Aug. 29, 1967 H. J. CVAR 3,338,511

MAIL SIGNAL DEVICE

Filed Oct. 20, 1965

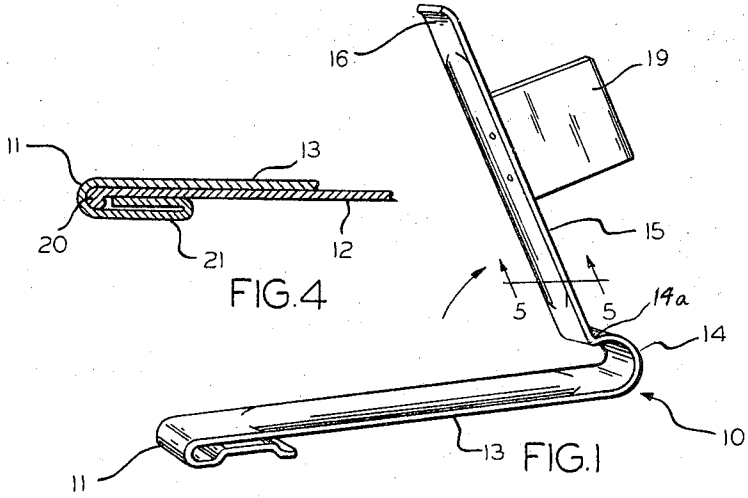


FIG.4

FIG.1



FIG.5

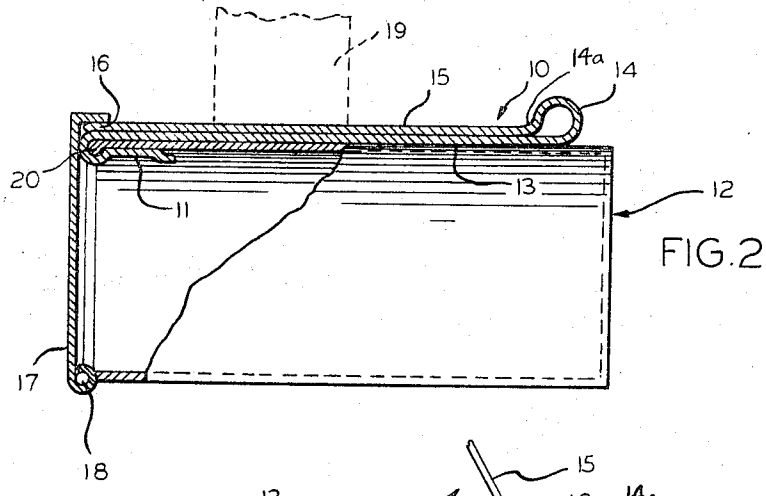


FIG.2

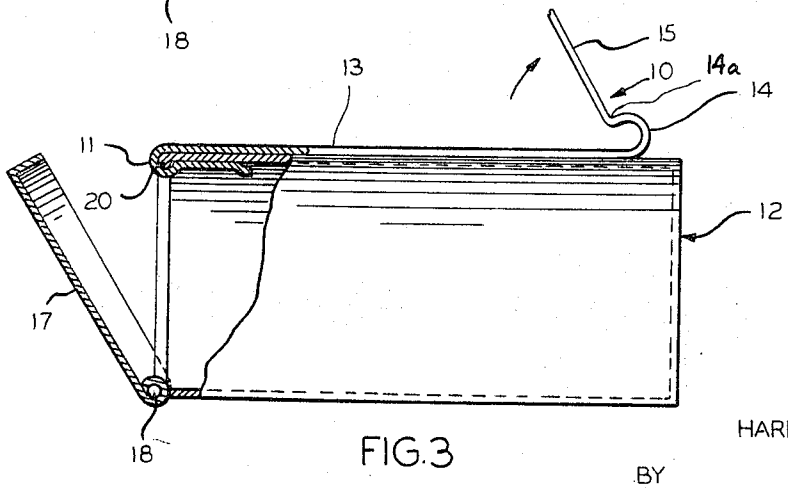


FIG.3

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MAIL SIGNAL DEVICE

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A signal attachment for mailboxes utilizing a one-piece spring arm having an integral clamp on one end attached to the top front edge of the mailbox. The free end of the spring arm is normally held down in a non-use position by the swinging front door of the box, opening of the box releasing the free end to signal the presence of mail.

My invention relates to a mail box signal device, and more particularly to a mail signal device that may be applied as an accessory to a rural mail box for signaling the presence of mail in a mail box.

The object of my invention is to provide a signal device that may be applied to a rural mail box without any mechanical equipment or skill.

Another object of my invention is to provide a device of the character described that is actuated by the manipulation of the cover or door of the mail box when depositing the mail in the box.

A still further object is to provide a device that is a one piece structure, designed to fit any type of rural mail box.

It is manifest to anyone familiar with the delivery of mail in rural areas, that the mail box is normally located at a distance from the residence, and is usually equipped with some signal device that is manually operated by the mailman when delivering the mail, to inform the occupant that mail has been deposited into the mail box. However, the undesirable feature of prior mail signal devices was that at times the mailman would forget to raise or actuate the signal device. It is therefore a prime object of my invention to provide a mail indicator device that automatically moves into a signalling position to indicate the presence of mail when the door of the mail box is opened for depositing mail therein.

The device is simple in construction, economical to manufacture. It may be constructed of a single piece of material and requires no mechanical skill when applying to a conventional rural mail box.

Other and further objects of my invention will become more apparent as the description proceeds, when taken in conjunction with the drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the mail box signal device with the top portion thereof in a signalling position;

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view of the device attached to a mail box, shown partly in cross-section, with the device held in a downward position, by the upper edge of the door of the mail box;

FIG. 3 is a similar view of the device as shown in FIG. 2, but with the top portion of the mail box signal device in a signalling position when the door of the mail box is opened;

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view of a modified version of the mail signal device; and

FIG. 5 is a lateral cross-section of the top portion of

the signal device taken on the line 5—5 in FIG. 1 to illustrate the arcuate construction.

Similar characters of reference indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views, and referring now to the same, the character **10** shows the body of the device constituting my invention. The body **10** may be constructed of a band of spring steel, or other suitable material, and includes a clamp portion **11** at the forward end of a horizontally disposed bottom portion **13**, for engagement with a section of a mail box **12** as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3.

The bottom portion **13**, terminates into a radial portion or joint **14**. A crease **14***a* is formed at the junction of the top portion **15** with the joint **14**.

The free end **16** of the top portion **15** is clamped by the upper edge of door **17** of the mail box **12** when it is in a closed position (FIG. 2). The door **17** is hingedly supported at **18**, to the mail box **12**, (FIG. 2).

When the door **17** of the mail box is opened (see FIG. 3), the top portion **15** is automatically released, and moves upward (see FIGS. 1 and 3) to an outward signalling position to indicate mail in the mail box by the position of a signal flag **19**. Signal flag **19**, may be of any form, size, or contour and attached in any practical manner to the portion **15** of the device.

If desired the bottom and top portions **13** and **15** may be arcuated or radially formed as shown in FIG. 5, to add to their rigidity.

In as much as the open end of the rural mail box is usually equipped with a ridge, or bead shown as **20**, the clamp portion **11** as shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3 is designed to resiliently fit over the ridge, or bead **20**. In FIG. 4 is shown modified clamp arrangement in which the clamp portion **11** has a member **21** folded for engagement with the ridge, or bead **20** of mail box **12**.

From the above description it should become manifest that the device is simple in construction, easy to apply and positive in its actuation and function. The upper edge of the door of the mail box overcomes the outward biasing of the top portion **15** of the mail signal device. When the door of the mail box is opened, the resilient force of the top portion **15** of the signal devices urges the signalling device to an outward signalling position to indicate the presence of mail.

It is believed that my invention, its mode of construction and assembly, and many of its advantages should be readily understood from the foregoing without further description, and it should also be manifest that while a preferred embodiment of the invention has been shown and described for illustrative purposes, the structural details are nevertheless capable of wide variation within the purview of my invention as defined in the appended claim.

What I claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States is:

In combination with a mailbox having a front door pivoted at the bottom to the box, said door having a peripheral inwardly directed flange on its sides and its top adapted to overlie a portion of the sides and top of the box, the improvement comprising an automatic signal for indicating the presence of mail in said box, said signal comprising, a unitary one-piece device formed of spring steel and including a bottom portion adapted to lie along the top of said box, a reverse bend on the free end of said bottom portion forming a spring clamp and adapted to be engaged over the top front edge of the box to rigidly attach said signal device to said mailbox, said device

further including a top portion extending integrally from the remaining end of the bottom member, the area of joinder of said top and bottom portions defining an integral spring hinge, a signal flag mounted on the top surface of said top portion, said top portion being normally biased upwardly by said spring hinge, said top portion being adapted to overlie said bottom portion upon the application of an external force thereto, said top flange of the mailbox door overlying the free end of said top portion of the device when the door is closed and serving as said external force, said top portion moving to an outward signal position to indicate the presence of mail in the box when said door is opened.

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