Sept. 19, 1967 H. M. BEATTY 3,342,294

CONVERTIBLE BACK-REST AND DUAL PURPOSE MAT

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Fig. 1

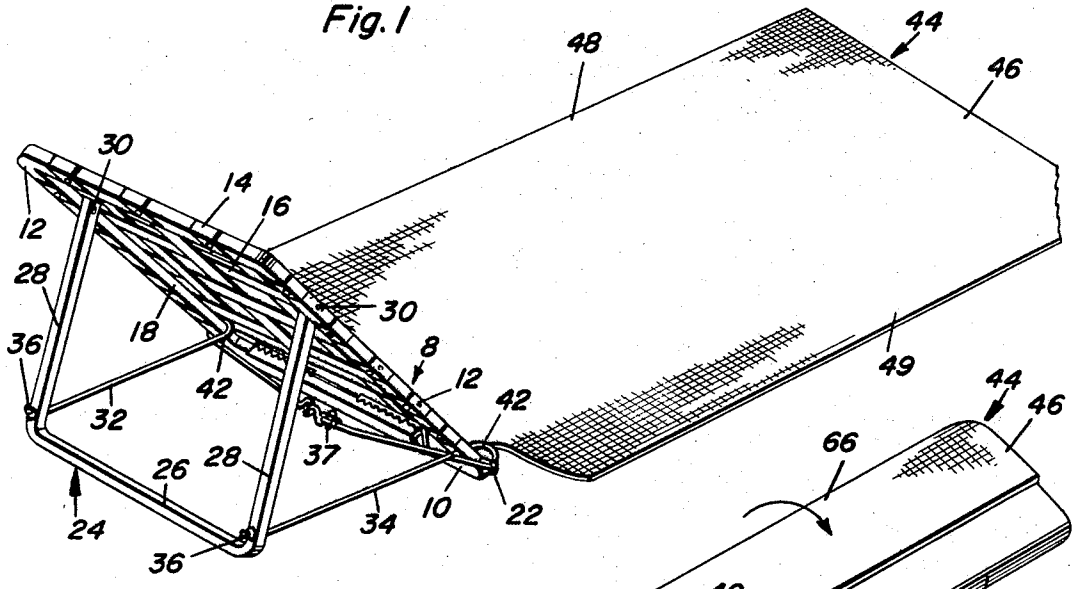


Fig. 2

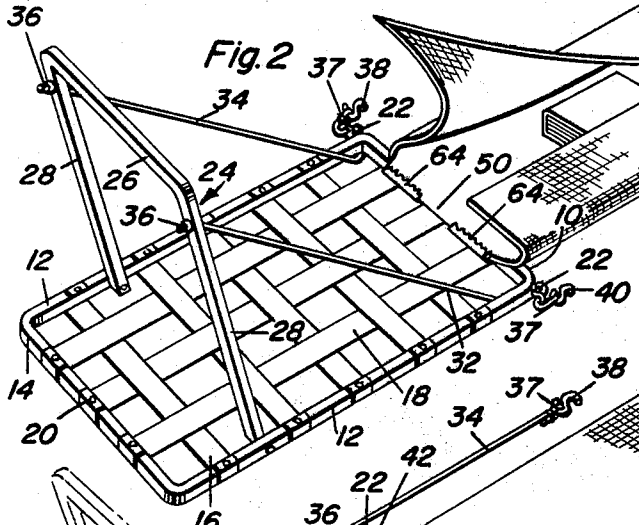
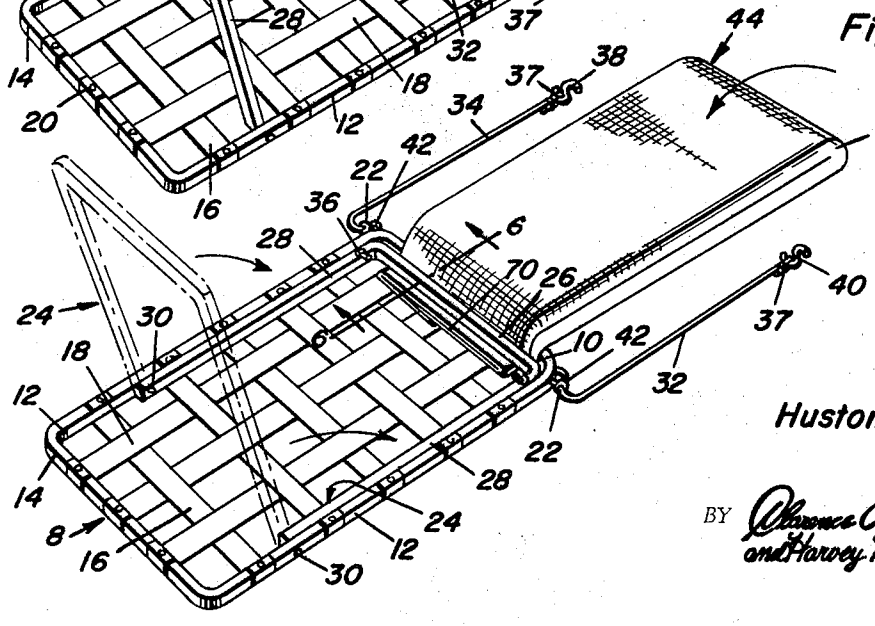


Fig. 3



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Fig. 4

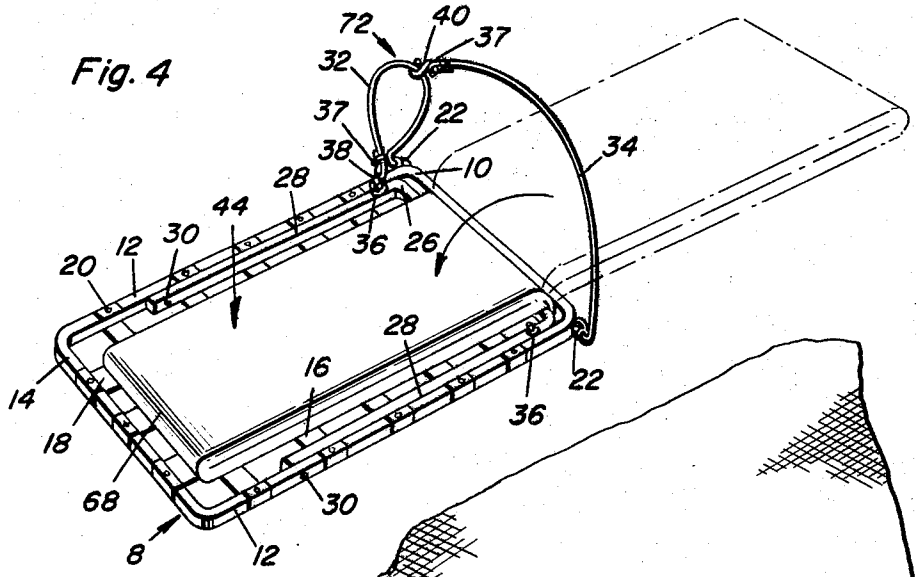


Fig. 5

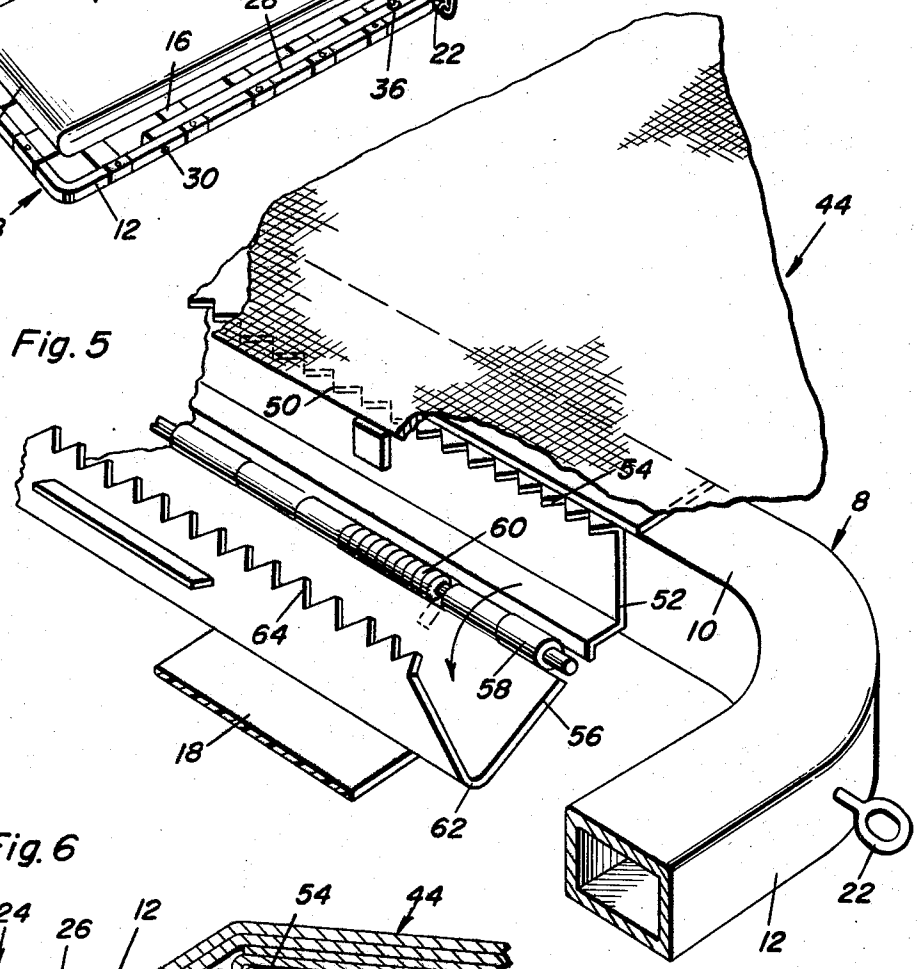
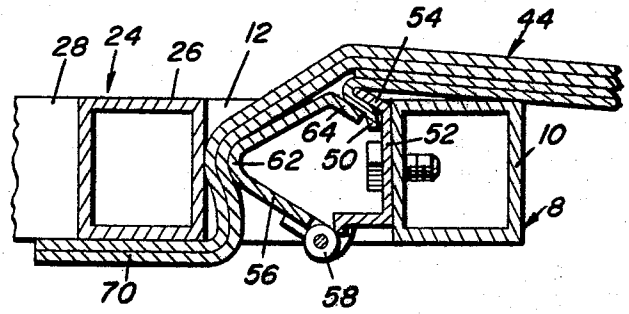


Fig. 6



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CONVERTIBLE BACK-REST AND DUAL PURPOSE MAT

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A combined angularly adjustable back rest and beach towel which are foldable into a beach bag for carrying personal belongings.

This invention relates to portable multipurpose convertible equipment such as is functionally designed and structurally made for convenient usage either indoors or outdoors and is adapted for use at home, at the beach or wherever temporary lounging and reclining facilities are commonly used and has to do, more particularly, with a collapsible back-rest and a companion mat which is detachably connectible with the back-rest.

Briefly, the device comprises two component parts, namely, a portable folding back-rest and an attachable and detachable mat, more specifically, one which is flexible, spreadable and foldable and serves not only for lounging and reclining needs, but has the significant capability of being transformed or converted to serve as a beach bag or pouch for storing and carrying outing articles such as for example magazines or the like, bathing attire, pillows, handbag, cosmetics and analogous small articles.

More specifically, the back-rest is characterized by a simple light in weight but strong and durable suitably covered framed of a size and shape to provide a comfortable back support. This frame is provided on its rearward side with a simple U-shaped companion easel-type prop which is hingedly or pivotally mounted for angular adjustment on side members of the frame and can be compactly folded, when not in use, within the encompassing confines of said frame. Novel flexible stay means, to be hereinafter set forth, functions to operatively connect the prop with the frame. While the "mat" may be a sheet of canvas, plastic or cloth sheeting or even a light rug for instance, it is preferably in the form of a regular beach towel (or large bath towel). This towel is unique in the instant disclosure in that while it is a companion component of the over-all structure it is bodily attachable to and detachable from the bottom part of the back-rest frame, is launderable and, without alteration or sewing, constitutes an integral part of the device. Then, too, it is an innovation in that it can be and is used when properly folded, as the aforementioned pouch or beach bag.

As will be hereinafter more specifically revealed the concept has to do with a convertible device for lounging and diversified recreational use and is feasible for use when fishing, boating, at the pool side, for backyard sunning, watching TV, for sporting events, at picnic areas and so forth. It is characterized by portable support means embodying a back-rest whose bottom or marginal member is designed and adapted, when in use, to reside flatwise on a support surface such as a floor or ground. The collapsible prop is foldably mounted at the rearward side of the back-rest and it has a cooperating bottom member which is likewise adapted to rest on the support surface. The flexible stay means is attached to and carried primarily by the prop but is adjustably connected with coacting component portions of the back-rest. This novel stay means is capable of being selectively adjusted and maintaining a variable angular relationship between the frame of the back-rest and the U-shaped or equivalent prop. The construction is especially desirable in that means is

provided on the bottom member of the back-rest for the attachment thereto of the aforementioned dual purpose mat or beach towel.

The elongated beach towel has a median portion of an attachable transverse inner marginal edge detachably connected with the bottom member of the frame of the back-rest. This allows the lengthwise marginal edge portions of the towel to be folded inwardly toward each other and over the body portion of the towel. Then, the thus folded towel can be folded upon itself between its respective transverse ends to provide a sack-like pouch. In keeping with the uniqueness of the inventive idea the free end of the thus folded towel, this being important, is aptly clenched between suitable clamping devices which are carried by the bottom member of the frame, permitting the then completed pouch to be bodily swung over within the confines of the collapsed prop and frame, after which the aforementioned flexible stay means comes into play and is transformed into a satisfactory sling which is usable as a shoulder strap when carrying and transporting the then collapsed device.

Particular novelty is predicated on the use of the stay means. This means comprises a pair of nylon or equivalent cords which have knotted ends attached to leg or arm portions of the prop and which are slidingly threaded through screw eyes or the like provided therefor on outer perimeter sides of the back-rest, and which terminate in loops carrying S-shaped or equivalent hooks which are employed in several ways but are usable in linking the two cords together to provide the aforementioned shoulder sling.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafer descritbed and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a view in perspective showing the device set up for use either indoors or outdoors, illustrating the towel-type mat spread out for reclining and showing how the prop is adjustably supported in one of its positions.

FIGURE 2 is a view also in perspective which shows the back-rest means inverted or turned upside-down and shows the initial step of folding the flaps or edges of the towel into overlapping relationship to partially define the pouch or beach bag.

FIGURE 3 is a view in perspective with the prop shown in full and phantom lines and which illustrates, more specifically, how the free end of the halved pouch is clenched and held between the prop and frame, more particularly, between the towel attaching and clamping means and prop and frame.

FIGURE 4 is a view also in perspective and which ties in with FIGURES 2 and 3 and which shows how the pouch is folded or flipped over within the confines of the collapsed back-rest and, more importantly, how the free end portions of the convertible flexible stay cords are manually fashioned into the aforementioned shoulder sling.

FIGURE 5 is an enlarged fragmentary view in perspective which shows the construction of one of the clamps with the jaws in open position and in readiness to grip a single edge portion of the mat or towel therebetween, this being the manner of detachably connecting the ready-to-use towel with the over-all back-rest.

FIGURE 6 is an enlarged detailed sectional view taken on line 6—6 of FIG. 3 and which brings out the construction of the clamping means and how the spring biased movable jaw cooperates with the free end portion of the folded towel or pouch to clench or clampingly hold the same.

Referring now to the views of the drawings it will be

seen that the back-rest, considering the same as a structural entity, is characterized by the back-rest proper denoted at 8. This unit comprises a tubular aluminum or equivalent generally rectangular frame having a horizontal bottom or transverse frame member 10 (FIG. 1) which rests on the ground or other surface, a pair of longitudinal side frame members 12 and a transverse top frame member 14. The opening encompassed by the frame is spanned or covered by appropriate cover means. In actual practice interlaced horizontal and vertical wide plastic bands or straps (also called webbing) are provided and are denoted at 16 and 18 and have their ends turned over the frame members and riveted or otherwise fastened thereto as at 20. The lower corner portions (FIG. 1) of the side members 12 are provided with outstanding screw eyes 22 which serve a purpose to be hereinafter described. The complemental or companion prop 24 comprises a U-shaped hollow aluminum or equivalent leg frame whose bight portion is denoted at 26 and when in use rests on the ground in conjunction with the bottom frame member 10 as shown in FIG. 1. The legs or arms 28 have their free end portions hingedly or pivotally connected as at 30 to upper portions of the side frame members 12. This prop is precision made so that it folds with requisite nicety, when collapsed, within the confines or inner marginal portions of the frame as shown for example in FIGS. 3 and 4.

The back-rest unit or means also includes the aforementioned flexible stay means. More specifically this means comprises a first nylon cord or rope 32 at the left as shown in FIG. 1 and a companion nylon cord 34 at the right. The legs 28 are provided with holes and end portions of the cords 32 and 34 pass through the holes and are tied into suitable anchoring knots 36. These cords are proportional and suitably long to accomplish the varying results desired, for example, adjusting and maintaining the angularity between the prop 24 and back-rest or frame 8. Each cord is the same in construction and terminates at its free end in a loop 37 which carries an S-shaped hook. For convenience of distinction the hook at the left in FIGS. 2 and 3 is denoted at 38 and the one at the right at 40. In practice the hook-equipped end portions of the cords are passed around the vertical frame members and formed into return bends as at 42 (FIG. 1) and the terminal end portions are slidingly passed through and held in position by the respective guiding and retaining eyes 22. When the structure is set up for use as shown in FIG. 1, the hook equipped end portions are simply slid or pulled through the eyes 22 and the S-hooks are separably hooked together to thus interconnect both cords and to hold the prop in one of its adjusted positions. By rearranging the attachable end portions of the cords it is possible to stress or pull the cords into different adjusted positions to change the slant of the prop and also the angular inclination of the back-rest.

A complemental and important component part of the unique back-rest means comprises the aforementioned spreadable flexible mat which is denoted generally at 44. As previously mentioned the term "mat" is intended to cover or comprehend a suitable sheet of canvas, a plastic or fabric cloth, sheeting, or even lightweight rugs. It will suffice here to consider the mat more specifically, as a regular beach towel. The outer edge portion is denoted at 46, the longitudinal side or edge portions at 48 and 49 and the inner attachable edge portion is denoted at 50 as shown for example in FIGS. 2, 5 and 6 respectively. In practice when the device is used for lounging or reclining the towel is spread out as illustrated in FIG. 1. The means for detachably and novelly joining the free edge portion 50 comprises either a single or a pair of clamping devices. Each grip, on the over-all device, comprises a stationary jaw 52 (FIGS. 5 and 6) which has a lateral flange with the gripping teeth 54 thereon. The relatively movable jaw 56 has an edge portion hingedly connected at 58 to a component part of the stationary jaw and this hinge connection is spring loaded as at 60 to urge the jaws into clamping relationship. The jaw 56 is preferably V-shaped or approximately so in cross-section and provides a vertex portion 62. This jaw terminates in a suitably toothed flange 64 which cooperates with the flange 54. The tendency of the spring is to close the jaws so that the two flanges 54 and 64 are in oblique angular relationship but are in close spaced parallelism so that the attachable edge portion 50 can be clampingly anchored in place in the manner shown in FIG. 6. It should be noted in this connection that the towel is of a width appreciably greater than the width of the back-rest means. Therefore, only the median portion 50 is clamped to the bottom bar 10 of the back-rest frame. Accordingly, the edge portions 48 and 49 can be freely folded inwardly toward each other as indicated by arrows in FIG. 2 on the fold lines 66 thus providing overlapping flaps. This arrangement provides, at least in part, the article storing and carrying pouch. When it is desired to accomplish this result it is necessary to turn the frame of the back-rest upside-down as shown in FIG. 2 whereupon the flaps can be folded nicely into place. Then, as shown in FIG. 3 the partially folded towel is halved and folded upon itself that is transversely as denoted at 68 in FIG. 3. Now the free end portion 70 is capable of being passed within the confines of the frame, that is beyond the bottom frame member 10, after which the pull cords 32 and 34 are pulled upon to collapse or fold the prop into the frame so that it is nested in place as illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 4. FIG. 4 shows how the pouch is then nested to assume the compact position shown providing the article carrying pouch. The free hook-equipped end portions of the nylon cords 32 and 34 can be now rearranged as shown in FIG. 4. Here the hook 38 is suitably attached to the knotted end 36 and a loop 72 is thus provided. The other cord 34 to the right is simply bowed or curved and the hook 40 on the end thereof is connected with the loop 72 whereby to provide a dual-cord sling. This sling is usable, obviously, as a handling and shoulder carrying strap for the now portable pouch. It follows that the stay cords or flexible elements are not only for adjusting the angularity between the back-rest frame and easel-type prop, they have the additional function of providing the unique sling shown in FIG. 4. It should be noted that the towel may be attached to the device and needs no special sewing or alteration to become a seat or reclining means for the back-rest. The angle of the back-rest may be adjusted by manipulating the cords or ropes in such a way as to change the relative angularity between the frame of the back-rest and the prop. Particular attention is directed to FIG. 6 wherein it will be seen that the relationship between the crest or bend 62 of the movable clamping jaw and the bight portion of the U-frame is such that the free end portion 70 is pinched and clampingly held, providing the desired pouch or beach bag.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A convertible device for lounging and diversified recreational use indoors or outdoors comprising: portable support means embodying a back-rest having a bottom marginal member which is designed and adapted, when in use, to reside flatwise and firmly on a support surface, a collapsible easel-like prop operatively mounted on said back-rest and having a cooperating marginal member likewise adapted to rest upon said support surface, flexible stay means carried by said prop and adjustably connected with coacting component portions of said back-rest, said stay means being capable of selectively adjusting and

maintaining variable angular in-use relationship between said back-rest and prop, respectively, and clamping means carried by said back-rest for attachment thereto of a dual purpose beach towel, said clamping means being operatively mounted on said bottom marginal member and, in combination, a relatively large spreadable beach towel having a median part of an inner edge portion thereof detachably connected to said clamping means, the longitudinal edge portions and outer end remote from said detachable edge portion being free, whereby said towel can be hand-folded and optionally transformed into a bag-like storing and carrying pouch for small articles and miscellaneous sundries.

2. The device defined in claim 1, and wherein said stay means has the additional function of a handling sling capable of serving as a halter-like shoulder strap.

3. The device according to claim 1, and wherein said back-rest comprises a frame spanned and covered by interconnected straps connected at ends thereof to coordinating members of said frame, said prop being U-shaped and embodying a pair of companion legs having like ends hingedly joined to median interior peripheral surfaces of opposed side members of said frame, the opposite ends of said legs being joined by a bight portion constituting the aforementioned marginal rest member, said prop being adapted to fold and wholly nest itself within the encompass confines of said frame when in a collapsed state and whereupon said bight portion is then parallel to and spaced from the bottom marginal member of said frame.

4. The device as defined in claim 3, and wherein said towel clamping means is mounted on an inner rearwardly facing side of said bottom member.

5. The device as defined in claim 3, and wherein said clamping means is mounted on an inner rearwardly facing side of said bottom member, and wherein said towel being of a width greater than the width of said back-rest whereby said longitudinal edge portions can be folded inwardly toward each other to overlap the body portion of the towel after which the thus folded towel can be further folded transversely upon itself into half-portions thus defining and providing closable bag-like article storing and carrying pouch, and also wherein the outer free end of the towel can be extended and tucked into the space between said frame bottom member and the bight portion of said prop.

6. The structure according to claim 5, and wherein said clamping means comprises a pair of like clamps, each clamp emboding a pair of hingedly connected spring biased jaws having orientated gripping teeth, one jaw being affixed to said bottom frame member, the other relatively movable jaw being proximal and parallel to but spaced from said bight portion and so arranged relative thereto that said free end of said towel can be pinched and clampingly held between the bight portion and said movable jaw to retain the pouch in a closed carrying state.

7. The structure according to claim 6, and wherein said movable jaw is substantially V-shaped in cross-section with the vertex of the V disposed in close-spaced parallel relationship relative to an adjacent parallel part of said bight portion, whereby said free end portion of said towel is clampingly bound between coacting surfaces of said vertex and parallel part of said bight portion.

8. A convertible device for lounging and diversified recreational use indoors or outdoors comprising: portable support means embodying a back-rest having a bottom marginal member which is designed and adapted, when in use, to reside flatwise and firmly on a support surface, a collapsible easel-like prop operatively mounted on said back-rest and having a cooperating marginal member likewise adapted to rest upon said support surface, flexible stay means carried by said prop and adjustably connected with coacting component portions of said back-rest, said stay means being capable of selectively adjusting and maintaining variable angular in-use relationship between said back-rest and prop, respectively, and clamping means carried by said back-rest for attachment thereto of a dual purpose beach towel, and wherein said stay means comprises a first nylon cord and a second complemental nylon cord, like ends of said cords being connected to individual component parts of said prop, the other ends of said cords being slidingly cooperable with adjacent coacting parts of said back-rest, each such part having an outstanding fixed eye, said other ends being laced slidingly through their respective eyes, being free and provided on the free ends with terminal S-shaped hooks.

9. The structure according to claim 8, and wherein the hook-equipped ends of said cords are adapted to be manually pulled through their respective eyes in a manner that cooperating portions of the hooks of said cords can be separably linked together to define and provide a handling and carrying sling.

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