



US 20060013512A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**

Shaw

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2006/0013512 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Jan. 19, 2006**

(54) **FOLDABLE BLANK IN USE WITH A BAG MATERIAL FOR SECURING AND RETAINING ARTICLES OF EVIDENCE IN TAMPER-EVIDENT FASHION**

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
B65D 33/14 (2006.01)
B65D 33/06 (2006.01)
B65D 33/02 (2006.01)
B65D 1/34 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **383/5; 383/15; 383/34; 206/554**

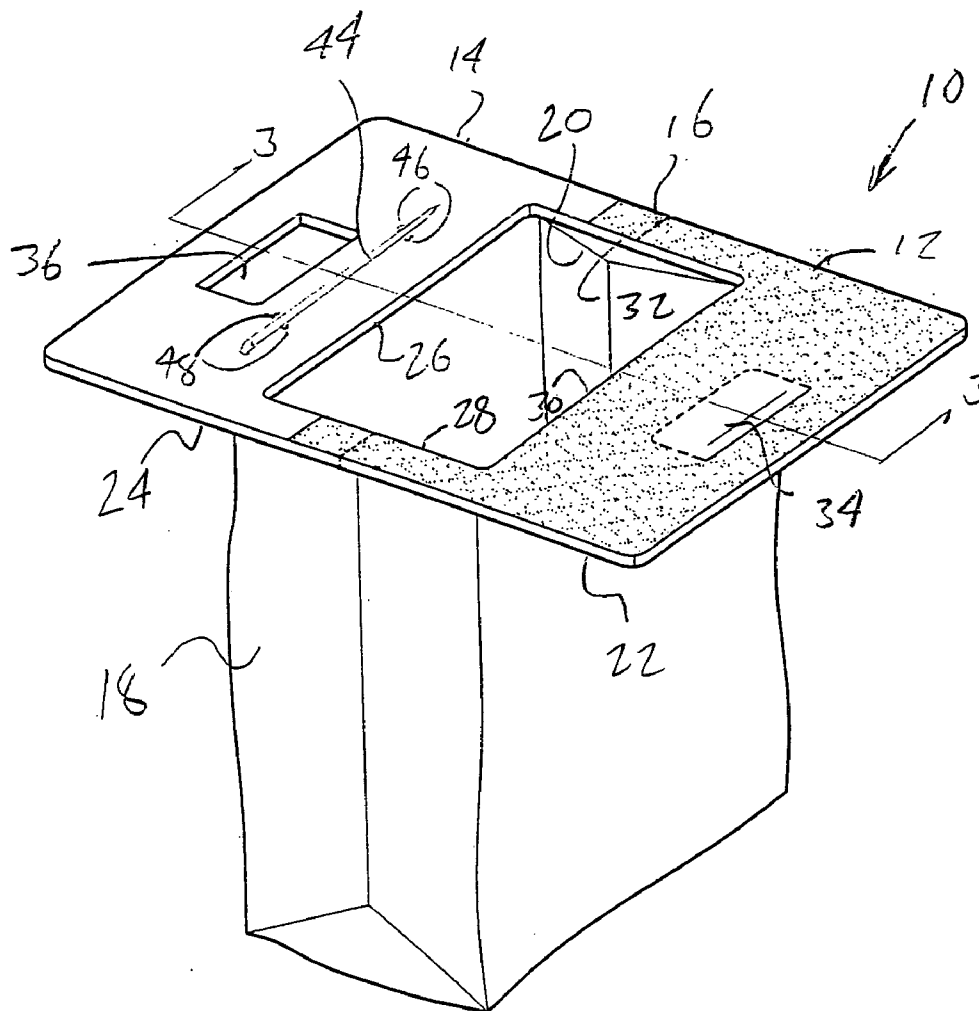
(76) **Inventor: Raymond R. Shaw, Farmington Hills, MI (US)**

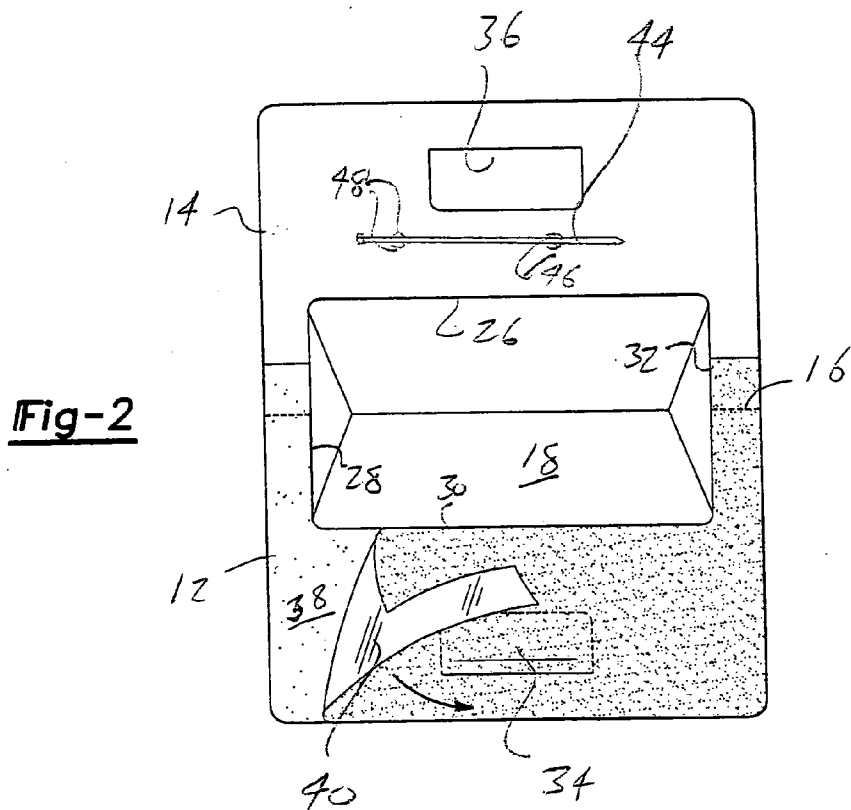
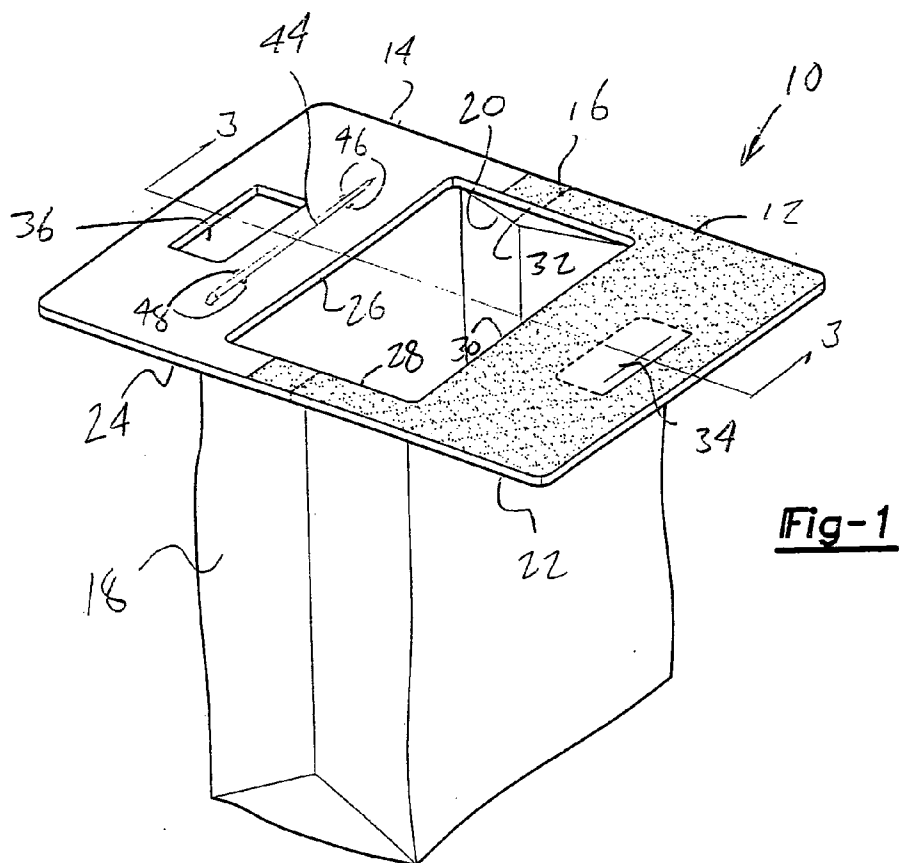
Correspondence Address:
GIFFORD, KRASS, GROH, SPRINKLE & CITKOWSKI, P.C
PO BOX 7021
TROY, MI 48007-7021 (US)

(57) **ABSTRACT**
 A tamper-evident evidence bag including a blank having first and second planar shaped and pivotally connected panels. The bag has an open perimeter edge and is secured to first selected facing surfaces of the pivotally connected panels and such that an interior of the bag is communicable through an aperture defined between the panels. The first and second panels are folded from an open position, in which they panels are established in a substantially parallel relationship, to a closed position in which opposingly facing surfaces of are adhered against one another and in order to maintain, in tamper-evident fashion, items placed within the bag enclosure.

(21) **Appl. No.: 10/891,347**

(22) **Filed: Jul. 14, 2004**





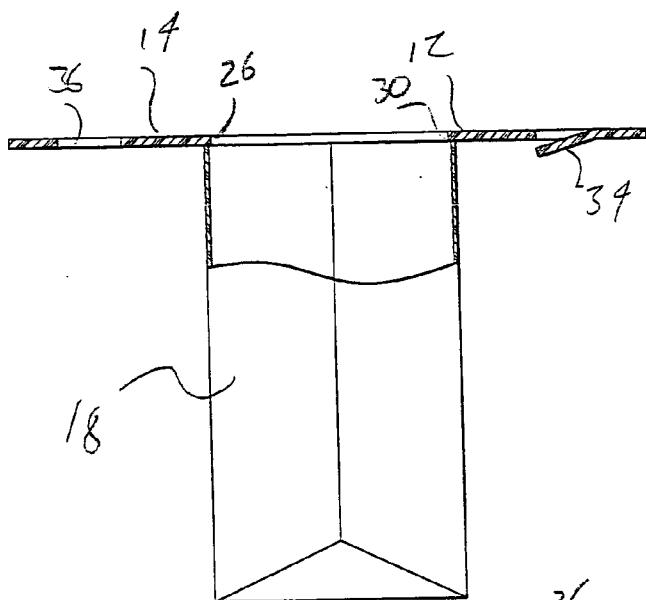


Fig-3

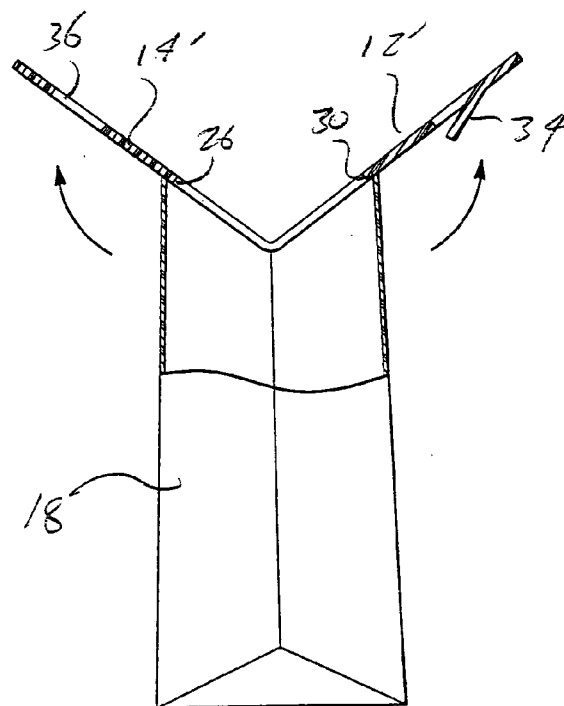


Fig-4

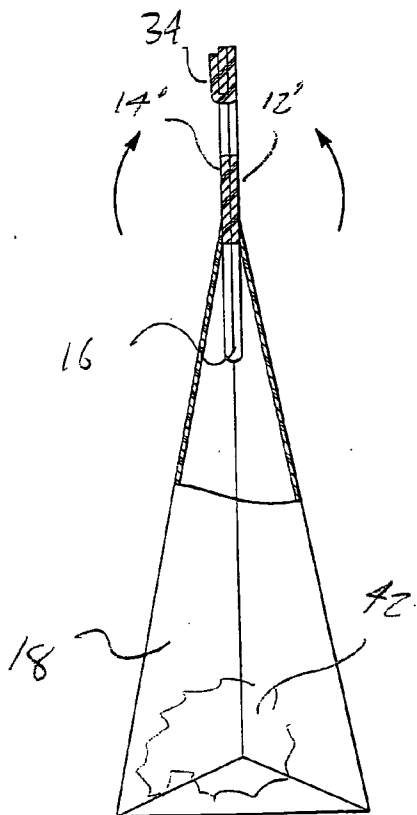


Fig-5

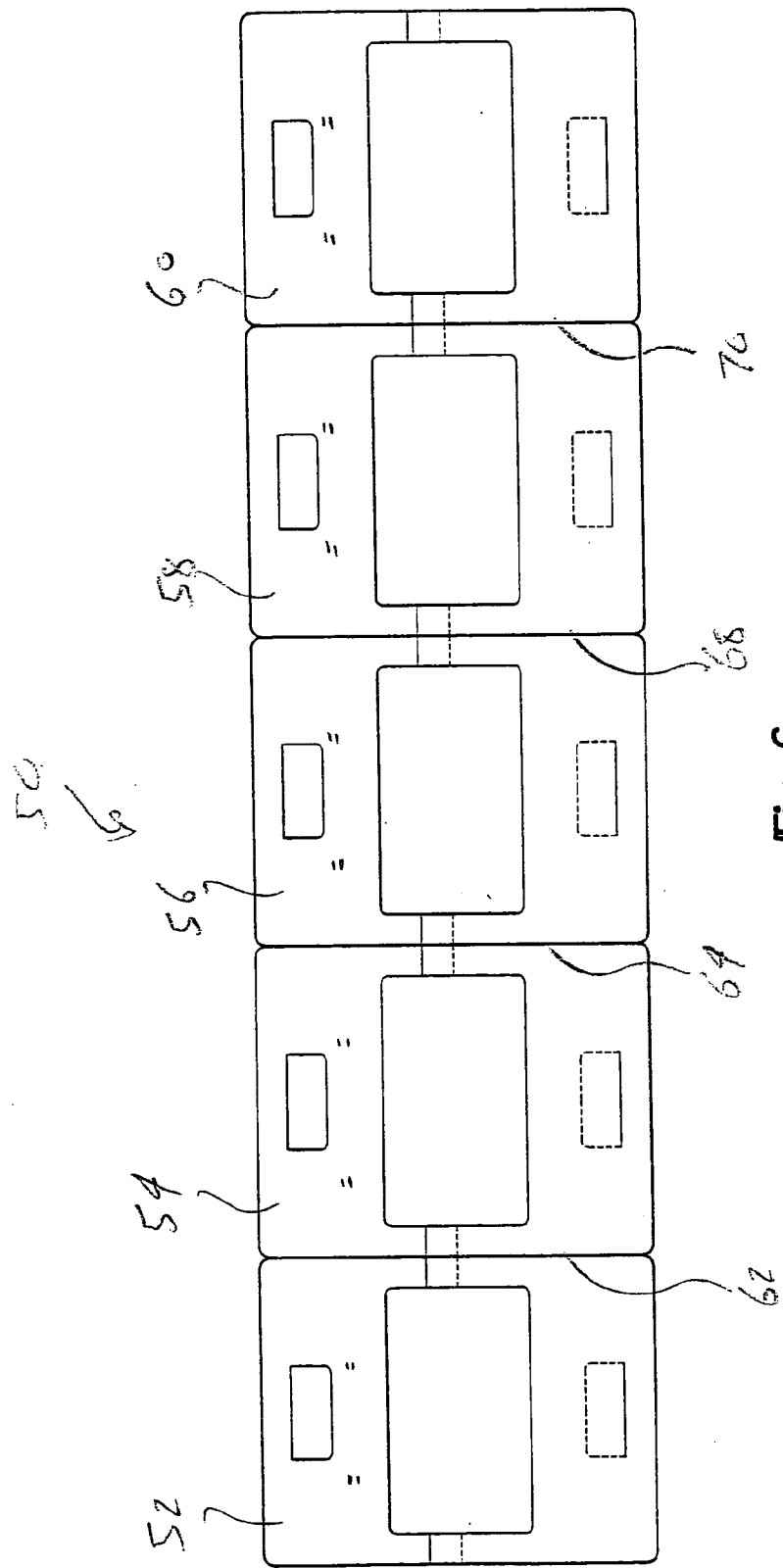


Fig-6

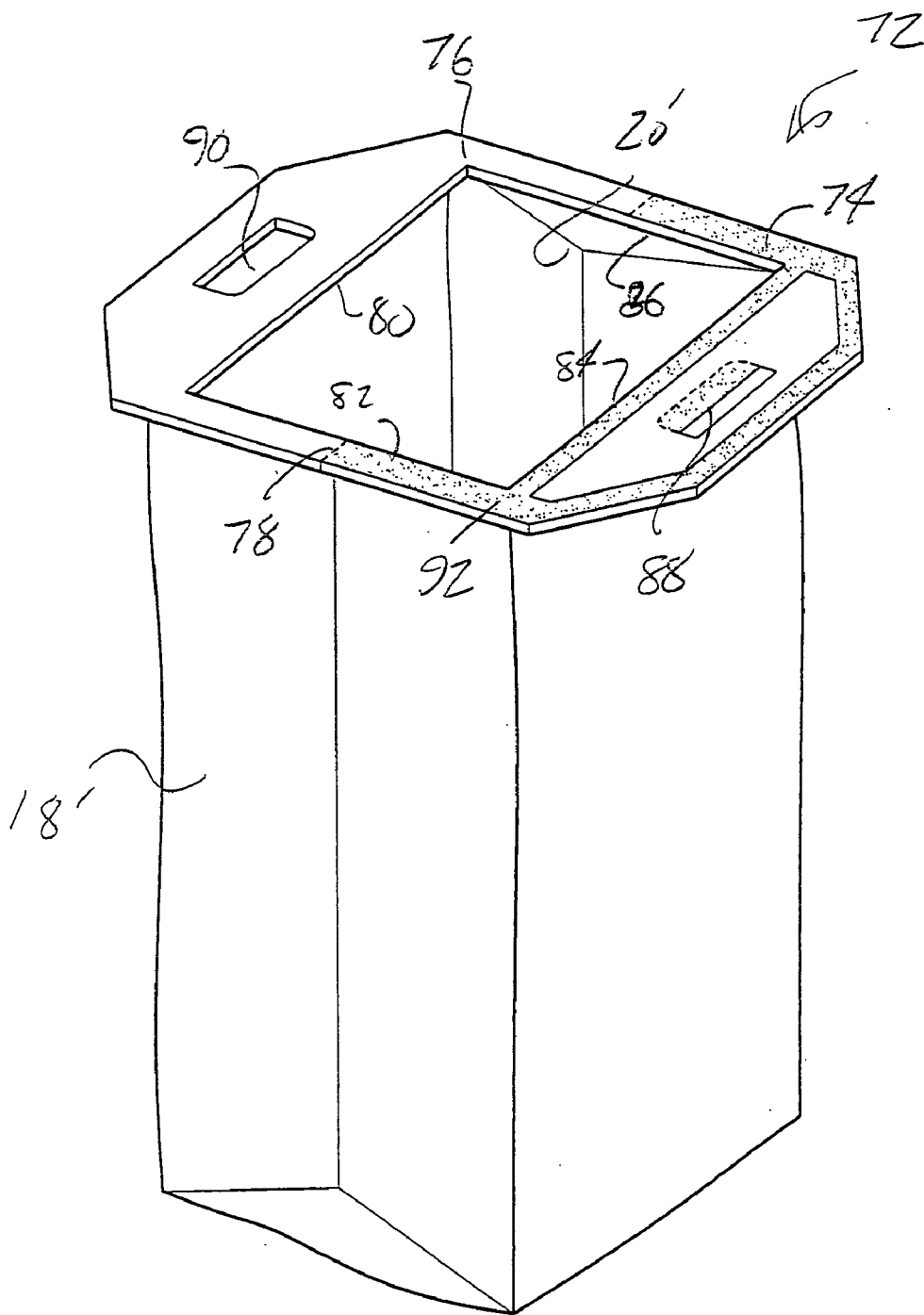


Fig-7

**FOLDABLE BLANK IN USE WITH A BAG
MATERIAL FOR SECURING AND RETAINING
ARTICLES OF EVIDENCE IN TAMPER-EVIDENT
FASHION**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates generally to a foldable and reclosable blank having an open center. More particularly, the present invention discloses a blank in use with an attachable bag-like structure for the purpose of providing for secure holding and retention of evidence, such as in particular by law enforcement personnel.

[0003] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0004] The prior art is well documented with varying examples of storage and retention articles, such including bag-like structures, containers and the like. These articles are configured for a variety of different uses, among these being the storage and retention of solids and fluids for varying applications.

[0005] U.S. Pat. No. 6,048,008, issued to Shaw, teaches a device for the removal and disposition of animal waste and which includes, in a preferred embodiment, a body consisting of first and second planar shaped members arranged in parallel extending and proximate fashion and such that the planar members define opposingly facing surfaces. First and second elongate handles extend from the planar members and a flexible bag having an open end and a closed end is fitted to the device so that the planar members define a perimeter of the open end. The first and second handles are engaged to outwardly actuate the first and second planar shaped members relative to one another and so that the open end of the bag encompasses a solid waste object setting upon a ground location. The opposingly facing surfaces of the planar shaped members are capable of grasping and elevating the solid waste object and the device is adapted to being inverted to deposit the object with the bag interior.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 5,186,900, issued to Jenson, teaches a blood collection and transportation assembly for evidentiary purposes and which includes an impact resistant outer container having a soft foam cushioning pad disposed across the bottom and top thereof. A protective wrap of plastic bubble packaging material surrounds a pair of blood sampling tubes and a multi-sample syringe assembly disposed between the cushioning pads. Additional items include a sealable evidence bag, tamper evidencing tapes, an instruction manual, a non-alcoholic swab, and a liquid absorbent packet contained therein. The outer container and its contents are initially enclosed and sealed in a tamper evidencing wrapper and such that the assembly can be subjected to rough handling with the contents of the blood sampling tubes remaining intact.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 4,653,113, issued to Taylor, teaches a security bag arrangement having a transparent polymeric material comprising a pair of side walls and a transverse weld forming a receptacle. A paper panel is applied on the inner surface of one side wall, and closure members in the form of strips of adhesive material join the other side wall to the paper panel in such a way that breaching of the adhesive material is evident by delaminating or tearing the panel.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 4,479,588, issued to Davis, teaches a sealed carton with tamper indicating means. An outermost closure panel is provided with a tuck flap which extends down between inner and outer panels of a double wall carton body wall, the inner surface of the tuck flap being bonded to the exterior surface of the inner panel to provide an inaccessible bond. Panels of the cartons which are bonded together have an accessible seam and may be provided with an arrangement of weakening lines so that, if one attempts to destroy the bond using a knife or razor blade, the exposed outer panel will give evidence of rupturing and thus indicate tampering even though the two panels are later resealed. The inner panels may further include an arrangement of weakening lines which match that of the exterior panel and which may be arranged in rows extending transversely of the panels so that the bonded together panels may be readily torn to effect an opening of the package.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 4,573,634, issued to Kohler et al., teaches another example of a one-piece tamper-evident paperboard carton having overlapped end flaps secured to each other in such a way that the ends of the carton cannot be opened without tearing the paperboard and so that observation of the carton would indicate that it had been previously opened.

[0010] Finally, U.S. Pat. No. 4,614,297, issued to Davis et al., teaches a tamper resistant carton wherein the outermost closure flap is provided with a sealing flap of which at least a portion functions as a tuck flap and which passes between a front panel and a terminal inner panel with a tuck flap portion being bonded on its inner surface to the outer surface of the inner terminal panel in an inaccessible position whereby the carton cannot be opened without rupturing the same to the extent that tampering would be apparent.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

[0011] The present invention discloses a blank for use with an attachable bag-like structure, such including either a waterproof/non-fluid absorbent or fluid absorbent material, and for the purpose of providing for secure holding and retention of items of evidence. The present invention is particularly suited for use by law enforcement personnel in the collection of evidence for criminal prosecution.

[0012] A blank includes first and second planar shaped and pivotally connected panels. In a preferred application, the blank may be constructed either of a paperboard material or plasticized material, and which includes aligning handle cutout portions.

[0013] A bag includes an open perimeter edge and is secured to first selected facing surfaces of the pivotally connected panels. Typically, the bag exhibits a plurality of fold lines such that, upon expanding to a full open position, the blank is supported in an upwardly displaced position and such that an interior of the bag is communicable through an aperture defined between the panels.

[0014] The first and second panels are folded from an open position, following placement of evidentiary items within an interior of the bag, to a closed position in which opposingly facing surfaces of the panels are adhered against one another in order to maintain, in tamper-evident fashion, items placed within the bag enclosure. An adhesive surface covers at least a portion of at least one opposing surface of a panel and,

upon removal of a tear-away strip or like covering, permits the panels to be retrained in a tamper-evident fashion upon being folded together.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] Reference will now be made to the attached drawings, when read in combination with the following detailed description, wherein like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views, and in which:

[0016] **FIG. 1** is a perspective view of a foldable blank incorporated into an evidence bag according to a first preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0017] **FIG. 2** is a top view of the blank incorporated into **FIG. 1** and showing the feature of the tear-away adhesive strip for accomplishing sealing of the bag interior;

[0018] **FIG. 3** is a cutaway side view illustration taken along line 3-3 of **FIG. 1** and again illustrating the blank in a fully opened and loading position;

[0019] **FIG. 4** is a succeeding side view illustration of the blank in a partially sealed condition;

[0020] **FIG. 5** is a further succeeding side view illustration of the blank in a fully closed and sealed position;

[0021] **FIG. 6** is an illustration of a plurality of blanks and such as which may be produced according to a manufacturing process; and

[0022] **FIG. 7** is a perspective view of a foldable blank and evidence bag application according to a further preferred embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0023] Referring now to **FIG. 1**, a tamper-evident evidence bag is illustrated at **10** according to a first preferred embodiment of the present invention. As described previously, the present invention also discloses a blank in use with an attachable bag-like structure for the purpose of providing for secure holding and retention of evidence, such as in particular by law enforcement or crime scene investigation personnel.

[0024] As best shown in the illustrations of **FIGS. 1-5**, the tamper-evident evidence bag **10** includes a blank constructed of a first planar shaped panel **12** and a second panel **14** pivotally attached to the first panel **12** along center line **16**. The panels **12** and **14** each typically exhibit a substantially planar and polygonal shape and which are constructed of a paperboard (such as corrugated material for providing strength) or, alternatively, a plasticized or other suitable material exhibiting the necessary properties of strength and durability. The centerline **16** further exhibits a hinge which, as will be subsequently described, facilitates opening and closing of opposing facing surfaces of the panels **12** and **14** in the manner shown in **FIGS. 3-5**.

[0025] A bag **18** having an open perimeter edge (see as referenced at **20** in **FIG. 1**) is secured to first selected, and underside facing surfaces **22** and **24**, of the pivotally connected panels **12** and **14**. As illustrated, the bag **18** may be of a conventional paperboard variety and which exhibits a plurality of fold lines such that, upon expanding the bag to a full open position, the blank is supported in an upwardly

displaced position, and further such that an interior of the bag **18** is communicable through an aperture (see inwardly facing and rectangular defining side walls **26, 28, 30** and **32**) to defined between the panels **12** and **14**.

[0026] In a preferred application, the bag **18** is constructed of a somewhat fluid absorbent material, this typically being preferred in evidence gathering operations where it is necessary to maintain the integrity of items such as blood or semen covered clothing. In applications such as these, it has been found that a non-breathing, or waterproof/impermeable, material would result in compromising the contained evidence items. In additional applications, it is desired that the bag enclosure exhibit some degree of non-absorbency of fluids, and this may be provided either by substituting the paperboard bag material with another material exhibiting the necessary properties. Alternatively, it is also envisioned that a plasticized film or like suitable insert may be provided for placement within the paperboard bag enclosure in order to establish the necessary retention properties.

[0027] Referring again to **FIGS. 1 and 2**, the panels **12** and **14** each include aligning and cutout portions, see at **34** for panel **12** and at **36** for panel **14**. In particular, and in a preferred embodiment, the cutout portion **34** is provided as a pivotally attached portion and which, upon rotating the panels to the position illustrated in **FIG. 5**, engages through aligning aperture **36** in panel **14** and in order to further assist in securing the panels together. Although not further shown, it is envisioned and understood that carrying handles can be formed in the nature of extending or looped portions projecting from outermost extending edges of the panels **12** and **14**, or in any other suitable fashion to facilitate grasping and portability of the device.

[0028] An adhesive surface is represented, see at **38** in **FIG. 2**, upon at least a portion, and typically all, of an opposing and inwardly facing surface of the first panel **12** (this further being defined as being the surface opposite that to which the bag **18** is secured). In the preferred embodiment illustrated, the adhesive backing extends to a portion of the second panel **14** just beyond the contiguous and hinged center line **16** and it is also envisioned that the adhesive may extend across the entire opposing faces of the first and second panels.

[0029] A peel-away strip **40** (see again **FIG. 2**) may be provided and which, upon being removed from the adhesive backing **38**, permits the hingedly connected panels **12** and **14** to be pivoted, from the fully open position of **FIG. 3**, through the closing position (illustrated by intermediate positions **12'** and **14'** in **FIG. 4**), and to their closed and tamper-evident positions (see at **12"** and **14"** in **FIG. 5**) and upon pre-insertion of desired evidence items, see as further represented at **42** in **FIG. 5**. It is also envisioned that, within the scope of the present invention, the adhesive backing and peel-away strip can be substituted by other structure for securing together the opposing facing surfaces of the panels, these including the provisions of other types of mechanical or chemical based fasteners and including, without limitation, clips, heat staking portions and the like.

[0030] Referring again to **FIGS. 1 and 2**, an elongated wand element **44** (such as a sanitized pencil, chopstick or like item) is secured to one of the panels, in this instance panel **14**. The purpose of the wand may be twofold, firstly to provide for lifting and depositing of the evidence items in

a non-contaminating fashion and, secondly, to provide a convenient writing utensil for recording information relevant to the evidence item, and such as which may be provided upon an indicia recording surface of the bag or blank for recording such information. In a preferred embodiment, the wand element **44** is releasably secured to a surface of the panel (again **12** or **14**) and this may further include the provision at least one pair of opposing and biasingly resilient tabs, see pairs of tabs at **46** and **48**, extending from a surface of said panel and which grippingly engages therebetween said wand.

[0031] Referring further to **FIG. 6**, a general representation is shown at **50** of a plurality of blanks **52, 54, 56, 58** and **60**. The blanks **52-60** each exhibit a specified shape and size (and such as which are substantially identical to those described in reference to **FIGS. 1-5**), the blanks further being detachable engaged together along selected and interconnecting edges, see at **62, 64, 66, 68** and **70** and such as which may be produced according to a manufacturing process.

[0032] The illustration of **FIG. 6** is intended to illustrate that the blank design is usually produced separately from the bag (although the present invention also contemplates that the bag and blank can be produced together in certain embodiments). One envisioned manufacturing process contemplates a corrugated cardboard forming and stamping operation, succeeded by a cutting process for sectioning the individual blanks **52-60** at their interconnecting edges **62-70**.

[0033] Referring finally to **FIG. 7**, a general illustration is shown at **72** of a foldable blank and evidence bag application according to a further preferred embodiment of the present invention. A blank is provided, similar in function to that described in **FIGS. 1-5**, with the exception that the hingedly connected panels **74** and **76** are reconfigured such that they define a larger central opening, see hinged center line **78** and inwardly facing and aperture defining edges **80, 82, 84** and **86**.

[0034] Handle portions **88** and **90** are formed in the panels **74** and **76** and, as also with the first disclosed embodiment, an adhesive backing **92** is applied to the first panel **74**. The embodiment **72** of **FIG. 7** is generally understood to qualify as a larger-sized tamper-evident and sealable bag and in order to secure and retain larger sized evidence items, and which is further characterized by a larger sized bag **18'** with open perimeter edge **20'**.

[0035] Having described my invention, other and additional preferred embodiments will become apparent to those skilled in the art to which it pertains, and without deviating from the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A tamper-evident and sealable blank in use with an attached bag enclosure, said blank further comprising:

first and second planar shaped and pivotally connected panels, the bag including an open perimeter edge securing to first selected facing surfaces of said pivotally connected panels and such that an interior of the bag is communicable through an aperture defined between said panels; and

said first and second panels being folded from an open position to a closed position in which opposing facing surfaces of said panels are adhered against one another and in order to maintain, in tamper-evident fashion, items placed within the bag enclosure.

2. The invention as described in claim 1, further comprising an adhesive surface covering at least a portion of one of said opposing facing surfaces associated with a selected panel.

3. The invention as described in claim 2, further comprising a peel-away strip covering said adhesive surface.

4. The invention as described in claim 1, further comprising first and second aligning and cutout handle portions associating with said first and second pivotally connected panels.

5. The invention as described in claim 1, said blank having a specified shape and size and being constructed of a paperboard material.

6. The invention as described in claim 1, said blank having a specified shape and size and being constructed of a plasticized material.

7. The invention as described in claim 1, further comprising an elongated wand element secured to one of said panels.

8. The invention as described in claim 7, further comprising said wand element being releasably secured to said panel.

9. The invention as described in claim 8, further comprising at least one pair of opposing and biasingly resilient tabs extending from a surface of said panel and which grippingly engages therebetween said wand.

10. The invention as described in claim 1, further comprising a plurality of individual blanks, each having a specified shape and size, and being detachably engaged together along selected edges.

11. A tamper-evident evidence bag, comprising:

a blank having first and second planar shaped and pivotally connected panels;

a bag having an open perimeter edge and which is secured to first selected facing surfaces of said pivotally connected panels, and such that an interior of the bag is communicable through an aperture defined between said panels; and

said first and second panels being folded from an open position, in which said panels are established in a substantially parallel relationship, to a closed position, in which opposingly facing surfaces of said panels are adhered against one another and in order to maintain, in tamper-evident fashion, items placed within the bag enclosure.

12. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 11, further comprising an adhesive surface covering at least a portion of one of said opposing facing surfaces associated with a selected panel, a peel-away strip covering said adhesive surface.

13. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 11, further comprising first and second aligning and cutout handle portions associating with said first and second pivotally connected panels.

14. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 11, said blank having a specified shape and size and being constructed of a paperboard material.

15. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 11, said blank having a specified shape and size and being constructed of a plasticized material.

16. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 11, further comprising an elongated wand element secured to one of said panels.

17. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 16, further comprising at least one pair of opposing and biasingly resilient tabs extending from a surface of said panel and which grippingly engages therebetween said wand.

18. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 11, further comprising a plurality of individual blanks, each having a specified shape and size, and being detachably engaged together along selected edges.

19. A tamper-evident evidence bag, comprising:

a blank having first and second planar shaped and pivotally connected panels;

a bag having an open perimeter edge and which is secured to first selected facing surfaces of said pivotally connected panels, said bag exhibiting a plurality of fold lines and such that, upon expanding said bag to a full open position, said blank is supported in an upwardly displaced position and further such that an interior of the bag is communicable through an aperture defined between said panels; and

said first and second panels being folded from an open position to a closed position in which opposingly facing surfaces of said panels are adhered against one another and in order to maintain, in tamper-evident fashion, items placed within the bag enclosure.

20. The tamper-evident bag as described in claim 19, said bag having a specified shape and size and further comprising at least one of a fluid absorbent material and a waterproof material.

* * * * *