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(54) **GIFT BAG HANGER**

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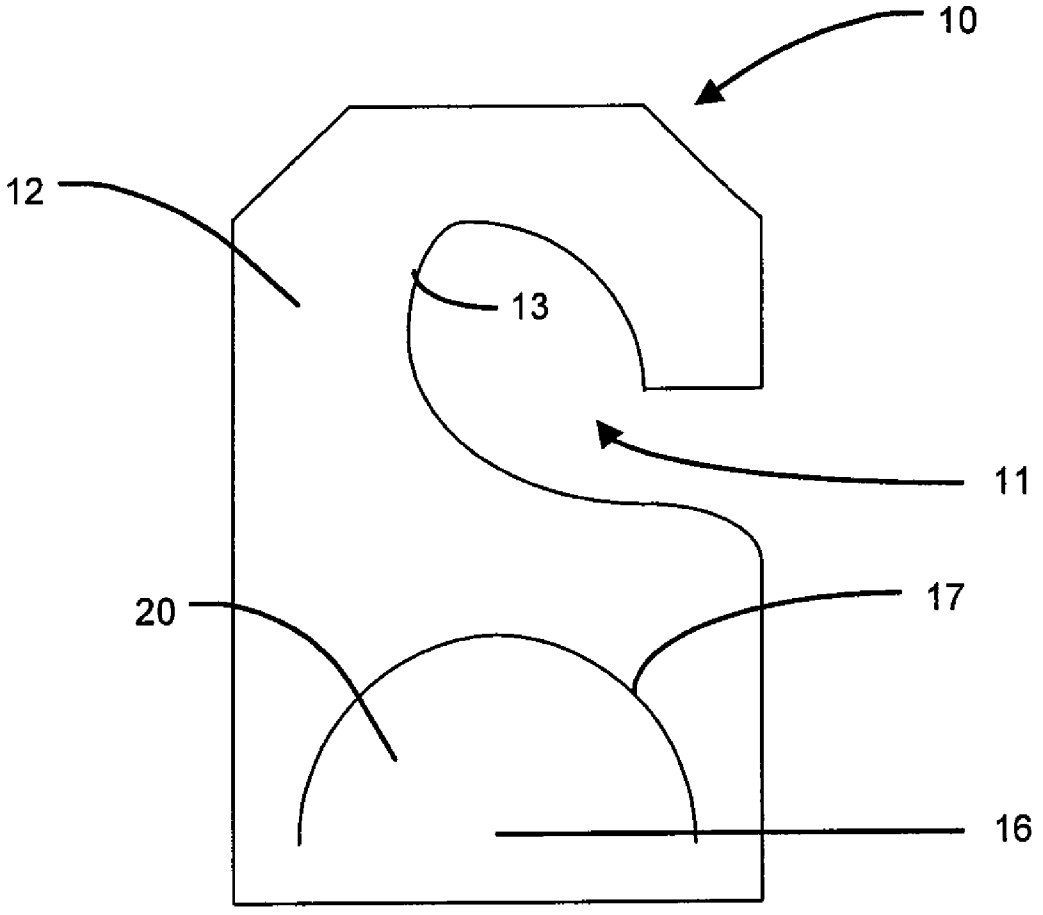
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A gift bag hanger includes a hooking portion, a body, and at least one flap to display gift bags or similar items on a merchandise rack. The hangers may have one or more flaps to keep the gift bag closed. When the hanger has one flap, the hanger is attached to one side of the gift bag, and the flap engages the opposite side of the bag. By closing the bag, the flap provides enhanced support and stability for the bag. When the hanger has more than one flap, it can be attached to one side of the gift bag using one flap, and a second flap can engage the opposite side of the bag to keep it closed.



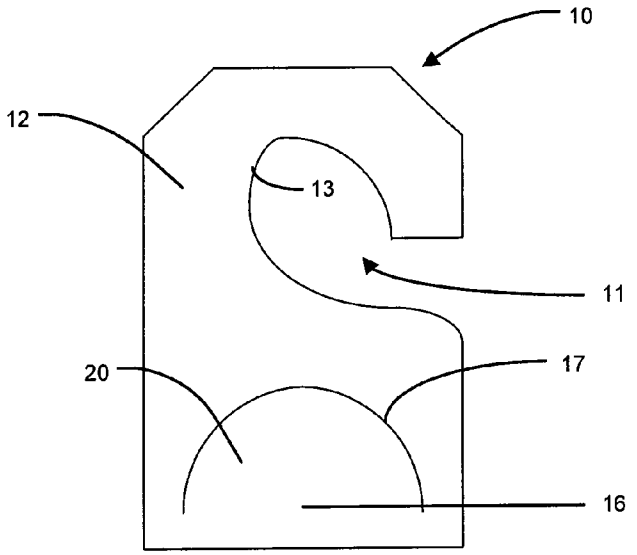


FIG. 1

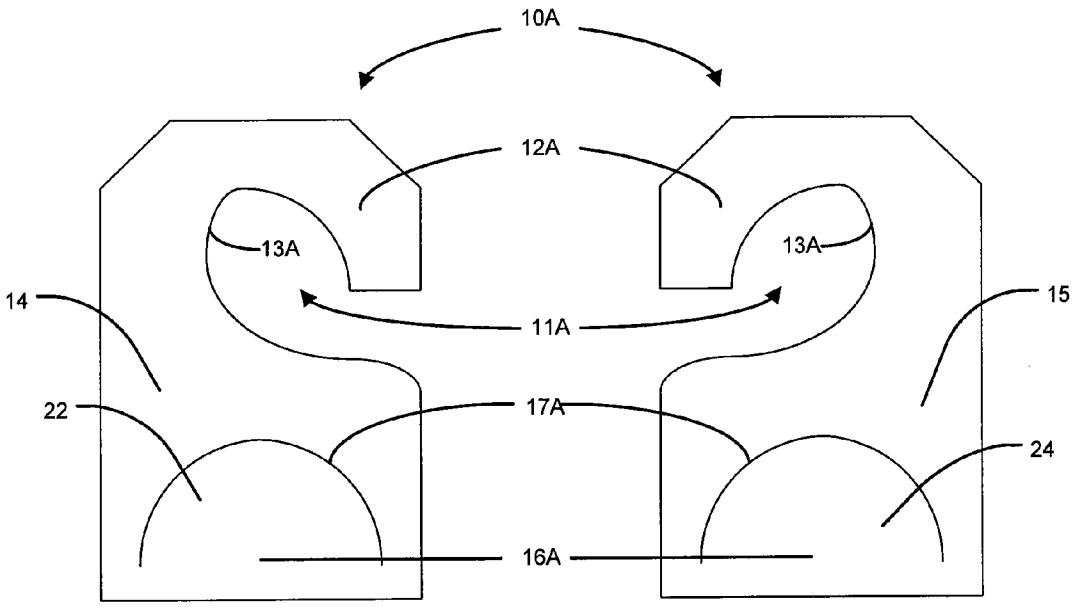


FIG. 2A

FIG. 2B

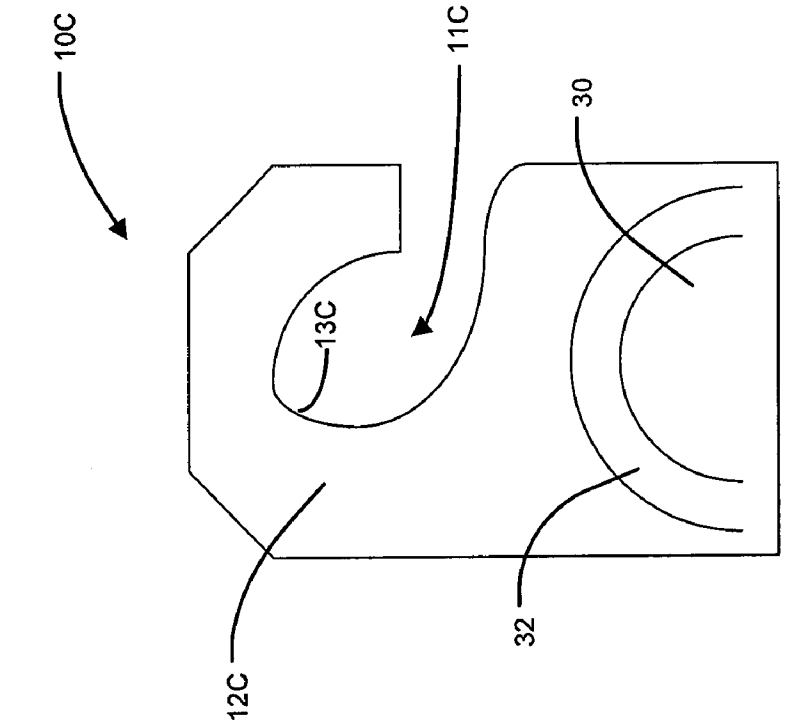


FIG. 4

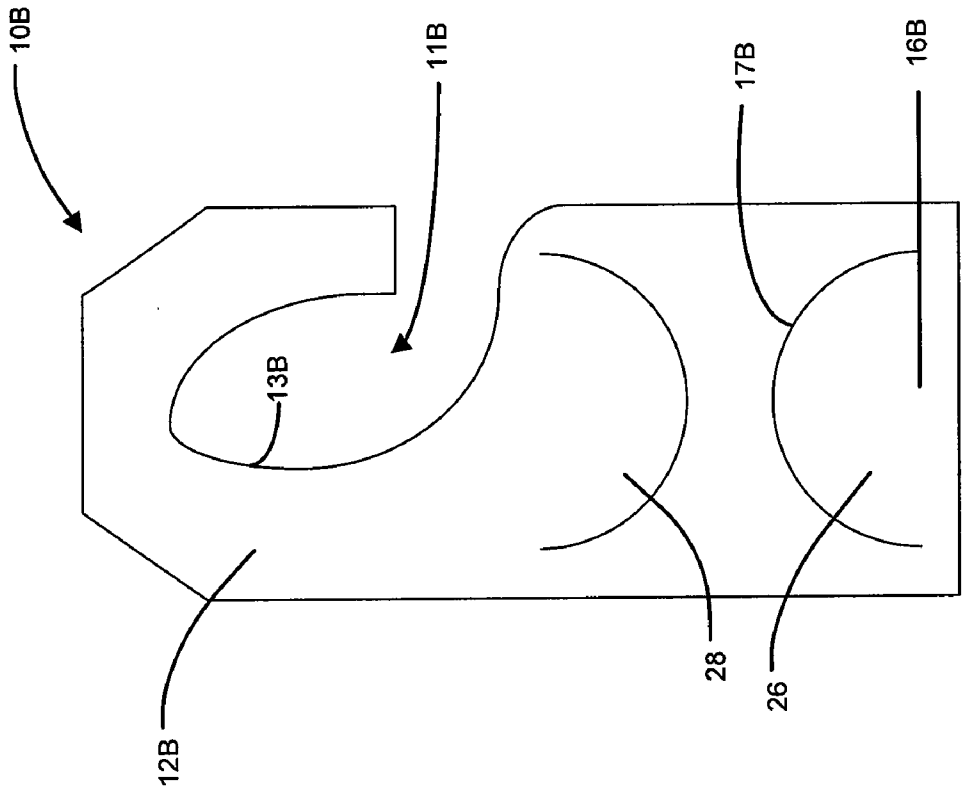


FIG. 3

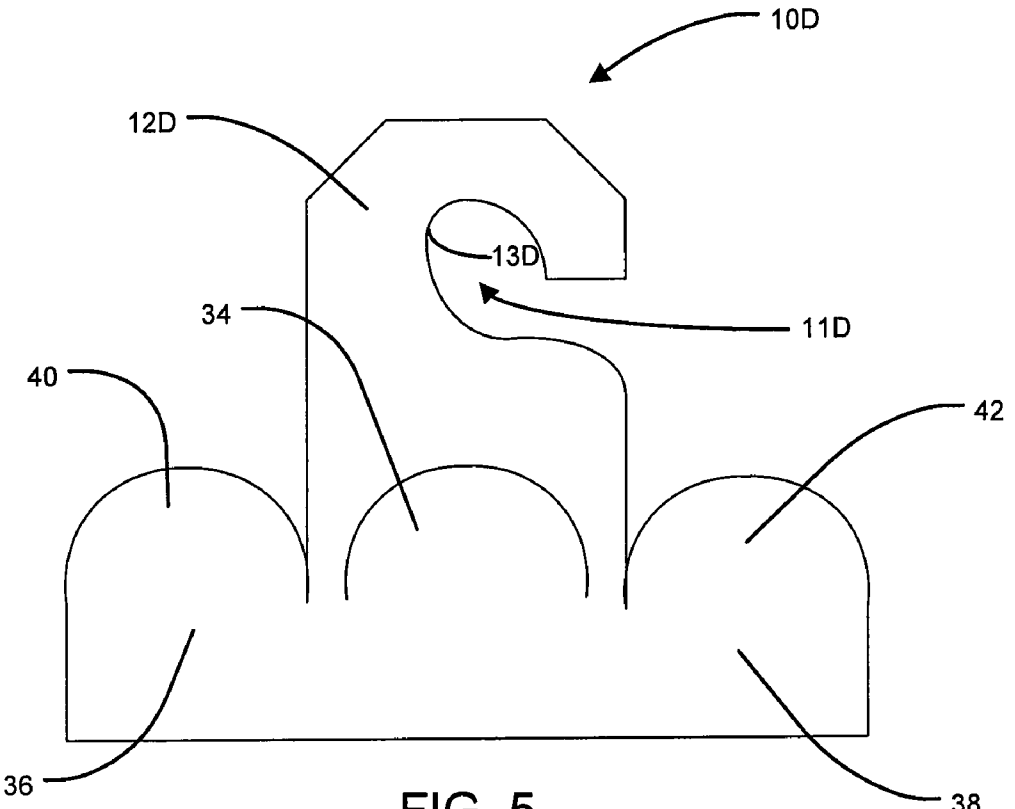


FIG. 5

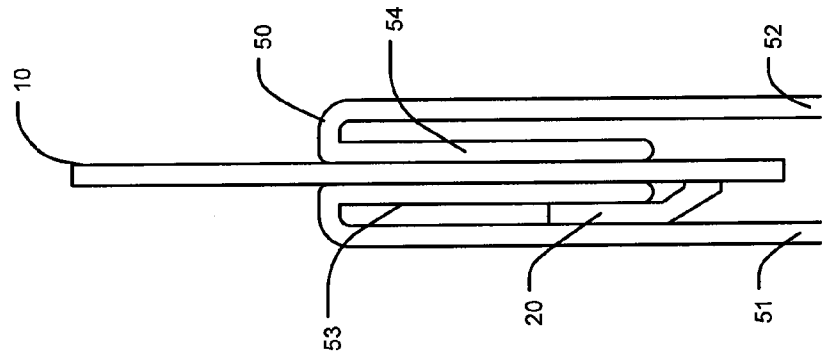


FIG. 6B

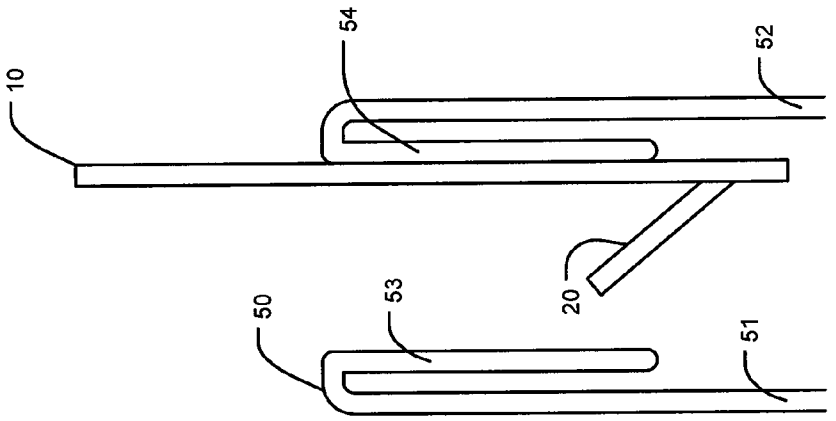


FIG. 6A

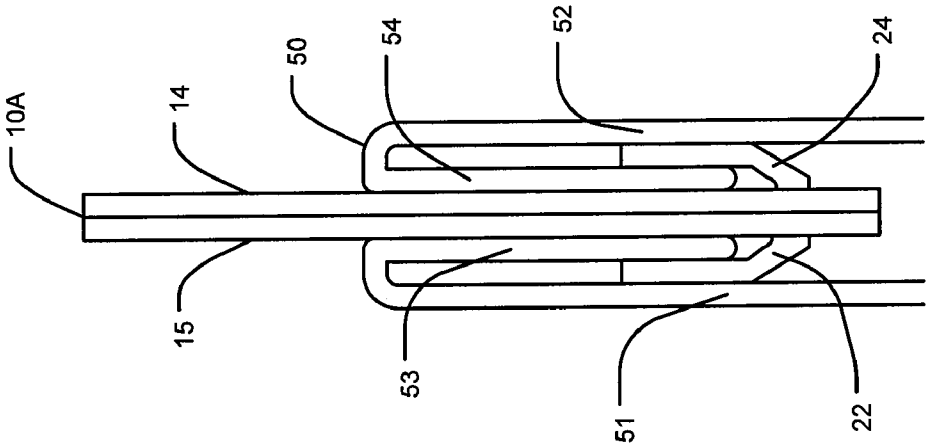


FIG. 7B

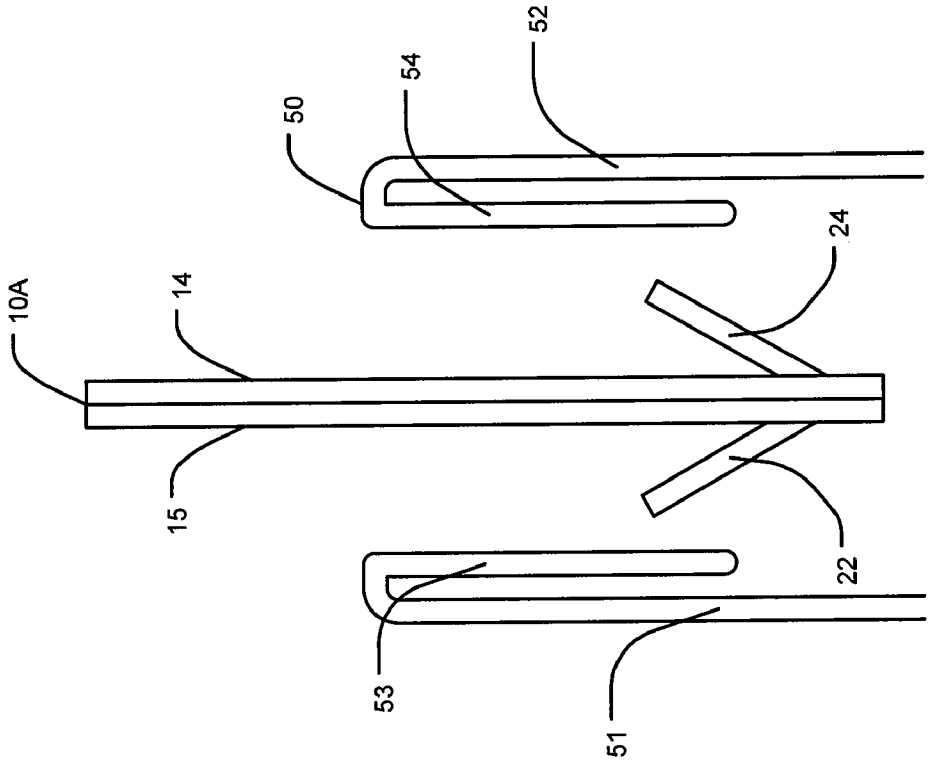


FIG. 7A

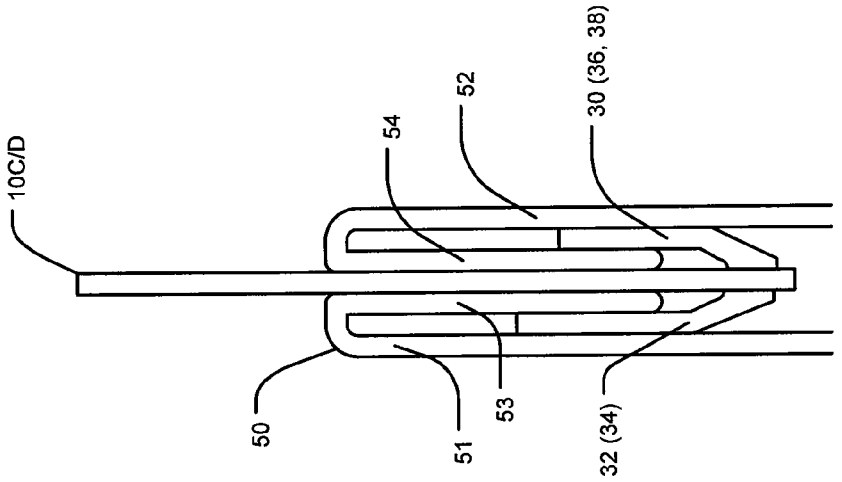


FIG. 9

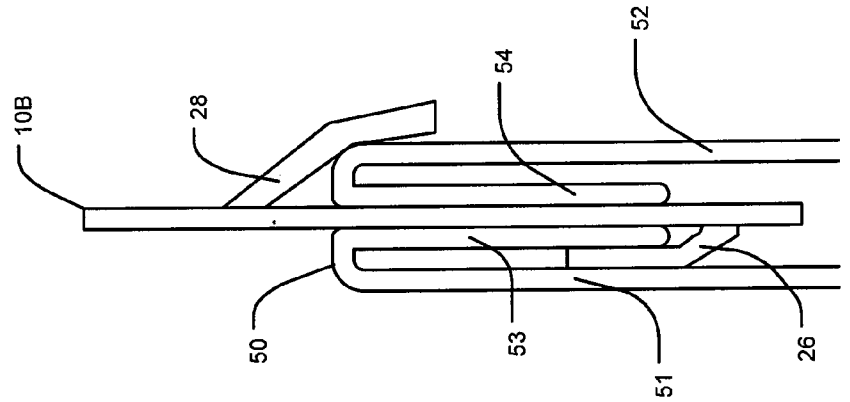


FIG. 8B

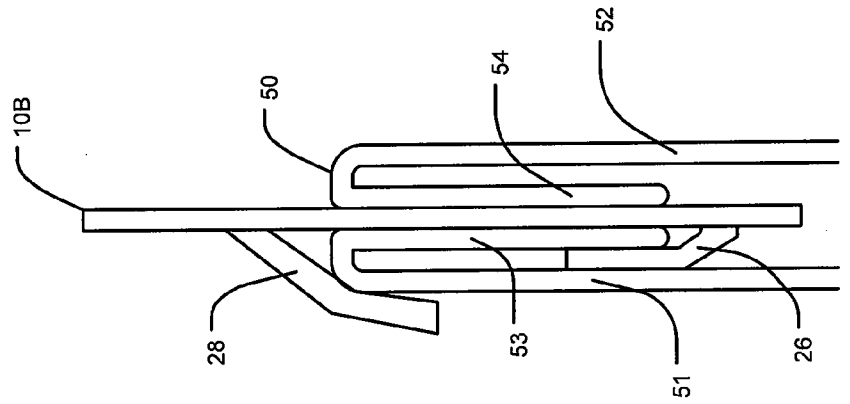


FIG. 8A

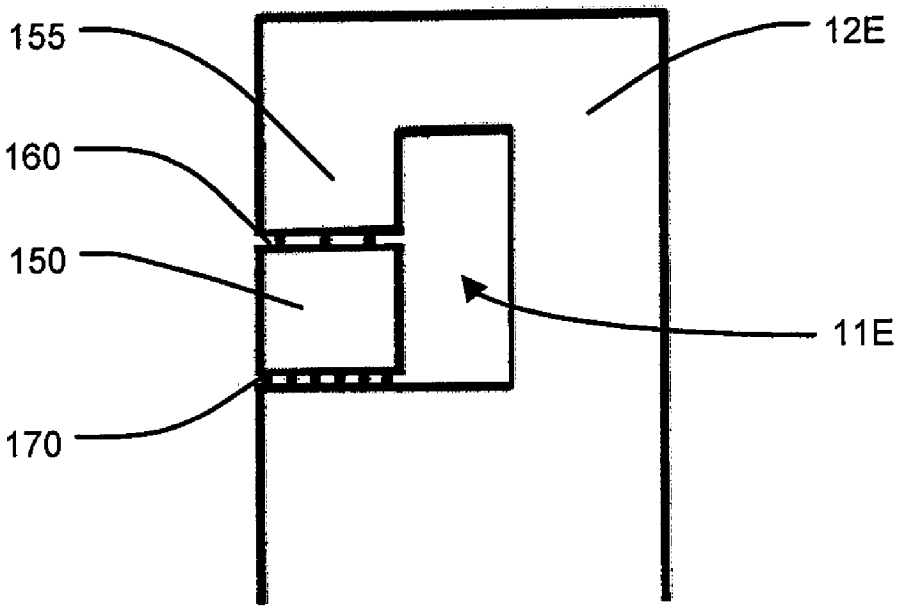


FIG. 10

GIFT BAG HANGER

CROSS-REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/877,625 filed Dec. 29, 2006 and U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/878,692 filed Jan. 5, 2007.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The invention generally relates to devices and methods for hanging gift bags, and similar items on merchandise racks.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] In a retail setting, gift bags are displayed on merchandise racks by plastic hanging devices. These hanging devices include a hook-shaped structure and are typically glued onto one of the inner cuffs or folds located at the brim region of the gift bag. However, these hanging devices are unstable and may easily break, causing gift bags to fall off display racks. Such hanging devices do not provide ample support and stability for the gift bags to which they are attached. In addition, current hanging devices face a difficult technical issue in selecting the proper amount of glue or adhesive to permit the hanging device to be securely attached to the gift bag for display, yet also be removable by the customer after purchase. Current hanging devices are limited as they do not secure both sides of the bag closed, and as a result, the bags are often tangled and mangled when customers browse through them. Also, displaying open bags rather than closed bags decreases the amount of rack space available for other merchandise.

[0004] In addition, numerous devices for hanging gift bags have been proposed or suggested in the prior art literature, but they do not address all of the issues above and/or suffer from other drawbacks. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,044,773 discloses a device having a first portion installed within the cuff of the gift bag and a portion extending upward and including a means for supporting the gift bag in a hanging condition. This device requires installation within the cuff of the gift bag and also fails to keep the gift bag closed while on display.

[0005] Devices for hanging and closing other types of bags are known, but these are not suitable for gift bags and/or suffer from other drawbacks or disadvantages. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 3,017,070 discloses a bag closure and carrier having a tuck portion that is used to secure a bag under downward facing bendable tabs. This device is designed for bags "constructed of a flimsy material such as polyethylene plastic or some other similar flexible material." Col. 3, lines 49-51. Because gift bags are typically not constructed from a flimsy material and generally do not have a closure flap as disclosed by U.S. Pat. No. 3,017,070, this device would not be applicable to, or suitable for use with, gift bags. Similarly, U.S. Pat. No. 5,267,643 discloses an outdoor plastic information dispenser to be used with transparent plastic bags. This device uses a downward facing hanger/flap to close plastic bags having two sides and three edges. This device would be unsuitable for use with gift bags because the hanger is permanently attached to the bag (col. 2, lines 41-49). Furthermore, the downward flap does not contribute to supporting the weight of the contents display bag. U.S. Pat. No. 5,096,070 discloses downward facing flaps that extend over the top of a food product bag. An inflexible protrusion, rather than the downward flaps, support the weight of the bag and its contents. Col. 2, lines 14-17.

[0006] Devices for hanging objects other than bags are known, but are not shaped, dimensioned, or otherwise configured specifically for gift bags. See, e.g., U.S. Published Application No. 2002/0092958, U.S. Pat. No. 3,310,272, U.S. Pat. No. 6,062,521, U.S. Pat. No. 4,943,026. These items are of the wrong shape and size to securely attach to a gift bag and/or to securely attach to a merchandise rack for gift bags.

[0007] In addition, other devices for hanging objects rely primarily on adhesive to attach to the item for display. See, e.g., U.S. Pat. No. 168,536, U.S. Pat. No. 5,328,137, and U.S. Pat. No. 5,542,634. U.S. 168,536 discloses a device having a downward facing flap that is "secured to the article upon which it is to be used by means of gum, glue, or other suitable adhesive material." Col. 1, lines 25-28. U.S. Pat. No. 5,542,634 shows a device using adhesive to attach the device with slits to the item for display. The portion created by the slits does move away from the device to engage the item, but rather, is merely adhered to the item. U.S. Pat. No. 5,328,137 discloses a display hanger having a folded portion to engage the merchandise rack rather than a flap to engage the item for display.

[0008] Accordingly, there a need in the art for an improved gift bag hanger that is easy to manufacture and use by consumers and is specifically configured to securely display gift bags on merchandise racks while keeping the bag closed.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The invention provides improved devices and methods for hanging various products, particularly gift bags and similar items, to merchandise racks. The improved methods and devices securely display gift bags in their closed position and also can reduce or completely eliminate the need for adhesive to connect the gift bags to the hangers.

[0010] Embodiments of the invention may achieve one or more advantages over current hanging devices in that they may be more durable, provide ample support and stability for the gift bags, secure both sides of the gift bag together to close the bag opening, allow ease of customer browsing, and/or provide more available rack space for other merchandise.

[0011] According to one aspect of the invention, a gift bag display system includes a gift bag defining an enclosure having an opening providing access to the interior of the bag; and a gift bag hanger having a first portion attached to said gift bag; a second portion configured to engage a merchandise rack; and at least one projecting portion, oriented upwardly towards said second portion, and movable away from said first portion to engage said gift bag and close said opening. The at least one projecting portion can be a single flap. The first portion can be attached to the gift bag with or without adhesive. The hanger can include a first flap and a second flap. The flaps can be arranged vertically, horizontally, or concentrically to one another. The first and second flaps can be capable of extending in opposite directions. The first flap can be configured to close the gift bag, and the second flap can be configured to attach the hanger to the gift bag. The gift bag can include a first side and a second side, and a first cuff folded from the first side and a second cuff folded from the second side. Each of the first and second flaps can independently engage a wall or cuff. The cuffs can be folded inwardly, and the first flap can engage the first cuff, and the second flap can engage the second cuff. The first portion can be a body,

the second portion can be a hooking portion, and the projecting portion can be at least one flap. The second portion can define a space sized to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a widest dimension of about 0.1 to about 2 cm. The second portion can include at least one deformable connection. The deformable connection can be, e.g., a perforation. In one aspect, the hooking portion includes a detachable perforation and a hinged perforation, wherein the detachable perforation, when stressed, is capable of converting a closed space defined by the second portion to an open space.

[0012] According to another aspect of the invention, a gift bag hanger includes a first portion; a second portion defining a space sized to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a widest dimension of about 0.1 to about 2 cm; and at least one projecting portion, oriented upwardly towards said second portion, and movable away from said first portion to close an opening of a gift bag. The at least one projecting portion can be a single flap, or the hanger can include a first flap and a second flap. The flaps can be arranged vertically, horizontally, or concentrically to one another. The first and second flaps can be capable of extending in opposite directions. The first portion can be a body, the second portion can be a hooking portion, and the projecting portion can be at least one flap. The second portion can include at least one deformable connection. The deformable connection can be, e.g., a perforation. In one aspect, the hooking portion includes a detachable perforation and a hinged perforation, wherein the detachable perforation, when stressed, is capable of converting a closed space defined by the second portion to an open space.

[0013] In yet another aspect of the invention, a method for displaying a gift bag on a merchandise rack includes attaching a gift bag hanger to a first part of a gift bag defining an enclosure having opening; bending at least one upwardly oriented projection away from the gift bag hanger; and closing the gift bag by engaging the upwardly oriented projection with a second part of the gift bag. The method can include applying adhesive to attach the hanger to the gift bag and/or engaging a projection with the gift bag to attach the hanger to the bag. The attaching step may be accomplished with or without adhesive. The method can further include a step of hanging the hanger attached to the gift bag onto a merchandise rack protrusion by engaging a portion of the hanger defining a space sized to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a widest dimension of about 0.1 to about 2 cm with the merchandise rack protrusion. The method may include removing the hanger from the merchandize rack protrusion by detaching two sections of the hanger. The method may further include a step of re-hanging the hanger onto the merchandise rack protrusion by bending the first section of the hanger relative to the second section.

[0014] Additional features, advantages, and embodiments of the invention are set forth in, or are apparent from, the following detailed description, figures, and claims. It is to be understood that both the foregoing summary of the invention and the following detailed description are exemplary and intended to provide further explanation without limiting the scope of the invention as claimed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0015] The accompanying figures, which are included to provide a further understanding of the invention, are incorporated in, and constitute a part of, this specification. The figures illustrate embodiments of the invention and together with the detailed description serve to explain the principles of the invention. No attempt is made to show structural details of the invention in more detail than may be necessary for a fundamental understanding of the invention and various ways in which it may be practiced.

[0016] FIG. **1** shows one embodiment of a gift bag hanger constructed according to the principles of the invention having a hooking portion to engage a merchandise rack and one upwardly oriented flap to engage a gift bag.

[0017] FIGS. **2**A and **2**B show front and rear views, respectively, of a second embodiment of a gift bag hanger constructed according to the principles of the invention having a hooking portion and two flaps on opposite sides of the device.

[0018] FIG. **3** shows a third embodiment of a gift bag hanger constructed according to the principles of the invention having a hooking portion, a lower flap, and an upper flap.

[0019] FIG. **4** shows a fourth embodiment of a gift bag hanger constructed according to the principles of the invention having a hooking portion and two concentric flaps.

[0020] FIG. **5** shows a fifth embodiment of a gift bag hanger constructed according to the principles of the invention having a hooking portion, a flap, and two side wings.

[0021] FIGS. **6**A and **6**B show side cross-sectional views of the first embodiment shown in FIG. **1** before and after engaging a gift bag, respectively.

[0022] FIGS. **7**A and **7**B show side cross-sectional views of the second embodiment shown in FIGS. **2**A and **2**B before and after engaging a gift bag, respectively.

[0023] FIGS. **8**A and **8**B shows two alternative side cross-sectional views of the third embodiment shown in FIG. **3** after engaging a gift bag.

[0024] FIG. **9** shows a side cross-sectional view of the embodiments shown in FIG. **4** or FIG. **5** after engaging a gift bag.

[0025] FIG. **10** shows another embodiment of the hooking portion of the invention having a detachable perforation and a hinged perforation.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0026] It is understood that the invention is not limited to the particular materials, methodology, etc., described herein, as these may vary as would be recognized by one of ordinary skill in the art. It is also to be understood that the terminology used herein is used for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only, and is not intended to limit the scope of the invention. It also is to be noted that as used herein and in the appended claims, the singular forms "a," "an," and "the" include both the singular and the plural reference unless the context clearly dictates otherwise. For example, a reference to "a flap" is a reference to one or more flaps and equivalents thereof known to those of ordinary skill in the art.

[0027] Unless defined otherwise, all technical terms used herein have the same meanings as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art. The embodiments of the invention and the various features and advantageous details thereof are explained more fully with reference to the non-limiting embodiments, illustrated in the accompanying figures and/or detailed in the following description. It should be noted that the features illustrated in the figures are not necessarily drawn to scale, and features of one embodiment can be employed with other embodiments, even if not explicitly stated herein.

[0028] Any numerical values recited herein include all values from the lower value to the upper value in increments of any measurable degree of precision. As an example, if it is

stated that the value of a variable such as, for example, size, angle size, pressure, time and the like, is, for example, from 1 to 90, specifically from 20 to 80, more specifically from 30 to 70, it is intended that values such as 15 to 85, 22 to 68, 43 to 51, 30.3 to 32, etc., are expressly enumerated in this specification. In other words, all possible combinations of numerical values between the lowest value and the highest value enumerated are to be considered to be expressly stated in this application in a similar manner.

[0029] The definition section provided immediately below specifically defines certain terms used herein. Particular devices, methods, and materials are described, although any materials and methods similar or equivalent to those described herein can be used.

[0030] The term "hooking portion" as used herein refers to a portion of a device, such as a gift bag hanger, configured to secure the device to a merchandise rack or other display. The hooking portion can be designed to receive a rail, peg, hook, and/or other protrusion on a merchandise rack or to otherwise be removably attached to a merchandise rack.

[0031] The term "flap" as used herein refers to an integral or separate projection that is capable of being moved into and out of the plane of the "body," which is defined below. The flap has sufficient flexibility to move away from the body of the device to engage a side of a bag, but has sufficient stability to securely engage the side of the bag toward the device.

[0032] The term "body" as used herein refers to the portion of the device connecting the hooking portion to the flap(s).

[0033] The term "perforation" as used herein refers to any discontinuity or demarcation along which the device can be bent, or partially or completely separated. The perforation may provide a weakened demarcation to facilitate bending or separation. A perforation includes, but is not limited to, a series of holes or indentions. Stronger perforations (e.g., hinged perforations) facilitate bending without separation, whereas weaker perforations (e.g., detachable perforations) facilitate separation between the portions of the device bordering the demarcation. The device can comprise one or more strengths of perforations. The perforation can be a line, curve, or other boundary on the device.

[0034] In one embodiment, a gift bag hanger includes a hooking portion, a body, and at least one flap. The flap can engage with a first side of a gift bag, and the body can be secured to a second side of the bag, such as the side opposite the first side. The flap can be used to clip the sides of the gift bag together, thereby closing the bag. The body can be secured to the second side of the bag using glue, adhesive, staples, any other known attachment system, or by using a second flap as described below.

[0035] In another embodiment, a gift bag hanger includes a hooking portion, a body, a first flap, and a second flap. The flaps may be capable of extending in opposite directions. The first flap can engage with a first side of a gift bag, and the second flap can engage with a second side of the bag, such as the side opposite the first side. The second flap can secure the body to the bag with or without adhesive or other additional attachment support. The second flap may secure the body to the bag with no adhesive, minimal adhesive, or less adhesive than would be required to secure the body to the bag without the flap. In some embodiments, the device can be designed to close the bag without any adhesive, if desired.

[0036] The hooking portion for these and other embodiments can have rounded or angular edges. The hooking portion may define an open space not entirely confined by the body of the device (e.g., a J-type hook). A hooking portion that defines an open space allows the device to be inserted onto the front of, and/or removed laterally from, the merchandise rack. The hooking portion may define a closed space (e.g., a hole through the body of the device). When the hooking portion defines a closed space, the space is confined by the body of the device, and the device must be inserted onto the front of the merchandise rack and cannot be removed laterally without breaking the device. In one embodiment, the hooking portion can convert from a configuration defining a closed space to a configuration defining an open space, such as by one or more perforations to facilitate removal and replacement of the device on a display rack by a user or consumer. The hooking portion may be located in the upper center part of the device body.

[0037] The gift bag hangers of the invention can include one, two, three or more flaps, as shown, e.g., in the illustrated embodiments. In some embodiments, the gift bag hanger includes one to three flaps. In other embodiments, the gift bag hanger includes one or two flaps. In yet another embodiment, the gift bag hanger includes a single flap.

[0038] A variety of flap configurations can be used. One or more flaps can be included on either or both sides of the device. Additionally, the flap can be of various shapes and sizes. For example, the flaps can be round, curved, square, rectangular, triangular, etc. in shape. In one embodiment, a flap is semi-circular and extends upwardly from a base integral with the bottom of the body. In a device having more than one flap, the shapes of the flaps can be the same as, or different from, one another. In a device having more than one flap, the flaps can be arranged vertically, horizontally, overlapping, concentric, tangential, or separated from one another, or any combination thereof.

[0039] A flap can be oriented in any direction as long as it can engage a side (such as a wall or cuff) of a gift bag. At least one flap may be oriented upwardly toward the hooking portion. This orientation is shown, e.g., in FIG. **1**. In this way, the flap not only acts to close the bag, it also acts to support the weight of the bag when hanging on display. Instead of a flap, another hooking portion can be used to engage the wall or cuff of a gift bag, in which case the gift bag hanger would include from top to bottom, a hooking portion, a body, and another hooking portion, which may be of any shape including the J-shaped hooking portions as shown herein, or square, or any other shape that achieves the functions of the invention. Such a design might not be as stable as a flap-based design, but would still function adequately.

[0040] The gift bag hangers of the invention can be constructed from one or more suitable materials including, but not limited to, plastics, metals, composites, and cardboard. In one embodiment, the device is made of a durable plastic material that provides sufficient support for the merchandise. In another embodiment, the device is made of a clear acetate material.

[0041] Furthermore, the dimensions and specifications of the device can vary depending on the dimensions of the gift bag and/or merchandise rack. The dimensions and specifications can be fitted to accommodate the standard sizes and dimensions of the merchandise racks commonly used in the industry. The hooking portion may be configured to engage a standard merchandise rack for displaying gift bags. For example, in one embodiment, the hooking portion is configured to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a size (i.e., diameter or other widest dimension) of less than about 5

cm, less than about 3 cm, less than about 2 cm, or less than about 1 cm. Typically, the hooking portion is configured to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a size of about 0.1 to about 2 cm.

[0042] The invention also relates to display systems using the described devices to hang merchandise, particularly gift bags. The display systems may include a gift bag and a hanger as described above. The display systems may use a hanger to display a closed gift bag. The bag may have one cuff, or two cuffs, to engage the flap(s) of the device. The bag can be a shopping bag, gift bag, or the like, which is widely available at shopping malls, gift shops, etc. In the embodiments described below, the bag is described as having "front" and "rear" sides simply for identification purposes. The flap(s) can often be used to engage either side of the bag. Also, the device can often engage the bag in either direction, and the bag can be displayed facing either direction.

[0043] The gift bag to be used in the display systems defines an opening to an interior of the bag. The bag may include a bottom wall and at least two sides extending upwardly from the bottom wall. In some embodiments, the bag is gusseted so as to have four sides extending upwardly from the bottom wall. A "side" of the bag may include the wall and/or cuff of the bag. A cuff can be an extension of a wall folded inwardly (e.g., as shown in FIG. **6**A) or outwardly.

[0044] Exemplary gift bag hangers constructed according to the principles of the invention are described below and shown in FIGS. **1-5**. Similar reference numbers are used to refer to similar parts.

[0045] FIG. **1** shows a first embodiment of a gift bag hanger in accordance with the invention. The hanger **10** has a hooking portion **12** and a flap **20** formed by a partial cutout of the hanger **10**. The hooking portion **12** includes a cutout **13** extending from one side of the hanger **10** to an upper center portion of the hanger **10**. Thus, the hooking portion defines a partially open space **11**. Alternatively, the hooking portion could be a hole, thereby defining a closed space. The flap **20** is a semi-circular cutout within the hanger **10**, wherein the bottom, flat base portion **16** of the semi-circle remains attached to the hanger **10**, and the curved portion **17** may take the form of a projection extending above the flat portion on the hanger **10**. The flap **20** can be moved away from hanger **10** and can lie within the plane of hanger **10**. Alternatively, the flap could be a separate piece similarly attached to the hanger **10**.

[0046] The device as shown in FIG. **1** can be used to securely hang and close a gift bag as shown in the cross-sectional views of FIGS. **6**A and **6**B. FIG. **6**A shows a cross-sectional view of the hanger **10** (as depicted in FIG. **1**) attached to a bag **50**. The bag **50** has a front wall **51**, rear wall **52**, front cuff **53** extending from the front wall **51**, and rear cuff **54** extending from the rear wall **52**. FIG. **6**A shows the back of the hanger **10** attached to the rear cuff **54** using any known attachment system, such as adhesive. When adhesive is used, it may be necessary to control the amount of the adhesive applied between hanger **10** and bag **50**. For example, if an excessive amount of adhesive is used, a user may not be able to detach the hanger **10** from the bag **50**. If an insufficient amount of adhesive is used, the hanger **10** and the bag **50** may not stay attached when the bag **50** is hung on a bar or wall for display.

[0047] FIG. **6**B shows the flap **20** of the hanger **10** inserted into a space between the front cuff **53** and the front wall **51** of the bag **50**. By engaging the flap **50** under the front cuff **53**, both front and rear cuffs **53**, **54** of the bag **50** are clipped together, and the bag **50** is closed, which allows enhanced support and stability of the bag. Also, the thickness of the bag **50** is significantly reduced, thereby allowing more bags to be hung on the bar or wall for display.

[0048] FIGS. **2**A and **2**B show a second embodiment of a gift bag hanger **10**A having a pair of flaps **22** and **24** arranged on opposite surfaces of the hanger **10**A. FIG. **2**A shows a front view of the hanger **10**A, which includes a front surface **14** and the front flap **22**. FIG. **2**B shows a rear view of the hanger **10**A, which includes a rear surface **15** and the rear flap **24**. The hooking portion **12**A is configured like the hooking portion of FIG. **1**. Each flap **22**, **24** is a semi-circular projection from the hanger **10**A, wherein the flat base portion **16**A of the semi-circle remains attached to the hanger **10**A, and the curved portion **17**A is a projection extending from and above the flat base portion on the hanger **10**A. Each flap **22**, **24** can be moved away from hanger **10**A and can lie within the plane of hanger **10**A. Because flaps **22**, **24** are attached on opposite surfaces of the hanger **10**A, the flaps are capable of extending in opposite directions. In this embodiment, adhesive may not be necessary because one flap can engage a first side of a bag, while the other flap engages a second side of the bag, as shown in FIGS. **7**A and **7**B described below.

[0049] More specifically, the device as shown in FIGS. **2**A and **2**B can be used to securely hang and close a gift bag **50** as shown in the cross-sectional views of FIGS. **7**A and **7**B. The bag **50** includes front wall **51**, which folds inwardly to create front cuff **53**, and the bag **50** includes rear wall **52**, which folds inwardly to create rear cuff **54**. As shown in FIG. **7**A, the front and rear flaps **22** and **24** of hanger **10**A are located to face the front cuff **53** and rear cuff **54**, respectively. As shown in FIG. **7**B, the front flap **22** is inserted into the space between the front wall **51** and the front cuff **53**, and the rear flap **24** is inserted into the space between the rear wall **52** and the rear cuff **54**. Gift bag hangers having more than one flap, as shown in FIGS. **7-9**, e.g., may be used with no adhesive, minimal adhesive, or less adhesive than would otherwise be required to securely, but still removably attach the device to the bag.

[0050] FIG. **3** shows a third embodiment of hanger **10**B having a hooking portion **12**B, a lower flap **26**, and an upper flap **28**. The hooking portion **12**B is configured like the hooking portion of FIG. **1**. The lower flap **26** is configured like flap **20** in FIG. **1**. The upper flap **28** is located above lower flap **26** on the hanger **10**B. Upper flap **28** is configured like lower flap **26** except that it is vertically rotated. Thus, upper flap **28** is a semi-circular projection from hanger **10**B, wherein the flat base portion **16**B of the semi-circle remains attached to the hanger **10**B, and the curved portion **17**B is a projection extending below the flat base portion **16**B of the hanger. The flaps **26**, **28** can be moved away from hanger **10**B and can lie within the plane of hanger **10**B.

[0051] The device as shown in FIG. **3** can be used to securely hang and close a gift bag as shown in the cross-sectional views of FIGS. **8**A and **8**B. FIGS. **8**A and **8**B show how the flaps can engage one or both sides of a bag. In FIG. **8**A, the hanger **10**B is attached to the rear cuff **54** of the bag **50** using, e.g., adhesive, and the lower flap **26** is inserted into the space between the front wall **51** and the front cuff **53** to close the bag **50**. Additionally, upper flap **28** can engage the front wall **51** to more securely attach the device **10**B to the bag **50**. FIG. **8**B shows a device having a hooking portion, a body, and at least two flaps, wherein a first flap engages a first cuff of the bag, and a second flap engages a wall of the bag opposite the

first cuff. As shown in FIG. **8**B, the lower flap **26** is inserted into the space between the front wall **51** and the front cuff **53**, and flap **28** engages the rear wall **52**, thereby closing the bag.

[0052] FIG. **4** shows a fourth embodiment of hanger **10**C having a hooking portion **12**C, a first flap **30**, and a second flap **32**. The hooking portion **12**C is configured like the hooking portion of FIG. **1**. The first flap **30** is configured like flap **20** in FIG. **1**. The second flap **32** is configured like first flap **30**, except that it is slightly bigger than, and concentric to, the first flap **30**, thereby defining a semi-circular half-annular shape.

[0053] FIG. **5** shows a fifth embodiment of hanger **10**D having a hooking portion **12**D, a center flap **34**, side wings **36**, **38**, and corresponding side flaps **40**, **42**. The hooking portion **12**D is configured like the hooking portion of FIG. **1**. The center flap **34** is configured like flap **20** in FIG. **1**. The side wings **36**, **38** project outwardly from the left and right sides, respectively, of the hanger **10**D. Each of side wings **36**, **38** includes a corresponding side flap **40**, **42**. Each side flap **40**, **42** is configured like center flap **34**. Thus, FIG. **5** shows a hanger **10**D with three horizontally arranged upwardly oriented semi-circular flaps.

[0054] The device as shown in FIGS. **4** and **5** can be used to securely hang and close a gift bag as shown in the cross-sectional view of FIG. **9**. Using the device of FIG. **4**, the first flap **30** engages under the rear cuff **54** of the bag **50**, and the second flap **32** engages under the front cuff **53**, thereby closing the bag. Similarly, using the device of FIG. **5**, the center flap **34** engages under the front cuff **53** of the bag **50**, and one or more of the side flaps **40**, **42** engage under the rear cuff **54**, thereby closing the bag.

[0055] The hooking portion of any of these embodiments may include one or more perforations as shown in FIG. **10**. The hooking portion of the device may include at least one perforation, such as a detachable perforation. In one embodiment, before stressing the perforation, the hooking portion defines a closed space. Exemplary stress includes pressure of about 1 to about 20 ounces, about 5 to about 20 ounces, about 10 to about 15 ounces, or about 12 ounces. After stressing the perforation, e.g., by pulling laterally on the device when hooked onto a display, the detachable perforation detaches between the, hooking portion and tab **150**, thereby defining an open space in the hooking portion. After stressing, the hooking portion may still be able to be securely hung for display.

[0056] More specifically, FIG. **10** shows an embodiment of a hooking portion **12**E having at least one hinged perforation **170** and at least one detachable perforation **160**, disposed on either side of tab **150**. When the perforations are stressed, the detachable perforation detaches and the hinged perforation permits the tab portion **150** to deflect relative to the rest of the hooking portion **12**E. The hooking portion thus converts from defining a closed space to an open space. Because the hooking portion still maintains a J-hook style even after stress, the hooking portion can still be attached to a display to hang the merchandise.

[0057] More specifically, the hooking portion **12**E before stressing defines an open space **11**E that can be inserted onto the front of the merchandise rack. The hooking portion is securely attached to the merchandise rack because the opening defined by the hooking portion completely surrounds the merchandise rack. This configuration decreases the likelihood that the displayed gift bag will inadvertently fall off the merchandise rack. However, if a customer wants to examine and/or purchase the gift bag, it is not necessary for the customer to remove the gift bag from the front of the merchandise rack. This is especially useful because if the customer wants to examine and/or purchase a gift bag toward the back of the display, the customer would have to also remove all other gift bags displayed in front of the gift bag of interest. Instead, the customer can pull laterally on the hooking portion to stress the perforations. The stress causes detachable perforation **160** to break and the tab portion **150** to deflect along the hinged perforation **170**, thereby creating a partially open space allowing the customer to laterally remove the hooking portion (and the attached gift bag) from the merchandise rack. Because the hooking portion **12**E after stressing still includes an overhang **155**, the hooking portion can be re-hung on the merchandise rack, if desired. Moreover, tab portion **150** can be moved at its hinged connection to its original position before stressing, thereby providing additional stability to the attachment between the hanger and the merchandise rack by closing the space defined by the hooking portion.

[0058] The description and examples given above are merely illustrative and are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all possible embodiments, applications, or modifications of the invention. Although the invention has been described in connection with specific embodiments, it should be understood that the invention as claimed should not be unduly limited to such specific embodiments. Various modifications and variations of the described devices, methods, and systems of the invention will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A gift bag display system comprising:
- a gift bag defining an enclosure having an opening providing access to the interior of the bag; and
- a gift bag hanger including:
  - a first portion attached to said gift bag;
  - a second portion configured to engage a merchandise rack; and
  - at least one projecting portion, oriented upwardly towards said second portion, and movable away from said first portion to engage said gift bag and close said opening.

2. The gift bag display system of claim **1**, wherein said at least one projecting portion is a single flap.

3. The gift bag display system of claim **1**, wherein said first portion is attached to said gift bag using adhesive.

4. The gift bag display system of claim **1**, wherein said at least one projecting portion comprises a first flap oriented upwardly towards said second portion, and a second flap.

5. The gift bag display system of claim **4**, wherein said flaps are arranged vertically, horizontally, or concentrically to one another.

6. The gift bag display system of claim **4**, wherein said first and second flaps are capable of extending in opposite directions.

7. The gift bag display system of claim **6**, wherein said first portion is attached to said gift bag without adhesive.

8. The gift bag display system of claim **4**, wherein said first flap is configured to close said opening in the gift bag, and said second flap is configured to attach said first portion to said gift bag.

9. The gift bag display system of claim **4**, wherein said gift bag further comprises a first side and a second side, and a first cuff folded from said first side and a second cuff folded from said second side, wherein said each of said first and second flaps independently engages one of said walls or cuffs.

10. The gift bag display system of claim **9**, wherein said first cuff is folded inwardly from said first wall, and said second cuff is folded inwardly from said second wall, and wherein said first flap engages said first cuff, and said second flap engages said second cuff.

11. The gift bag display system of claim **1**, wherein said first portion comprises a body portion of said gift bag hanger, said second portion comprises a hooking portion, and said at least one projecting portion comprises at least one flap.

12. The gift bag display system of claim **11**, wherein said hooking portion defines a space sized to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a widest dimension of about 0.1 to about 2 cm.

13. The gift bag display system of claim **1**, wherein said second portion comprises at least one deformable connection.

14. The gift bag display system of claim **13**, wherein said at least one deformable connection comprises at least one perforation.

15. The gift bag display system of claim **14**, wherein said at least one perforation comprises a detachable perforation and a hinged perforation, wherein said detachable perforation, when stressed, is capable of converting a closed space defined by said second portion to an open space.

16. A gift bag hanger comprising:

a first portion;

a second portion defining a space sized to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a widest dimension of about 0.1 to about 2 cm; and

at least one projecting portion, oriented upwardly towards said second portion, and movable away from said first portion to close an opening of a gift bag.

17. The gift bag hanger of claim **16**, wherein said at least one projecting portion is a single flap.

18. The gift bag hanger of claim **16**, wherein said at least one projecting portion comprises a first flap oriented upwardly towards said second portion, and a second flap.

19. The gift bag hanger of claim **18**, wherein said flaps are arranged vertically, horizontally, or concentrically to one another.

20. The gift bag hanger of claim **18**, wherein said first and second flaps are capable of extending in opposite directions.

21. The gift bag display system of claim **16**, wherein said first portion comprises a body portion, said second portion comprises a hooking portion, and said at least one projecting portion comprises at least one flap.

22. The gift bag hanger of claim **21**, wherein the hooking portion comprises at least one deformable connection.

23. The gift bag hanger of claim **22**, wherein said at least one deformable connection comprises at least one perforation.

24. The gift bag hanger of claim **23**, wherein said at least one perforation comprises a detachable perforation and a hinged perforation, wherein said detachable perforation, when stressed, is capable of converting a closed space defined by said second portion to an open space.

25. A method of displaying a gift bag on a merchandise rack, said method comprising:

attaching a gift bag hanger to a first part of a gift bag defining an enclosure having opening;

bending at least one upwardly oriented projection away from the gift bag hanger; and

closing the gift bag by engaging the upwardly oriented projection with a second part of the gift bag.

26. The method of claim **25**, wherein said attaching step comprises applying adhesive between the hanger and the gift bag.

27. The method of claim **25**, wherein said attaching step comprises engaging a projection with the first part of the gift bag.

28. The method of claim **27**, wherein said attaching step is accomplished without adhesive.

29. The method of claim **25**, further comprising hanging the hanger attached to the gift bag onto a merchandise rack protrusion by engaging a portion of the hanger defining a space sized to engage a merchandise rack protrusion having a widest dimension of about 0.1 to about 2 cm with the merchandise rack protrusion.

30. The method of claim **29**, further comprising:

removing the hanger from the merchandize rack protrusion by detaching two sections of the hanger.

31. The method of claim **30**, further comprising:

re-hanging the hanger onto the merchandise rack protrusion by bending the first section of the hanger relative to the second section.

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