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(54) **DURABLE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING  
GARMENT PROTECTOR**

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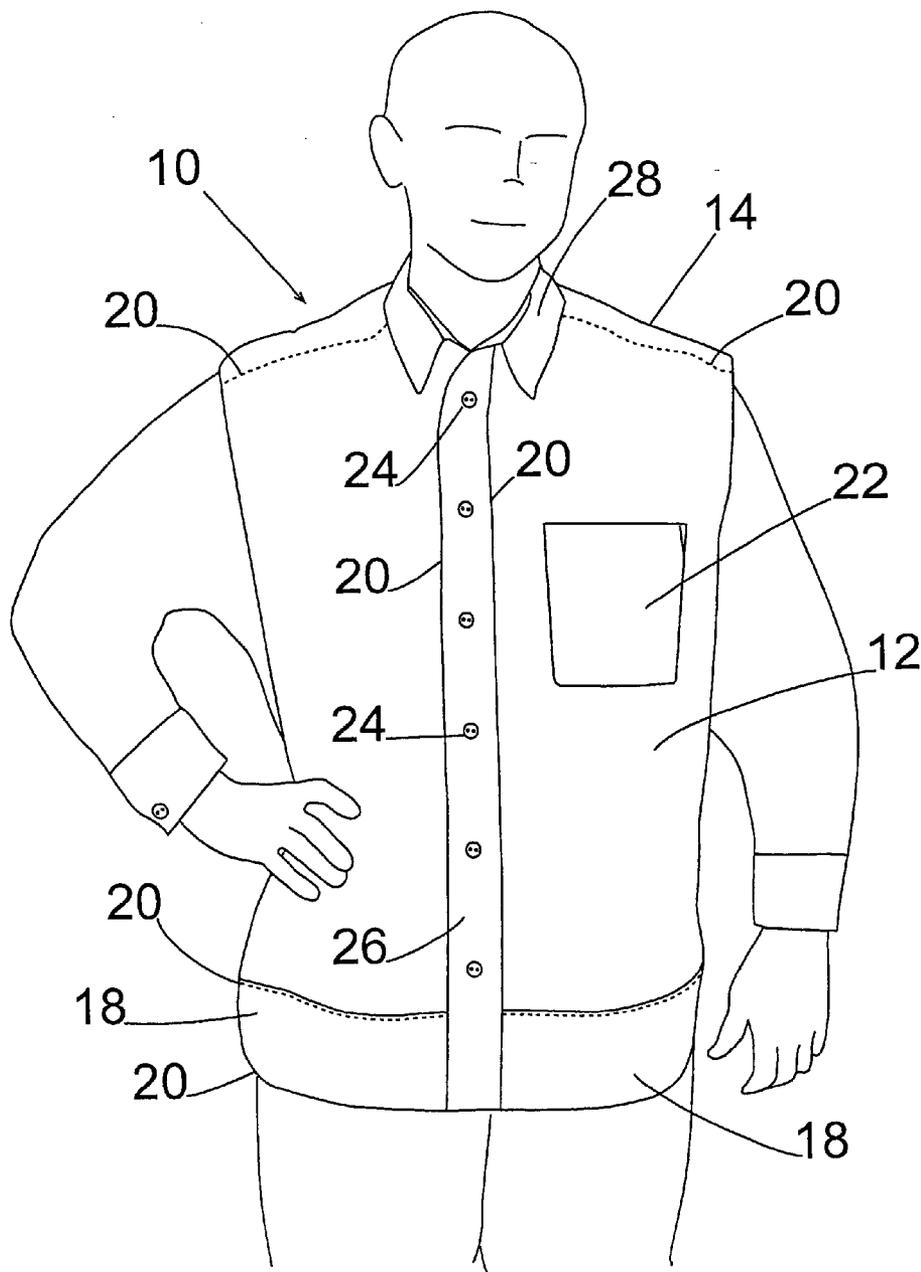
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An improved bib for use by adults is disclosed. The present invention relates to a bib that contains decorative indicia to allow the bib to resemble normal clothing when worn. For example, the bib of the present invention can be designed to resemble a man's dress shirt or woman's blouse disguising its use. As its use is less noticeable than ordinary bibs, wearer's are afforded a greater sense of dignity.

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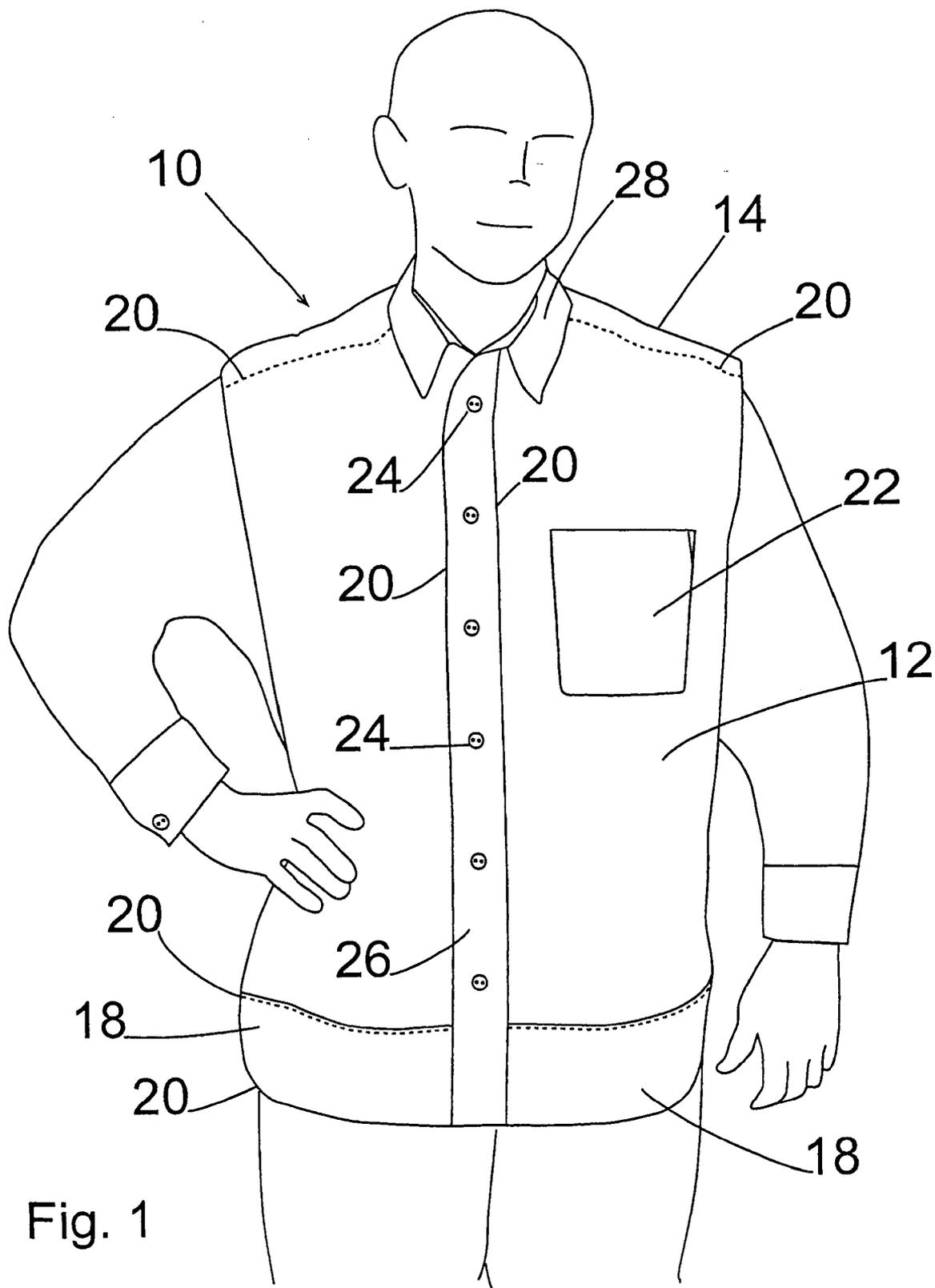


Fig. 1

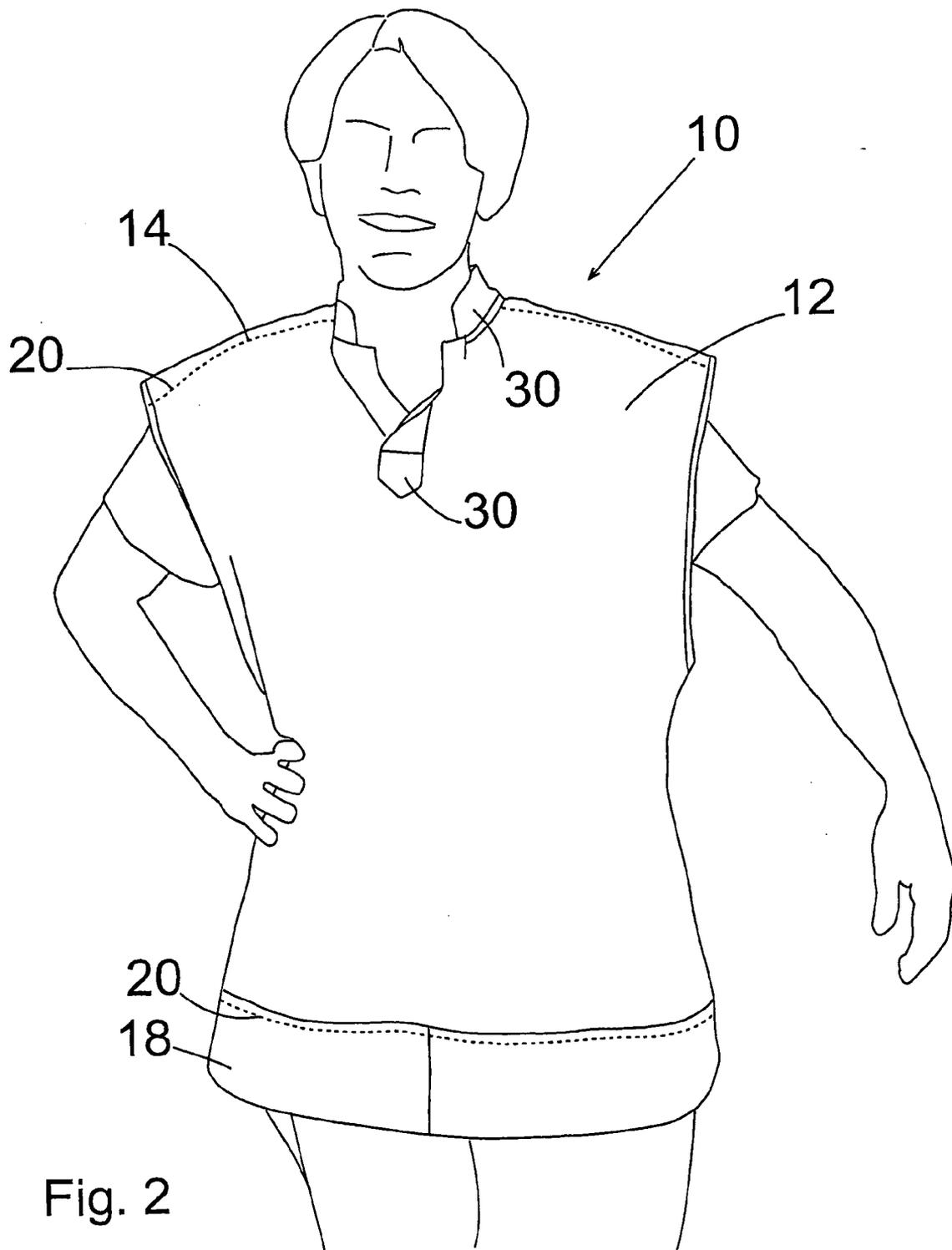


Fig. 2

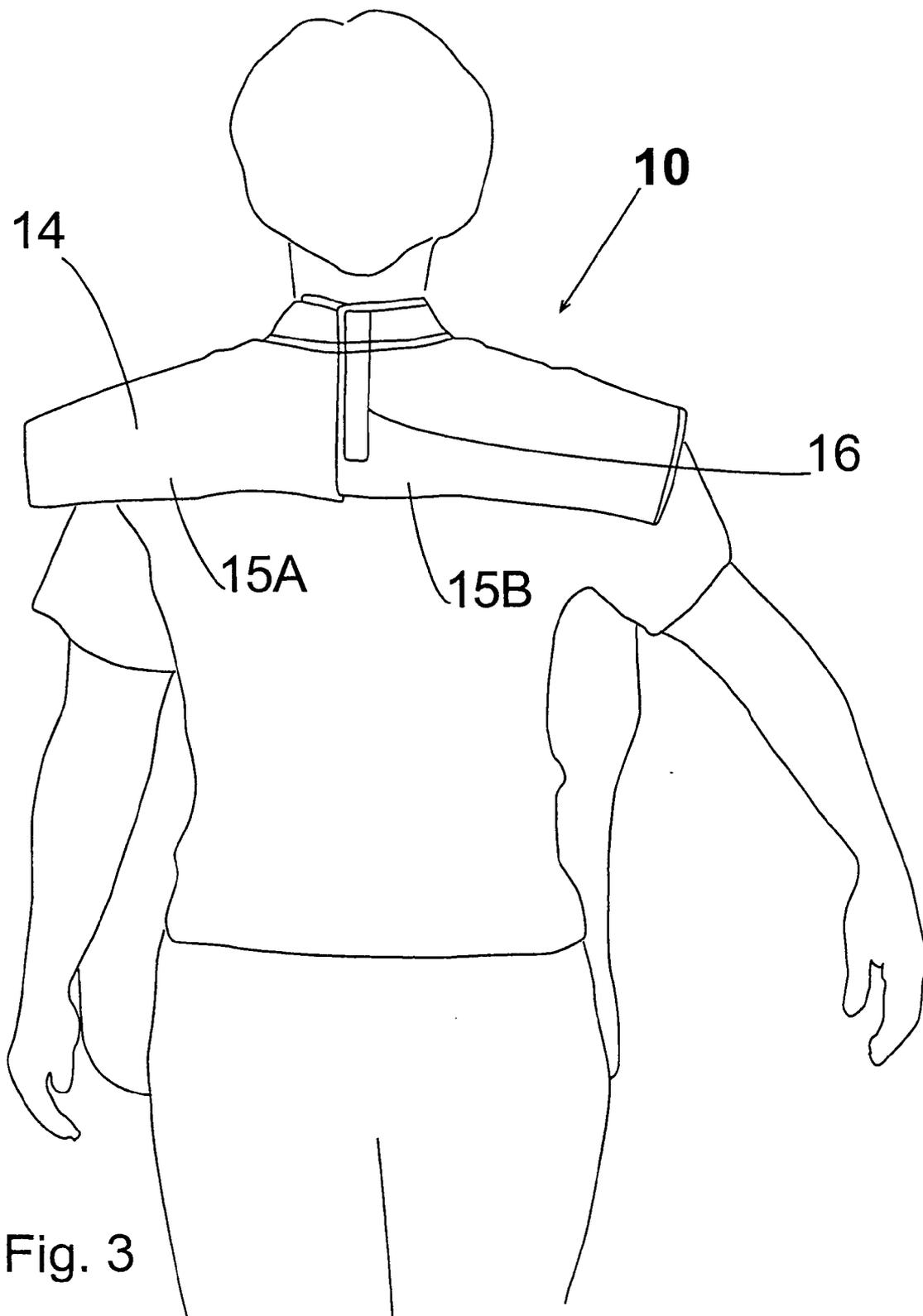


Fig. 3

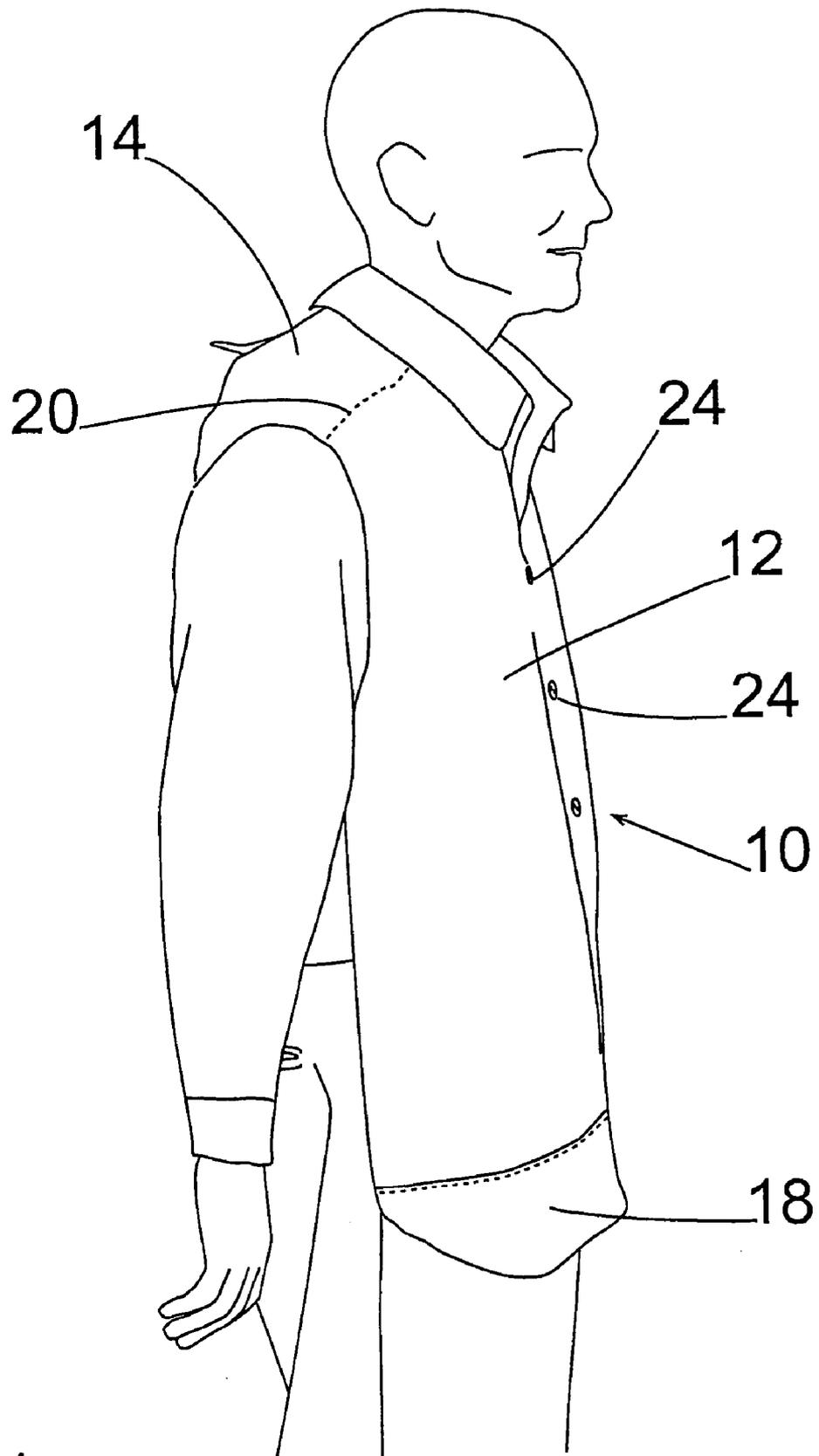


Fig. 4

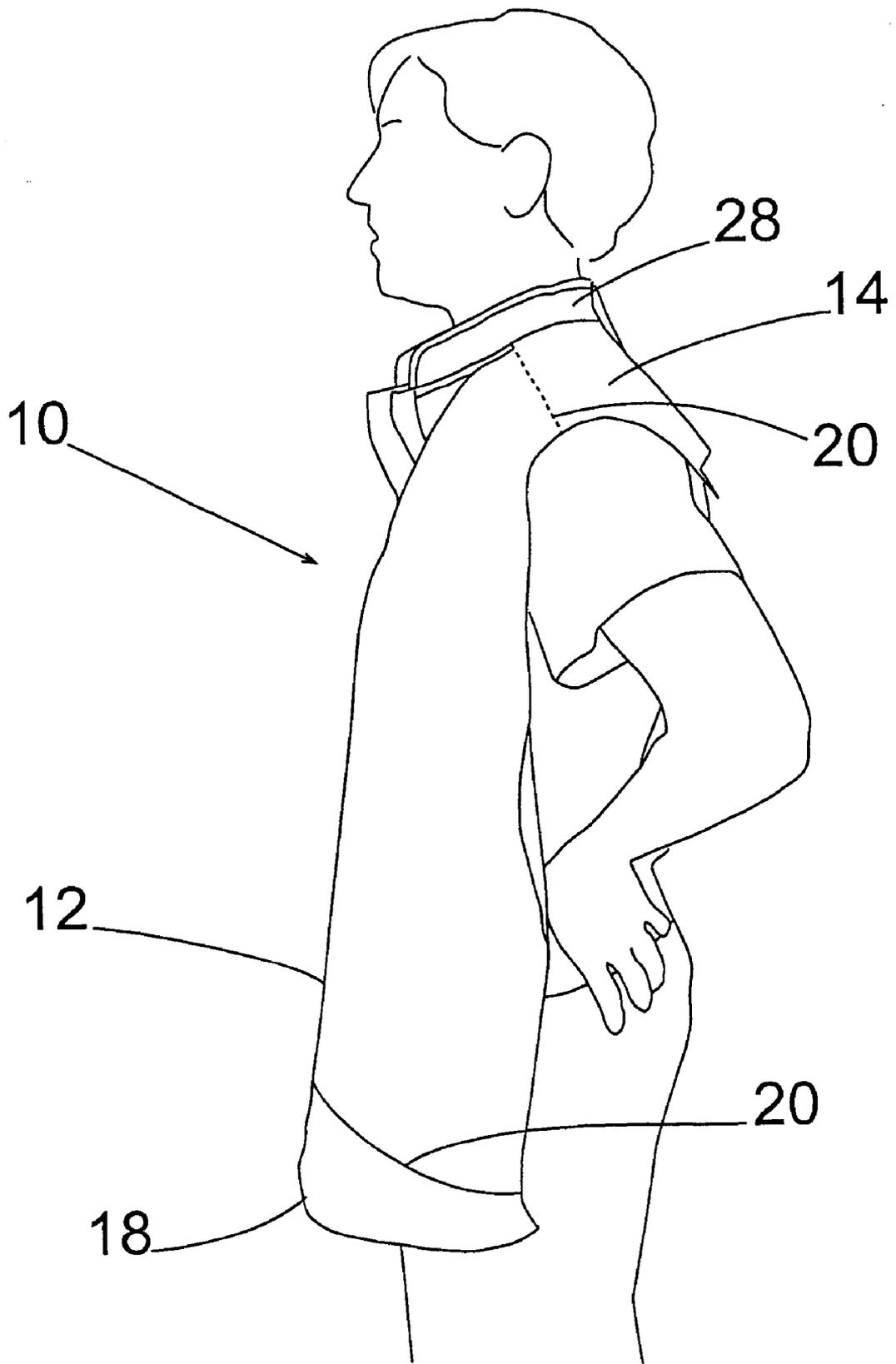


Fig. 5

**DURABLE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING GARMENT PROTECTOR**

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**[0001]** 1. Field of Invention

**[0002]** The present invention relates to an improved bib, and more particularly to an improved aesthetically pleasing bib worn by adults. Specifically, the present invention relates to a bib formed from a durable material designed to resemble a normal shirt or other article of clothing which disguises its use.

**[0003]** 2. Prior Art

**[0004]** Many adults must wear bibs when eating to protect their clothing from spilled food. These individuals typically include the elderly and other infirm individuals with poor motor coordination who easily spill their food and drink. While bibs can protect the wearer's clothes they have several drawbacks. The most notable drawback for adult wearer's is the embarrassment and humiliation many adults suffer when forced to wear a bib. Since bibs are also worn by babies and small children, adults who are forced to wear bibs may lose their dignity.

**[0005]** Additionally, many bibs do not adequately protect the wearer's clothing. Most prior art bibs only cover the wearer's front torso leaving their shoulders and upper back completely exposed to food spills.

**[0006]** For example, U.S. Pending Patent application 2002/0069449 published on Jun. 13, 2002 to Pinckney et al. discloses a bib that is highly visible to others. It is easily apparent that one is wearing a bib since it bears no resemblance to normal clothing what-so-ever. This bib even includes a cloth member which is awkwardly attached to the front of the bib and is designed to be used to "clean up" the wearer after meals.

**[0007]** Additionally, U.S. Pat. No. 5,031,241 to Widemann discloses a bib that includes a clear plastic sheet with a rigid lip member along the bottom edge to catch loose food items that may fall during eating. While the use of this bib is more discrete than the bib disclosed by Pinckney due to its transparent nature it still suffers from drawbacks. Since this bib must be attached to the wearer by use of adhesive regions located along the bib it would appear to be difficult to take on and off. It would especially be difficult if not impossible for the elderly and other infirm adults who already suffer from a lack of motor control to attach this bib to their clothing by use of the adhesive regions. Also, this bib does not cover the wearer's shoulders and upper back leaving these areas vulnerable to spills.

**[0008]** Therefore, there appears a need in the art for a bib that would be easy to put on and remove that would preserve the adult wearer's dignity by simulating the appearance of a normal piece of clothing while covering their entire front torso, shoulders and upper back while also covering a substantial portion of the wearer's lap.

**OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION**

**[0009]** Accordingly, the primary object of the present invention is to provide an aesthetically pleasing bib which is

easy to take on and off while covering the wearer's front torso, shoulders, lap, and upper back.

**[0010]** Another object of the present invention is to provide a bib that resembles normal clothing as to minimize its true function.

**[0011]** A further object of the present invention is to provide a bib that is easy for an elderly wearer to put on and take off.

**[0012]** Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a bib that when worn covers both the wearer's front torso, shoulders, lap, and upper back.

**[0013]** These and other objects of the present invention are realized in the preferred embodiment of the present invention, described by way of example, and not by way of limitation, which provides for a bib constructed from a durable material that drapes over the wearer's shoulders and completely covers their front torso, shoulder, and upper back while having a decorative indicia and design to simulate the likeness of an actual shirt or blouse.

**[0014]** In brief summary, the present invention overcomes and substantially alleviates the deficiencies of the prior art by providing a bib that resembles normal clothing as to disguise its use when worn. The present invention features a bib large enough to cover the wearer's front torso and drape over their shoulders. Additionally, the bib is large enough to cover the wearer's lap when they are sitting down. In the preferred embodiment of the invention a series of pocket members are affixed to the bottom edge to catch loose food items which fall during eating. A decorative collar is attached along the top edge which surrounds the wearer's neck to give this bib the appearance of a normal shirt which further disguises its use.

**[0015]** The present invention also includes decorative indicia that allow the bib to resemble normal clothing. In one embodiment a collar and buttons are attached to the bib giving it the resemblance of a man's dress shirt. In another embodiment, a different style of collar is attached and the buttons removed to allow the bib to feature the likeness of a woman's blouse.

**[0016]** This new bib is beneficial as it both protects the wearer's clothing and is not noticeable when worn. Therefore, adults who must wear bibs while eating do not have to suffer the embarrassment of doing so as this bib is effectively disguised by the decoration. Adult wearer's of this bib are afforded greater dignity and their clothes are better protected from spills that occur while eating than they were with prior art bibs.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

**[0017]** FIG. 1 is a front view depicting one embodiment of the improved bib according to the present invention;

**[0018]** FIG. 2 is a front view depicting another embodiment of the improved bib according to the present invention;

**[0019]** FIG. 3 is a rear view of the improved bib according to the present invention;

**[0020]** FIG. 4 is a side view depicting one embodiment of the improved bib according to the present invention; and

[0021] FIG. 5 is a side view depicting another embodiment of the improved bib according to the present invention.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0022] Referring to the drawings, the preferred embodiment of the improved bib of the present invention is illustrated and generally indicated as **10** in FIGS. 1-5.

[0023] Referring to FIGS. 1-5, bib **10** is an aesthetically pleasing garment protector that protects and preserves the wearer's clothing from food and drink spills. In the preferred embodiment, bib **10** will be manufactured from a durable cloth material that is capable of being frequently washed and reused. However, any suitable material such as non-woven fabrics can be used and still fall within the scope of the present invention. Bib **10** is designed to look almost identical to normal clothing due to decorative indicia placed on it to disguise its use and true function. Since bib **10** does not appear to be a bib because it resembles normal clothing, wearers of the bib are afforded greater dignity while having their clothing protected. The present invention can be practiced in any number of embodiments, two of which will be described in detail.

[0024] FIGS. 1 and 4 depict one of the preferred embodiments of bib **10**. In this embodiment, bib **10** is designed to resemble a man's dress shirt and thus it would be anticipated that men would use this embodiment of the bib. FIGS. 2, 3, and 5 depict another alternative embodiment of bib **10** which is designed to resemble a woman's blouse and would generally be worn by women.

[0025] Both of these preferred embodiments of bib **10** include a front member **12** that covers the wearer's front torso and a shoulder cover **14** which drapes over the wearer's shoulders and upper back. Additionally, front member **12** covers a substantial portion of the wearer's lap when they are seated. The portion of shoulder cover **14** that covers the wearer's upper back is further divided into two sides, side **15A** and side **15B**. Side **15A** covers the left side of the wearer's upper back while side **15B** covers the right side of the wearer's upper back. Therefore, bib **10** protects most of the wearer's lap from spills when they are seated and also completely protects their front torso, shoulders, and upper back from spills that occur during eating.

[0026] Other features common to both embodiments of bib **10** include an attachment member **16** which secures bib **10** to the wearer and a pocket **18** located along the bottom edge of front member **12** to catch loose food items. Both attachment member **16** and pocket **18** allow bib **10** to provide superior protection to the wearer's clothes from food and drink spills.

[0027] Specifically, as can be seen in FIG. 3 attachment member **16** securely attaches bib **10** to the wearer and allows the bib to be easily taken on and off by the elderly and other adults with poor muscle coordination. Attachment member **16** is vertically located along an outer edge of shoulder cover **14** and attaches sides **15A** to side **15B** together thus securing bib **10** to the wearer. The use of attachment member **16** allows the wearer to easily put bib **10** on prior to a meal and take it off after a meal. While any attachment means can be used to secure bib **10** to the wearer it is anticipated that in these preferred embodiments that a hook and loop style

fastener will be used such as Velcro®. When Velcro® is used as attachment member **16** one piece of Velcro® with the loop portion would be placed on side **15A** while the other piece of Velcro® with the hook portion would be placed on side **15B** by way of example.

[0028] After the bib **10** has been attached to the wearer by attachment member **16** it now protects their clothing from food spills. Not only is the wearer's front torso protected, shoulder cover **14** and sides **15A** and **15B** afford protection to their shoulders and upper back. Should any loose food items fall while the wearer is eating, pocket **18** would catch them. Pocket **18** is placed along the bottom edge of front member **12** and is preferably constructed from the same cloth like material as front member **12**. A series of stitches **20** attaches pocket **18** to front member **12**. Any number of pockets can be used but in this preferred embodiment, 2 pockets are placed along the bottom edge of front member **12**.

[0029] Pocket **18** may also include decorative indicia to further disguise its use as a bib. Decorative indicia are articles or elements that when applied or affixed to bib **10** allow it to resemble a normal article of clothing such as a man's shirt or woman's blouse. Depending upon which embodiment is used, bib **10** will either appear to look identical to a man's shirt or a woman's blouse. The decorative indicia used should correspond to the particular embodiment being practiced. For example, to allow bib **10** to resemble a man's shirts decorative indicia such as a breast pocket **22** and a plurality of buttons **24** would be placed along the center portion of front member **12** thereby giving bib **10** the appearance of a man's button down shirt. Buttons **24** can be attached directly to front member **12**, however in the preferred embodiment, buttons **24** are placed on an additional piece of vertical fabric **26** that is secured to front member **12** by additional stitching **20**. This additional vertical piece of fabric is attached to front member **12** as this design element is generally used in the conventional manufacture of men's shirts.

[0030] The last decorative indicia placed on this embodiment for men is collar **28**. Collar **28** is designed to resemble the appearance of the type of collar found on normal men's dress shirts. Collar **28** not only performs a decorative function as it allows bib **10** to closely resemble a normal dress shirt, it also aids in protecting the wearer's neck from food spills.

[0031] FIGS. 2 and 5 illustrate and describe another embodiment suitable for women. The only difference between the two embodiments described herein is the type of decorative indicia used. For the embodiment for women, indicia should be utilized to allow bib **10** to resemble the appearance of a woman's blouse. As shown in FIG. 2, collar **30** is placed on front member **12** to allow bib **10** to resemble a woman's blouse. Collar **30** is different in design than collar **28** because it is known in the clothing field that collars on woman's blouses differ in appearance from collars on men's shirts.

[0032] The type and amount of decorative indicia that can be used in the present invention is endless. Any type of decorative indicia to allow bib **10** to resemble a normal article of clothing could be used and still fall within the scope of the present invention. Examples not shown would include designs of several colors for both men and women

(not shown) to create additional embodiments for men, women, or a unisex embodiment.

[0033] Additional decorative indicia may include college logos (not shown) or various sports logos (not shown) that could be used with different collar designs to allow bib 10 to resemble a casual sweatshirt. For men, an embodiment could exist whereby bib 10 resembled a man's suit for example (not shown) or a woman's dress (not shown) for a woman. It is also anticipated that bib 10 could be custom designed to match a wearer's clothing. For example, if the wearer was wearing a navy blue button down shirt with white buttons they could select and order a bib 10 that was navy blue with white decorative buttons 24 that were an exact replica of the type present on their blue shirt. This use of the present invention would allow the bib to be almost invisible except to the most careful of observers.

[0034] Thus, improved bib 10 of the present invention allows adults that wear the bib to both protect their clothing and to disguise to others their need for a bib. Since it is not readily apparent to others that the wearer must wear a bib they will experience a greater sense of personal dignity.

[0035] It should be understood from the foregoing that, while particular embodiments of the invention have been illustrated and described, various modifications can be made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Therefore, it is not intended that the invention be limited by the specification; instead, the scope of the present invention is intended to be limited only by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

- 1. An aesthetically pleasing bib comprising:
  - a) a front member that substantially covers the wearer's front torso and shoulders which is similar in appearance to the front portion of a normal shirt or blouse;
  - b) at least one pocket element located along the bottom edge of said front member; and
  - c) a decorative indicia attached to said front member which further allows said aesthetically pleasing bib to resemble a normal article of clothing.
- 2. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 1 further comprising attachment means to secure said bib around the wearer's neck.
- 3. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 2 wherein said attachment means is a hook and loop fastener.
- 4. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 1 further comprising a collar element attached to the upper side of said front member which surrounds the neck of the wearer.
- 5. An aesthetically pleasing bib comprising:
  - a) a front member which is similar in appearance to a normal shirt or blouse that substantially covers a wearer's upper torso which defines an upper portion near said wearer's neck and a lower portion near said wearer's waist that covers said wearer's front torso, shoulders and upper back;

- b) at least one pocket element located along said bottom portion of said front member;
- c) a collar member attached to said upper portion of said front member; and
- d) at least one decorative member attached to said front member allowing said aesthetically pleasing bib to further resemble the appearance of a normal article of clothing.
- 6. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 5 wherein said decorative member is a breast pocket located on the upper portion of said front member.
- 7. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 5 wherein said decorative member is a shirt button located on said front member.
- 8. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 7 further comprising at least two or more buttons placed in spaced intervals and extending from said bottom portion to said upper portion of said front member.
- 9. An aesthetically pleasing bib comprising:
  - a) a front member extending from a wearer's neck line to their waist which defines an upper portion and a lower portion respectively that covers the wearer's front torso and covers said wearer's shoulders and upper back;
  - b) at least one pocket element located along said bottom portion of said front member;
  - c) a collar member attached to said upper portion of said front member;
  - d) a breast pocket attached to said upper portion of said front member below said collar member;
  - e) a fastening member to attach said bib around the neck of said wearer; and
  - f) a plurality of button members placed in spaced intervals and extending from said bottom portion to said upper portion of said front member.
- 10. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 10 wherein said front member is constructed from a cloth material.
- 11. The aesthetically pleasing bib of claim 10 wherein said fastening member is a hook and loop fastener.
- 12. A method of protecting clothing from becoming soiled while consuming meals comprising the steps of:
  - a) providing a bib which is designed to cover a wearer's front torso, shoulders and upper back;
  - b) decorating said bib with indicia to allow said bib to resemble the likeness of a normal article of clothing; and
  - c) placing said bib around the neck of a person.
- 13. The method of claim 12 wherein said step of decorating said bib is accomplished to allow said bib to match the wearer's clothing.

\* \* \* \* \*