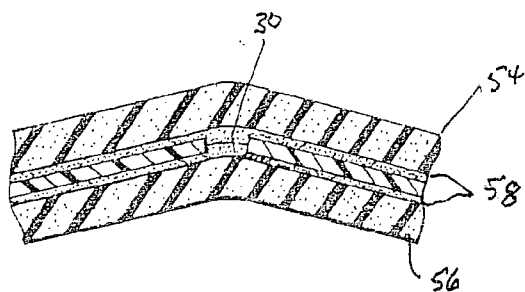


Fig. 3

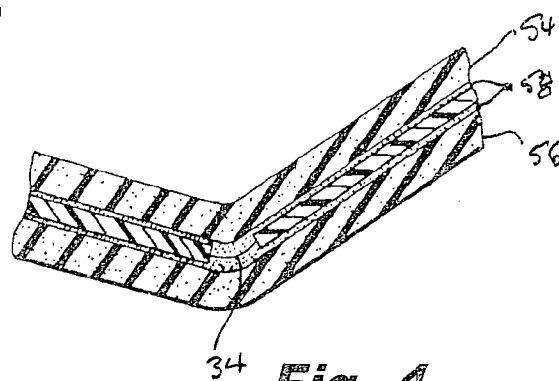


Fig. 4

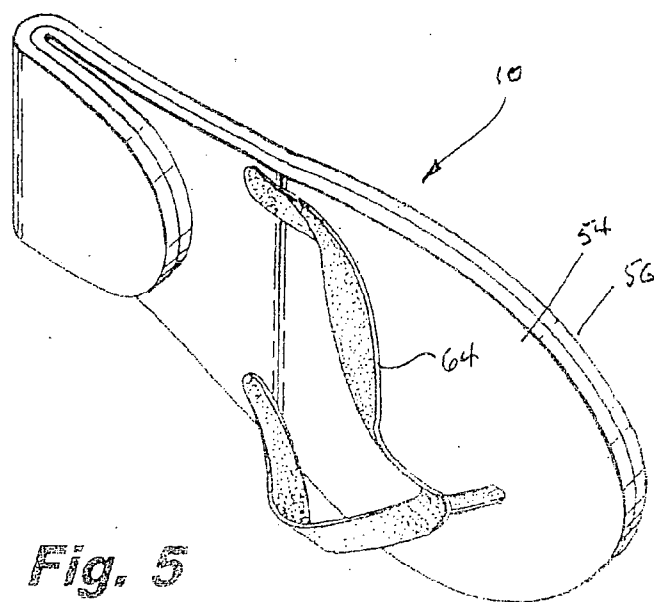


Fig. 5

Fig. 6

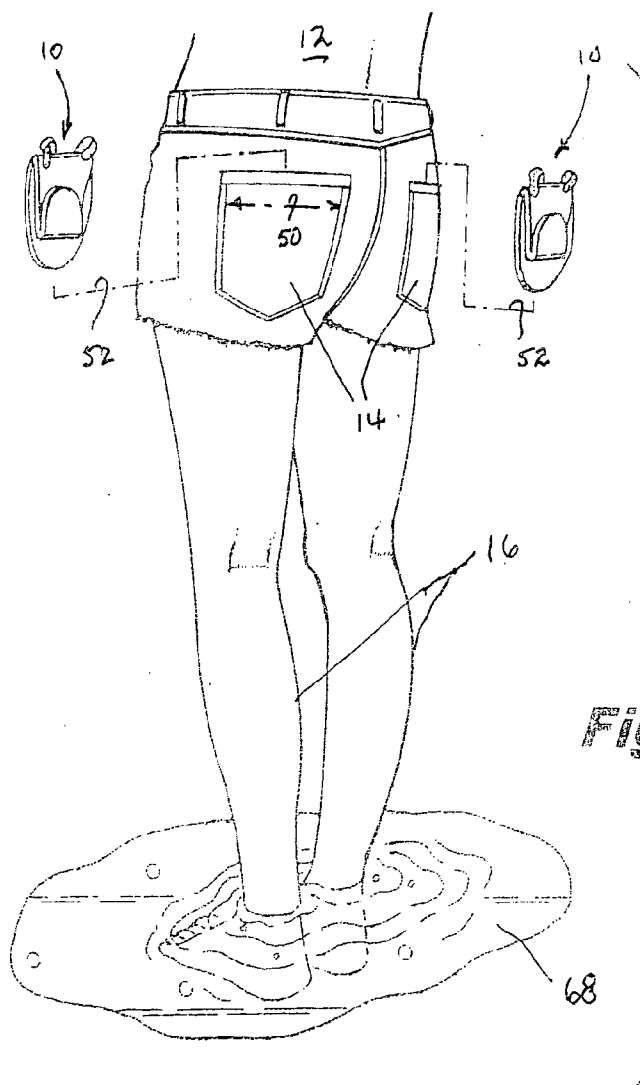
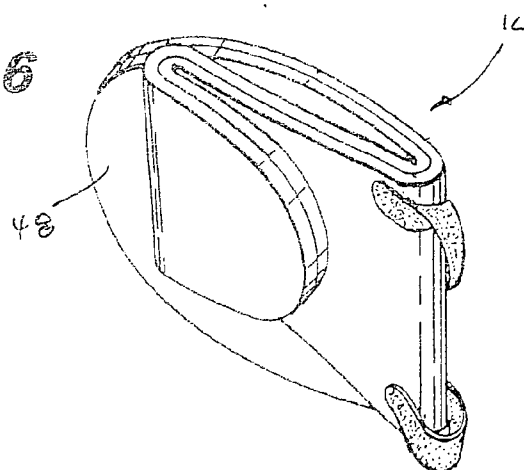


Fig. 7

FOLDABLE FLIP-FLOP

[0001] The present invention relates generally to improvements for a pocket sized footwear article of manufacture and more particularly to improvements whereby said footwear article of manufacture is placed in a folded condition following pivotal traverses so as to assume a pocket sized $\frac{1}{3}$ dimension all as will be better understood as the description proceeds.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of Search

[0003] In the prior art is patent application publication US 2008/0098616 of Leedy for "Roll Up Thong" made up of layers of thin flexible material having the ability to be rolled up for non-use storage. In the rolled up condition there is the tendency to unroll, and the diameter of the roll is not of a desirable minimal size.

[0004] In prior art patent application US 2007/0204483 of Kirsch et al. for "Flexible Shoe and Container" in the specific embodiment of a thong or flip-flop, there is specific reference to being folded as well as rolled, but to be rolled the thong is also of thin flexible material, it thus lacks the ability to withstand the abuse of wear on walking surfaces such as concrete sidewalks and the like.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] Broadly, it is an object of the present invention to overcome the foregoing and other noted shortcomings of the prior art.

[0006] More particularly, it is an object to provide three adjacently spaced apart stiff plastic constituted panels to withstand the abuse of wear positioned lengthwise of the thong, and a top and a bottom elastomeric ply utilized to sandwich the plastic panels therebetween, and at the bridging of each spacing site between the plastic panels, there functionally exists an axis for pivotal traverses. Partaking of the pivotal traverses results in a non-use folded condition of $\frac{1}{3}$ the dimension of the thong.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

[0007] The description of the invention which follows, together with the accompanying drawing should not be construed as limiting the invention to the example shown and described, because those skilled in the art to which this invention appertains will be able to devise other forms thereof.

[0008] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a foldable flip-flop according to the present invention preparatory to its folding mode;

[0009] FIG. 2 is an exploded view of the flip-flop illustrating the construction thereof;

[0010] FIG. 3 is a partial cross-sectional view taken along line 3-3 of FIG. 1;

[0011] FIG. 4 is a similar partial cross-sectional view taken along line 4-4 of FIG. 1;

[0012] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the flip-flop in its initial folding mode;

[0013] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the flip-flop in its final folding mode; and

[0014] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the flip-flop in circumstances using to advantage the folding mode thereof.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0015] Shown in the drawings is a footwear article of manufacture, generally designated 10, popularly known as a flip-flop (as designated in RANDOMHOUSE WEBSTER'S College Dictionary at page 509 right column) which is sized to fit in a female's 12 pocket 14 or pocketbook when not in wearing use on her feet 16.

[0016] To achieve this desirable downsizing, flip-flop 10 is constructed of three stiff plastic constituted panels, namely a toe panel 18, an arch or medial panel 20 and a heel panel 22, thus measuring from toe to heel a dimension 24 correlated to average sizes of the feet 16 of the female user 12. The plastic construction material of each of the panels 18, 20 and 22 is selected based on a stiffness of an extent necessary to withstand the "wear and tear" of ordinary use, but without, however, preventing the noted downsizing because of the folding mode embodied in the flip-flop construction.

[0017] More particularly, in the flat the toe panel 18 is located adjacent the middle panel 20 so that toe panel edge 26 and front middle panel edge 28 bound a first clearance 30 therebetween and located adjacent middle panel 20 is heel panel 22 so that rear middle panel edge 32 bounds a second clearance 34 therebetween with heel panel edge 36.

[0018] As noted by the reference arrows, the dimension 38 of toe panel 18 is a fraction of and no greater than $\frac{1}{3}$ the toe to heel dimension 24, and likewise of the dimension 40 of middle panel 20 and the dimension 42 of heel panel 22, so that folding toe panel 18 as noted by arrow 44 upon the middle panel 20 and then folding heel panel 22 as noted by the arrow 46 upon the bottom 48 of the toe panel 18 reduces the size of the folded condition of the flip-flop 10 to a width size dimension 50 of the trouser rear pocket 14 as best noted in FIG. 7 by the position-inserting dot-dash arrows 52.

[0019] Continuing with the description of the folding mode, two identical shaped upper ply 54 and lower ply 56 arc adhesively secured, using adhesive coats 58, on opposite sides of the toe panel 18, middle panel 20 and heel panel 22 and over the first and second clearances 30 and 34, so that the flexibility of the elastomeric construction material of the plies 54 and 56 is used to advantage to permit the pivotal traverses 44 and 46 of the axis 60 and 62 of the clearances 30 and 34.

[0020] From the foregoing it should be readily understood that preparatory to non-use the downsizing of the flip-flop 10 is sized to fit in the pocket 14 and preparatory to wearing use it is readily unfolded to the toe to heel dimension 24 to be held by thongs 64 attached, as at attachment sites 66 to the user's feet 16.

[0021] While the pocket sized footwear article/flip-flop herein shown and disclosed in detail is fully capable of attaining the objects and providing the advantages hereinbefore stated, it is to be understood that it is merely illustrative of the presently preferred embodiment of the invention and that no limitations are intended to the detail of construction or design herein shown other than as defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A pocket sized footwear article of manufacture comprising:

A. Three stiff plastic constituted panels each $\frac{1}{3}$ of the length of a footwear article of manufacture operatively

positioned in planar relation with a front panel and a rear panel adjacent a middle panel in interposed position therebetween delimiting nominal first and second clearances between confronting edges between said front panel and said rear panel;

- B. Two identical plies of elastomeric construction material sized so as to extend from toe to heel of said footwear article of manufacture and on opposite sides of said three stiff plastic constituted panels and over said first and second clearances each respectively serving as an axis for a pivotal traverse;

C. Adhesive coats for attaching said two elastomeric plies to said three plastic constituted panels; and

- D. Positions of movement of said front and said rear panels upon said middle panel as permitted by pivotal traverses about said first and second clearances-established axis for pivotal traverse;

whereby said footwear article of manufacture in said folded condition following said pivotal traverses assumes said pocket sized $\frac{1}{3}$ dimension.

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