Embellishments are described of a beverage container having a secondary opening. The secondary opening is provided in addition to a primary opening on the top beverage container and allows the contents of the beverage container to be consumed quickly. The use of this secondary opening allows air to freely flow into the container through one of the openings while the beverage flows out of the other opening. In one embodiment, the secondary opening is placed near the bottom of the container on its side directly below the primary opening on the top of the container. This allows the user to safely open the secondary opening on the beverage container with ease.
FIG. 3B

FIG. 4A
BEVERAGE CONTAINER WITH SECONDARY OPENING

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of Invention

Embodiments of the present invention relate in general to containers and in particular to a beverage container having a primary and secondary opening.

2. Description of Related Art

Soft drinks, energy drinks and alcoholic beverages have typically been widely distributed and sold in metal and plastic containers. These beverage containers keep the beverages pressurized to maintain their carbonated quality and flavor during transport. Aluminum cans, as an example, have become a universal standard used by most major beverage producers.

In some cases, a user may attempt to drink the beverages of these containers very quickly by puncturing a hole in the side of the beverage container. This is commonly referred to as “shotgunning” the beverage container and may be done with any beverage container, including beers, energy drinks, and soft drinks. The technique has become a popular way for users to consume the contents of the beverage very quickly. Creating a secondary hole on the side of the container in addition to the opening on the top of the container provides the user with two primary advantages.

The first advantage is that the secondary hole created by the user allows the beverage to freely flow out while the primary opening on the top allows air to freely flow into the container to fill the volume left behind from the dispensed beverage.

The second advantage follows from the first. When a user drinks a beverage quickly by use only of the normal opening on the top of the container, the beverage tends to fizzle and bubble up in the user's mouth as the carbonation within the beverage is released while rapidly flowing out of the single opening. This makes the beverage more difficult to drink and deteriorates its taste as it becomes fizzy and flat. By creating a secondary hole on the container, the beverage with all of its integrity will freely flow from the container with ease while the air enters the container through the normal opening on top.

Thus, by creating a secondary hole on a beverage container, the consumer may drink the beverage more quickly while maintaining its full integrity and taste.

A common problem with creating a secondary hole on the beverage container or “shotgunning” the beverage container, is that it is inconvenient and dangerous. The process of creating the hole requires the user to puncture the hole by any means possible, for example by cutting through the container with a knife or another sharp object. Users must then shape the punctured hole to a size sufficiently large enough to allow the beverage to freely flow from the container. If the punctured hole is made too wide however, it may spill on the user while drinking. Puncturing the hole in the container also causes the pressurized, carbonated contents of the container to explode onto the user or others nearby. Furthermore, in the case where the beverage container is made of metal, i.e. aluminum, the cut hole will have sharp edges that may cut the user’s fingers and/or mouth while using the secondary hole to drink the beverage. For these reasons, this process is dangerous and very inconvenient.

Therefore, there is a need for a beverage container having a secondary opening made accessible to the user safely and with ease.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The embodiments of the present invention provide a beverage container having a secondary opening on the container separate from the primary opening on the top of the container. The secondary opening may be the same or different as the primary opening on the top of the container and located anywhere on the container so long as it allows the beverage to freely flow from either the primary opening or secondary opening. In addition, the secondary opening may be opened and resealed to allow the user to close the hole after opening it. It will be appreciated that the precise variations of shape, type, form, or materials made to create any part of the container falls within the scope of the invention so long as the beverage container has a secondary opening that can be safely opened with ease.

It will also be appreciated that the precise location of the secondary opening is not to be limited. In one embodiment, the secondary opening is placed on the side of the beverage container, directly below the primary opening as will be discussed later. However, other embodiments include the secondary opening located anywhere on the container, including on the bottom of the container, so long as it allows the beverage to freely flow from the container through either opening.

Furthermore, embodiments of the present invention allow for more than one secondary opening on the beverage container. For example, a plurality of openings may be designed on the beverage container made for simultaneous or independent use. The number of secondary openings may be limited by the size of the container and therefore larger containers will be able to facilitate more secondary openings than smaller containers. In the case that two or more secondary openings are opened, the beverage will flow from the container through each of the opened openings simultaneously. In this way, multiple consumers can drink from a single beverage container in this case by using a different opening on the container. In the case that only one of the secondary openings is used independently of the others, the beverage will flow from only that single secondary opening.

It is also within the scope of the invention that the type of openings may vary and may have various orientations on the container. In some cases, it may be beneficial for the primary and secondary openings to be the same and in others it may be advantageous for them to be different. Furthermore, in other cases the secondary openings may be rotated to adjust the orientation between the primary and secondary openings. For example, it may be useful to design the beverage container for either a right-handed or left-handed user. In this case, the type of primary and secondary openings may vary and be oriented on the container to best serve this purpose. Furthermore, the openings may be capable of being rotated so that one beverage container may facilitate both right-handed or left-handed users. In this case, the type of primary and secondary openings may vary and be rotated on the container to best serve this purpose.

Finally, as described in the previous two paragraphs, the container may have a plurality of secondary openings each having a different type and orientation (including rotation), to best serve both right-handed and left-handed consumers. It should also be considered obvious by those skilled
in the art to make or use any various combinations of the ideas disclosed herein. Other objects and advantages of the embodiments of the present invention will appear from the following description of the embodiments.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0016] FIG. 1 shows a view of a beverage container according to an embodiment.
[0017] FIG. 2A shows a view of a beverage container according to another embodiment of the present invention.
[0018] FIG. 2B shows a view of a beverage container according to another embodiment that includes the secondary opening being placed near the top or bottom of the beverage container.
[0019] FIG. 2C shows a beverage container having the secondary opening placed on the left or right side of the beverage container according to another embodiment of the invention.
[0020] FIG. 3A shows a beverage container having at least two secondary openings located above/below each other. One of the beverage containers according to another embodiment.
[0021] FIG. 3B shows a beverage container having a plurality of secondary openings located next to each other on the beverage container according to another embodiment.
[0022] FIG. 4A shows an orientation of the secondary opening in a beverage container with respect to the primary opening for a right-handed consumer according to an embodiment of the invention.
[0023] FIG. 4B shows an orientation of the secondary opening in a beverage container with respect to the primary opening for a left-handed consumer according to another embodiment.
[0024] FIG. 4C shows an orientation of the secondary opening in a beverage container having a secondary opening having an orientation designed for rotation according to another embodiment of the invention. By rotating the orientation of the secondary opening, the beverage container is able to serve both right-handed and left-handed consumers.
[0025] FIG. 5A shows a view of another embodiment of the present invention. A variety of modifications can be made to the beverage container within the scope of the present invention and combinations of any of the features shown in the other drawings may be implemented into one design. This drawing more specifically shows the beverage container in FIG. 1 having a plurality of secondary openings as shown in FIG. 3B, each having a different orientation as shown in FIGS. 4A and 4B, according to embodiments that may be implemented into one design.
[0026] FIG. 5B shows a beverage container as shown in FIG. 1, having a plurality of secondary openings as shown in FIG. 3A, each secondary opening having a different location as shown in FIGS. 2B and 2C, and each secondary opening also having different orientations as shown in FIGS. 4A and 4B, according to embodiments that may be implemented into another design.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0027] A more detailed description will now describe the embodiments of the present invention with reference to the drawings.
[0028] FIG. 1 shows a view of a beverage container according to an embodiment of the present invention. The beverage container 10 comprises a top 11, a primary opening 12, siding 13, a secondary opening 14 and a bottom (not shown). The primary opening 12 and secondary opening 14 should be made so that the user can safely open the beverage container 10 with ease, however many modifications of this invention may include variations to the precise shape, size, type, materials, and locations/orientations of the primary opening 12 and secondary opening 14. These variations may apply to each part of the beverage container 10 as well. All variations or modifications of this sort are considered within the inventive scope of the invention. In addition, the secondary opening may be opened and resealed to allow the user to close the hole after opening it. The shape of the beverage container 10 may include all commonly known beverage container shapes, including standard aluminum cans and variations thereof, as well as plastic and glass bottles.
[0029] The size of the beverage container 10 may vary as well. Although the precise volume of the container is only limited by the consumers ability to lift and drink the beverage container, most commonly beverage container sizes include 6 oz, 8 oz, 12 oz, 16 oz, 22 oz, 24 oz, 32 oz, and 64 oz in North America as well as 250 ml, 500 ml, 750 ml, and 1 liter in Europe. Any volume within reason however can be used for the design of the embodiments of the present invention.
[0030] The type of primary opening 12 and secondary opening 14 designed may vary. In different embodiments, the primary opening 12 and secondary opening 14 may be the same type or different types of openings.
[0031] The materials to make the beverage container 10 include any materials commonly known for making beverage containers including metals, i.e. aluminum, steel, tin, or another composition of metal or metal alloy, plastics, glass, and variants thereof. It is conceivable that other materials can be incorporated for the creation of this invention however the use of a secondary opening on such a container made from another unknown material would be obvious to those of skill in the art so long as it allows the beverage to flow freely from the container.
[0032] The location of the primary opening 12 and secondary opening 14 on beverage container 10 may vary as shown in FIGS. 2A-2D. The purpose of these drawings is not to be exhaustive; rather they are provided to illustrate several of the many variations that may be applied to the present invention shown in FIG. 1.
[0033] FIG. 2A shows the preferred embodiment of beverage container 20 as having a primary opening 12 on the top 11 of the container and a secondary opening 24 on the container siding 13 near the bottom. Components 11, 12, and 13 are common to FIGS. 2A-5B and will not be described again. (Note, an exemplary pull-tab is used as a primary opening 102 in FIGS. 4A-5B as will be more thoroughly described below.) The plane 15 shown in FIG. 2A defines the side from which the user may drink the beverage. In this embodiment, the primary opening 12 is on the same plane 15 as the secondary opening 14. For best results, the secondary opening 24 should be located on the same plane 15 as shown in the preferred embodiment of beverage container 20.
[0034] FIG. 2B shows another embodiment of the present invention, where a beverage container 30 that includes a secondary opening 34 placed midway on the container siding 13. In this drawing, the secondary opening 34 is shown located closer to the top 11 of the beverage container 30 and shows that the secondary opening 34 may be located near the top 11, in the middle, or near the bottom (as shown in FIG. 2A) of beverage container 30.
[0035] FIG. 2B shows that the secondary opening 34 is not required to be located on the same plane as the primary opening 12.

[0036] Another example to illustrate that the location of the secondary opening 44 may vary is shown on beverage container 40 in FIG. 2C. In this drawing, the secondary opening 44 is located to the left of the plane 15 shown in FIG. 2A.

[0037] FIG. 3A shows a beverage container 60 according to another embodiment. The beverage container 60 may have at least two secondary openings 64. The at least two secondary openings 64 may be placed above and below each other. FIG. 3A is not intended to limit the scope of the present invention and these at least two secondary openings 64 may be located anywhere on the beverage container 60.

[0038] FIG. 3B shows another embodiment of the present invention having a plurality of openings 74 side-by-side on a beverage container 70. As previously mentioned, this figure is not intended to limit the scope of the present invention and these multiple secondary openings 14 may be located anywhere on the beverage container 70.

[0039] A beverage container 80 in FIG. 4A shows a primary opening 102 and secondary opening 84 as pull-tab openings, as one type of opening that may be used, where the secondary tab 84 is oriented with the pull-up portion to the right of the potential opening. The primary opening 102 and the secondary opening 84 have an orientation design that may be preferred by right-handed users. Right-handed users may conveniently use their right hand to open the primary opening 102 and left hand to open the secondary opening 104.

[0040] Alternatively, a beverage container 90 in FIG. 4B shows the primary opening 102 and a secondary opening 94 as pull-tab openings 102 and 94 having an orientation designed for left-handed users. Left-handed users may prefer using the left hand to open the primary opening 102 and the right hand to open the secondary opening 94.

[0041] The orientation of the primary opening 12 and secondary opening 14 of FIG. 1 may be modified as shown by a beverage container 100 shown in FIG. 4C. As in FIGS. 4A-4B, the use of a pull-tab is meant as an example and not to limit the scope of the inventive concept. FIG. 4C shows the beverage container 100 having a secondary opening 104 capable of rotation. The secondary opening 104 may be adjusted by right-handed and left-handed users, according to the user’s preference.

[0042] In other embodiments, various features of FIGS. 2A-4C may be combined as shown in a beverage container 110 design shown in FIG. 5A. The beverage container 110 comprises several of the previously mentioned modifications. More specifically, the beverage container 110 has the similar features of beverage container 10 in FIG. 1, however it additionally has more than one secondary opening 114 as described in reference to FIG. 3B as well as each secondary opening 104 having a different orientation in relation to the primary opening 102 as shown in FIGS. 4A-4B.

[0043] To further illustrate this point, reference is made to FIG. 5B. A beverage container 120 is shown in FIG. 5B having similar features of beverage container 10 in FIG. 1, however in this case, it has more than one secondary opening 124 as shown in FIG. 3A. Each of these secondary openings 124 having a different location as described in FIGS. 2B-2C. Additionally, each secondary opening 124 has a different orientation with respect to the primary opening 102 as shown in FIGS. 4A-4B. In conclusion, it is within the scope of the inventive concept to apply any number of the modifications shown in FIGS. 2A-5B to the embodiment shown in FIG. 1.

[0044] In summary, it has been the purpose of this specification to clearly and fully disclose the objects of the present invention. As mentioned, embodiments of the invention may take the form of various embodiments however it is the underlying concept of this invention to provide a safe and easy way for users to drink a beverage by use of a secondary opening, or a plurality thereof, on the beverage container.

[0045] From the foregoing it will be appreciated that, although specific embodiments of the invention have been described herein for purposes of illustration, various modifications may be made without deviating from scope of the invention. Accordingly, embodiments of the invention are not limited except as by the appended claims.

We claim:

1. A beverage container comprising:
   a bottom;
   a siding on the bottom;
   a top on the siding;
   a primary opening on the top that when sealed holds a substance in liquid form within the beverage container pressurized, the primary opening structured to provide access to the liquid contained in the beverage container when opened;
   a secondary opening on the beverage container that when sealed holds the liquid within the beverage container pressurized and when opened with the primary opening, enables the liquid in the container to freely flow from either the primary opening or the secondary opening.

2. The container of claim 1, wherein the secondary opening is located directly below the primary opening on the siding of the beverage container.

3. The beverage container of claim 1, wherein the primary opening and the secondary opening are a same type of opening.

4. The beverage container of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of secondary openings.

5. The beverage container of claim 1, wherein the orientation of the primary opening with respect to the secondary opening is designed for a right-handed user.

6. The beverage container of claim 1, wherein the orientation of the primary opening with respect to the secondary opening is designed for a left-handed user.

7. The beverage container of claim 1, wherein the primary opening and secondary opening each comprise an opening tab that rotates to adjust the orientation of the primary and secondary opening.

8. A beverage container comprising:
   a primary means for opening the top of the beverage container that when sealed holds a beverage within the beverage container pressurized;
   a secondary means for opening the beverage container that when sealed holds the beverage within the beverage container pressurized and when opened permits a beverage to freely flow from within the beverage container.

9. A method of accessing a liquid substance housed in a beverage container, the method comprising:
   holding the liquid substance housed in a pressurized container;
   providing a first opening to access the liquid in the container;
providing a second opening to access the liquid in the container, the second opening increasing the air into the container to cause the liquid to freely flow from either the primary opening or the secondary opening.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein providing the second opening comprises providing the second opening directly below the first opening to access the liquid in the container.

11. The method of claim 9 further comprising at least a third opening.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the first opening and the second opening each respectively comprises an opening tab that rotates to adjust the orientation of the first and second openings.

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