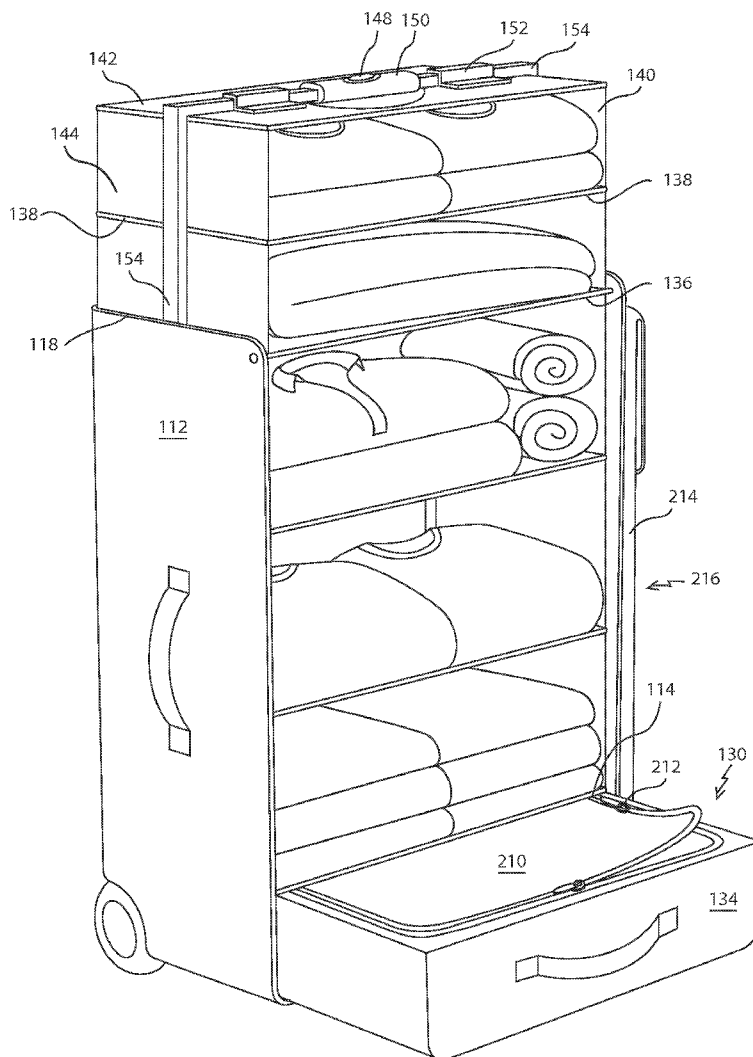




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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Campbell et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2007/0295570 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Dec. 27, 2007**(54) **COLLAPSIBLE SUITCASE**(52) **U.S. CL. 190/15 R; 190/18 A**(76) Inventors: **Antonija Jurinec Campbell,**
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A45C 5/14 (2006.01)
A45C 13/03 (2006.01)(57) **ABSTRACT**

A container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode is presented which includes: an exterior shell having: a top edge; a bottom wall disposed opposite the top edge; and a back wall coupled to the bottom wall; a top planar member, for compressing storage space, selectably coupleable to the exterior shell; a flexible member coupled to each of and between the top planar member and the bottom wall; a middle planar member, coupled to the flexible member between the top planar member and the bottom wall and oriented substantially parallel to the top planar member; a first side wall coupled to the bottom wall and to the back wall; a second side wall coupled to the bottom wall and to the back wall; and a front cover coupled to the second side wall and removably coupleable to the first side wall.



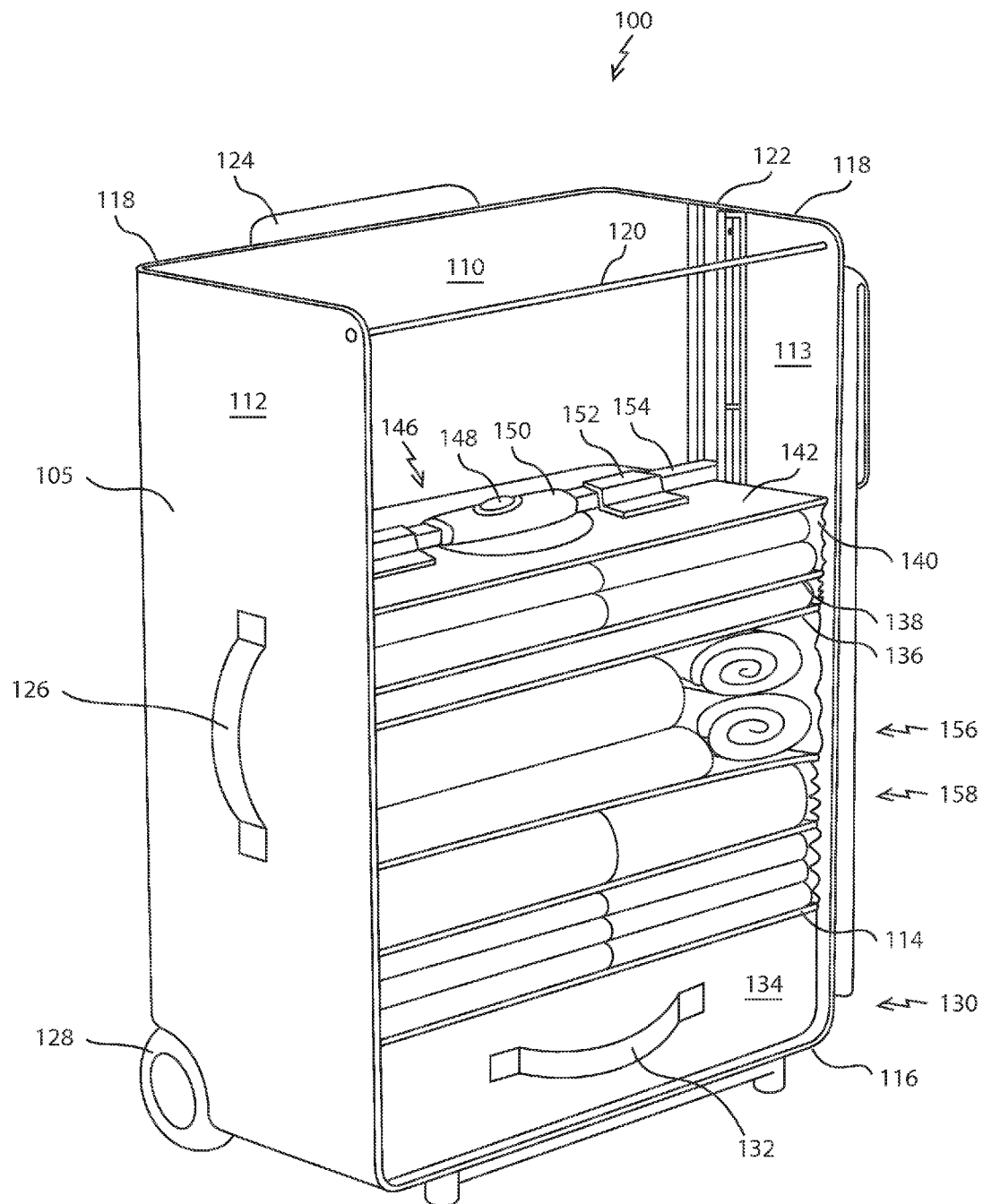


Fig. 1

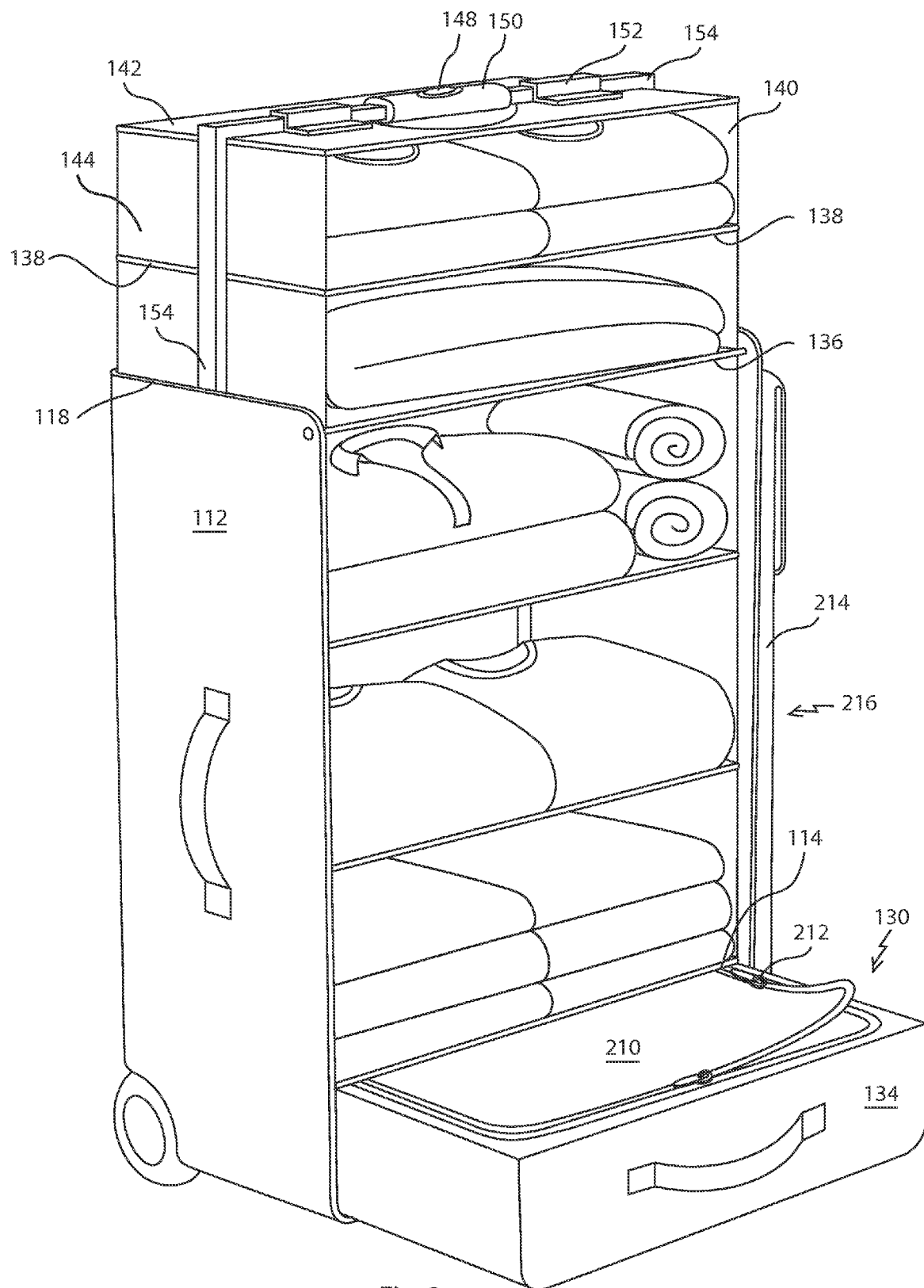


Fig. 2

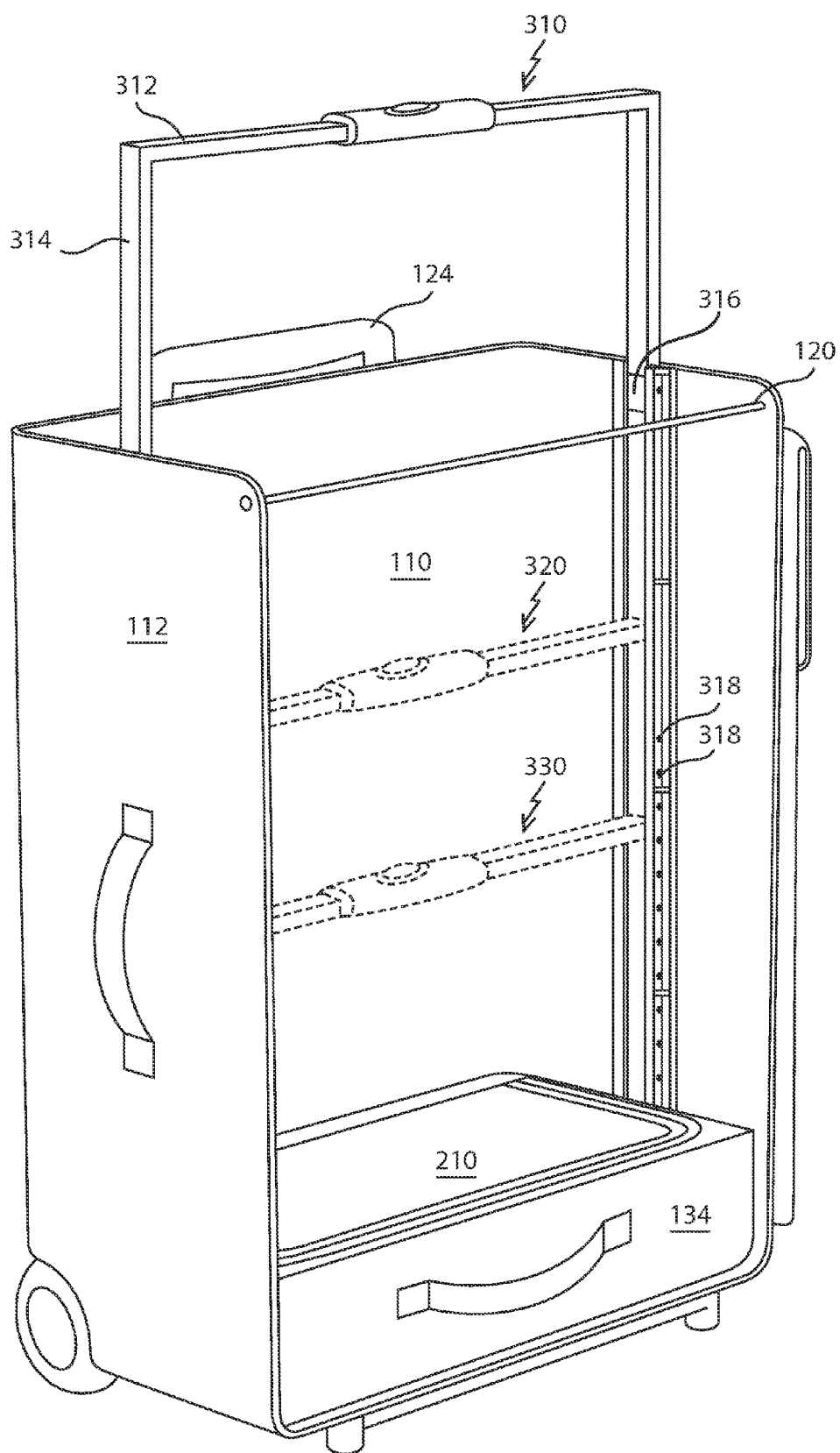


Fig.3

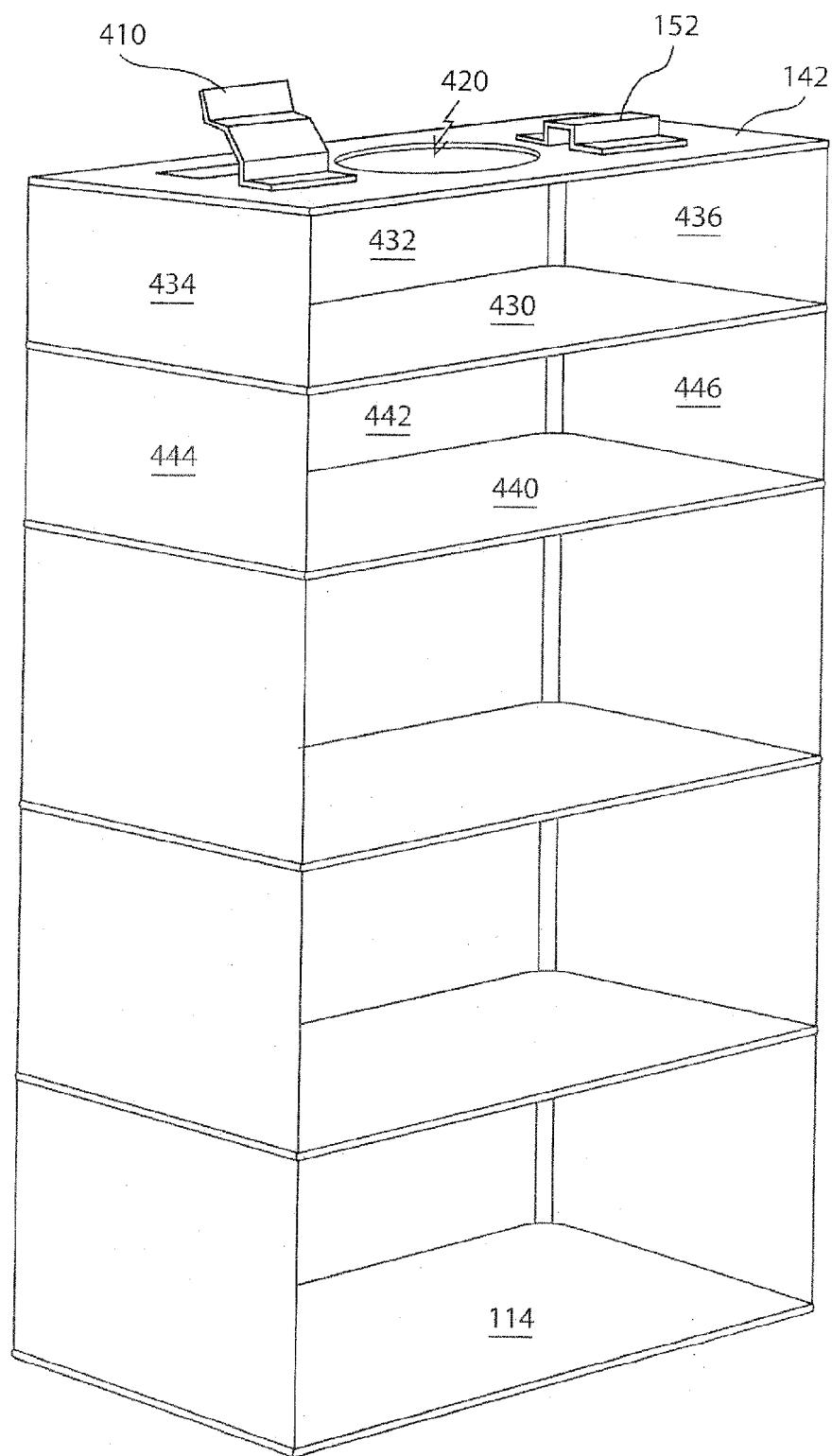


Fig. 4

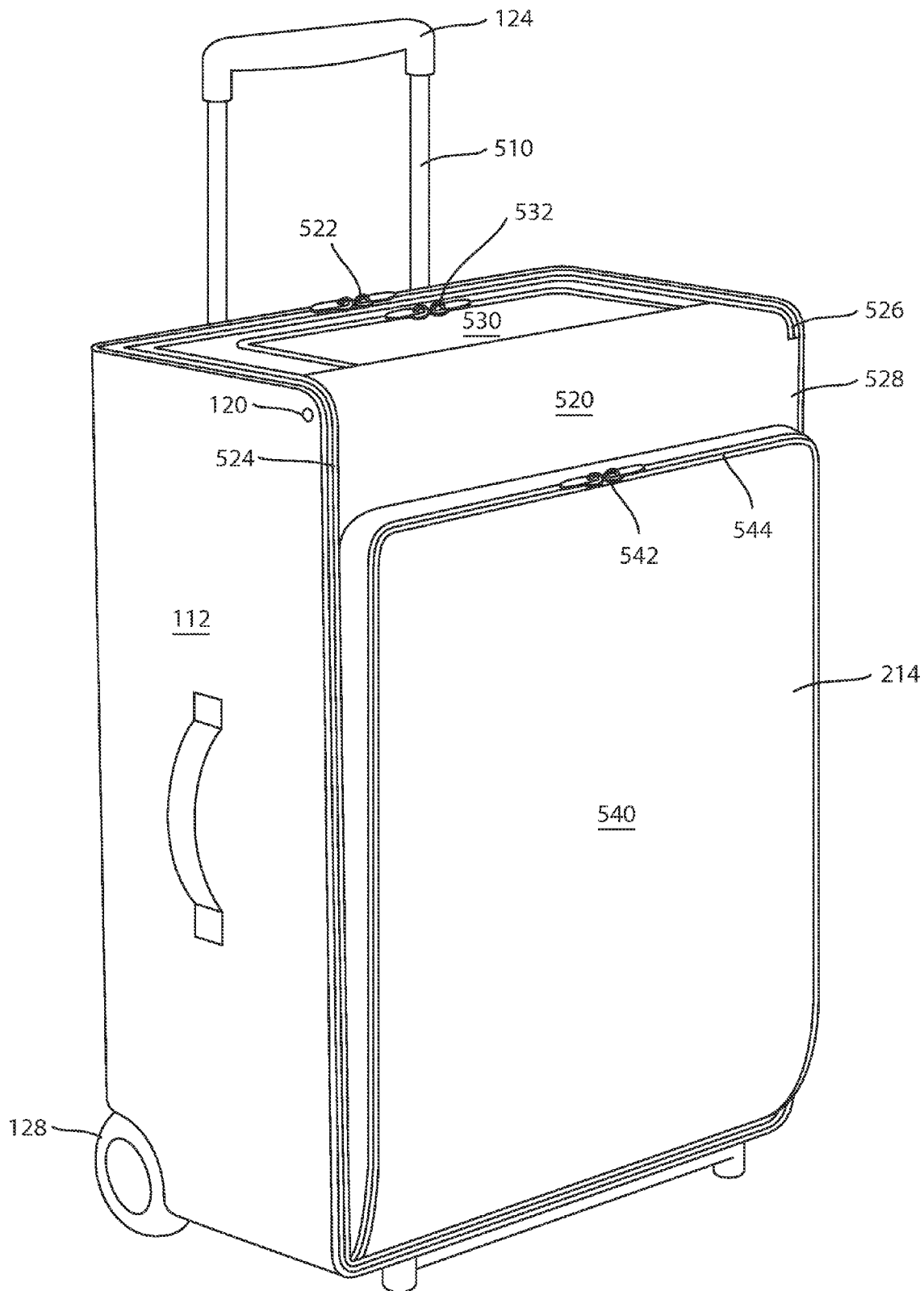


Fig.5

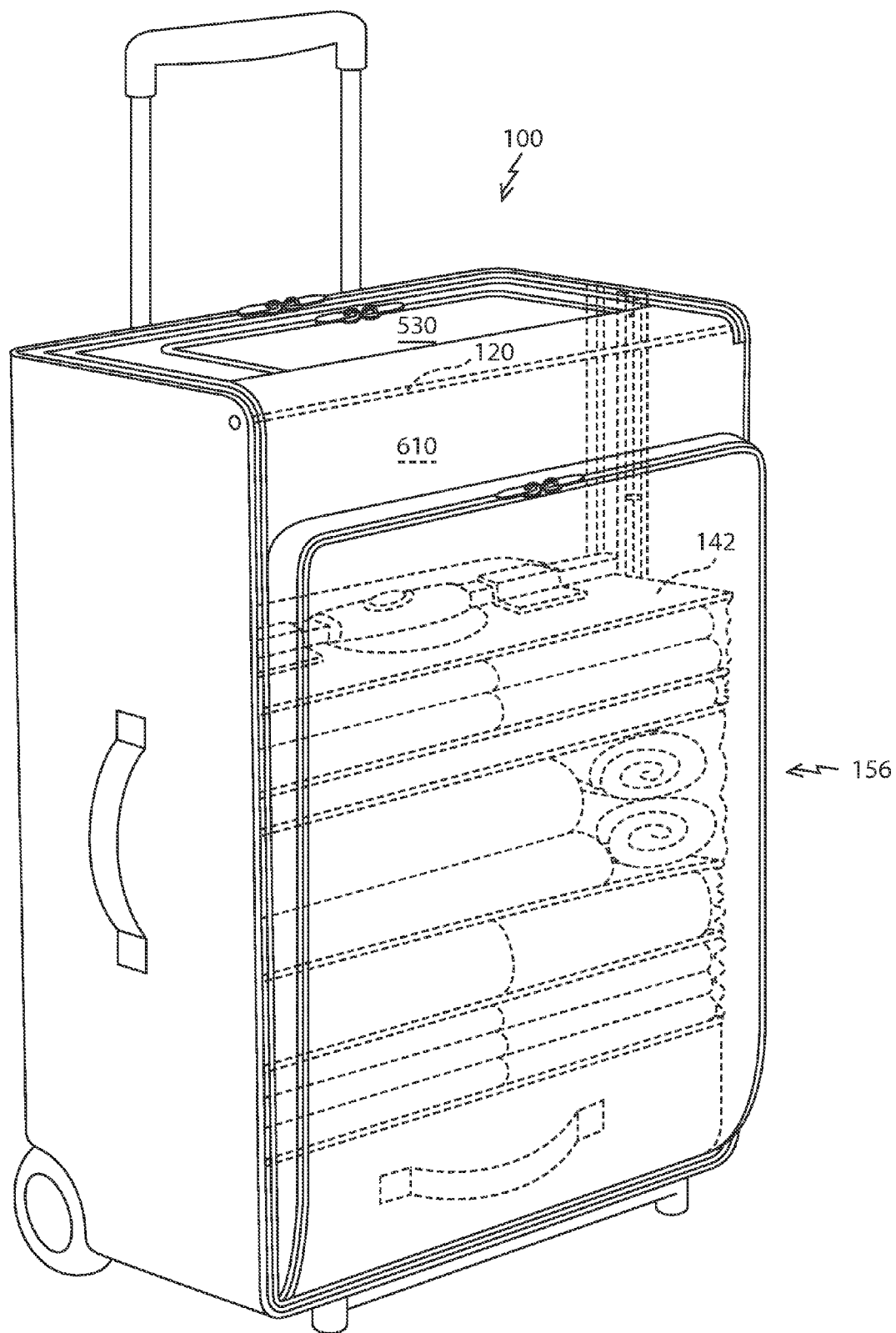


Fig. 6

COLLAPSIBLE SUITCASE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to portable bags, specifically expandable and collapsible suitcases.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] When traveling, clothes can be packed in suitcases. Clothes are packed in suitcases in layers, one item of clothing on top of another. However, packing this way does not allow for visibility of all the clothes in the suitcase at one time, and clothing items may be difficult to access. Also, packing this way often causes items to shift and clothes to wrinkle. In order to overcome these problems, some improvements have been made in the field. Examples include but are not limited to the references described below, which references are incorporated by reference herein:

[0005] U.S. Pat. No. 3,099, issued to Beackley, discloses a trunk. Within this trunk is placed a box which is open at top and which is so much smaller in length and width than the interior of the trunk as to leave a space of an inch and a half, more or less, between the two. The height of this interior box may be nearly equal to that of the trunk, to the bottom of which it is to be made fast by screws or otherwise. The space between the trunk and the box is to be occupied by sliding cases, usually three in number, which pass one within the other; the inner most of these sliding cases has a lid, furnished with hinges and a lock; the others are without either bottom or top, consisting of a back and two ends, which are fastened permanently together; and the front of each is furnished with a door, or doors, hinged on the sides in the manner of wardrobe doors.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 325,555, issued to Klein, is a body which is formed on sections A1 A2, which fit each other telescopically, whereby the section A2 may be drawn out at the end of the section A1, and thus extend the length of the body of the trunk.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 4,312,431, issued to Corey discloses a carrying case which has a telescoping wall structure for varying the carrying capacity of the case. The case has an articulated wall construction and includes a bottom section which is adapted to fit snugly for retention within the lower end of the top section without the use of fastener elements. The case is integrally formed with the top and bottom sections being interconnected by a flexible coupling panel.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 502,081, issued to Kern, is a wardrobe, the same being adapted to serve as an ordinary trunk for traveling purposes and to be opened and extended for the purpose of serving as a convenient receptacle for the clothing in an unpacked condition, and therefore adapted to support them suspended in the manner in which they are suspended in an ordinary wardrobe.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 623,913, issued to Kohout and Rous, discloses three compartments 2, 3, and 4, which are constructed to telescope one within the other, and each is provided with V-shaped stops 5, which engage with one with another when the said trunk is extended to its extreme height when desired to use the same as a wardrobe or cabinet.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 643,416, issued to Kohout and Roust discloses a combined trunk and wardrobe, composed of a trunk, sections arranged to telescope within said trunk, a tray provided with a plurality of drawers arranged upon the top of said sections within said trunk, and a lid or cover arranged

to fit over said sections and forming the top of the trunk, said sections and tray so arranged that the same may be transformed into a wardrobe by removing said sections and reversing the same, placing one upon top of the other, said sections supported by angular strips, said sections provided with suitable doors, and a bar extending across the top of said upper section provided with coat hooks, said tray forming the top of said wardrobe and provided with drawers substantially as specified.

[0011] However, such improvements generally fail to adequately prevent clothes from being wrinkled during transportation, and/or have limited features, adaptability, visibility, accessibility, secureability, convenience, and/or ease of use.

[0012] What is needed is a collapsible suitcase that solves one or more of the problems described herein and/or one or more problems that may come to the attention of one skilled in the art upon becoming familiar with this specification.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] The present invention has been developed in response to the present state of the art, and in particular, in response to the problems and needs in the art that have not yet been fully solved by currently available liner supports of carrying cases. Accordingly, the present invention has been developed to provide a container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode.

[0014] In one embodiment, there may be a container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode, including: an exterior shell having: a top edge; a bottom wall disposed opposite the top edge, and/or a back wall coupled to the bottom wall; and/or a top planar member, for compressing storage space, selectably coupleable to the exterior shell at a plurality of vertical positions between the top edge and the bottom wall.

[0015] In another embodiment, the container may include: a flexible member coupled to each of and between the top planar member and the bottom wall; and/or a middle planar member, for storing as a shelf, coupled to the flexible member between the top planar member and/or the bottom wall and/or oriented substantially parallel to the top planar member.

[0016] In still another embodiment, the container may include: a first side wall coupled to the bottom wall and/or to the back wall; a second side wall coupled to the bottom wall and/or to the back wall; and/or a front cover coupled to each of the second side wall and/or bottom wall and/or removably coupleable to the first side wall, wherein the front cover restricts access to the middle planar member when the front cover may be coupled to the first side wall.

[0017] In yet another embodiment, the front cover may be removably coupleable to the top edge and restricts access to the top planar member when the front cover may be coupled to the top edge.

[0018] In still yet another embodiment, the container may include a support member, configured to provide lateral support to the exterior shell, coupled to the first side wall near a top front edge and/or to the second side wall near a top front edge.

[0019] In a further embodiment, the container may include a track coupled to the exterior shell and extending from near a bottom of the exterior shell to near a top of the exterior shell, wherein the top planar member selectably couples to the track at a plurality of vertical positions.

[0020] In still a further embodiment, the container may include a first side wall coupled to the bottom wall and/or the back wall, wherein the track is coupled to the first side wall.

[0021] In yet a further embodiment, the container may include an actuatable securing device coupled to the top planar member, wherein in a first actuation position the securing device may be fixedly coupled to the track and in a second actuation position the securing device may be slidably coupled to the track.

[0022] In still yet a further embodiment, the container may include a drawer coupled to the exterior shell above the bottom wall. The drawer may be removably coupled, slidably coupled, and/or fixedly coupled.

[0023] In an additional embodiment, there may be a container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode, including: an exterior shell having an open top and defining a first cavity; and/or a compression assembly disposed in the cavity and/or accessible through the open top, wherein the compression assembly may be selectably coupleable at a plurality of positions within the cavity.

[0024] In still an additional embodiment, the container may include a shelf assembly coupled to the compression assembly and to the exterior shell.

[0025] In yet an additional embodiment, the exterior shell defines a second cavity and/or wherein the container further comprises a drawer assembly disposed within the second cavity.

[0026] In still yet an additional embodiment, the exterior shell includes a removable cover disposed over a front of the container.

[0027] In a different embodiment, the compression assembly may include: a top planar member; a handle coupled to the top planar member; an actuator coupled to the handle and having a first actuation position and/or a second actuation position; a locking member, mechanically coupled to the actuator and/or fixedly coupled to the top planar member, having a locked position and/or an unlocked position, wherein in the locked position the locking member may be fixedly coupled to the exterior shell and/or in the unlocked position the locking member may not be fixedly coupled to the exterior shell.

[0028] In still a different embodiment, the shelf assembly may further include a plurality of middle planar members coupled in an array each to a first flexible member and/or a second flexible member at opposite ends of each middle planar member, wherein the middle planar members may be substantially parallel one to another and/or distances between adjacent middle planar members may be variable. One or more of the middle planar members may be tilted at an angle from horizontal.

[0029] In yet a different embodiment, the drawer assembly may include: a drawer slidably disposable within the second cavity; and/or a drawer cover removably coupleable near a top edge of the drawer.

[0030] In still yet a different embodiment, the removable cover may be removably coupleable over a top of the exterior shell.

[0031] In even another embodiment a container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode, may include: an exterior shell having an open top and/or defining a first cavity and/or a second cavity; a compression assembly disposed in the cavity and/or accessible through the open top, wherein the compression assembly may be selectably coupleable at a plurality of positions within the cavity; a

shelf assembly coupled to the compression assembly and/or to the exterior shell; and/or a drawer assembly disposed within the second cavity.

[0032] In even a further embodiment, the compression assembly may include: a top planar member; a handle coupled to the top planar member; an actuator coupled to the handle and/or having a first actuation position and/or a second actuation position; a locking member, mechanically coupled to the actuator and/or fixedly coupled to the top planar member, having a locked position and/or an unlocked position, wherein in the locked position the locking member may be fixedly coupled to the exterior shell and/or in the unlocked position the locking member may not be fixedly coupled to the exterior shell.

[0033] In even an additional embodiment, the shelf assembly may include a plurality of middle planar members coupled in an array each to a first flexible member and/or a second flexible member at opposite ends of each middle planar member, wherein the middle planar members may be substantially parallel one to another and distances between adjacent middle planar members may be variable; and/or the drawer assembly may include: a drawer slidably disposable within the second cavity; and/or a drawer cover removably coupleable near a top edge of the drawer.

[0034] In one embodiment, the container contains clothes and may be compressed and extended such that all of the items in the container may be viewed at the same time without creating wrinkles in clothes

[0035] Reference throughout this specification to features, advantages, or similar language does not imply that all of the features and advantages that may be realized with the present invention should be or are in any single embodiment of the invention. Rather, language referring to the features and advantages is understood to mean that a specific feature, advantage, or characteristic described in connection with an embodiment is included in at least one embodiment of the present invention. Thus, discussion of the features and advantages, and similar language, throughout this specification may, but do not necessarily, refer to the same embodiment.

[0036] Furthermore, the described features, advantages, and characteristics of the invention may be combined in any suitable manner in one or more embodiments. One skilled in the relevant art will recognize that the invention can be practiced without one or more of the specific features or advantages of a particular embodiment. In other instances, additional features and advantages may be recognized in certain embodiments that may not be present in all embodiments of the invention.

[0037] These features and advantages of the present invention will become more fully apparent from the following description and appended claims, or may be learned by the practice of the invention as set forth hereinafter.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0038] In order for the advantages of the invention to be readily understood, a more particular description of the invention briefly described above will be rendered by reference to specific embodiments that are illustrated in the appended drawings. Understanding that these drawings depict only typical embodiments of the invention and are not therefore to be considered to be limiting of its scope, the

invention will be described and explained with additional specificity and detail through the use of the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0039] FIG. 1 illustrates a perspective view of the container for carrying and storing contents in an open and compressed mode, according to one embodiment of the invention;

[0040] FIG. 2 illustrates a perspective view of the container for carrying and storing contents in an open and extended mode, according to one embodiment of the invention;

[0041] FIG. 3 illustrates a perspective view of the container for carrying and storing contents in an open and extended mode, a portion of the container being broken away to show details of construction, according to one embodiment of the invention;

[0042] FIG. 4 illustrates a perspective view of the interior of the container for carrying and storing contents in an open and extended mode, according to one embodiment of the invention;

[0043] FIG. 5 illustrates a perspective view of the container for carrying and storing contents in a closed mode, according to one embodiment of the invention; and

[0044] FIG. 6 illustrates a perspective view of the container for carrying and storing contents in a closed and compressed mode, according to one embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0045] For the purposes of promoting an understanding of the principles of the invention, reference will now be made to the exemplary embodiments illustrated in the drawings, and specific language will be used to describe the same. It will nevertheless be understood that no limitation of the scope of the invention is thereby intended. Any alterations and further modifications of the inventive features illustrated herein, and any additional applications of the principles of the invention as illustrated herein, which would occur to one skilled in the relevant art and having possession of this disclosure, are to be considered within the scope of the invention.

[0046] Reference throughout this specification to “one embodiment,” “an embodiment,” or similar language means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment of the present invention. Thus, appearances of the phrases “one embodiment,” “an embodiment,” and similar language throughout this specification may, but do not necessarily, all refer to the same embodiment, different embodiments, or component parts of the same or different illustrated invention. Additionally, reference to the wording “an embodiment,” or the like, for two or more features, elements, etc. does not mean that the features are related, dissimilar, the same, etc. The use of the term “an embodiment,” or similar wording, is merely a convenient phrase to indicate optional features, which may or may not be part of the invention as claimed.

[0047] Each statement of an embodiment is to be considered independent of any other statement of an embodiment despite any use of similar or identical language characterizing each embodiment. Therefore, where one embodiment is identified as “another embodiment,” the identified embodiment is independent of any other embodiments char-

acterized by the language “another embodiment.” The independent embodiments are considered to be able to be combined in whole or in part one with another as the claims and/or art may direct, either directly or indirectly, implicitly or explicitly.

[0048] Finally, the fact that the wording “an embodiment,” or the like, does not appear at the beginning of every sentence in the specification, such as is the practice of some practitioners, is merely a convenience for the reader’s clarity. However, it is the intention of this application to incorporate by reference the phrasing “an embodiment,” and the like, at the beginning of every sentence herein where logically possible and appropriate.

[0049] FIG. 1 illustrates a container 100 for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode according to one embodiment of the invention. The container 100 has an exterior shell 105. The illustrated exterior shell 105, has a back wall 110, a first side wall 112, a second side wall 113, a bottom wall 116, and a top edge, 118. The top assembly 146 of the container 100, has a top planar member 142, selectably coupleable to the exterior shell 105, at a plurality of positions along a track 122 fixedly coupled to the exterior shell 105. In operation, the top planar member 142 selectably couples to the track 122 at a plurality of locations, thereby enabling a user to selectably compress and/or extend a storage space 156.

[0050] In the illustrated embodiment, the container 100 further includes a first container handle 124 slidably coupled to the back wall 110, a second container handle 126 fixedly coupled to the first side wall 112, and a wheel 128 fixedly coupled to the bottom wall 116 for moving the container 100. In operation, the first container handle 124 is extended, downward force may be applied to the first container handle 124, and the first container handle 124 acts as a lever to tilt the container 100, and the container 100 is pulled to a desired location. In one embodiment, the handle may be biased on an extended or compressed mode. In operation, the second container handle 126 can be used to lift, pull, or push the container 100.

[0051] In the illustrated embodiment, the container 100 further includes a drawer 130, slidably coupled to the exterior shell 105, above the bottom wall 116. The drawer 130 has a drawer face 134 and a handle 132 fixedly coupled to the drawer face 134. Advantageously, the drawer 130 will allow for additional storage. In particular, the drawer 130 allows for storage of items that the traveler may want to keep hidden from view when the container 100 is in an open mode, for providing a shelf-type system of storage. Further, the drawer 130 may be independent from the compressed and extended modes, such that when the container is in the compressed mode, the drawer is not compressed. Still further, the drawer 130 may merely be a substantially non-compressible cavity. Advantageously, a user may place articles that may be sensitive to compression in the drawer 130. In operation, the drawer 130 is slidably extended from the exterior shell 105, items are inserted into the drawer 130, and the drawer 130 is slidably inserted into the exterior shell 105.

[0052] Looking to FIGS. 1 and 2, the container 100 further includes a support member 120 configured to provide lateral support to the exterior shell 105, coupled to the first side wall 112 and the second side wall 113 and near a front of the top edge 118. Advantageously, the support member 120 helps prevent deformation of the container 100 when in a com-

pressed mode. The support member 120 also keeps clothes from becoming wrinkled by maintaining the shape of the exterior shell 105, which allows for compression of the of the storage space 156. The support member 120 also acts as a support and/or guide for attachment of a removable cover 214 to the exterior shell 105.

[0053] FIGS. 1 and 2 also illustrate an actuatable securing device 154 fixedly coupled to the top planar member 142, and side planar member 144, by a bracket 152. As illustrated, coupled to the actuatable securing device 154 is an actuating handle 150, with an actuator button 148. In operation, the actuatable securing device 154 compresses and/or extends the storage space 156 as shown by compressed storage portion 158 and extended storage portion 216.

[0054] In one non-limiting example, actuator button 148 may enable the actuatable securing device 154 to be locked into a compressed and/or extended position. For example, the actuator button 148 may be fixedly coupled to a flexible cord within the actuatable securing device 154, and the flexible cord may be fixedly coupled to springing protrusions which selectively couple to a plurality of vertical positions along the track 122. For example, when the actuator button 148 is pressed, the flexible cord shortens and pulls the springing protrusions from the vertical positions, allowing the actuatable securing device 154 to slidably extend and/or compress the storage space 156. For example, when the actuator button 148 is released, the flexible cord assumes its original length, and the springing protrusions protrude into the vertical positions, locking the actuatable securing device 154 into a compressed and/or extended position.

[0055] In addition, illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, the container 100 further includes a flexible member 140 coupled to each of and between the top planar member 142 and the bottom wall 116, and middle planar members 136 and 138, coupled to the flexible member 140 between the top planar member 142 and the bottom wall 116 and oriented substantially parallel to the top planar member 142. In operation, the middle planar members 136 and 138 are used as a shelf for storing. There is also a bottom shelf 114, coupled to the exterior shell 105, and may be supported by the drawer 130 and/or the exterior shell 105. In one non-limiting example, the flexible member 140, the top planar member 142, the bottom wall 116, and middle planar members 136 and 138, may be as described by FIG. 9 of U.S. Patent Application Publication No.: 2006/0000681, by Barker et al., which is incorporated by reference herein.

[0056] FIG. 2 illustrates the container 100 in an open and extended mode. The drawer 130 is extended and there is a drawer cover 210 removably coupled to the drawer face 134 of the drawer 130 with a zipper 212. The removable cover 214 is also in an open mode. In operation, the removable cover 214, may be removed, the drawer 120 may be extended, and the storage space 156 is extended to form the extended storage portion 216.

[0057] FIG. 3 illustrates a compression mode of the container 100. There is a top actuatable securing device 312 fixedly coupled to a side actuatable securing device 314. The side actuatable securing device 314 may be selectably coupled to the track 122 (see FIG. 1) at a plurality of vertical positions 318. The side actuatable securing device may be locked into place by a locking member 316 fixedly coupled to the side actuatable securing device 314 and selectably coupled to the track 122.

[0058] In operation, downward force may be applied to the top actuatable securing device 312, compressing the side actuatable securing device 314 into a compressed position 320 and a further compressed position 330. Alternatively, upward force may be applied to the top actuatable securing device 312, extending the side actuatable securing device 314 into an extended position 310. In one embodiment, the locking member 316 may have a male portion which is selectably coupleable to a female portion of the track 122.

[0059] In one non-limiting example, the top actuatable securing device 312 and side actuatable securing device 314 may house a coupling between the actuator button 148 (see FIG. 1) and the plurality of vertical positions 318. For example, the coupling may be a flexible cord fixedly coupled to springing protrusions. For example, when the actuator button 148 is pressed, the flexible cord shortens and pulls the springing protrusions from the vertical positions 318, allowing the side actuatable securing device 314 to slidably extend and/or compress the storage space 156 (see FIG. 1). For example, when the actuator button 148 is released, the flexible cord assumes its original length, and the springing protrusions protrude into the vertical positions 318, locking the side actuatable securing device 314 into a compressed and/or extended position.

[0060] FIG. 4 illustrates the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440, of the container 100 in an extended mode. There is a bottom shelf 114, a series of middle shelves 440 and 430, and a top planar member 142 which are suspended by flexible walls 432, 434, 436, 442, 444, and 446, fixedly connected to the middle shelves 440 and 430. In addition, there may be an aperture 420 which facilitates grasping the top actuatable securing device 312 by allowing a hand to reach around the top actuatable securing device 312. Also, the brackets 152 and 410 may be removably coupled to the top planar member 142.

[0061] In operation, when the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440 is compressed, the flexible walls 432, 434, 436, 442, 444, and 446 bend and/or fold in substantially an accordion fashion, and the middle shelves 430 and 440 and top planar member 142, remain substantially parallel to the bottom shelf 114, and clothing and other items are secured. When the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440 is extended, the flexible walls 432, 434, 436, 442, 444, and 446 extend so that walls 434 and 444 are substantially parallel to walls 436 and 446, and the middle shelves 430 and 440 and top planar member 142 are substantially parallel to the bottom shelf 114. Also, when the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440 is extended, walls 432, 434 and 436 and walls 442, 444, and 446 form larger cavities for storing clothing and other items. In addition, the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440 may be removed from the container 100. For example, the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440 could be as described by FIG. 9 of U.S. Patent Application Publication No.: 2006/0000681, by Barker et al., which is incorporated by reference herein.

[0062] It is envisioned that in one embodiment of the invention, the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440 may be removed from the exterior shell 105. Accordingly, a user may be enabled to wash the shelving unit 114, 142, 430, and 440 separately from the exterior shell.

[0063] FIG. 5 illustrates the container 100 in a closed mode. The removable cover 214 has a front cover portion 520 and a top cover portion 530. The removable cover 214 is coupled to the container 100 by a zipper 522 that runs

along the edge of the first side wall 112 and the top edge 118. The top cover 530 also has an inner zipper 532 to open a smaller area of the top cover portion 530. The container removable cover 214 also has a pocket 540 that is coupled to the removable cover 214 by a zipper 542 that runs along the edge of the pocket 540. The illustrated embodiment also shows the support member 120 and the wheel 128. In operation, the container 100 is compressed and closed and the first container handle 124 is slidably extends the lever 510 for moving the container 100.

[0064] FIG. 6 illustrates the container 100 in a compressed and closed mode. The storage space 156 is compressed. The support member 120 enables the exterior shell 105 to keep its shape when the storage space 156 is compressed and the container 100 is closed by supporting the removable cover 214, which creates a compression space 610 between the top planar member 142 and the top cover portion 530.

[0065] In operation, the storage space 156 is compressed, and the removable cover 214 encloses the storage space 156 and the compression space 610, so that the exterior of the container 100 retains its size and shape during transportation. For example, compressing the storage space 156 secures items stored inside the container 100 and prevents clothing from becoming wrinkled. Also, since the shape and size of the exterior of the container 100 remains intact, even when the storage space 156 is compressed, the container 100 is safely and easily transported as the container 100 does not have any protruding exterior edges.

[0066] It is understood that the above-described embodiments are only illustrative of the application of the principles of the present invention. The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiment is to be considered in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claim rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

[0067] For example, one skilled in the art would know that a variety of mechanisms could be used to selectably couple the top planar member 142 to the exterior shell 105 at a plurality of positions along the track 122, such as, a telescoping unit, a rack and pinion, and other such mechanisms known in the art.

[0068] Additionally, although the figures illustrate a single drawer 130, there may be a plurality of drawers or no drawer at all.

[0069] It is also envisioned that the brackets 152 and 410 may be partially and/or completely removable.

[0070] It is expected that there could be numerous variations of the design of this invention. While generally, the container 100 may be substantially rectangular, the container 100 may have various shapes and sizes, including, but not limited to: square, circular, oblong, oval, and trapezoidal.

[0071] While a particular configuration is illustrated, especially with regard to the track mechanism, it is understood that the devices which may be used to allow for compression and/or extension of the shelves is plethora. Non-limiting examples include: friction fitting; accordion folding structure (scissor-type scaffolding); multiple tracks; single track; and telescoping pole.

[0072] Finally, it is envisioned that the components of the device may be constructed of a variety of materials. For

example, the exterior shell 105 of the container 100 could be made from a variety of textiles, metals, and other materials known in the art. One skilled in the art would also know that the mechanical components of the container 100 could be constructed from a variety of metals, plastics, and other materials known in the art, and that the flexible member could be composed of textiles and other materials known in the art to be flexible.

[0073] Thus, while the present invention has been fully described above with particularity and detail in connection with what is presently deemed to be the most practical and preferred embodiment of the invention, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that numerous modifications, including, but not limited to, variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use may be made, without departing from the principles and concepts of the invention as set forth in the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode, comprising:

an exterior shell having:

a top edge;
a bottom wall disposed opposite the top edge, and
a back wall coupled to the bottom wall; and

a top planar member, for compressing storage space, selectably coupleable to the exterior shell at a plurality of vertical positions between the top edge and the bottom wall.

2. The container of claim 1, further comprising:

a flexible member coupled to each of and between the top planar member and the bottom wall; and

a middle planar member, for storing as a shelf, coupled to the flexible member between the top planar member and the bottom wall and oriented substantially parallel to the top planar member.

3. The container of claim 2, further comprising:

a first side wall coupled to the bottom wall and to the back wall;

a second side wall coupled to the bottom wall and to the back wall; and

a front cover coupled to the second side wall and removably coupleable to the first side wall, wherein the front cover restricts access to the middle planar member when the front cover is coupled to the first side wall.

4. The container of claim 3, wherein the front cover is removably coupleable to the top edge and restricts access to the top planar member when the front cover is coupled to the top edge.

5. The container of claim 4, further comprising a support member, configured to provide lateral support to the exterior shell, coupled to the first side wall near a top front edge and to the second side wall near a top front edge.

6. The container of claim 1, further comprising a track coupled to the exterior shell and extending from near a bottom of the exterior shell to near a top of the exterior shell, wherein the top planar member selectably couples to the track at a plurality of vertical positions.

7. The container of claim 6, further comprising a first side wall coupled to the bottom wall and the back wall, wherein the track is coupled to the first side wall.

8. The container of claim 7, further comprising an actuable securing device coupled to the top planar member, wherein in a first actuation position the securing device is

fixedly coupled to the track and in a second actuation position the securing device is slidably coupled to the track.

9. The container of claim 1, further comprising a drawer coupled to the exterior shell above the bottom wall.

10. A container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode, comprising:

an exterior shell having an open top and defining a first cavity; and

a compression assembly disposed in the cavity and accessible through the open top, wherein the compression assembly is selectably coupleable at a plurality of positions within the cavity.

11. The container of claim 10, further comprising a shelf assembly coupled to the compression assembly and to the exterior shell.

12. The container of claim 10, wherein the exterior shell defines a second cavity and wherein the container further comprises a drawer assembly disposed within the second cavity.

13. The container of claim 10, wherein the exterior shell further comprises a removable cover disposed over a front of the container.

14. The container of claim 10, wherein the compression assembly further comprises:

a top planar member;

a handle coupled to the top planar member;

an actuator coupled to the handle and having a first actuation position and a second actuation position;

a locking member, mechanically coupled to the actuator and fixedly couple to the top planar member, having a locked position and an unlocked position, wherein in the locked position the locking member is fixedly coupled to the exterior shell and in the unlocked position the locking member is not fixedly coupled to the exterior shell.

15. The container of claim 11, wherein the shelf assembly further comprises a plurality of middle planar members coupled in an array each to a first flexible member and a second flexible member at opposite ends of each middle planar member, wherein the middle planar members are substantially parallel one to another and distances between adjacent middle planar members are variable.

16. The container of claim 12, wherein the drawer assembly further comprises:

a drawer slidably disposable within the second cavity; and
a drawer cover removably coupleable near a top edge of the drawer.

17. The container of claim 13, wherein the removable cover is removably coupleable over a top of the exterior shell.

18. A container for carrying and storing contents in a compressed mode, comprising:

an exterior shell having an open top and defining a first cavity and a second cavity;

a compression assembly disposed in the cavity and accessible through the open top, wherein the compression assembly is selectably coupleable at a plurality of positions within the cavity;

a shelf assembly coupled to the compression assembly and to the exterior shell; and

a drawer assembly disposed within the second cavity.

19. The container of claim 18, wherein the compression assembly further comprises:

a top planar member;

a handle coupled to the top planar member;

an actuator coupled to the handle and having a first actuation position and a second actuation position;

a locking member, mechanically coupled to the actuator and fixedly coupled to the top planar member, having a locked position and an unlocked position, wherein in the locked position the locking member is fixedly coupled to the exterior shell and in the unlocked position the locking member is not fixedly coupled to the exterior shell.

20. The container of claim 19, wherein:

the shelf assembly further comprises a plurality of middle planar members coupled in an array each to a first flexible member and a second flexible member at opposite ends of each middle planar member, wherein the middle planar members are substantially parallel one to another and distances between adjacent middle planar members are variable; and

the drawer assembly further comprises:

a drawer slidably disposable within the second cavity; and

a drawer cover removably coupleable near a top edge of the drawer.

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