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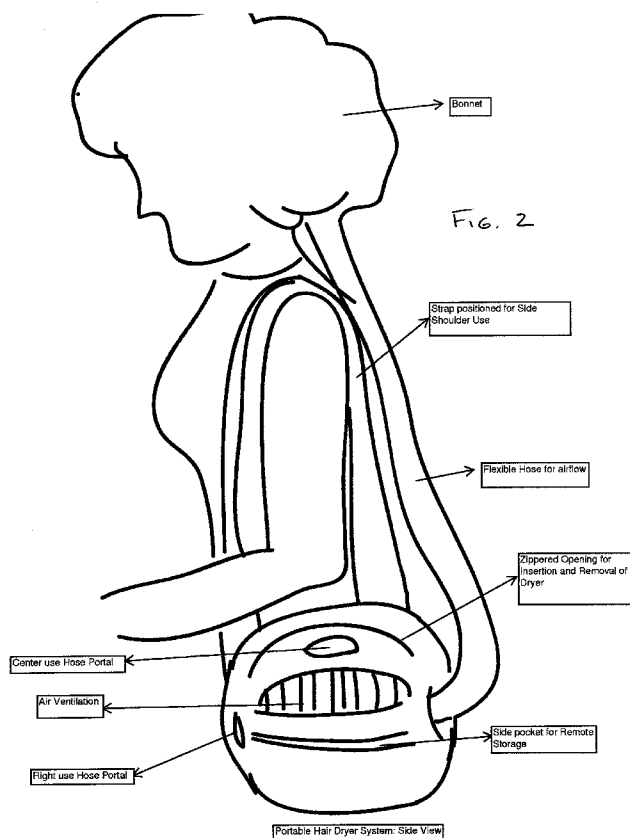
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(54) Title: PORTABLE HAIR DRYER SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: A portable carrier for a hair dryer comprises a receptacle adapted to receive the hair dryer and one or more straps facilitating carrying of the portable carrier by a user. The portable carrier contains ventilation netting on a portion intended to cover air intake vents of the hair dryer. Openings are provided in the carrier to accommodate hair dryer cords and plugs. The hair dryer is preferably of a turtle shell shape and is powered by rechargeable batteries and remote controlled.

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PORTABLE HAIR DRYER SYSTEM

PRIORITY CLAIM

This application claims priority of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/019,880, filed on January 9, 2008.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a portable hair dryer system.

2. Description of Related Art

Attempts to make hair dryer systems portable are in principle known in the art. See, for example, US 5,651,190; US 5,857,262; US 6,964,116; and US 7,096,597. All these systems suffer one or more obvious disadvantages. They are too bulky, too complicated or lacking in flexibility and versatility.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention solves these problems by providing a novel carrier for the heater/blower component of a hair dryer, wherein the novel carrier comprises:

- a) a receptacle having an interior space adapted to removably receive a heater/blower component of a hair dryer, wherein the receptacle comprises:
 - i) ventilation netting material on at least a portion of the receptacle intended to cover an air intake vent of the heater/blower; and
 - ii) one or more hose openings adapted to receive an external hose of the hair dryer; and
- b) at least one strap attached to the receptacle for facilitating carrying of the portable carrier by a user thereof.

In another embodiment, the present invention relates to a combination of the novel carrier and a heater/blower component contained in said receptacle.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will now be described in greater detail with reference to the drawings.

Figure 1 is a schematic of the front view of a female user carrying the inventive carrier on her front. The carrier has two straps permitting the carrier to be worn like a backpack. The carrier contains, for example, a turtle shell dryer. The carrier has ventilation netting on the portion that covers the air intake vent of the turtle shell dryer. A hose from the turtle shell dryer exits the carrier at the top and a distal end of the hose is attached to a bonnet worn atop the user's head. On the left-side of the carrier, an external remote control unit for the turtle shell dryer is held in the user's hand. The remote control unit is attached to the turtle shell dryer by a cord that passes through an adapted opening in the carrier.

Figure 2 shows the carrier with a single strap being slung over the user's shoulder.

Figure 3 shows the carrier with two straps being worn on the user's back.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The portable carrier according to the present invention can be composed of any suitable material, but is preferably composed at least in part of heat-resistant material. In a preferred embodiment, the heat-resistant material comprises nylon/denier.

The portable carrier has at least one hose opening. Preferably, the portable carrier has a plurality of the hose openings to allow versatility in the positioning of the hose.

The portable carrier typically has one or two straps. When one strap is employed, the portable carrier can be worn by the user as a sling. When the portable carrier has two straps, these can be positioned so that the portable carrier can be worn by the user as a backpack. In this configuration, of course, the user can also make use of only one of the two straps, slinging the one strap in use over one shoulder.

In a preferred embodiment, the hair dryer is controlled by a remote control unit. The control may be wireless or wired. In the event the control is wired, the portable carrier can be provided with one or more adapted openings to receive wires passing between the remote control unit and the heater/blower component.

The heater/blower component may be powered by AC current or batteries. For maximum portability, batteries, especially rechargeable batteries, are preferred. The portable carrier can be provided with one or more adapted openings to receive a cord connecting a rechargeable battery pack contained in the heater/blower component to a recharging power source. Alternatively, the portable carrier can be provided with one or more adapted openings to receive a cord connecting the heater/blower component to an electrical outlet, for example, a wall outlet.

For storing accessories, the portable carrier can be provided with at least one storage compartment on an outside surface or an inside surface of the receptacle.

The interior space of the receptacle is preferably sealable, for example, with a zipper or with VELCRO® (mating hook and loop material).

The portable carrier can be designed to accommodate any suitable hair dryer shape. In a preferred embodiment, the heater/blower component has a turtle shell shape.

The present invention has many clear advantages:

Hood/Bonnet drying is a longer drying process, but has been long thought to be easier on the hair than the direct heat of a blow dryer. Many consumers realize the damaging effects of blow drying hair; however, they use this method out of the desire to spend less time in the hot bathroom. Some users prefer the look of blown dry hair. However, many hairstylists have developed methods to create a blown dry look with the use of a hood drying method.

From an everyday/household use perspective, the present invention allows the user the freedom of movement to do any activities normally done while wearing a back/pack or sling.

From a salon or fitness facility point of view, clients will be able to move or be taken to other locations about the salon, thus being easily accommodated for additional services like manicures, pedicures, and makeup and some aesthetic treatments.

From a healthcare/hospital perspective, patients (especially the elderly, wheelchair bound or physically compromised) could have their hair needs completed while remaining in a comfortable position.

From a hotel/cruise ship travel perspective, patrons who prefer to relax or prepare for business meetings can do so outside of the confines of a typically smaller bathroom, and without having to be tied to limitations of the dryer cord.

From a camping and/or limited-electrical access point of view, users can benefit from a styling/drying method without the need of an electrical outlet.

While the present invention has been described in conjunction with the specific embodiments set forth above, many alternatives, modifications and other variations thereof will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. All such alternatives, modifications and variations are intended to fall within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A portable carrier for a hair dryer comprising:
 - a) a receptacle having an interior space adapted to removably receive a heater/blower component of a hair dryer, said receptacle comprising:
 - i) ventilation netting material on at least a portion of the receptacle intended to cover an air intake vent of said heater/blower; and
 - ii) one or more hose openings adapted to receive an external hose of said hair dryer; and
 - b) at least one strap attached to said receptacle for facilitating carrying of the portable carrier by a user thereof.
2. The portable carrier according to claim 1, which is composed at least in part of heat-resistant material.
3. The portable carrier according to claim 2, wherein the heat-resistant material comprises nylon/denier.
4. The portable carrier according to claim 1, which comprises a plurality of said hose openings.

5. The portable carrier according to claim 1, which has one strap allowing the portable carrier to be slung over the shoulder of a user.

5 6. The portable carrier according to claim 1, which has two straps allowing the portable carrier to be carried on the back or chest of a user with one strap being positioned over each shoulder of said user.

7. The portable carrier according to claim 1, which further comprises at least one
10 additional opening adapted to receive a cord connecting a remote control unit for said hair dryer to said heater/blower component when contained in said receptacle.

8. The portable carrier according to claim 1, which further comprises at least one additional opening adapted to receive a cord connecting a rechargeable battery pack
15 contained in said heater/blower component to a recharging power source or connecting said heater/blower component to an electrical outlet.

9. The portable carrier according to claim 1, which further comprises at least one storage compartment on an outside surface or an inside surface of said receptacle.

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10. The portable carrier according to claim 1, wherein said interior space is sealable.

11. The portable carrier according to claim 10, wherein said interior space is
25 rendered sealable by means of a zipper.

12. The portable carrier according to claim 10, wherein said interior space is rendered sealable by means of mating hook and loop material.

5 13. A combination comprising:

a) the portable carrier according to any one of claims 1-12; and

b) a heater/blower component contained in said receptacle.

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14. The combination according to claim 13, which further comprises a hose connected on one end to said heater/blower component and emanating through one of said hose openings.

15 15. The combination according to claim 14, wherein said hose is connected on its other end to a bonnet.

16. The combination according to claim 13, wherein the heater/blower is controlled by a remote control unit.

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17. The combination according to claim 16, wherein the remote control unit is attached to the heater/blower by a cord and the cord passes through said adapted opening for said cord.

18. The combination according to claim 13, wherein the heater/blower component is powered by rechargeable batteries.

19. The combination according to claim 13, wherein the heater/blower component
5 has a turtle shell shape.

20. A combination comprising:

- 10 a) a receptacle having an interior space adapted to removably receive a heater/blower component of a hair dryer, said receptacle comprising:
- i) ventilation netting material on at least a portion of the receptacle intended to cover an air intake vent of said heater/blower; and
- 15 ii) one or more hose openings adapted to receive an external hose of said hair dryer;
- b) at least one strap attached to said receptacle for facilitating carrying of the portable carrier by a user thereof;
- 20 c) a heater/blower component contained in said receptacle;
- d) a hose connected on one end to said heater/blower component, said
25 hose emanating through one of said hose openings;

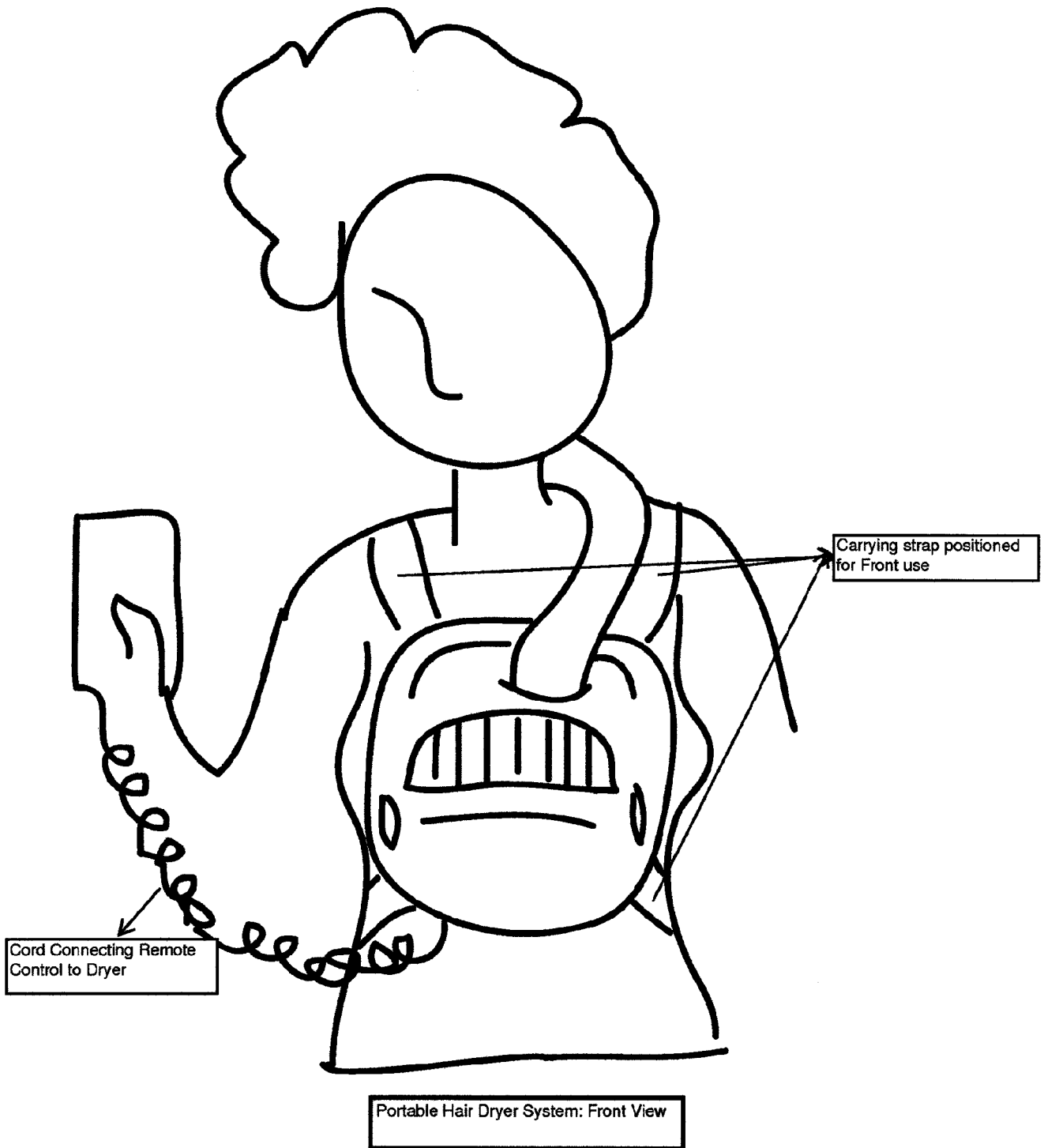
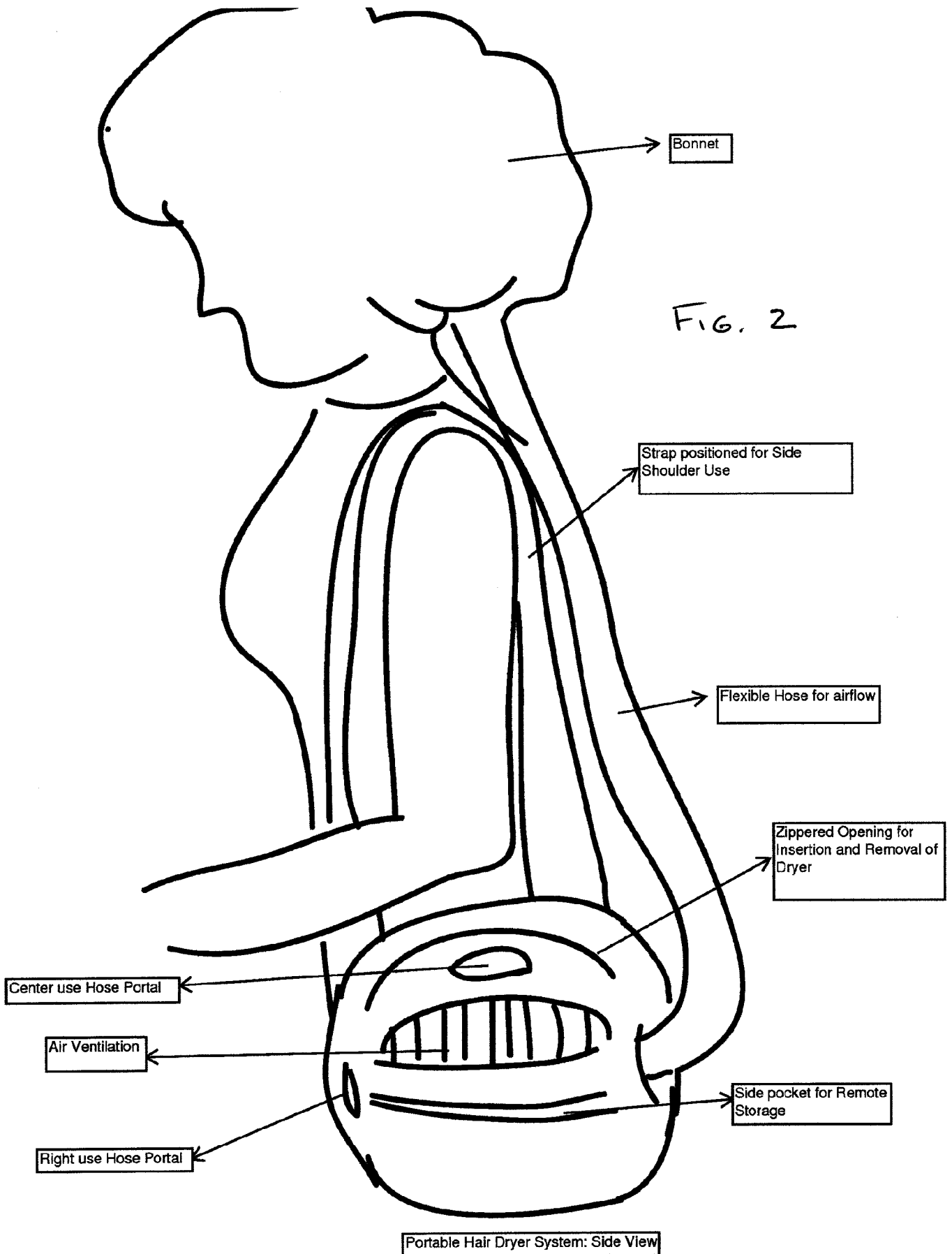
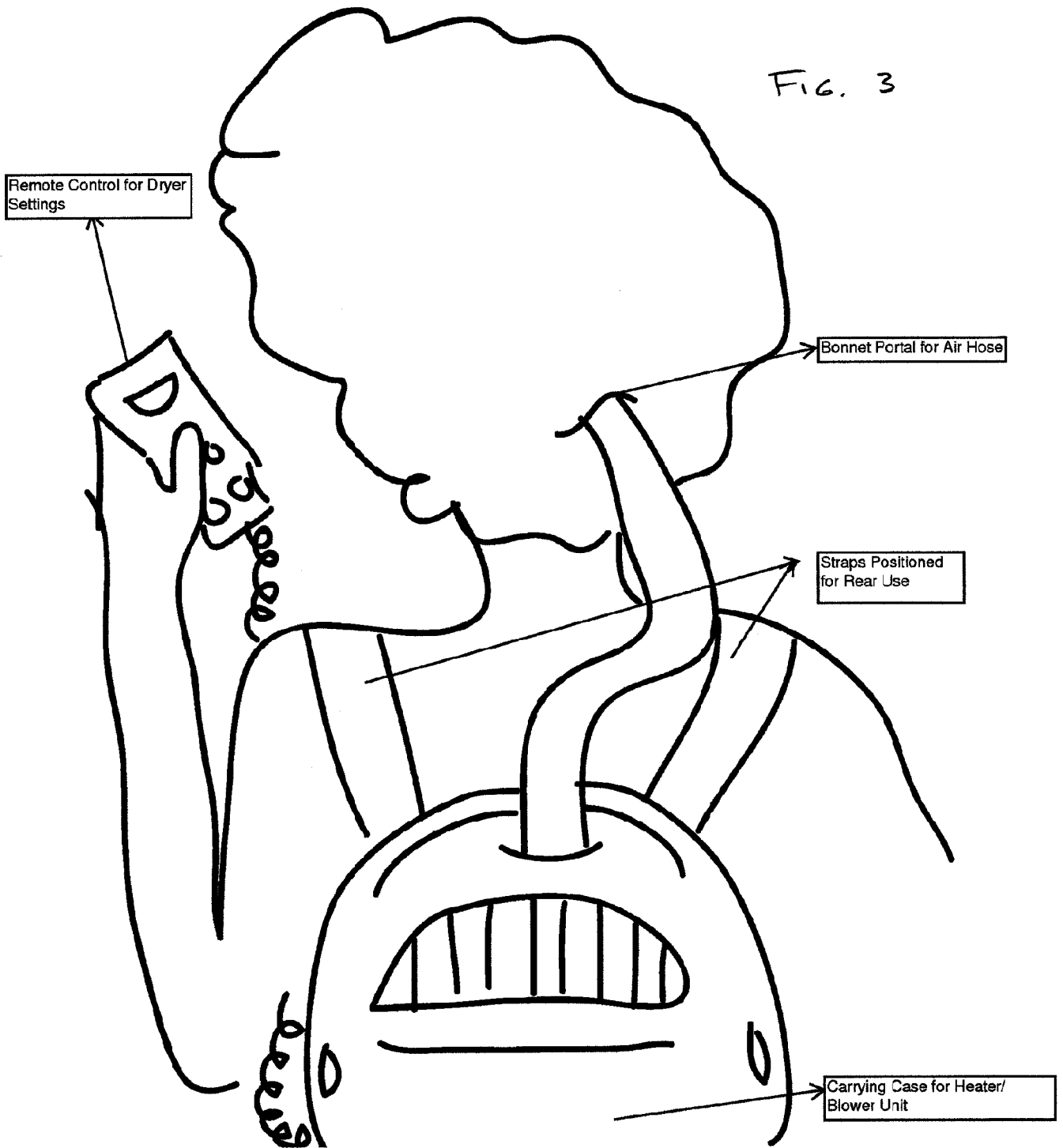


FIG. 1



Portable Hair Dryer System: Rear View

FIG. 3



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US2009/030419

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - A45D 20/00 (2009.01)

USPC - 34/90

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) - A45D 20/00, 20/18 (2009.01)

USPC - D28/12; 34/90, 99, 101, 283; 392/383

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

PatBase; Google Patents

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 7,096,597 B1 (ZELLOUS) 29 August 2006 (29.08.2006) entire document	1-2, 5-11, 13-20
Y		3-4, 12
Y	US 2007/0119070 A1 (COATS et al) 31 May 2007 (31.05.2007) entire document	3, 12
Y	US 5,404,652 A (SHER) 11 April 1995 (11.04.1995) entire document	4

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"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

"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

"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

"&" document member of the same patent family

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