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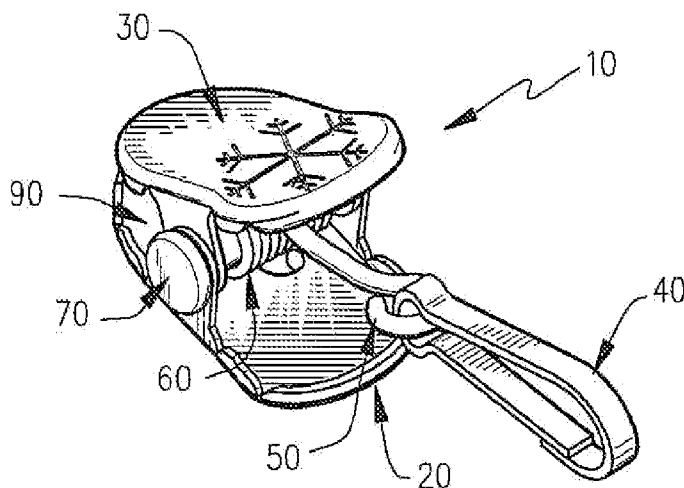
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(54) Title: ORNAMENT HANGING DEVICE, ALONG WITH ORNAMENT AND METHOD INCORPORATING SAME



(57) Abstract: Provided is a hanging device for suspending an item to be displayed from a suspension member. In preferred embodiments, the hanging device suspends an ornament from a holiday display. Broadly, a clip engages the item to be displayed. A clasp, which is resiliently biased into a normally closed position, engages the suspension member, and a link joins the clip to the clasp thereby to suspend the item from the suspension member. In preferred embodiments a carabiner clip engages loop of the ornament, an alligator clip engages the holiday display, and a linkage joins the carabiner clip to the alligator clip. The linkage may include a swivel for permitting the carabiner to rotate relative to the alligator clip.

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**ORNAMENT HANGING DEVICE, ALONG WITH ORNAMENT AND METHOD
INCORPORATING SAME**

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

The present application claims the benefit of U.S. provisional application No. 60/865,984 filed on November 15, 2006, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND

Throughout history, humans have sought to enhance their surroundings by the use of decorative items. Such items have included such diverse elements as wall paintings, tiles, tapestries and two-dimensional art, to name a few. In many instances, such decorative elements become a relatively permanent part of the environment in which they are placed, remaining on display for years on end. In contrast to these long-term decorations, some decorative items are intended to be of a more transient nature. One example is the use of fresh cut flowers that have a display life of only a few days.

In addition to these types of decorations, it is also known to create decorations for special events or seasons. Often, such events or seasons are correlated to a specific event, holiday or commemorative anniversary. Often, there is an established theme associated with such holidays or seasons. In the United States, for example, the holidays that are key for decorating are Valentine's Day, Easter, Fourth of July, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Additionally, as the trend for decorating geared to a particular theme expands, other events such as New Year's Eve, St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day and Labor Day have become decorating events. Other events such as March Madness (basketball), Super Bowl Day (football) and the like give rise to decorative themes. Seasonal themes may include the advent of spring, fall harvest, and the like.

As an example, one of the most well known decorative displays is the Christmas tree. A Christmas tree is normally an evergreen coniferous tree that is brought into the home and decorated with lights, ornaments, and tinsel. The evergreen tree has long represented a

renewal of life. Evergreen trees began to appear in association with Christmas day in Germany around the 16th century. At that time Christmas trees were decorated with paper ornaments, fruit, nuts, and sometimes cheese.

Today the Christmas tree is the focal point of the Christmas celebration. It is the gathering point for friends and family to exchange gifts and renew ties weakened by time and distance. As such an important part of the holiday tradition, little expense is spared in adorning Christmas trees with lights, flocking, and ornaments. The traditional ornament is a decorative body that is formed in an image or that is painted or printed in a decorative theme or that carries a holiday message. Many ornaments are formed of glass or crystal and are therefore quite fragile. In many cases these ornaments have become family heirlooms holding great sentimental, as well as intrinsic, value. Ornaments vary drastically in size, shape, weight and construction. For example, ornaments can vary in weight from those constructed of paper to others that are relatively heavy in weight such as those formed of ceramics.

In order to suspend an ornament from a Christmas tree or other decorative display, such as a wreath or string of garland, an ornament is typically provided with a mount in the form of a small loop of wire. In some cases the ornament is of such construction to facilitate the use of a hole formed through the ornament. An ornament is traditionally suspended from a decorative display by engaging the ornament's mount with a hooked piece of wire, string, or the like which is then attached to the display. This traditional method of hanging an ornament has some disadvantages. On the one hand, where the ornament is suspended by a hook, it is common for the ornament to become dislodged from the display. This can occur when children, who are naturally fascinated by the decorative display, touch or play with the ornament. Pets are also known to dislodge such ornaments, and they can be dislodged simply from accidental contact with the ornament. Securing the ornament with string reduces such likelihood of dislodgement; however, the use of string is more difficult and inconvenient. Given the fragility of many

ornaments they are easily broken if dislodged from the tree limb from which they are hung. Some ornaments are easily replaceable yet many are expensive to replace and those with sentimental value are impossible to replace. In any event it is inconvenient to replace ornaments that have fallen off or broken. In addition, cleaning up a broken ornament is yet another unwelcome chore, especially during the busy holiday season.

Accordingly, there is a need for a means of suspending ornaments that is simple and easy to attach to a support as part of a decorative display. A still further need is to provide a means of suspending ornaments that resists dislodgement and provides a secure attachment to the decorative display. Such goals have been the impetus of the present invention.

SUMMARY

Provided is a hanging device for suspending an item to be displayed from a suspension member. In preferred embodiments, the hanging device suspends an ornament from a holiday display. Broadly, a clip engages the item to be displayed. A clasp, which is resiliently biased into a normally closed position, engages the suspension member, and a link joins the clip to the clasp thereby to suspend the item from the suspension member. In preferred embodiments a carabiner clip engages loop of the ornament, an alligator clip engages the holiday display, and a linkage joins the carabiner clip to the alligator clip. The linkage may include a swivel for permitting the carabiner to rotate relative to the alligator clip.

The alligator clip is resiliently biased into a normally closed position and includes first and second jaw elements retained in pivotal relation to one another by the assembly pin. A resilient member, such as a torsion spring, biases the jaws into the normally closed position. The torsion spring may have a plurality of coils through which the assembly pin is received. Here, the linkage is pivotally disposed about the coils. In an alternate construction the torsion spring includes a pair of spaced-apart coil portions through which the assembly pin is received, such that the linkage is confined for movement about the assembly pin between the coil portions. Also in this construction, the torsion springy includes a pair of coplanar, oppositely

projecting tension arms adapted to seat within a first jaw element of the alligator clip. These arms are joined to one another by a tapered loop adapted to seat within a second jaw element of the alligator clip.

The alligator clip preferably has a configuration correlated to the holiday season, such as the snowman, a snowflake, a Christmas tree, a star, or holly. Furthermore, the alligator clip may have an irregular surface contour to facilitate gripping the clip. This irregular surface contour is preferably in a pattern correlated to the holiday season.

Embodiments of ornaments are also provided. For example, an ornament which is adapted to be suspended from a holiday display comprises a decorative item correlated to a selected holiday and a hanging device for suspending the decorative item from the holiday display, wherein the hanging device incorporates one or more of the broad or detailed features discussed above. A method for suspending an ornament from a holiday display is also provided and comprises engaging the holiday display with an alligator clip, engaging the ornament with a carabiner, and linking the alligator clip to the carabiner. Preferably, the alligator clip and the carabiner are allowed to rotate relative to one another.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1A is a perspective view of a first exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device being employed to hang an ornament from the pine bough of a Christmas tree;

Figure 1B is a perspective view of a pair of ornament hanging devices of the first exemplary embodiment being employed to hang a string of lights from the pine boughs of a Christmas tree;

Figure 1C is a perspective view of a pair of ornament hanging devices of the first exemplary embodiment being employed to hang a tinsel garland from the pine boughs of a Christmas tree;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the ornament hanging device shown in Figure 1A as viewed from the alligator clip end;

Figure 3 is a perspective view illustrating the ornament hanging device shown in Figure 1A as viewed from the carabiner clip end;

Figure 4 is an exploded perspective view illustrating the assembly of the ornament hanging device shown in Figures 1A-3;

Figure 5 is a top plan view of the first jaw element of the ornament hanging device introduced in Figure 1A;

Figure 6 is an end view in elevation of the first jaw element shown in Figure 5;

Figure 7 is a side view in elevation of the first jaw element shown in Figure 5;

Figure 8 is a top plan view of the second jaw element of the ornament hanging device introduced in Figure 1A;

Figure 9 is an end view in elevation of the second jaw element shown in Figure 8;

Figure 10 is a side view in elevation of the second jaw element shown in Figure 8;

Figure 11 is a top plan view of the connecting link of the ornament hanging device shown in Figure 1A;

Figure 12 is a side view in elevation of the connecting link shown in Figure 11;

Figure 13 is a top plan view of the torsion spring as used in the first embodiment of the ornament hanging device shown in Figure 1A;

Figure 14 is a side view in elevation of the torsion spring shown in Figure 13;

Figure 15 is a top plan view of a carabiner clip as used in the first exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device;

Figure 16 is a top plan view of the ornament hanging device assembly pin;

Figure 17 is a perspective view of a second exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device, which employs a leaf spring construction;

Figure 18 is an exploded perspective view of the second exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device as shown in Figure 17;

Figure 19 is a top plan view of the leaf spring used in the second exemplary embodiment

of the ornament hanging device as shown in Figure 17;

Figure 20 is an end view in elevation of the leaf spring shown in Figure 19;

Figure 21 is a side view in elevation of the leaf spring shown in Figure 19;

Figure 22 is a perspective view illustrating a third exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device, which employs a sheet-metal connector link; and

Figure 23 is a side view in elevation illustrating the sheet-metal connector link as shown in Figure 22.

Figure 24A is a perspective view illustrating a fourth exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device which employs an alternative torsion spring construction;

Figure 24B is an exploded perspective view illustrating the assembly of the ornament hanging device shown in Figure 24A;

Figure 25A is a side view in elevation of the torsion spring employed in the ornament hanging device of Figures 24A and 24B, and with the spring shown in a relaxed state;

Figure 25B is another side view in elevation of the torsion spring shown in a partially compressed state;

Figure 25C is a top plan view of the torsion spring device shown in Figures 25A and 25B;

Figure 26 is a side view in elevation showing a linkage assembly, incorporating a swivel member, which may be used with any of the described ornament hanging device embodiments;

Figure 27 illustrates a representative embodiment of an ornament according to the teachings herein; and

Figures 28(a)-(g) illustrate representative configurations of alligator clips for use in any of the described embodiments of the ornament hanging device, or an ornament itself.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Suspending decorative ornaments from holiday displays using traditional methods such as string or wire hooks does not provide a positive attachment to the display. The use of string

or wire hooks is unreliable because there is not a positive engagement to the display, or as in this case to the pine bough of a Christmas tree. The lack of positive engagement to the holiday display often results in the ornaments becoming dislodged from the display to which they are attached. When dislodged, ornaments are often broken and/or lost.

The various exemplary embodiments of the present invention described herein disclose a new device useful for conveniently and securely suspending ornaments from a holiday display. Figure 1A illustrates a first exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device 10 being employed to suspend holiday ornament 5 from pine bough 1 of a Christmas tree 2. With further reference to Figure 2, it can be seen that carabiner clip 40 engages loop 7 of the ornament 5. First jaw element 20 and second jaw element 30 engage the pine bough 1 thereby suspending the ornament 5 from the tree 2. Although the ornament hanging device is described in relation to hanging an ornament (Figure 1A), the ornament hanging device may be used in a number of ways such as hanging a string of lights 8 or a garland of tinsel 9 as shown in Figures 1B and 1C respectively.

The ornament hanging device 10 is comprised of three main components including an alligator-type clip 15, a carabiner-type clip 40, and a link 50 connecting the two clips. The alligator clip 15 is comprised of a first jaw element 20, a second jaw element 30, and an assembly pin 70 that retains the two jaws in pivotal relation to each other. As can best be seen in Figure 4, alligator clip 15 also includes a torsion spring 60 that is placed over assembly pin 70 to provide spring actuation, which maintains the jaws 20 and 30 in a normally closed position. Engaged around the coils of torsion spring 60 is link 50. Link 50 is pivotally disposed about the coils of torsion spring 60 and provides an attachment point for carabiner clip 40.

In order to engage ornament hanging device 10 to pine bough 1, as shown in Figure 1A, the jaws 20 and 30 are opened by squeezing the distal end portions 32 and 22 of the jaws against the spring force provided by torsion spring 60, which provides an opening at the proximal end portions of the jaws 24 and 34 which can be placed around the pine bough. In

order to facilitate gripping the jaw portions 32 and 22, each jaw may be provided with a raised pattern to provide grip. In this case the pattern is in the form of a snowflake, which matches the holiday theme. It should be understood that the pattern could be raised, engraved, or stamped into the jaw in any of a multitude of patterns.

The upper jaw element 20, as shown in Figure 5, includes a distal end 22 and proximal end 24 with a generally planar portion 23 extending therebetween. Extending perpendicularly from planar portion 23 are two ears 28 spaced apart from each other a distance X_1 . Ears 28 both include a mounting hole of diameter D_1 formed therethrough. Also extending from planar portion 23 is a surrounding skirt margin 25. At the proximal end 24 of upper jaw element 20, a plurality of teeth 27 may be formed in the surrounding skirt margin 25. The teeth 27 are radiused such that they provide grip yet do not damage the tree. The remainder of surrounding skirt margin 25 provides structure to resist bending when alligator clip 15 is squeezed in order to open the jaws. Between planar portion 23 and surrounding skirt margin 25 is radius R_1 . Radius R_1 provides a comfortable edge that protects fingers from sharp corners. This is particularly useful on distal end 22 of the jaw where a user applies pressure to actuate the clip.

Figure 8 illustrates the details of the lower jaw element 30. It can be readily seen that lower jaw element 30 is similar to upper jaw element 20 with both proximal and distal ends 32 and 34 as well as a surrounding skirt margin 35 with a plurality of teeth 37 formed therein. With reference to Figure 10, it can be seen that ears 38 both have a hole of diameter D_2 formed therethrough. Holes D_1 and D_2 of the upper and lower jaw elements respectively are of the same diameter through which assembly pin 70 may be inserted. The lower jaw element 30 has a pair of ears 38 extending perpendicularly from planar portion 33 that are spaced apart such that the outer distance X_2 between the two ears is equal to or less than dimension X_1 . With reference again to Figures 3 and 4, it can be seen that upper and lower jaw elements 20 and 30 fit together where ears 38 of the lower jaw element fit within the distance X_1 of ears 28 of the upper jaw element. The lower jaw element 30 is constructed with waist regions 31 which allow

ears 38 to be spaced a distance X_2 that is smaller than distance X_1 while maintaining alignment of teeth 27 and 37 of the respective jaws.

It should also be noted that the teeth of the respective jaw elements are spaced such that they intermesh. To this end, upper teeth 27 and lower teeth 28 are offset (see Figures 6 and 9). Each jaw element also includes an opposed set of flat teeth 29 and 39. In contrast to the offset, smaller, and somewhat pointed teeth 27 and 37 the flat teeth 29 and 39 are longer, flatter, and opposed from each other. As seen in, for example Figure 3, these teeth allow for an opening 90 between the jaw elements 20 and 30, which is useful for engaging certain structures. In particular opening 90 is ideal for engaging a pine bough such as illustrated in Figure 1A.

In this case, the upper and lower jaw elements 20 and 30 are formed of a sheet metal stamping of thickness t_1 . This process of metal forming is applicable to a multitude of different metals including coated steel, stainless steel, aluminum, copper and the like. It should be understood that the upper and lower jaw elements may also be formed through other means such as by plastic injection molding, metal casting, and machining.

Torsion spring 60, as shown in Figures 13 and 14, is of a common design well known in the art which includes a plurality of coils 62 with torsion arms 64 and 66 extending from the coil. The strength of torsion spring 60 may be varied by changing the diameter of the wire D_4 that forms the spring as well as by changing the number of coils 62. Any attempt to force torsion arms 64 and 66 closer to one another is met with resistance from the torsion spring thereby providing the closing force for the clip.

Both Figures 11 and 12 illustrate connecting link 50 in more detail. The link is formed in this case of wire of a diameter D_3 with a shank portion 56 and eyelet portions 52 and 54 disposed on the ends thereof. Eyelet portions 52 and 54 are formed on the shank 56 in an orthogonal relationship to one another. One eyelet 52 is dimensioned such that the connecting link 50 can freely pivot about torsion spring 60.

Clip 40, shown in Figure 15, is of a construction typically known as a carabiner clip. The carabiner clip consists of a spring end 42, a hook end 44 and an arm 46, which is connected to the spring end 42. Spring lever arm 46 is pushed inward to allow hook 44 to engage the ornament loop. Eyelet portion 54 of connecting link 50 is sized such that spring end 42 of the carabiner clip 40 may be assembled thereto as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 16 shows assembly pin 70, which is composed of a shank portion 72 and a head portion 74. This is a common type of pin and, in this case, is formed of a relatively soft material, which can be disrupted on end 76 in order to retain the assembled components on shank 72.

Having described the various components of ornament hanging device 10 in detail, the assembly of those components is described in further detail now. The ornament hanging device 10 may be assembled in different sequences. As an example, however, the first step may be to assemble the carabiner clip 40 to link 50, as shown in Figure 4, with the spring end assembled onto eyelet 54 of link 50. The free end of link 50 may now be assembled around the coils 62 of torsion spring 60 in preparation for assembly into the upper and lower jaws 20 and 30. Next, torsion spring 60 along with the link 50 and carabiner clip 40 are assembled between the upper and lower jaws 20 and 30 aligning the inner diameter of the coils with the holes formed in ears 28 and 38 such that assembly pin 70 may be inserted therethrough. Again, it should be noted with reference to Figure 3 that ears 38 are spaced a distance X_2 such that they may be inserted between ears 28 of the upper jaw element. Finally, once assembly pin 70 is inserted through the ears and the coil spring, the end 76 of assembly pin 70 may be disrupted to create a protuberance, which prevents the removal of the assembly pin 70 thereby retaining the entire assembly in the assembled state.

A second exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device 210 is illustrated in Figures 17 and 18. As can be seen in the figures, the components of this embodiment are similar to those of the first embodiment with the exception of the spring. In this embodiment, the spring is constructed in the form of a leaf spring 260. Also, the upper and lower jaw elements

are constructed the same as those in ornament hanging device 10 with the exception of the grip patterns. In this case, the grip patterns are engraved rather than raised. With reference to Figures 19 through 21, the construction of leaf spring 260 may be seen in more detail. The leaf spring in this case is formed of spring steel, or other resilient material, of thickness t_2 that provides the return force of the upper and lower jaws to provide the closing force. Leaf spring 260 also includes a slot 262 with a width X_3 , which provides clearance for link 50 to rotate about the assembly pin 70.

Figure 22 illustrates a third exemplary embodiment of the ornament hanging device 310. Ornament hanging device 310 is similar to the first embodiment in that it retains the same upper and lower jaw, the assembly pin 70, torsion spring 60, and carabiner clip 40. However, ornament hanging device 310 has an alternate construction for the connecting link, which is formed of sheet metal. Link 350 is formed of sheet metal and is spot-welded 358 to the carabiner clip 40. It should also be noted that the upper and lower jaw elements 230 and 220 are similar to the previous embodiments except that, again, in this case the grip pattern is engraved or inset rather than protruding above the surface. Figure 23 shows link 350 in more detail. Here the link is formed of a sheet metal of thickness t_3 and has an eyelet portion 352 sized such that it can be assembled around the coils of torsion spring 60. Shank portion 354 extends between the eyelet 352 and the contour portion 356. Contour portion 356 is contoured to match the shape of the spring end 42 of carabiner clip 40 along with the lower portion of the hook 40. Also note that, in this case, the width of the sheet metal link 350 is similar to the width of the carabiner.

A method is also contemplated for hanging an ornament having a mounting structure from a decorative display. This method may include any steps inherent in any of the disclosed embodiments. Broadly, the method includes the steps of pivotally securing an alligator type clip to an ornament such that it freely pivots relative to the alligator clip with no restorative force. The method also includes engaging a display with the alligator clip such that the ornament hangs

naturally from the display.

A fourth exemplary embodiment for an ornament hanging device 410 is shown in Figure 24. Ornament hanging device 410 is similar to that of the first embodiment in that it too includes an alligator-type clip containing first and second jaws, 20 and 30, respectively, an assembly pin 70, and a carabiner clip 40. Here, however, ornament hanging device 410 incorporates an alternative construction for its torsion spring 60(1) which torsion spring is perhaps best shown in Figures 25A-C. In these figures, it may be seen that torsion spring 60(1) includes torsion arms 62(1) and 64(1). These torsion arms are situated in a common plane and have oppositely directed distal end portions. Arms 62(1) and 64(1) are adapted to seat within the interior surface of the alligator clip's upper jaw 30 when in the assemble state shown in Figure 24B. Advantageously, torsion spring 60(1) includes a pair of spaced apart coils 66(1) and 66(2) through which assembly pin 70 is received. This spacing permits the hook portion of link 50 to be confined for movement between the coil portions so that it does not extend around them as in the previous embodiment. This construction has the advantage of allowing for a more smooth pivotal movement of the link about the assembly pin so that the entire device has a more free, unencumbered suspension. As best shown in Figures 25A and B, torsion arms 62(1) and 64(1) and their associated coil portions are joined by a tapered portion 67 which is adapted to seat within an interior surface of lower jaw.

Figure 26 illustrates an alternative construction for the link for use in the ornament hanging device. In particular, this link is referred to as a linkage 51 in that it incorporates an assemblage of parts, namely, a lower link portion 53, an upper link portion 55 and a swivel member 57 interconnecting them. Swivel member 57 is of a common construction known in art and is configured as a cylindrical bead having an opening at each end to receive links portions 53 and 55. It should be appreciated from Figure 26 that upper link 55 is similar to link 50 described in the earlier embodiments and would be received about the assembly pin in the assembled state. Lower link 53 could be mounted directly to a loop portion of an ornament or a

carabiner so that link portion 53, as well as link portion 55, can rotate relative to one another such as in the direction of arrow "A". This allows for greater freedom of movement between the various parts.

With the above in mind, and with reference now to Figure 28, it may be appreciated that the teachings herein also contemplate the provision of an ornament, such as ornament 500. It should be appreciated by the ordinarily skilled artisan, however, that ornament 500 shown in Figure 28 is only representative of the various types of styles and configurations which could be designed in accordance with the described teachings. Thus, generally speaking, ornament 500 includes an ornament hanging device 510 which could be constructed according to any of the above-described embodiments; preferably, however, ornament 500 incorporates an alligator-type clip 515, a linkage 550 incorporating a swivel mechanism 557 and a carabiner-type clip 540. The carabiner clip is not shown in Figure 28 because it is concealed by the decorative collar 572 associated with the ornaments ball 570. The ordinarily skilled artisan will, however, appreciate that the collar could incorporate a loop for the carabiner clip. Alternative, where a linkage construction as shown in Figure 26 is employed, the collar 572 could simple incorporate a central opening through which the lower link portion is inserted.

Refer now to Figures 28(a)-(g) which, for representative purposes only, illustrate various possible configurations for alligator-type clips such as in the form of a snowman 15(1), a star 15(2), a snowflake 15(3), a Christmas tree 15(4), holly 15(5), a paisley design 15(6), and a swirl design 15(7). In this manner, an ornament hanging device, or an ornament, can be created which has a clip correlated to the holiday season itself.

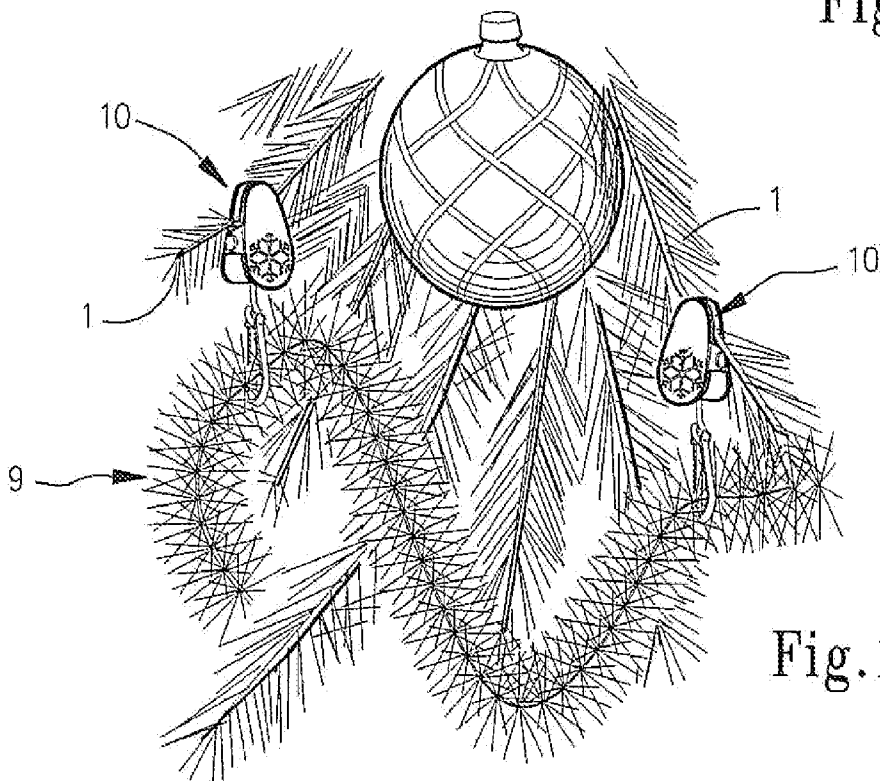
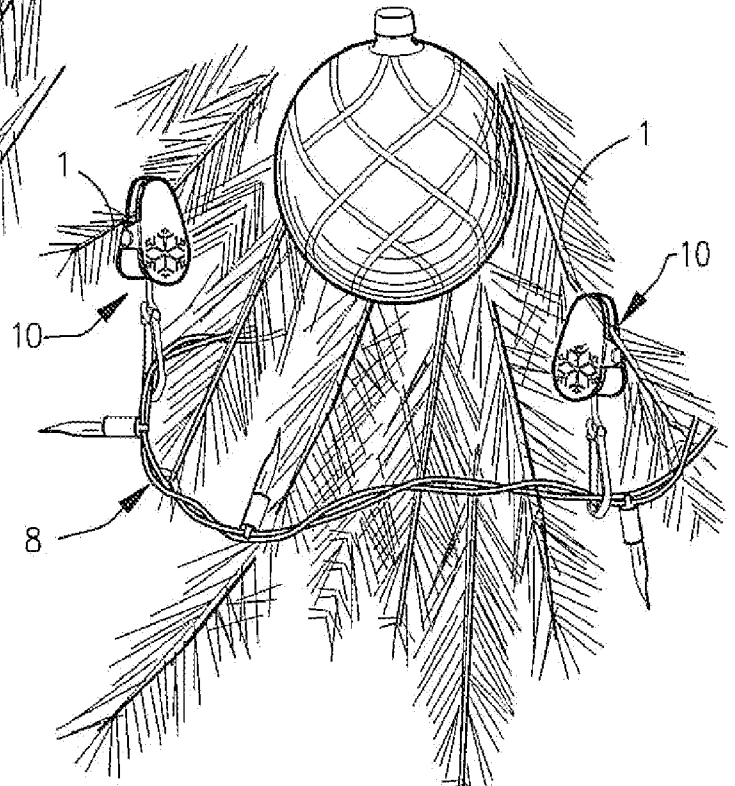
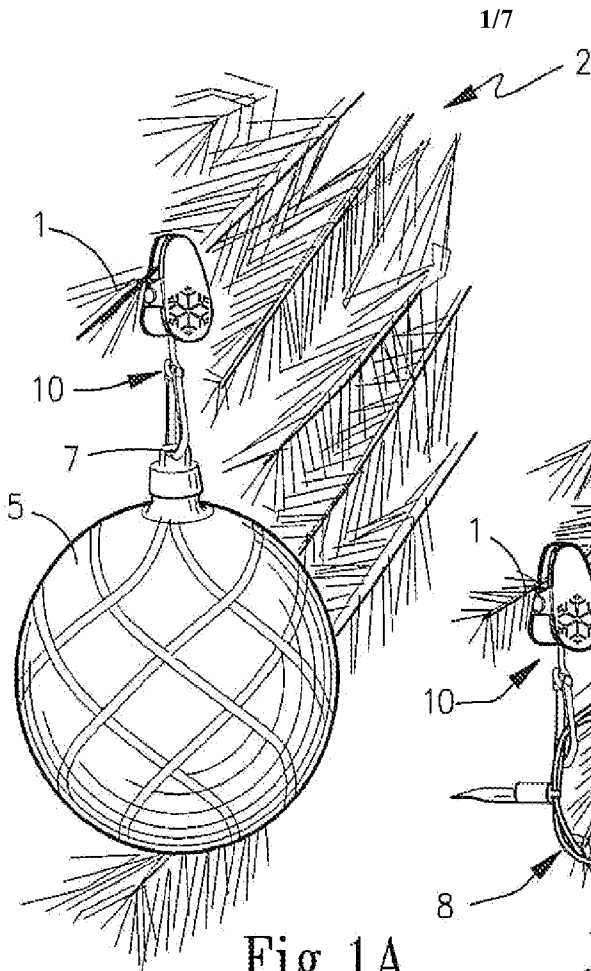
Accordingly, the present invention has been described with some degree of particularity directed to the exemplary embodiments. It should be appreciated through that the present invention is defined by the following claims construed in light of the prior art such that modifications or changes may be made to the exemplary embodiments without departing from the inventive concepts contained herein.

What is claimed is:

1. An ornament hanging device for suspending an ornament from a holiday display, comprising:
 - a. a carabiner clip for engaging a loop of the ornament;
 - b. an alligator clip for engaging the holiday display, said alligator clip movable between an open position and a closed position to engage said holiday display; and
 - c. a linkage joining said carabiner clip to said alligator clip.
2. An ornament hanging device according to claim 1 wherein said alligator clip is resiliently biased into a normally closed position.
3. An ornament hanging device according to its claim 1 wherein said alligator clip includes a first and second jaw elements retained in pivotal relation to one another by an assembly pin.
4. An ornament hanging device according to claim 3 wherein said alligator clip is resiliently biased into a normally closed position.
5. An ornament hanging device according to claim 3 further comprising a resilient member for biasing said first and second jaws into the normally closed position.
6. An ornament hanging device according to claim 5 wherein said resilient member is a spring.
7. An ornament hanging device according to claim 6 wherein said spring is a torsion spring.
8. An ornament hanging device according to claim 7 wherein said torsion spring has coils through which said assembly pin is received.
9. An ornament hanging device according to claim 8 wherein said linkage is pivotally disposed about said coils.
10. An ornament hanging device according to claim 7 wherein said torsion spring includes a pair of spaced-apart coil portions through which said assembly pin is received.

11. An ornament hanging device according to claim 10 wherein said linkage is confined for movement about said assembly pin between said coil portions.
12. An ornament hanging device according to claim 7 wherein said torsion spring includes a pair of co-planar, oppositely projecting tension arms adapted to seat within a first jaw element and joined to one another by a tapered loop adapted to seat within a second jaw element, and including a pair of spaced-apart coil portions each associated with a respective one of said torsion arms, said assembly pin received through said coil portions.
13. An ornament hanging device according to claim 1 wherein said alligator clip has a configuration which is correlated to a holiday season.
14. An ornament hanging device according to claim 13 wherein said alligator clip has an irregular surface contour to facilitate gripping said clip.
15. An ornament hanging device according to claim 14 wherein said irregular surface contour is in a pattern correlated to the holiday season.
16. An ornament hanging device according to claim 13 wherein said configuration is selected from a group consisting of a snowman, a snowflake, a Christmas tree, holly, and a star.
17. An ornament according to claim 1 wherein said linkage includes a swivel for permitting said carabiner to rotate relative to said alligator clip.
18. A hanging device for suspending an item to be displayed from a suspension member, comprising:
 - a. a clip for engaging the item to be displayed;
 - b. a clasp for engaging the suspension member, said clasp resiliently biased into a normally closed position; and
 - c. a link joining said clip to said clasp, thereby to suspend the item from said suspension member.
19. An ornament adapted to be suspended from a holiday display, comprising:

- a. a decorative item correlated to a selected holiday;
 - b. a hanging device for suspending said decorative item from the holiday display, said hanging device comprising:
 - i. a clip for engaging the item to be displayed;
 - ii. a clasp for engaging the holiday display, said clasp resiliently biased into a normally closed position; and
 - iii. a link joining said clip to said clasp, thereby to suspend the decorative item from the holiday display.
20. An ornament adapted to be suspended from a holiday display, comprising:
- a. a decorative item correlated to a selected holiday, said decorative item including a loop;
 - b. a hanging device for suspending said decorative item from the holiday display, said hanging device comprising:
 - i. a carabiner clip for engaging said loop;
 - ii. an alligator clip for engaging the holiday display, said alligator clip movable between an open position and a closed position to engage said holiday display; and
 - iii. a linkage joining said carabiner clip to said alligator clip.
21. An ornament according to claim 20 wherein said linkage includes a swivel for permitting said carabiner to rotate relative to said alligator clip.
22. A method for suspending an ornament from a holiday display, comprising:
- a. engaging the holiday display with an alligator clip;
 - b. engaging the ornament with a carabiner; and
 - c. linking said alligator clip to said carabiner.
23. A method according to claim 22 comprising allowing rotational movement of said carabiner relative to said alligator clip.



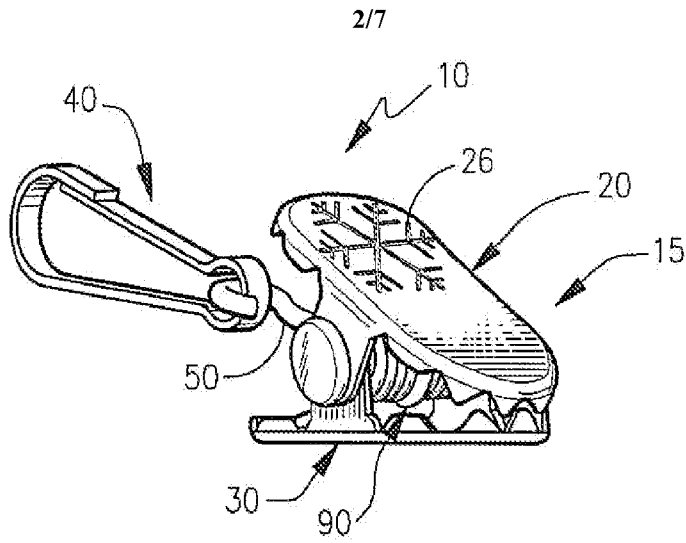


Fig.2

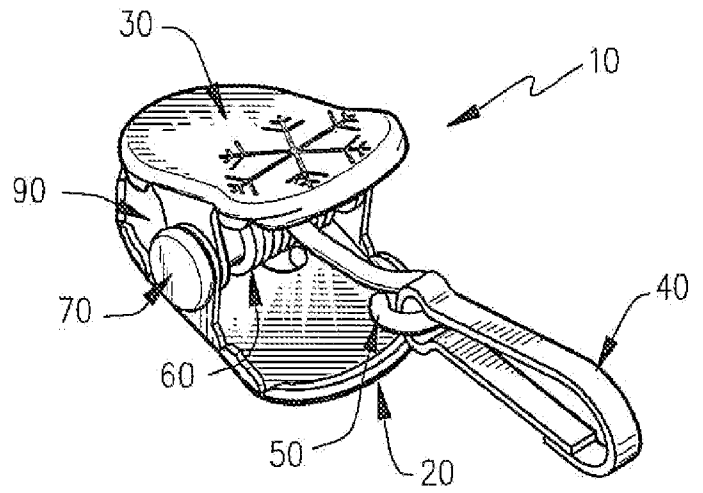


Fig.3

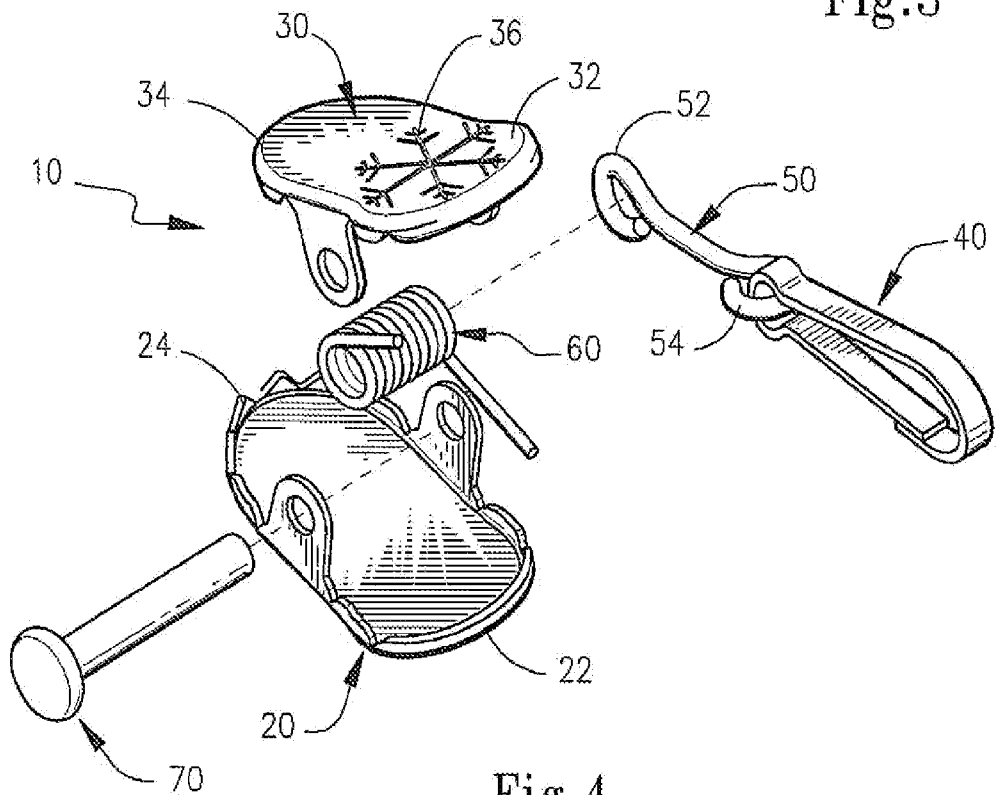


Fig.4

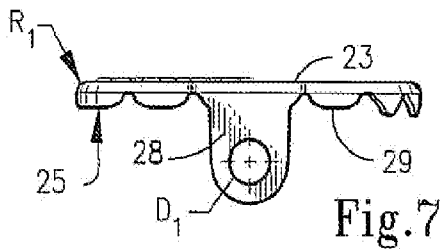
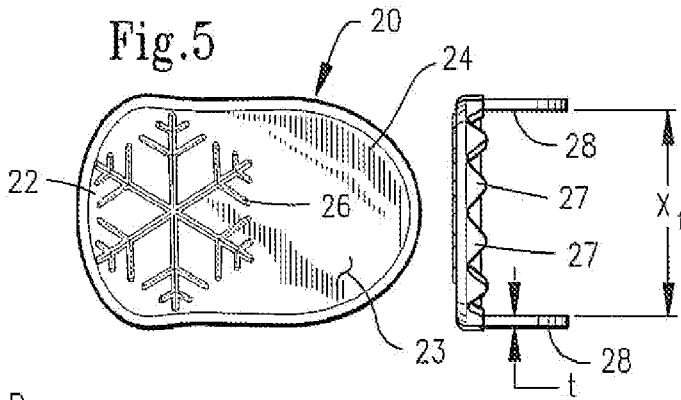


Fig. 6

Fig. 7

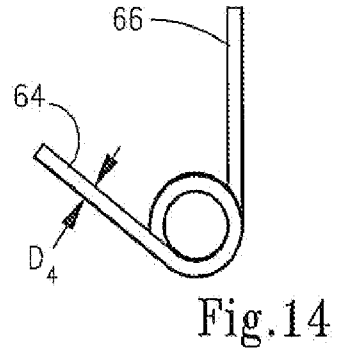
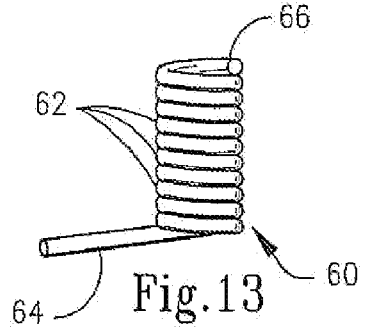


Fig. 14

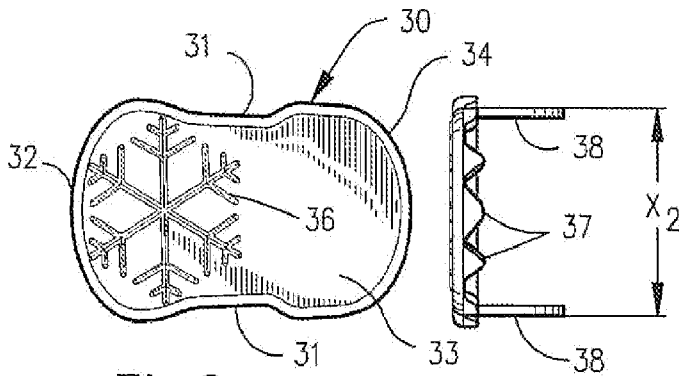


Fig. 8

Fig. 9

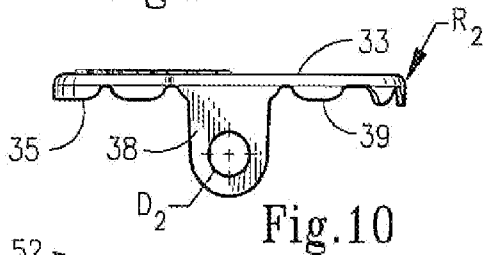


Fig. 10

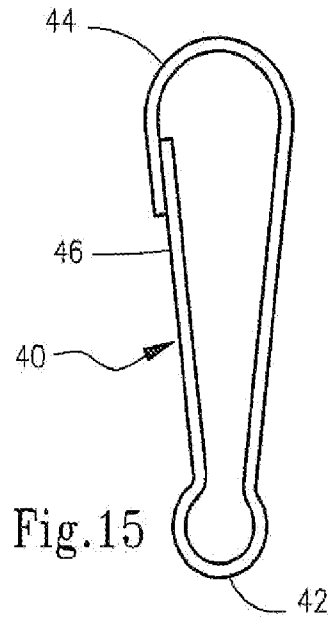


Fig. 15

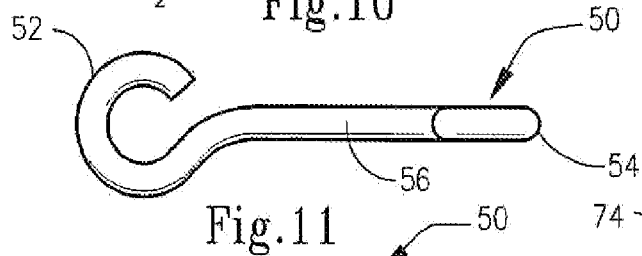


Fig. 11

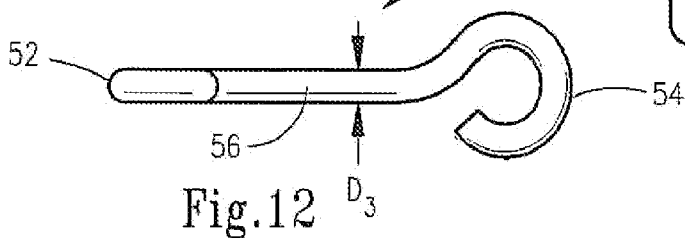


Fig. 12

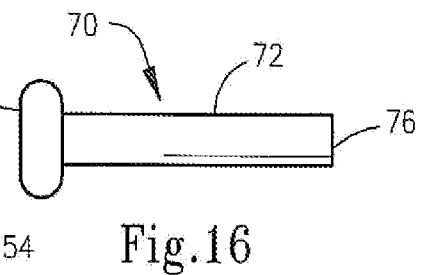


Fig. 16

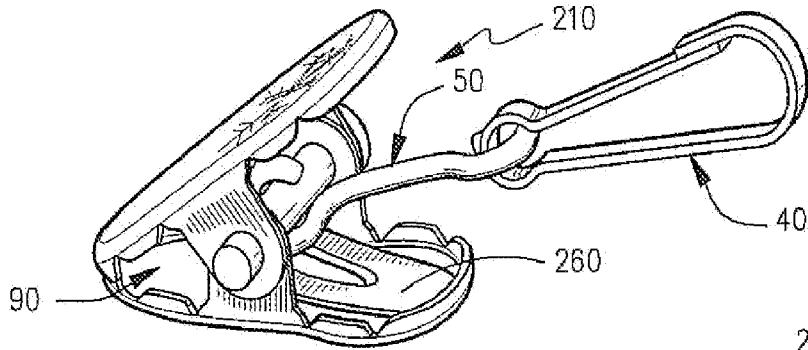


Fig. 17

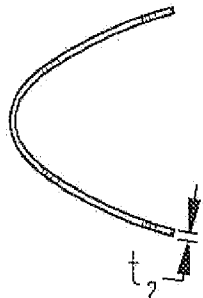


Fig. 19

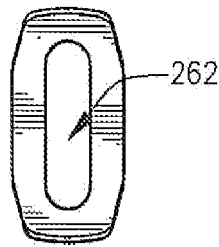


Fig. 20

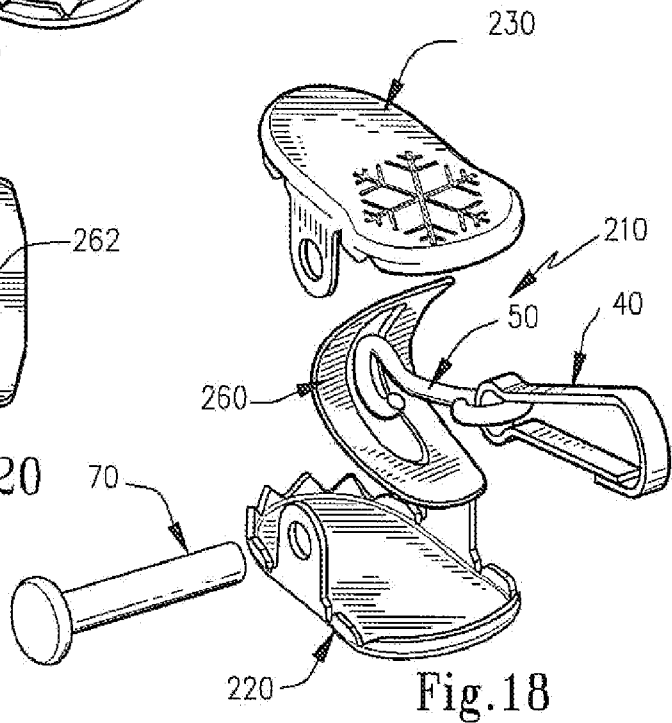


Fig. 18

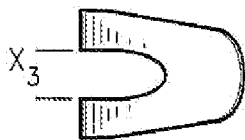


Fig. 21

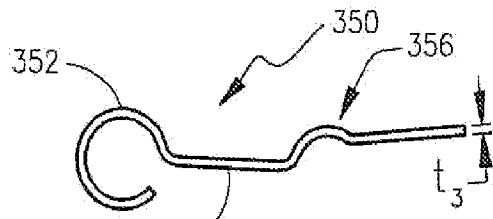


Fig. 23

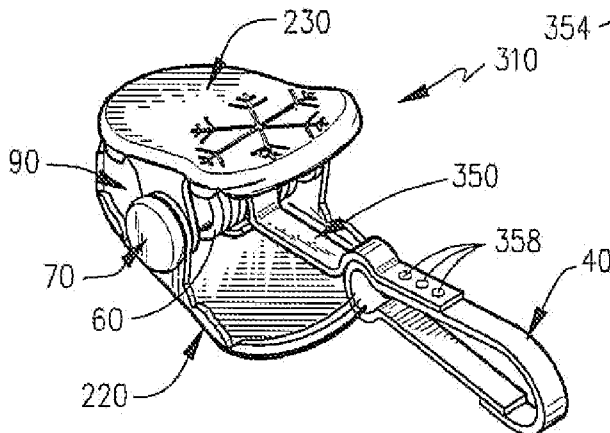


Fig. 22

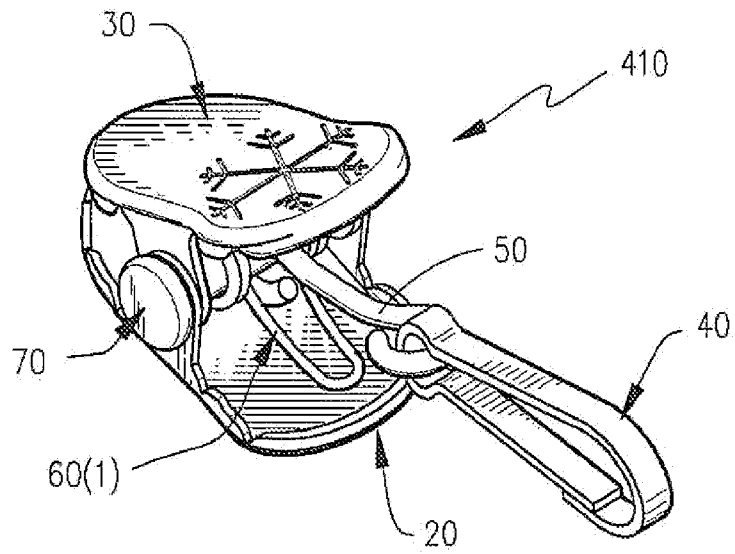


Fig.24A

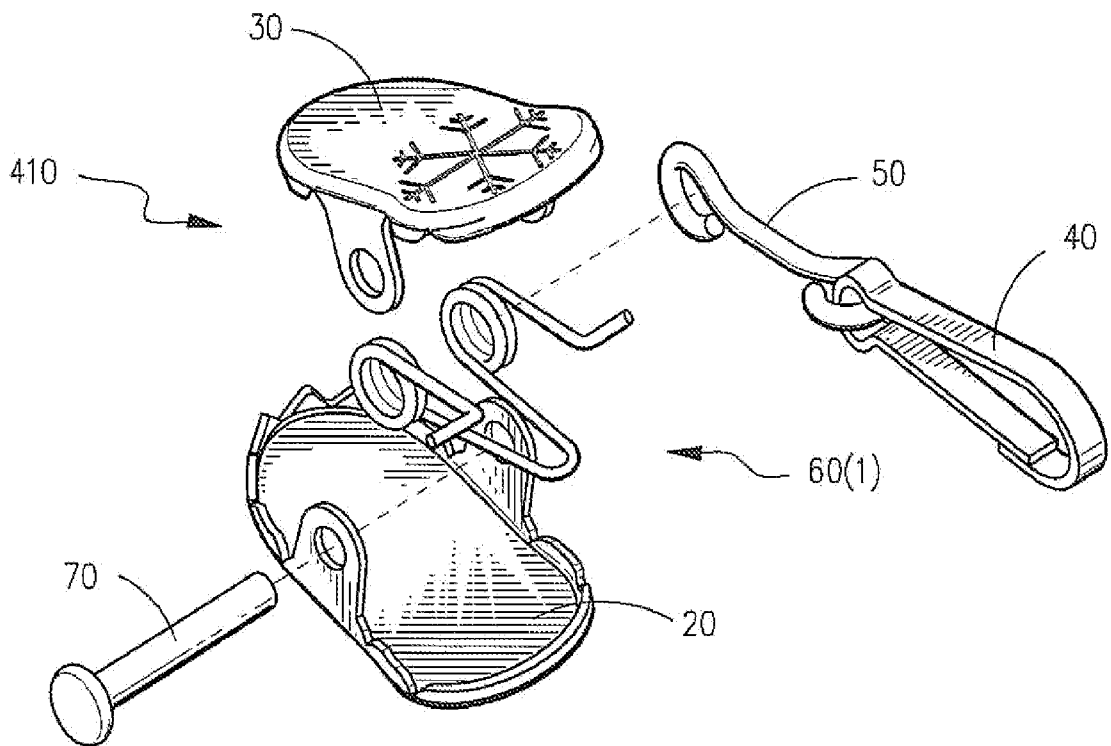
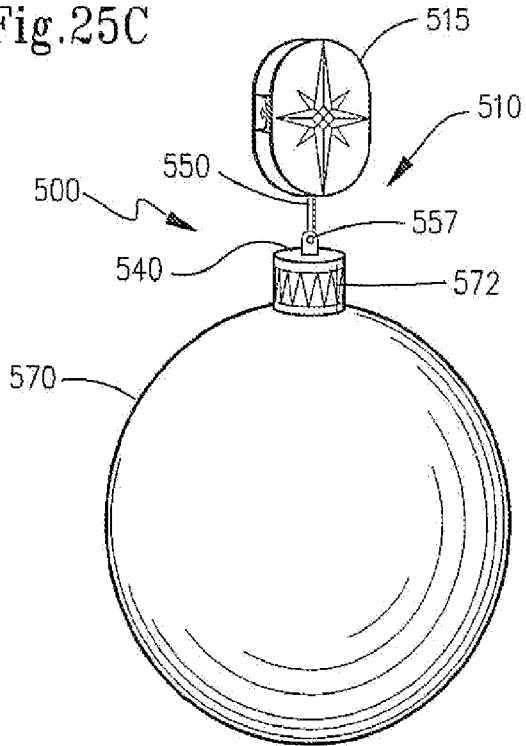
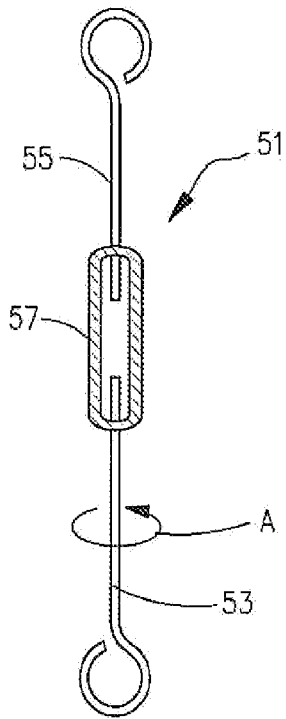
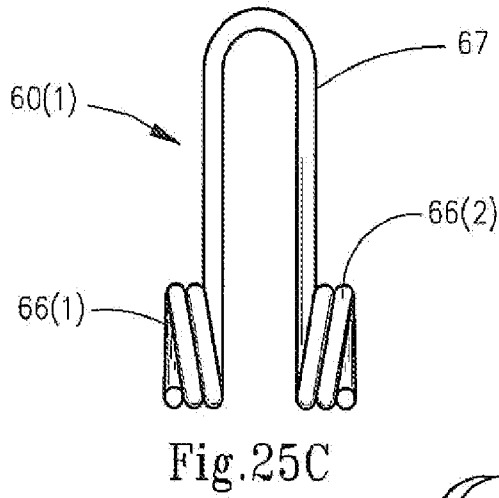
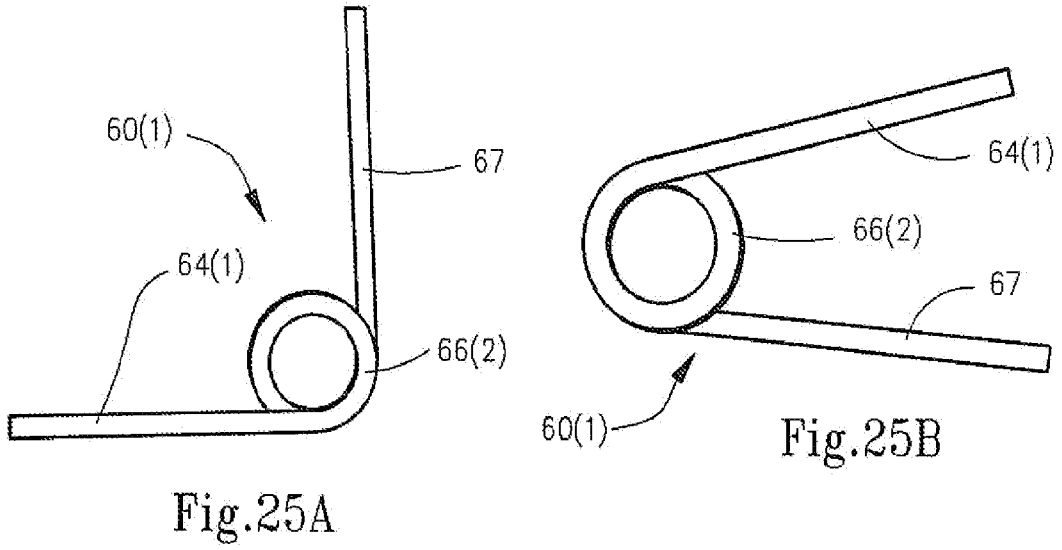


Fig.24B



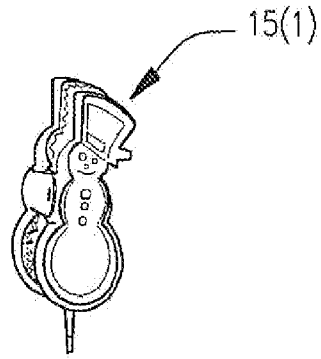


Fig.28a

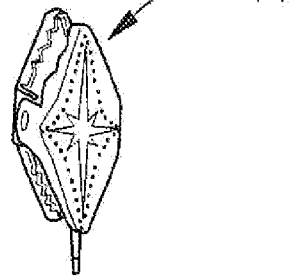


Fig.28b

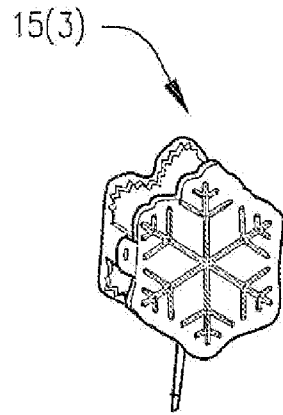


Fig.28c

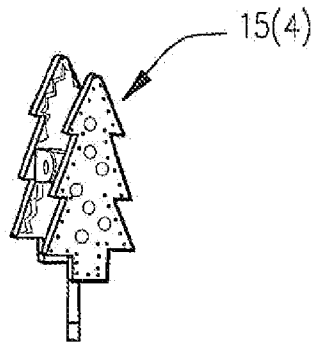


Fig.28d

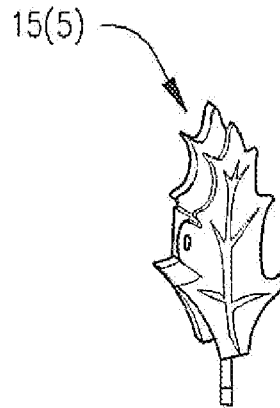


Fig.28e

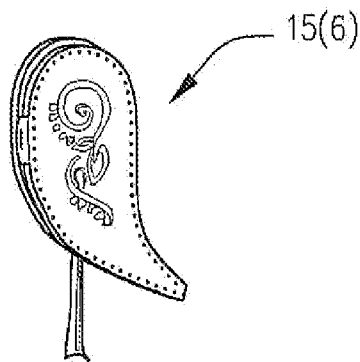


Fig.28f



Fig.28g

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US 07/23813

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC(8) - A47G 33/10 (2008.01) USPC - 428/7 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC(8) - A47G 33/10 (2008.01) USPC - 428/7		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched USPC 428/7; Backward/forward citation searches, Text Search		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) WEST (PGPB, USPT, USOCR EPAB, JPAB); Terms: ((alligator crocodile) adj (clip clasp clamp)) and (spring coil) with (pin rod) with (attach\$4 link\$3); Google Scholar (?ornament hanger alligator clip?)		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X		18
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Y	US 7,040,517 B1 (Swanson) 09 May 2006 (09.05.2006) figs. 3 and 5	1-17 and 19-23
Y	US 5,409,745 A (McGuire) 25 Apr 1995 (25.04.1995) fig. 3 and col 3, ln 13-20	1-17 and 19-23
Y	US 2006/0196101 A1 (Mrotek) 07 Sep 2006 (07.09.2006) figs. 1-6	3-12
Y	US 6,343,859 B1 (McCormick) 05 Feb 2002 (05.02.2002) figs. 12-14	14 and 15
Y	US 5,174,618 A (Kropf) 29 Dec 1992 (29.12.1992) fig. 2A, 2B	10-12
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>* Special categories of cited documents:</p> <p>"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</p> <p>"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date</p> <p>"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)</p> <p>"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means</p> <p>"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</p> <p>"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention</p> <p>"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone</p> <p>"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art</p> <p>"&" document member of the same patent family</p>		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 01 Mar 2008 (01.03.2008)		Date of mailing of the international search report 08 APR 2008
Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US, Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. 571-273-3201		Authorized officer: Lee W. Young PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300 PCT OSP: 571-272-7774