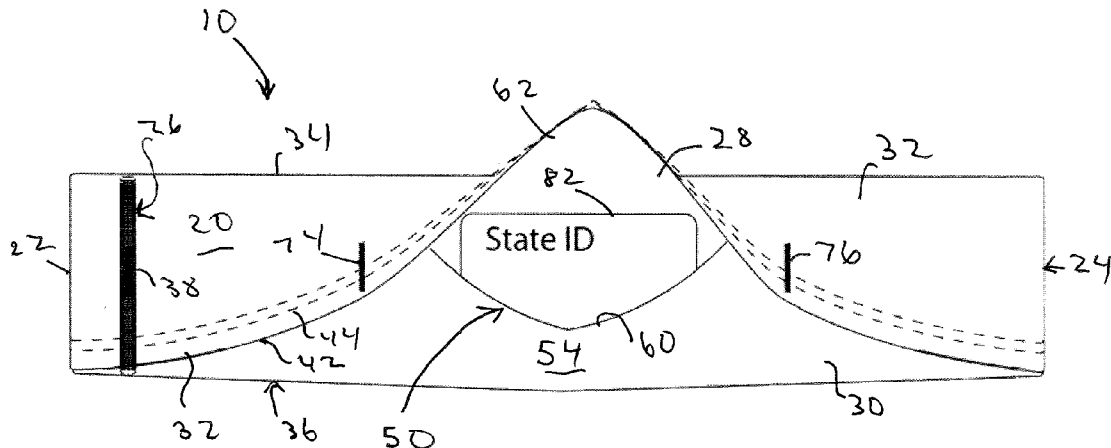




US 20160143424A1

(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
STEPHENS et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2016/0143424 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: May 26, 2016**(54) **WEARABLE ELASTIC BAND WITH
CARRYING POUCH****Publication Classification**(71) Applicant: **MARLENA INTERNATIONAL, LLC,**
Lawrenceville, GA (US)(72) Inventors: **Jeffrey Dan STEPHENS,** Atlanta, GA
(US); **Michael Demetrious**
MITCHELL, Lawrenceville, GA (US)(51) **Int. Cl.****A45F 3/00** (2006.01)**A41D 27/20** (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.**CPC **A45F 3/005** (2013.01); **A41D 27/20**
(2013.01); **A45F 2003/006** (2013.01)(21) Appl. No.: **14/952,009**(22) Filed: **Nov. 25, 2015****Related U.S. Application Data**(60) Provisional application No. 62/084,281, filed on Nov.
25, 2014.(57) **ABSTRACT**

A wearable elastic band including at least one pouch for holding an article. The band may be formed of a length of elastic material that is folded to have a first portion forming a rear pouch wall and a second portion forming a front pouch wall, the space between the first and second portions defining a pouch opening, and a third portion forming a flap that overlaps the pouch opening. The pouch has left and right sides defined by a tack stitch on each side. The pouch may be accessed by lifting the flap, which is stretchable. After a user places an item in the pouch, the flap is released to regain its initial configuration to form a cover over the opening and protect the item from inadvertently leaving the pouch.



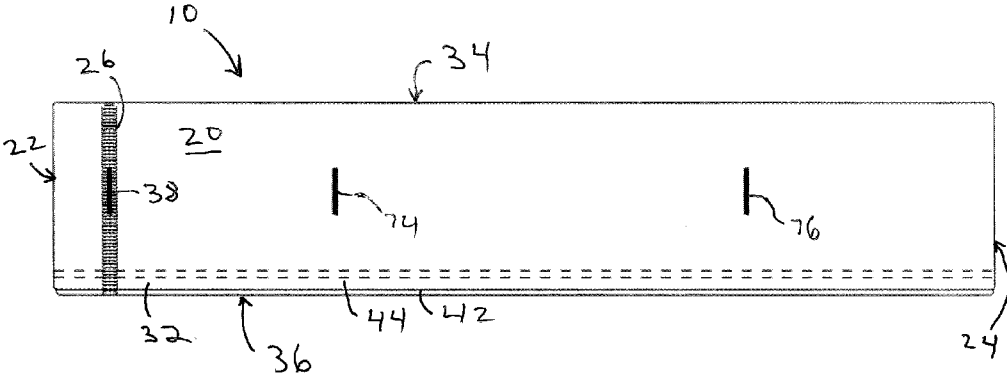
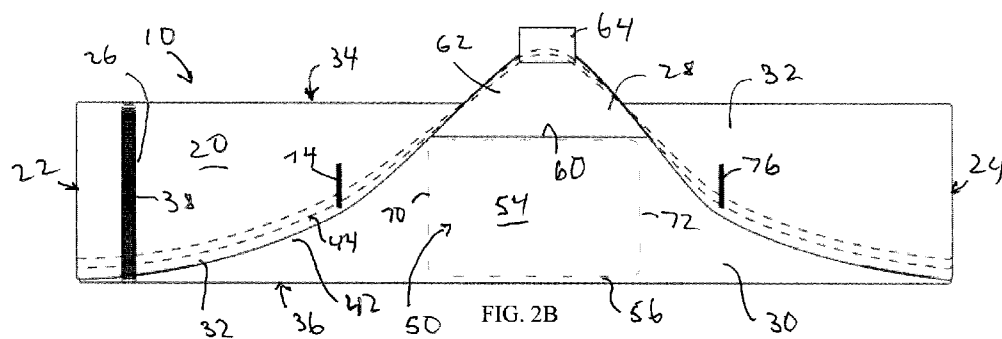
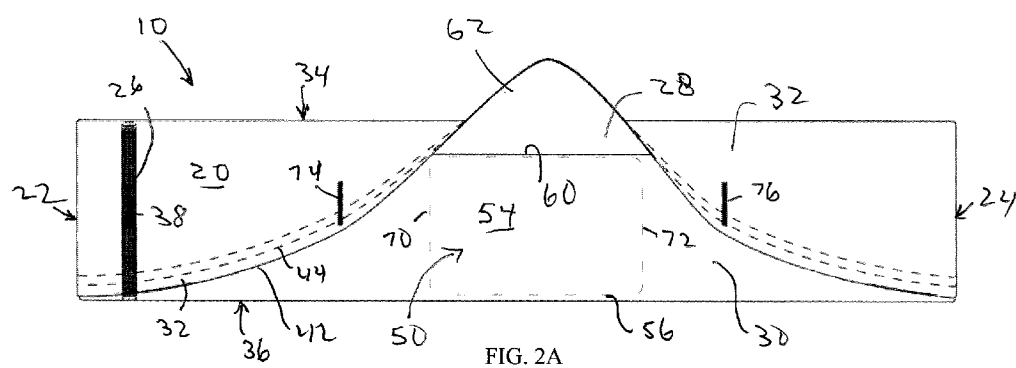
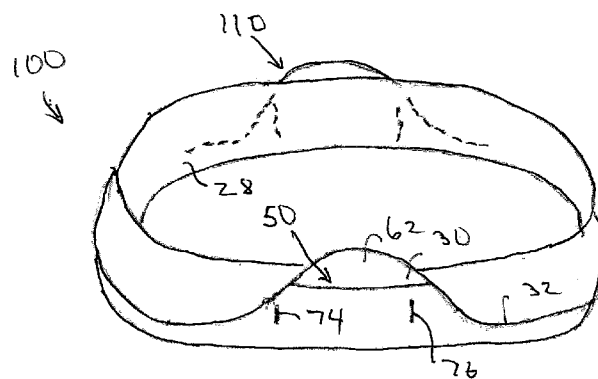
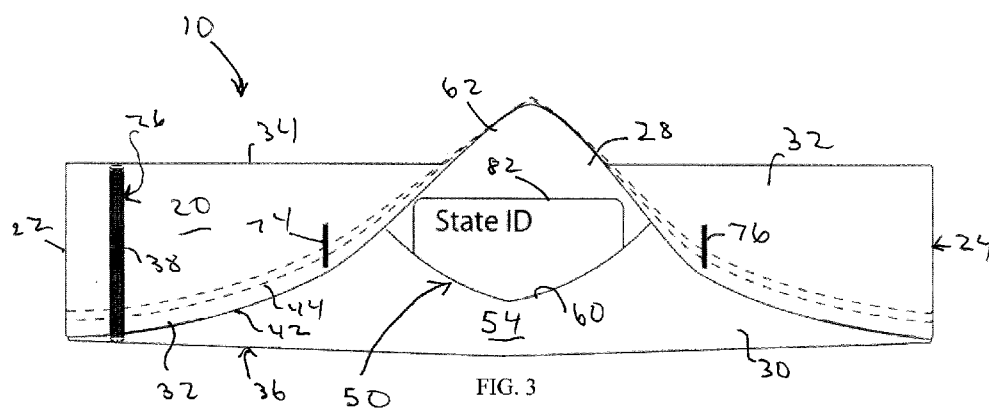


FIG. 1





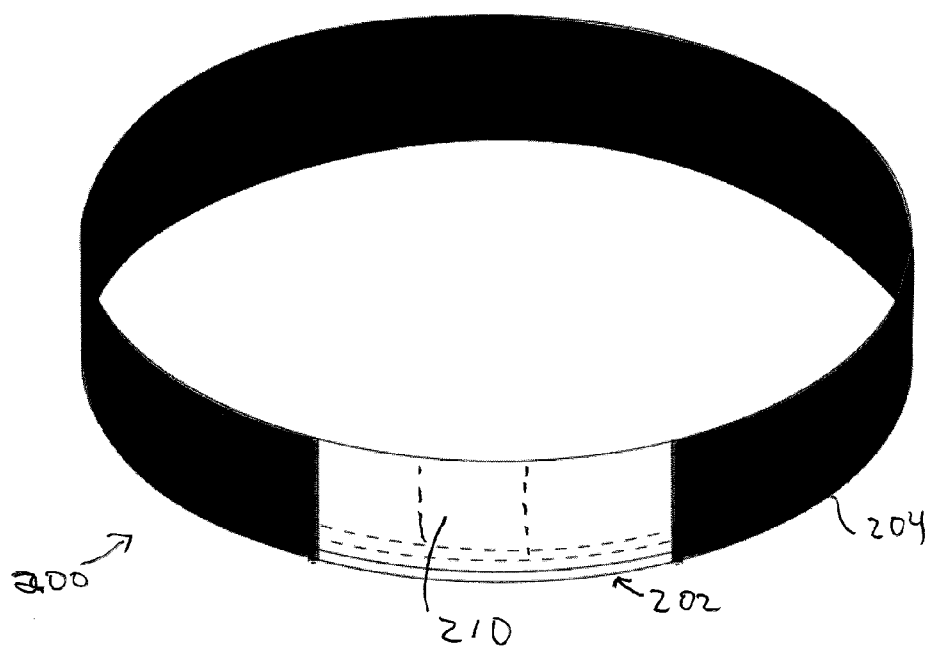


FIG. 5

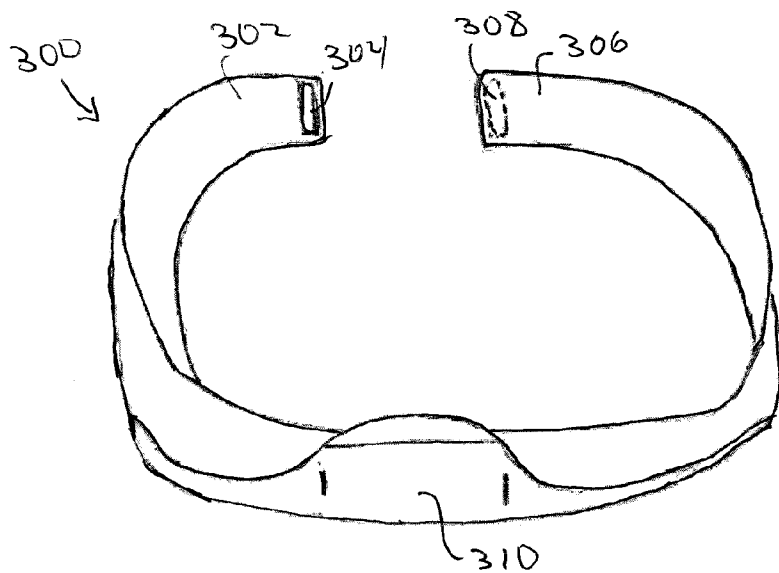


FIG. 6

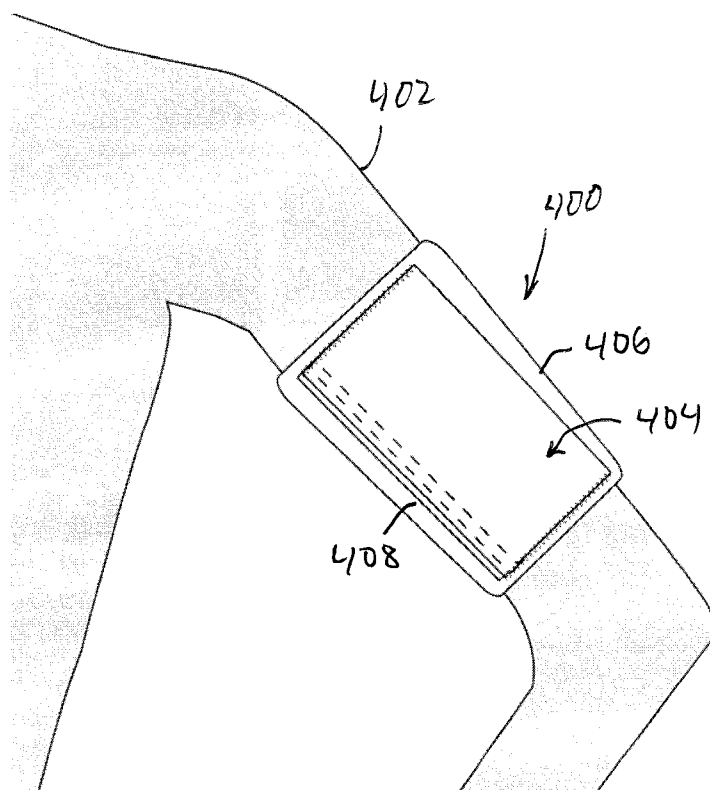


FIG. 7

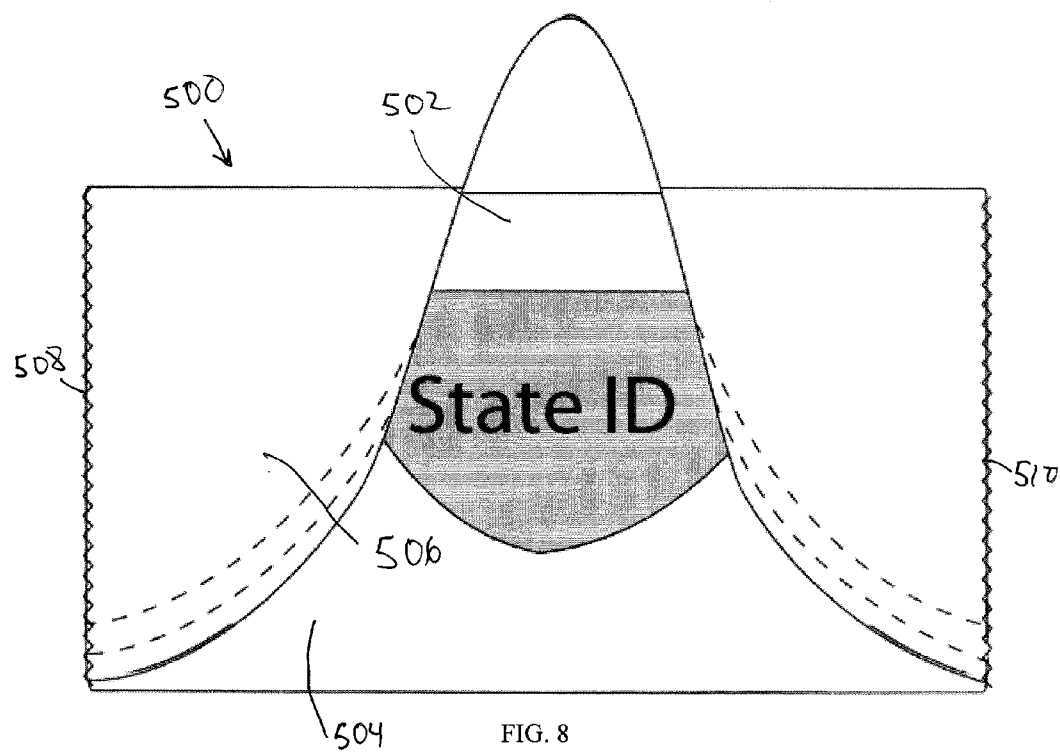


FIG. 8

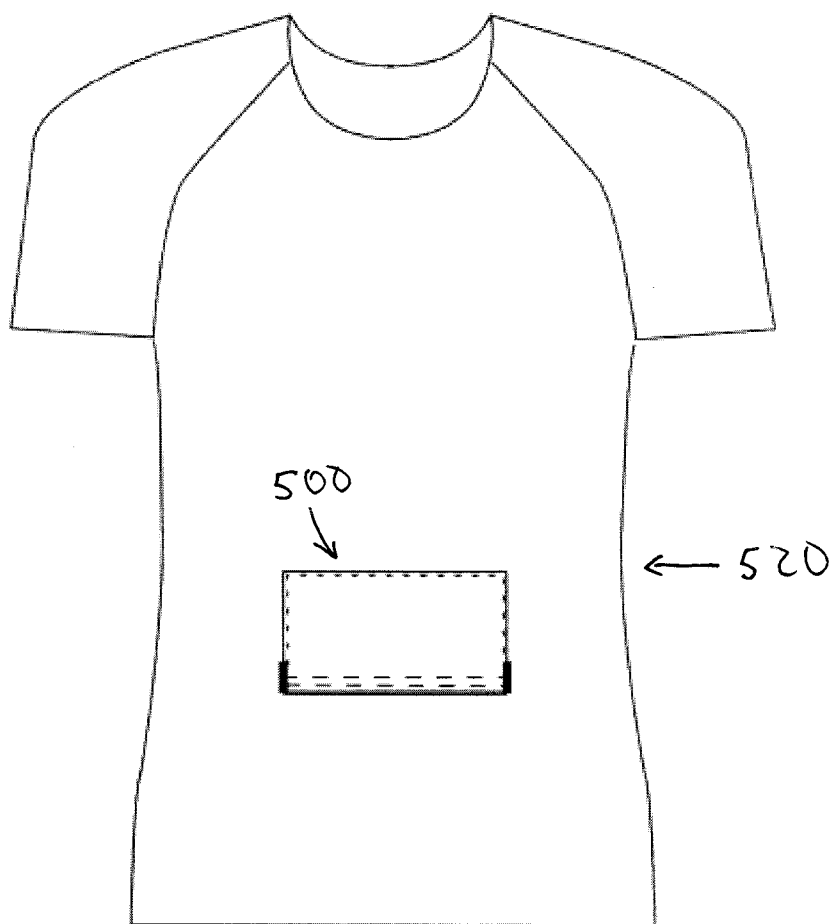


FIG. 9

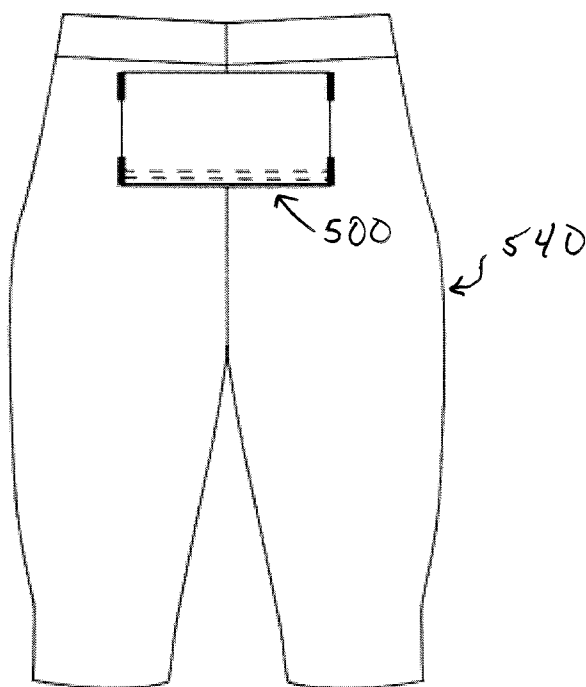


FIG. 10

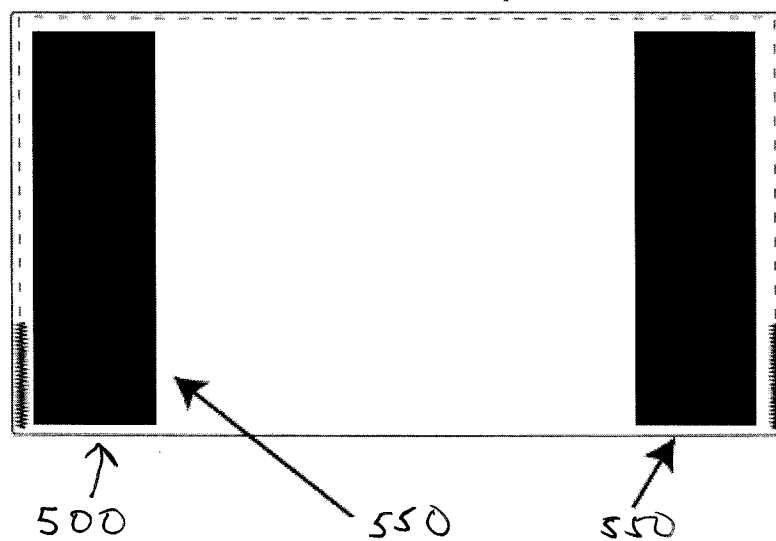


FIG. 11

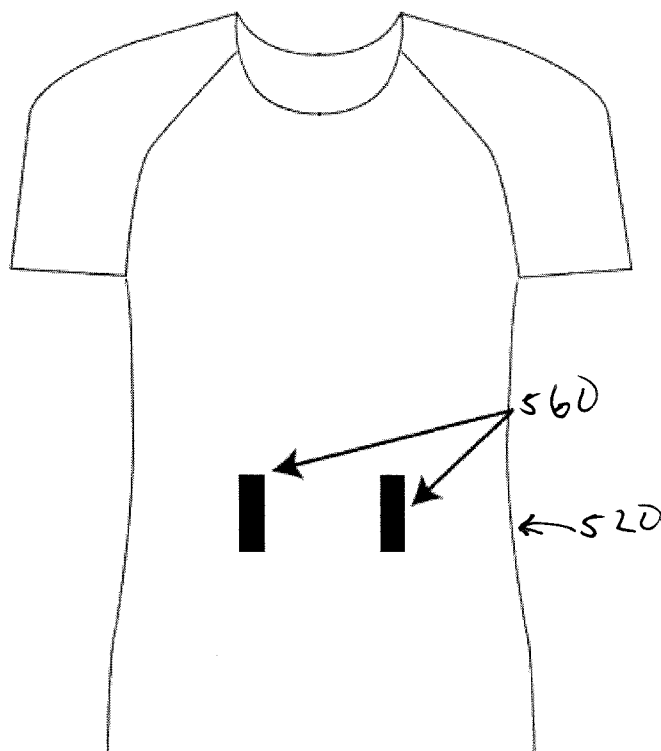
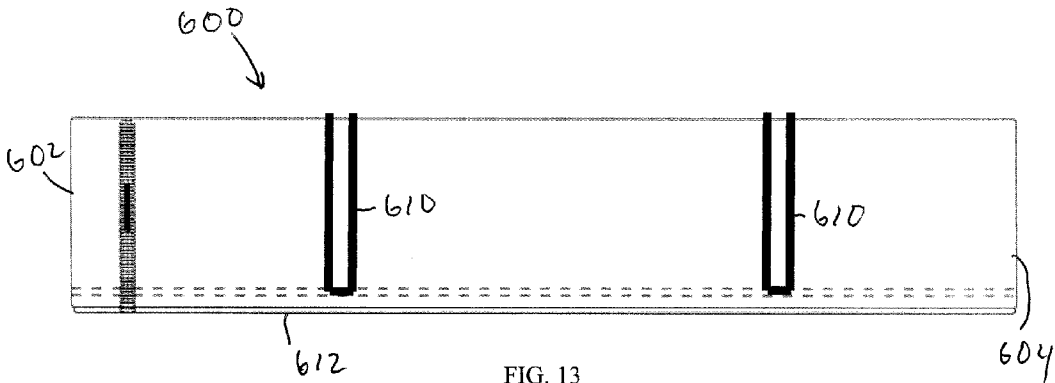


FIG. 12



WEARABLE ELASTIC BAND WITH CARRYING POUCH

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims benefit of copending U.S. provisional patent application No. 62/084,281, filed Nov. 25, 2014, entitled WAIST BELT WITH ELASTIC CARRYING POUCH, and commonly assigned to the assignee of the present application, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference in its entirety herein.

FIELD

[0002] The present disclosure relates, in exemplary embodiments, to a wearable band having at least one pouch contained therein or associated therewith for holding an article.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Various types of wearable pouches for carrying small article while walking, running or other activities are known. Such pouches range from older style “fanny packs,” which typically comprise a zippered pouch and two straps that are hooked together, to belts with zippered compartments, and other styles. It would be desirable to have a band that would be made of an elastic “compression”-style fabric that could be worn about the waist, leg, arm, or the like, and that would have a pouch. It would be desirable for such a pouch to avoid the need for snaps, zippers, hook and loop fasteners, or other closure mechanisms that can be cumbersome, degradable (after use or washing) or require two hands to access the pouch contents. It would also be desirable to have a band that is comfortable to wear and generally conforms to a person’s body shape.

SUMMARY

[0004] The following presents a simplified summary in order to provide a basic understanding of some aspects of various invention embodiments. The summary is not an extensive overview of the invention. It is neither intended to identify key or critical elements of the invention nor to delineate the scope of the invention. The following summary merely presents some concepts of the invention in a simplified form as a prelude to the more detailed description below.

[0005] Generally described, the present disclosure provides in a first exemplary embodiment an elastic band including at least one pouch for holding an article, the elastic band comprising a (a) length of material, at least a portion of which is elastic, and having a first end portion, a second end portion, the first and second end portions being associated with each other, a first face, a second face, a top edge, a bottom edge; and, (b) a pouch formed by a first portion of the elastic material forming a rear pouch wall, a second portion of the elastic material forming a front pouch wall, the top edge of the first portion and the top edge of the second portion forming an opening, the pouch further including a third portion of the elastic material forming a flap covering at least a portion of the first portion and second portion, whereby the bottom edge of the first portion is associated with the second portion and the top edge of the second portion is associated with the top edge of the third portion, the pouch further including a first fixation means for forming a first side pouch portion and a second fixation means for forming a second side pouch por-

tion. At least a portion of the flap is adapted to stretch under tension to enable access to the pouch opening which can removably receive and hold an article and whereby when the tension on the flap is released, the flap regains substantially its original configuration forming a cover over the top opening and preventing unintentional removal of the article.

[0006] In exemplary embodiments, the first and second fixation means each comprise a tack stitch associated with the first, second and third portions. In exemplary embodiments, the elastic material comprises a compression fabric.

[0007] Other features will become apparent upon reading the following detailed description of certain exemplary embodiments, when taken in conjunction with the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] The drawings disclose exemplary embodiments in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the figures of which:

[0009] FIG. 1 is a front elevation view of an elastic band with a pouch according to one exemplary embodiment.

[0010] FIG. 2A is a front elevation view of the elastic band of FIG. 1 showing the front flap lifted and showing the pouch.

[0011] FIG. 2B is a front elevation view of the elastic band of FIG. 1 according to one exemplary embodiment showing a tab for grasping the flap.

[0012] FIG. 3 is a front elevation view of the elastic band of FIG. 1 showing the front flap lifted and showing the interior of the pouch with an article placed therein.

[0013] FIG. 4 is a front elevation view of an elastic band according to one exemplary embodiment having two pouches.

[0014] FIG. 5 is a front schematic view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of a band having at least one portion made of an elastic material and at least one portion made of a less elastic or inelastic material.

[0015] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of one exemplary embodiment of an elastic band having two ends that attachable to each other.

[0016] FIG. 7 is a schematic view of one exemplary embodiment of an armband with a pouch, as worn by a user.

[0017] FIG. 8 is a front elevational view of one exemplary embodiment of a pouch.

[0018] FIG. 9 is a front view of one exemplary embodiment of a pouch attached to a shirt.

[0019] FIG. 10 is a front view of one exemplary embodiment of a pouch attached to a pair of shorts.

[0020] FIG. 11 is a front elevational view of one exemplary embodiment of a pouch incorporating hook or loop fasteners.

[0021] FIG. 12 is a front view of a shirt with either loop or hook fasteners attached thereto for mating with the hook or loop fasteners of the pouch of the exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. 10.

[0022] FIG. 13 is a perspective view of an alternative exemplary embodiment of an elastic band having clips forming the left and right sides of the pouch.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0023] Unless otherwise indicated, the drawings are intended to be read (for example, cross-hatching, arrangement of parts, proportion, degree, or the like) together with the specification, and are to be considered a portion of the entire written description of this invention. As used in the

following description, the terms “horizontal”, “vertical”, “left”, “right”, “up” and “down”, as well as adjectival and adverbial derivatives thereof (for example, “horizontally”, “upwardly”, or the like), simply refer to the orientation of the illustrated structure as the particular drawing figure faces the reader. Similarly, the terms “inwardly” and “outwardly” generally refer to the orientation of a surface relative to its axis of elongation, or axis of rotation, as appropriate.

[0024] FIGS. 1-3 show a first exemplary embodiment comprising a wearable band 10. The band 10 may be formed of one or more pieces of fabric or other material 20. In exemplary embodiments, the band 10 may be formed from a single piece of material 20. In exemplary embodiments, the band 10 may be formed from several strips of material 20. In exemplary embodiments, the band 10 may be formed of an elastic or stretchable fabric material or combination of materials. In exemplary embodiments, the material 20 may be made from ComfortWeave® material (Marena Group, Lawrenceville, Ga.; see U.S. Pat. No. 6,223,782, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference in its entirety), an elastic compression fabric woven from polyester fiber and elastic fiber. In exemplary embodiments, the material 20 forming the band 10 may be made of multiple layers or plies of material.

[0025] In exemplary embodiments, the material 20, or portions thereof, may optionally have a waterproof or water resistant material associated therewith, such as, but not limited to, another layer of material that is waterproof or water resistant, a lining, coating, laminated layer, or a waterproof or water resistant layer that is adhered or fused to the elastic material. In exemplary embodiments, the layer may be a fluid or particulate material that is applied to the elastic material, such as by spraying, coating, rolling, painting, or other application technique, or is impregnated in the elastic material.

[0026] In exemplary embodiments, the material 20 is shaped or folded to form a band 10 or tube. In exemplary embodiments, the material 20 has a first end 22 and a second end 24 that are joined at a generally vertical seam 26 (or alternatively a plurality of vertical seam segments). The material 20 may be folded lengthwise in an overlapping manner so as to create a first layer 28, second layer 30 and third layer 32, as shown in FIGS. 2-3. The band 10 has an upper edge 34 and a lower edge 36. In exemplary embodiments, at least a portion of the three layers 28, 30, 32 are maintained in a generally fixed relative position, such as, but not limited to, by a tack stitch 38 that passes through and connects all three layers. In exemplary embodiments, a tack stitch 38 may be positioned over or in proximity to the vertical seam 26. In exemplary embodiments, the tack stitch 38 may be positioned so as to extend only a portion of the height (i.e., the upper edge to lower edge) of the band 10. In exemplary embodiments, the tack stitch 38 may be positioned proximate to the vertical seam 26 and proximate to the lower edge 36. In exemplary embodiments, a second tack stitch 40 may be included. The second tack stitch 40 may be positioned at generally the opposite side of the band 10 from the first tack stitch 38. The first (and, optionally, the second) tack stitch 38 can help to maintain the first, second and third layers 28, 30, 32 in the folded shape.

[0027] Alternatively, instead of a tack stitch as described herein, adhesive, a grommet, button, snap, hook and loop fastener, or other fastening or fixation means may be used.

[0028] In exemplary embodiments, the bottom edge 42 of the third layer may have a hem 44 to create a finished edge.

[0029] In exemplary embodiments, a pouch 50 is formed by the first and second layers 28, 30, the first layer 28 forming the rear wall 52 of the pouch, and the second layer 30 forming the front wall 54 of the pouch. The bottom of the fold forming the first and second layers 28, 30 forms a bottom edge 56 of the pouch 50. The top portion of the first layer 28 and the top portion of the second layer 30 form a pouch opening 60. The third layer 32 forms a flap 62 over the pouch opening 60, as shown in FIG. 2A. In exemplary embodiments, the third layer bottom edge 42 may be slightly shorter than the height of the first and second layers 28, 30 so that a user can more easily grasp the third layer 32. In exemplary embodiments, as shown in FIG. 2B, a tab 64 or other protrusion or gripping area may be attached to or included as part of the third layer 32 to facilitate gripping.

[0030] In exemplary embodiments, a left side 70 and right side 72 of the pouch 50 are formed by a first pouch fixation means 74 and a second pouch fixation means 76. In exemplary embodiments, the fixation means 74, 76 is a tack stitch, but can be a different fixation means or a fastener, as described hereinabove with respect to the tack stitch 38. For the purposes of illustration, and not by way of limitation, a tack stitch will be described as the fixation means 74, 76. In exemplary embodiments, left and right pouch tack stitches 74, 76 may extend the entire height of the band 10, or, alternatively, may extend only a portion of the height of the band 10. In exemplary embodiments, the pouch tack stitches 74, 76 are spaced apart far enough to create a pouch recess area 80 that is wide enough to accommodate one or more articles of interest 82, such as, but not limited to, identification card (as shown in FIG. 3), a cell phone, music player, ear phones, wallet, keys, credit cards, cash, flashlight, pepper spray, glasses, pedometer, GPS unit, fitness computing device, or the like.

[0031] In exemplary embodiments, the pouch 50 may be formed on the left and right sides by the vertical seam 26 forming one pouch sidewall and one fixation means, such as a tack stitch 74, forming the opposing sidewall.

[0032] In exemplary embodiments, the pouch 50 is formed without left and right sidewall fasteners or fixation means.

[0033] In one exemplary embodiment, shown in FIG. 4, a band 100 may have at least one secondary pouch 110 may be included similar in design and construction to the pouch 50, but spaced apart therefrom around the band 100. In such an embodiment, for example, a first pouch 50 may be positioned to be over a user's abdomen, while a secondary pouch 110 is positioned proximate to the spine (or, alternatively, proximate to each side of the hips proximate to the hip bone). In exemplary embodiments, more than two pouches may be formed. In exemplary embodiments, the pouches may have the same width, while in other exemplary embodiments, the pouches may have different widths, such as a wide pouch to accommodate a phone, and a narrower pouch to hold keys.

[0034] In an alternative exemplary embodiment, the band 10 may be formed of a continuous seamless band of material that is folded to create each pouch.

[0035] In use, a user may place the band 10 over his or her hips or waist or other area. When access to the pouch 50 is desired, the user lifts a portion of the third layer 32 flap 62 (or by grasping optional tab 64 to expose the top opening 60 and inserts the article 82 to be stored in the pouch 50, as shown in FIG. 3. The user then releases the third layer 32 flap 62 so that the third layer 32 covers the pouch 50. The article 82 will then be maintained in the pouch 50 and will be resistant to falling

out during activity by the user. The elastic fabric will conform to the user's waist (or other area) to improve the ability to remain in place during activity by the user.

[0036] In an alternative exemplary embodiment, the band material **20** may include a slip resistant material associated with the inside of the band (i.e., the face of material closest to the wearer's clothing or skin) to reduce the likelihood of the band material **20** rising up during use. In exemplary embodiments, the slip resistant material may be a rubber or rubber-like material. The slip resistant material may be coated on the fabric material, or may be laminated, impregnated, adhered, attached to or formed as part of the fabric material. In exemplary embodiments, the slip resistant material may be applied as lines, rows, waves, dots, beads, circles or other shapes or configurations.

[0037] In an alternative exemplary embodiment, as shown in FIG. 5, a band **200** may comprise band material that may include one or more first portions made of an elastic material **202** as described hereinabove with respect to band **10**, and one or more second portions **204** made of either a lower elasticity material or inelastic material. The elastic material portion **202** includes a pouch **210**.

[0038] In an alternative exemplary embodiment, as shown in FIG. 6, a band **300** may comprise a length of material as described with respect to band **10**, but rather than being joined at a seam, the band **300** has a first end **302** to which is attached a first connector **304**, such as, but not limited to, a hook material. The band **300** also has a second end **306** to which is attached a second connector **308**, such as, but not limited to, a loop material such that the hook material and loop material are detachably fastenable to each other to create the band structure. In exemplary embodiments, the first end **302** and second end **306** may be attached by a connector mechanisms, such as, but not limited to, clips, snaps, buttons, eye hooks and loops, detachable adhesive, string, laces, and combinations of the foregoing. The band **300** has a pouch **310**.

[0039] In an alternative exemplary embodiment, shown in FIG. 7, a band **400** may be configured for use around a user's arm **402**. The band **400** may be made of a seamed or seamless layered length of material **20** similar to the band **10** or other embodiments thereof described herein. Alternatively, the band **400** may be constructed similar to the band **300**. A pouch **404** is formed between the upper edge **406** and lower edge **408** of the band **400**. The left and right sides of the pouch may be formed by a tack stitch on both sides.

[0040] In an alternative exemplary embodiment, as shown in FIG. 8, a pouch **500** is formed of a piece of elastic material that is folded over to form three layers **502**, **504**, **506**. Left and right sides **508**, **510** are seamed. The pouch **500** may be attached to a garment or other article, such as by stitching the pouch **500** to the article. FIG. 9 shows one exemplary embodiment of a pouch **500** attached to a shirt **520**. FIG. 10 shows one exemplary embodiment of a pouch **500** attached to the rear panel of a pair of shorts **540**.

[0041] In an alternative exemplary embodiment of the pouch **500**, rather attaching the pouch **500** to a garment or other article using a tack stitch, a hook and loop fastener system may be used, as shown in FIGS. 11-12, in which one or more pieces of hook material **550** are sewn or otherwise affixed to a garment (see FIG. 12) and one or more mating pieces of loop material **560** are sewn or otherwise affixed to the first layer of the pouch **500** (FIG. 11). It is to be understood that the hook material and the loop material may be switched

with each other. In use, a user simply attaches the pouch **500** using the hook and loop fasteners.

[0042] In an alternative exemplary embodiment, as shown in FIG. 13, rather than a tack stitch or other fastener or fixation means as described hereinabove, the sides **602**, **604** of a pouch **600** may be formed by one or more clips **610** that is associated with the band. For example, two movable spring-type clips **610** (such as a conventional paper clip or other shape) may be attached to the bottom side **612** of the band so as to create the sides **602**, **604** of the pouch. In this manner, the size of the pouch **600** can be adjusted by adjusting the spacing of the clips **610**.

[0043] While the methods, equipment and systems have been described in connection with specific embodiments, it is not intended that the scope be limited to the particular embodiments set forth, as the embodiments herein are intended in all respects to be illustrative rather than restrictive.

[0044] Unless otherwise expressly stated, it is in no way intended that any method set forth herein be construed as requiring that its steps be performed in a specific order. Accordingly, where a method claim does not actually recite an order to be followed by its steps or it is not otherwise specifically stated in the claims or descriptions that the steps are to be limited to a specific order, it is no way intended that an order be inferred, in any respect.

[0045] As used in the specification and the appended claims, the singular forms "a," "an" and "the" include plural referents unless the context clearly dictates otherwise.

[0046] "Optional" or "optionally" means that the subsequently described event or circumstance may or may not occur, and that the description includes instances where said event or circumstance occurs and instances where it does not.

[0047] Throughout the description and claims of this specification, the word "comprise" and variations of the word, such as "comprising" and "comprises," means "including but not limited to," and is not intended to exclude, for example, other additives, components, integers or steps. "Exemplary" means "an example of" and is not intended to convey an indication of a preferred or ideal embodiment. "Such as" is not used in a restrictive sense, but for explanatory purposes.

[0048] Disclosed are components that can be used to perform the disclosed methods, equipment and systems. These and other components are disclosed herein, and it is understood that when combinations, subsets, interactions, groups, etc., of these components are disclosed that while specific reference of each various individual and collective combinations and permutation of these may not be explicitly disclosed, each is specifically contemplated and described herein, for all methods, equipment and systems. This applies to all aspects of this application including, but not limited to, steps in disclosed methods. Thus, if there are a variety of additional steps that can be performed it is understood that each of these additional steps can be performed with any specific embodiment or combination of embodiments of the disclosed methods.

[0049] It should further be noted that any patents, applications and publications referred to herein are incorporated by reference in their entirety.

What is claimed is:

1. An elastic band including at least one pouch for holding an article, the elastic band comprising:
 - a) a length of material, at least a portion of which is elastic, and having

- i) a first end portion,
- ii) a second end portion, the first and second end portions being associated with each other,
- iii) a first face,
- iv) a second face,
- v) a top edge,
- vi) a bottom edge; and,
- b) a pouch formed by
 - i) a first portion of the elastic material forming a rear pouch wall,
 - ii) a second portion of the elastic material forming a front pouch wall, the top edge of the first portion and the top edge of the second portion forming an opening,
 - iii) the pouch further including a third portion of the elastic material forming a flap covering at least a portion of the first portion and second portion, whereby the bottom edge of the first portion is associated with the second portion and the top edge of the second portion is associated with the top edge of the third portion,
 - iv) the pouch further including a first fixation means for forming a first side pouch portion and a second fixation means for forming a second side pouch portion, whereby at least a portion of the flap is adapted to stretch under tension to enable access to the pouch opening which can removably receive and hold an article and whereby when the tension on the flap is released, the flap regains substantially its original configuration forming a cover over the top opening and preventing unintentional removal of the article.
- 2. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein the first and second fixation means each comprise a tack stitch associated with the first, second and third portions.
- 3. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein elastic material comprises a compression fabric.
- 4. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein elastic material comprises a blend of at least one polyester fiber and at least one elastic fiber.
- 5. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the elastic band further comprises a water resistant material.
- 6. The elastic band of claim 5, wherein the water resistant material is selected from the group comprising a lining, coating, laminate, or adhered layer of material.
- 7. The elastic band of claim 5, wherein the water resistant material is a fluid or particulate material that is applied to the elastic material either by spraying, coating, rolling or painting.
- 8. The elastic band of claim 1, further comprising a slip resistant material that is associated with at least a portion of the elastic material.
- 9. The elastic band of claim 8, wherein the slip resistant material is associated with the first portion of elastic material by coating, spraying, adhering, or impregnating.
- 10. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein the band is formed of a plurality of strips of material.
- 11. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein the band is formed of a plurality of layers or plies of elastic material.
- 12. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein the elastic material comprises a seamless band of elastic material.

13. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein the material comprises at least one portion of an elastic material and at least one portion of either a less elastic or inelastic material.

14. The elastic band of claim 1, further comprising at least one secondary pouch, each secondary pouch formed by a fourth portion of the elastic material and including a flap and a third fixation means and a fourth fixation means, the third and fourth fixation means forming side pouch portions.

15. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein the first and second end portions are detachably associated with each other by detachable fastening mechanism.

16. The elastic band of claim 15, wherein the detachable fastening mechanism is at least one mechanism selected from the group comprising hook and loop fasteners, clips, snaps, string, laces, buttons, eye hooks and loops, detachable adhesive, and combinations of the foregoing.

17. The elastic band of claim 1, wherein the band is configured to be worn around a user's waist, arm or leg.

18. An apparatus attachable to an item of clothing or other item and adapted for holding an article, the apparatus comprising:

- a) a length of material, at least a portion of which is elastic, and having
 - i) a first end portion,
 - ii) a second end portion,
 - iii) a first face,
 - iv) a second face,
 - v) a top edge,
 - vi) a bottom edge; and,
- b) a pouch formed by
 - i) a first portion of the elastic material forming a rear pouch wall,
 - ii) a second portion of the elastic material forming a front pouch wall, the top edge of the first portion and the top edge of the second portion forming an opening,
 - iii) the pouch further including a third portion of the elastic material forming a flap covering at least a portion of the first portion and second portion, whereby the bottom edge of the first portion is associated with the second portion and the top edge of the second portion is associated with the top edge of the third portion,
 - iv) the pouch further including a first fixation means for forming a first side pouch portion and a second fixation means for forming a second side pouch portion, whereby at least a portion of the flap is adapted to stretch under tension to enable access to the pouch opening which can removably receive and hold an article and whereby when the tension on the flap is released, the flap regains substantially its original configuration forming a cover over the top opening and preventing unintentional removal of the article.

19. The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising a means for attaching the pouch to an article.

20. The apparatus of 19, wherein the attaching means is selected from the group consisting of hook and loop fasteners, clips, snaps, string, laces, buttons, eye hooks and loops, detachable adhesive, and combinations of the foregoing.

* * * * *