Dec. 14, 1965 A. FEST 3,222,701

LIFE BUOYS

Filed Nov. 29, 1963

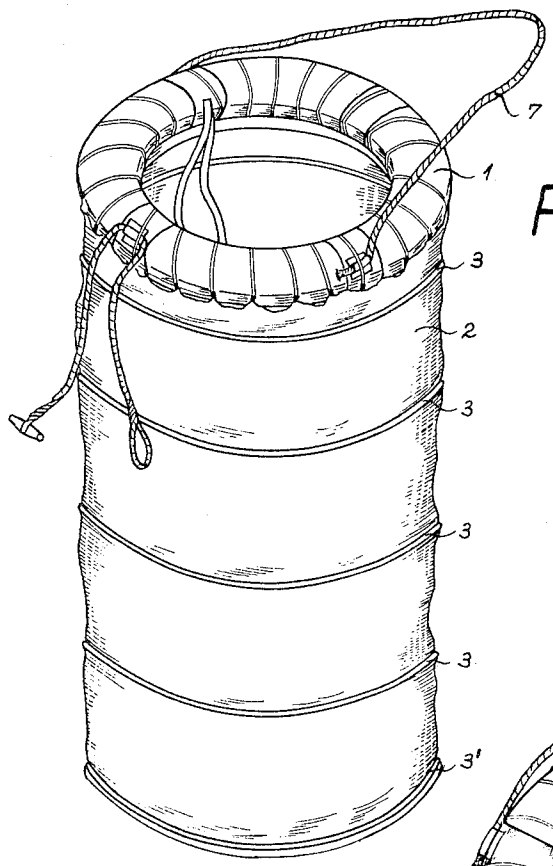


Fig-1

Fig-3

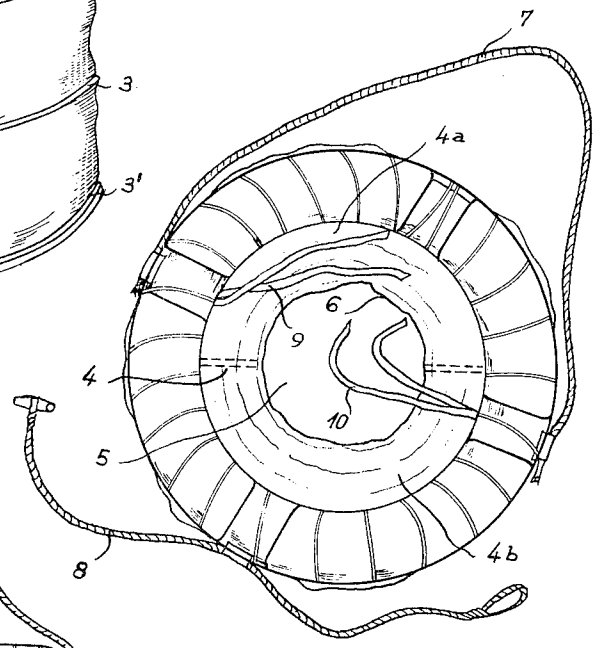
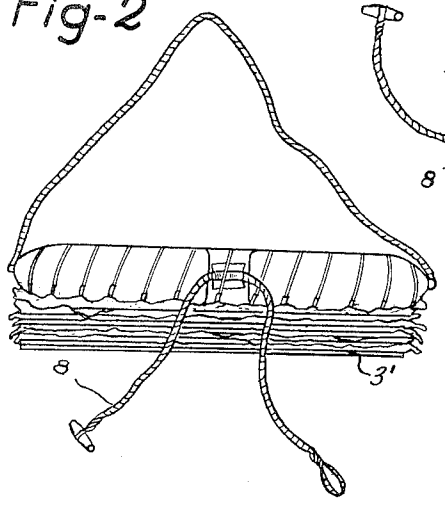


Fig-2



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United States Patent Office 3,222,701
Patented Dec. 14, 1965

3,222,701

LIFE BUOYS

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Filed Nov. 29, 1963, Ser. No. 326,900
Claims priority, application France, Dec. 7, 1962, 917,990, Patent 1,349,458
4 Claims. (Cl. 9—330)

One of the dangers which shipwrecked persons are confronted with in certain seas is the presence of sharks.

Means consisting notably of certain chemicals have already been proposed with a view to keep sharks away, but the efficiency of these means is rather questionable due to the marine currents or to the waves which disperse the sheet formed by the liquid spread on the sea and separate the shipwrecked people from this protection zone.

It is the essential purpose of the present invention to provide life buoys with elements adapted to protect shipwrecked people equipped with such buoys from the attack of sharks while permitting a convenient handling and without detrimentally impairing the movements of the users when they are still in a life-boat or other vessel.

According to this invention, the buoy is provided with an expansible sheath attached by sewing, gluing or otherwise to the lower portion of the buoy, this sheath being reinforced by spaced metal rings or the like constituting in the expanded condition a kind of cage surrounding the immersed portion of the body of the shipwrecked person, this sheath having but very reduced over-all dimensions when folded against the lower face of the buoy in order not to increase the discomfort of the wearer.

This buoy is formed at its lower portion with a bottom having a relatively large aperture to permit the passage of the feet, the edge of this aperture being provided with an extensible cord whereby the shipwrecked person may slip into the buoy in the usual fashion when the sheath is folded.

A typical form of embodiment of the present invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the buoy with the sheath expanded;

FIGURE 2 is a side elevational view of the buoy with the sheath folded, and

FIGURE 3 is a top view of the buoy.

As shown in the drawing, the buoy **1** consists as usual of cork or other lighter-than-water material and its lower portion carries a collapsible sheath **2** consisting of a skirt of a material sufficient strength and flexibility such as thick fabric, preferably of dark colour, which is reinforced by spaced metal rings **3** adapted to keep the sheath in a substantially cylindrical shape and to permit its immersion under the influence of their weight when the buoy is put on the water.

At its lower portion, the sheath **2** is formed with a bottom **4** comprising a central aperture **5** having sewn along its edge an elastic cord **6** whereby this aperture may open widely and permit the passage of the body of a person, the bottom consisting of at least two diametrally opposite pieces *4a*, *4b*.

The buoy is further provided with a small chord **7** secured at its end to facilitate the handling and transport of the buoy and to enable a shipwrecked person to pass this small cord around his or her neck whereby the buoy is retained at a suitable level around the wearer who can thus use freely his or her hands.

Finally, another small cord **8** having two free ends is secured on the buoy so that the latter can be attached for example to a boat or any other floating body to prevent the shipwrecked person from drifting.

Small paddles may be secured on the buoy to enable the shipwrecked person to move on the water surface. It may also be advantageous to ballast the bottom for example by using a heavier lowermost ring **3'**.

When the buoy is not in use, the sheath is folded up against the buoy and kept in this position by small strings **9**, **10**, whereby the over-all dimensions of the buoy will not exceed appreciably those of a conventional life buoy.

To use the buoy of this invention, the shipwrecked person just slips the buoy around his or her body as usual, the expansible bottom permitting this movement freely, the cord **7** being passed around the wearer's neck. In the water, the shipwrecked person releases the strings **9**, **10** to enable the sheath to expand by gravity.

Then the wearer can retract his or her feet inside the sheath and bear against the bottom therewith, thus assisting in holding the sheath expanded; then he or she can use the small cord **7** for being towed for example by a life-boat.

I claim:

1. A life buoy provided with means to protect the wearer's body from the attack of marine life, comprising a buoy, a sheath of thick fabric attached to one side of said buoy, a plurality of rigid reinforcing rings spaced along said fabric sheath, said sheath being adapted to be folded against the buoy in the inoperative position and to unfold freely under the weight of said rings when said buoy is immersed, a bottom in said sheath, a central aperture in said bottom, an elastic cord along the edge of said aperture, said aperture being capable of expansion to permit the passage of the user's body therethrough.

2. A life buoy provided with means to protect the wearer's body from the attack of marine life comprising a ring-like buoy, a sheath of thick fabric attached to one side of said buoy and depending therefrom, a plurality of spaced rigid reinforcing rings in said sheath, said sheath being adapted to be folded against the buoy in the inoperative position and to unfold freely under the weight of said rings when the buoy is immersed, a bottom attached to the lower end of said sheath having a central aperture therein, an elastic cord along the edge of said aperture, said aperture being arranged to open thereby providing for passage of user's body therethrough, said buoy being provided with first cord for retaining the sheath in its folded position, a second cord for attaching buoy from the user's shoulders and a third buoy for attachment to a rescue vessel.

3. A life buoy provided with means to protect the wearer's body from the attack of marine life comprising a life buoy, a sheath of thick fabric attached thereto and depending therefrom, ballast at the lower portion of said sheath, a plurality of spaced rigid reinforcing rings, said sheath being adapted to be folded against the buoy in the inoperative position and to unfold freely by the weight of said ballasting means when said buoy is immersed, a bottom on said sheath, said bottom having a central aperture therein, elastic means along the periphery of said aperture, said aperture being capable of expansion to allow the user's body to pass therethrough.

4. A life buoy provided with means to protect the wearer from the attack of marine life comprising a ring-like buoy of material having a density less than that of water, a sheath of thick fabric material attached to said buoy and depending therefrom, ballasting means on the lower portion of said sheath, a plurality of rigid reinfrocing rings spaced along said sheath and attached thereto, said sheath being adapted to be folded against said buoy in an inoperative position and to unfold freely under the weight of said ballasting means when said buoy

is immersed, a bottom formed in said lower portion of said sheath, a central aperture in said bottom, elastic cord surrounding the periphery of said aperture and keeping it in a normally closed condition, said aperture being capable of expansion to provide passage for the user's body therethrough, a first set of chords attached to said buoy for retaining the sheath in its folded position, a second cord attached to said buoy for suspening the buoy from the user's neck and shoulders, and a third towing cord.

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