A backpack unit has an open-top body and a seat assembly secured to the upper edge of the body; the seat assembly has a seat member covering the open top of the body and a back rest member pivotally secured to the seat member and moveable between a folded position and an unfolded position upon demand. A rigid support frame is positioned in the main chamber for supporting the seat member. The body defines a main chamber, which is divided into two compartments by a temperature conductive vertical dividing wall. One of the compartments is designed to retain cooling medium, such as ice, while food products can be positioned in another compartment. An audio device is secured to the front panel; the audio device can be a radio with speakers, or a headphone connection, or an iPod connection; the audio device can be a CD player and the like.
BACKPACK WITH A SEAT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates to personal carriers, and more particularly, to a backpack that can be used to retain food and other personal objects and can also be used as a seat, if desired.

[0002] Hikers, outdoorsmen, spectators of outdoor events, and other individuals often carry a folding chair to a location, such as a beach, a park, a concert or a sporting event. The folding chairs are usually transported in a collapsed position and are unfolded at the location for user convenience. The foldable chairs must be carried separately and usually require either a separate trip to the parked car or another person to assist in transporting the chairs to the desired location.

[0003] As a separate item, the user frequently transports a cooler for canned beverages. Still another desired item at an outdoor location such as a beach or a park is a radio or other electronic device for providing audio entertainment at the selected location. Needless to say, transporting these items presents a problem since all these items are bulky, requiring an individual to use both hands when carrying each such item.

[0004] The present invention contemplates elimination of drawbacks associated with the prior art and provision of a backpack/seat/cooler unit that combines in a single carrying unit the convenience of the above-described items.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] It is, therefore, an object of the present invention to provide a backpack unit that can accommodate food items and retain them in a cool environment.

[0006] It is another object of the present invention to provide a personal carrying case, or unit such as a backpack that can serve as a seat for a user.

[0007] A further object of the present invention is to provide a backpack/seat/cooler combination unit that incorporates an audio device within the unit.

[0008] These and other objects of the present invention are achieved through a provision of a backpack unit that has an open-top body with a front panel, a back panel, a first side panel, a second side panel, a bottom panel, and an upper edge. The body defines a main chamber that houses a temperature conductive vertical dividing wall, which divides the main chamber into a first portion and a second portion. A seat assembly is secured to the upper edge of the body; the seat assembly comprises a seat member covering the open top of the body and a back rest member pivotally secured to the seat member and moveable between a folded position and an unfolded position upon demand. A rigid support frame member is positioned in the main chamber for supporting the seat member. An audio device is secured to the front panel; the audio device can be a radio with speakers, or a headphones connection, or an iPod connection; the audio device can be a CD player and the like.

[0009] Shoulder straps and waist straps are secured to the back panel to allow a user to carry the backpack. The front panel and a side panel have a plurality of separate pockets for retaining personal items of the user, such as toiletries, clothes, CDs, telephone, etc. The pockets can be closed with zippers or hook-and-loop fasteners.

[0010] The first portion of the main chamber is sized and configured to retain small food items, such as for instance canned drinks. An inclined ramp is positioned inside the first portion to facilitate movement of the canned drinks toward a dispensing opening formed in the first side panel. The second portion is designed to accommodate a cooling medium, such as ice. A drainage opening is formed in the bottom panel to drain melted ice. An inclined plate positioned in the second portion directs the melted liquid toward the drainage opening.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] Reference will now be made to the drawings, wherein like parts are designated by like numerals, and wherein

[0012] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of the backpack unit in accordance with the present invention.

[0013] FIG. 2 is a perspective rear view of the backpack unit in accordance with the present invention.

[0014] FIG. 3 is a detail view of the seat assembly of the backpack unit in accordance with the present invention.

[0015] FIG. 4 is a detail view illustrating the interior of the backpack unit of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] Turning now to the drawings in more detail, numeral 10 designates the backpack unit in accordance with the present invention. The backpack unit 10 comprises a hollow body 12 provided with shoulder straps 14 and 16 secured to a back panel 18 of the body 12. The straps 14 and 16 are designed to be placed over the user's arms until the straps rest on the user's shoulders thereby enabling the user to carry the housing 12 as a conventional backpack.

[0017] A pair of waist straps 20 and 22 is secured to a lower part of the back panel 18. The straps 20 and 22 are used for encircling the user's waist to help balance the load and ensure that a load placed in the body 12 would not drag too much weight on the user's lower back. The waist strap 20 is provided with a buckle member 24, while the waist strap 22 is provided with a buckle member 26. The buckle members 24 and 26 are secured as male/female buckle members in the front of the user's body.

[0018] A first side panel 30 of the body 12 is provided with a pocket 32 for housing personal items of the user. A closing member 34, for instance a zipper, is provided at the top of the pocket 32 for enclosing the contents of the pocket 36 and preventing them from falling out during use of the backpack. A second side panel 40 of the body 12 is provided with an opening 42 normally covered with a flap 44. A closing member 46, for instance a zipper, is secured along the edges of the opening 42 for normally retaining the flap 44 in a closed position. The opening 42 opens access to the interior of the backpack main chamber allowing the user to withdraw food or other items from the inner chamber, as will be described in more detail hereinafter.

[0019] A front panel 50 of the body 12 is provided with a front pocket 52 large enough to carry clothing items, toiletries and other miscellaneous items needed by the user. A closure member 54, such as a zipper, closes the pocket 52. An audio device 56 is secured on the front panel 50 above the pocket 52. The audio device 56 can be a radio, a CD player, an iPod or other such device that provides access to
FM, AM or Satellite radio, as desired. Alternatively, the audio device 56 can be provided with an iPod connection or headphone connection, if desired.

[0020] A pair of speakers 58, 60 is electrically operationally connected to the audio device 56 to provide an audio outlet for the device 56. The audio device 56 can be battery powered, or solar powered, and is sufficiently lightweight not to add any unnecessary weight to the backpack 10. The device 56 is removably positioned in an opening 57 formed in the front panel 50, allowing the user to change the batteries when necessary.

[0021] Secured to the top edge 70 on the body 12 is a seat member 72 which is formed from a sturdy material, for instance wood, hard plastic, and the like. The seat 72 is pivotally secured to the top edge 70 of the body 12. A back rest 74 is pivotally secured to the seat member 72. The back rest member 74, similarly to the seat member 72, can be formed from a sturdy material, such as wood, plastic and the like. The seat member 72 and the back rest member 74 can be covered with padding and a fabric material to make it more comfortable for the user to sit and lean against.

[0022] One or more retainer straps 76 is secured to adjoining portions of the seat member 72 and of the back rest member 74 to prevent the back rest member 74 from being pivoted by more than approximately 90 degrees in relation to the planar surface of the seat member 72.

[0023] A securing strap 78 is secured to a center edge of the back rest member 74. A securing strap 80 is secured to a center of the outer edge 88 edge of the seat member 72. The securing straps 78 and 80 each carry a buckle element 84, 84 respectively, for retaining the back rest member 74 in a fold down position when the seat assembly is not in use. The space between facing planar surfaces of the seat member 72 and the back rest member 74 can be used for storing personal items of the user when the seat assembly is not in use.

[0024] A seat closing member 86 is secured along an edge 70 of the body 12 and along the edge 88 of the seat member 72. When the closing member, for instance a zipper 86 is opened, the seat member 72 can be pivotally moved, opening an access to an interior chamber of the backpack body 12.

[0025] The main inner chamber of the body 12 is divided by a temperature conductive dividing wall 90, which divides the main chamber into a first chamber portion 92 and a second chamber portion 94. A ramp 96 is positioned inside the first chamber portion 92 at an angle in relation to a vertical axis of the dividing wall 90. The ramp 96 is inclined towards the dispensing opening 42 in the second side panel 40. Canned food products 98 can be positioned in the first chamber portion 92 are easily dispensed through the opening 42 when they slide down the inclined ramp 96 toward the dispensing opening 42.

[0026] The second chamber portion 94 is adapted for retaining a quantity of ice or similar cooling medium therein. A drainage opening 100 is formed in a bottom panel 102 of the body 12 allowing melted ice to be drained from the second chamber portion 94. A suitable plug (not shown) closes the opening 100. A second inclined ramp 104 is positioned in the second chamber portion 94. The second inclined ramp 104 allows melted ice and water to slide towards the opening 100 to be drained by the user when necessary.

[0027] The first chamber portion 92 houses a generally rectangular frame 103 positioned a distance from the generally rectangular dividing wall 90. The frame 102, partially shown in FIG. 4 is made from a rigid, sturdy material suitable for providing support to the seat 72 when the seat 72 is folded down and supports the weight of the user. The frame 103 can be sized and shaped to follow the configuration of the dividing wall 90.

[0028] The first chamber portion 92 is preferably made wide enough to accommodate canned drinks or canned products. It is lined with an insulated material helping retain cold temperature inside the first chamber portion 92. The second chamber portion 94 is lined with an insulated material and is made waterproof, preventing melted ice and water from seeping into the first chamber 92 and outside of the body 12.

[0029] The flap closure 44, closing the opening 42 can be alternatively formed with a drawstring, enclosing the opening 42 and preventing the food items from rolling out of the chamber 92. Alternatively, the zipper closures used to close the pockets and flaps of the backpack 10 can be provided with hook-and-eye closing strips. The shoulder straps 14, 16 as well as the waist straps 20 and 22 can be made adjustable in length to accommodate different size users. The inner surface 73 of the seat member 72 can be covered with an insulated material to help retain cold temperature within the main chamber of the body 12.

[0030] The back rest member 74 need not be covered with an insulating material but may be provided with padding material to make it more comfortable for the user leaning against the back rest 74. The frame 103 can be made from aluminum or other lightweight sturdy material, metal or plastic, to retain the support for the seat member 72. The outside panels of the body 12 can be made from a variety of materials, such as canvas, flexible plastic and the like. When desired, the material may be made water repellent.

[0031] The electronic audio device 56 can be sealed against the elements by an additional cover panel that would prevent moisture from seeping into the device 56 and damaging the electrical connections inside. Similarly, the speakers 58 and 60 can be provided with suitable covers to prevent moisture penetration inside the speaker bodies.

[0032] Many other changes and modifications can be made in the design of the present invention without departing from the spirit thereof. I, therefore, pray that my rights to the present invention be limited only by the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A backpack unit, comprising:
   an open-top body having an upper edge and defining a main chamber therein;
   a vertical dividing wall positioned in the main chamber dividing the main chamber into a first portion and a second portion;
   a seat assembly secured to the upper edge of the body, said seat assembly having a seat member covering the open top of the body and a back rest member pivotally secured to the seat member and moveable between a folded position and an unfolded position upon demand.

2. The backpack unit of claim 1, wherein said body comprises a front panel, a first side panel, a second side panel, a back panel, and a bottom panel.
3. The backpack unit of claim 1, further comprising a means for limiting pivotal movement of the back rest member.

4. The backpack unit of claim 3, wherein said limiting means comprises a strap secured between the seat member and the back rest member, said strap having a pre-determined length to prevent out-of-range movement of the back rest member in relation to the seat member.

5. The backpack unit of claim 2, wherein an audio device is secured to the front panel, said audio device comprising speakers.

6. The backpack unit of claim 2, wherein shoulder straps are secured to the back panel.

7. The backpack unit of claim 2, wherein a pair of waist straps is secured to the back panel for securing the backpack unit to a user's waist.

8. The backpack unit of claim 2, wherein said first portion of the main chamber is configured to retain food items therein.

9. The backpack unit of claim 8, wherein food items comprise canned products.

10. The backpack unit of claim 8, wherein an inclined ramp is positioned inside the first portion of the main chamber to facilitate dispensing of the food items from said body.

11. The backpack unit of claim 10, wherein a dispensing opening is formed in the first side panel, and wherein said inclined ramp is inclined towards said dispensing opening.

12. The backpack unit of claim 11, wherein a cover is provided for normally closing said dispensing opening.

13. The backpack unit of claim 8, wherein said second portion of the main chamber is configured for retaining a cooling medium therein, and wherein said dividing wall is formed from a temperature conductive material.

14. The backpack unit of claim 13, wherein a drainage opening is formed in the bottom panel, said drainage opening being in fluid communication with the second portion of the main chamber.

15. The backpack unit of claim 14, wherein an inclined plate is positioned in the second portion of the main chamber to facilitate movement of melted cooling medium towards the drainage opening.

16. The backpack unit of claim 1, wherein interior walls of the main chamber are formed from an insulating material.

17. The backpack unit of claim 1, wherein interior walls of the second portion of the main chamber are formed from moisture-impermeable material.

18. The backpack unit of claim 2, wherein the front panel and the second side panel carry a plurality of pockets for housing personal items of a user.

19. The backpack unit of claim 1, wherein a support frame is positioned in the main chamber for supporting the seat member.

20. A backpack unit, comprising:
   an open-top body having a front panel, a back panel, a first side panel, a second side panel, a bottom panel, and an upper edge, said body defining a main chamber therein;
   a temperature conductive vertical dividing wall positioned in the main chamber dividing the main chamber into a first portion and a second portion;
   a seat assembly secured to the upper edge of the body, said seat assembly having a seat member covering the top of the body and a back rest member pivotally secured to the seat member and moveable between a folded position and an unfolded position upon demand;
   a rigid support frame member positioned in the main chamber for supporting the seat member;
   and
   an audio device secured to the front panel.

21. The backpack unit of claim 20, further comprising a means for limiting pivotal movement of the back rest member, said limiting means comprising a strap secured between the seat member and the back rest member, said strap having a pre-determined length to prevent out-of-range movement of the back rest member in relation to the seat member.

22. The backpack unit of claim 20, wherein shoulder straps and waist straps are secured to the back panel to facilitate carrying of the backpack by a user.

23. The backpack unit of claim 20, wherein said first portion of the main chamber is configured to retain food items therein, and said second portion of the main chamber is adapted for retaining a cooling medium therein.

24. The backpack unit of claim 23, wherein an inclined ramp is positioned inside the first portion of the main chamber to facilitate dispensing of the food items from said body, and wherein a dispensing opening is formed in the first side panel, said inclined ramp being inclined towards said dispensing opening.

25. The backpack unit of claim 23, wherein a drainage opening is formed in the bottom panel in the second portion of the main chamber.

26. The backpack unit of claim 25, wherein an inclined plate is positioned in said second portion of the main chamber to facilitate movement of the cooling medium towards said drainage opening.

27. The backpack unit of claim 24, wherein a cover is provided for normally closing said dispensing opening.

28. The backpack unit of claim 1, wherein interior walls of the main chamber are formed from an insulating material, and wherein interior walls of the second portion of the main chamber are formed from moisture-impermeable material.

29. The backpack unit of claim 20, wherein the front panel and the second side panel carry a plurality of pockets for housing personal items of a user.

30. The backpack unit of claim 20, wherein said audio device comprises speakers.