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3,180,310

CONTENTS INDICATOR FOR CONTAINERS

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FIG. 1

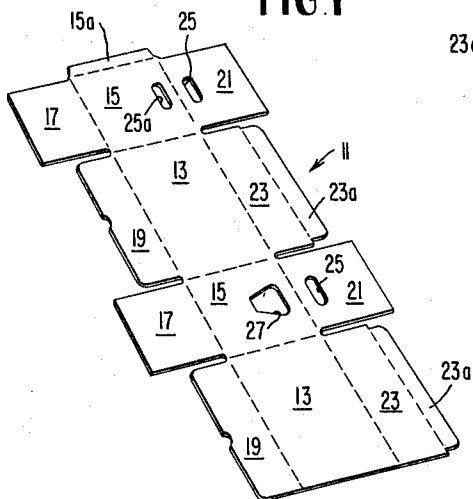


FIG. 2

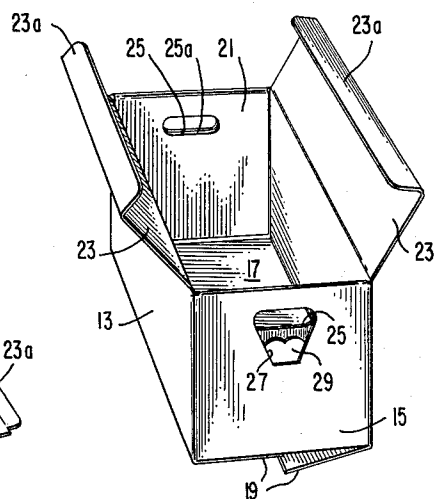


FIG. 3

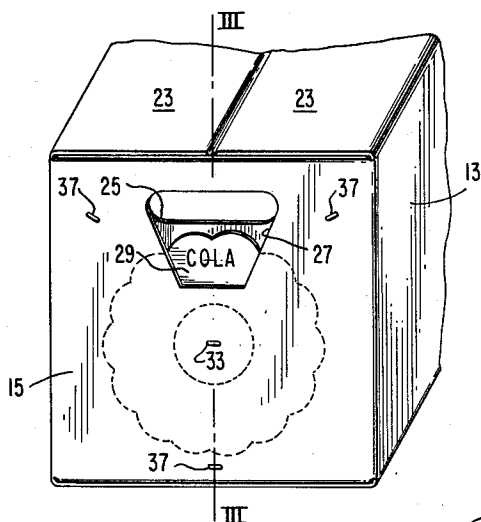
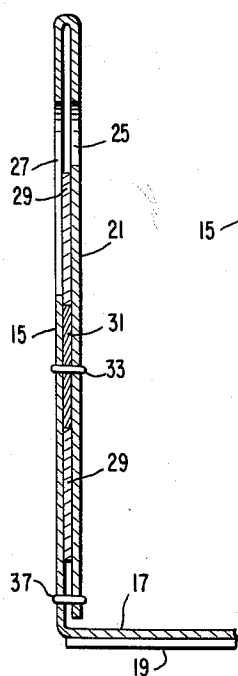
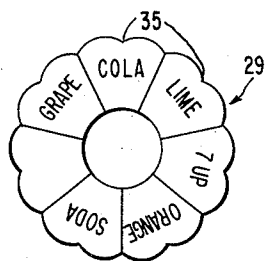


FIG. 4

FIG. 5



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CONTENTS INDICATOR FOR CONTAINERS

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3 Claims. (Cl. 116-133)

The present invention relates to a contents-indicating container and more particularly, relates to a container having a movable indicator mounted between its end flaps for identifying one of several varieties of contents that may be carried in the container.

Containers are often employed to carry one of a variety of contents as occasion may require. In these types of containers in which the contents are not immediately visible, such as completely enclosed containers or those with only the tops removed, a need arises to indicate or identify the contents without opening the containers or removing the contents. This need is particularly apparent in situations where bottle-containing paperboard boxes are used over and over again to carry bottles of different ingredients, such as one of several kinds of beverages. Obviously, any printing that may have identified the original contents of a box would no longer serve to identify different contents of the box when re-used.

Attempts in the prior art to solve this problem have in some instances resulted in the provision of window or tab mounted indicia-carrying insert cards removable from the container. Other attempts have brought about article-carried indicia observable through a window or opening cut into the container or box. In general, the disadvantages of these and other prior art attempts are that with a change of contents there is required removal of the old indicia-carrying card and the insertion of a new card with new indicia, or the erasure and printing of new indicia on the box or insert and, of course, where article-carried indicia may have originally been visible through an opening in the box, when the box is re-used indicia carried on different articles placed in the box may not be visible.

The foregoing difficulties and disadvantages are overcome by the present invention in which a member carrying a variety of indicia is movably mounted between a pair of overlying outer and inner panels formed by the folded over end flap of a container, e.g., a paperboard box. The outer and inner panels each have an opening therein, the openings being in register with each other but with the opening in the outer panel being larger than that of the inner panel. A portion of the movable member is visible through the larger outer opening. One of the variety of indicia visible through the outer opening identifies the contents of the box. When the contents of the box are changed, the indicia-carrying member may be moved to indicate the new contents.

It is, therefore, among the objects of the present invention to provide an improved container having variable content-identifying indicia means; to provide an improved container having a movable indicia-carrying member permanently affixed thereto for identifying one of a plurality of contents to be placed in the container; to provide an improved paperboard box for carrying one of generally similar types of contents each type of which is identifiable by means of variable indicia means permanently affixed to the box; and to provide an improved container having variable, contents-identifying indicia means for one of a given classification of contents, said indicia means not being easily removable.

Other objects of the invention will in part be obvious and will in part appear hereinafter.

The invention accordingly comprises the features of construction, combination of elements and arrangement

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of parts, which will be exemplified in the construction hereinafter set forth and the scope of the invention will be indicated in the claims.

For a fuller understanding of the nature and objects of the invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a view in perspective of a blank from which a version of the improved container of the invention may be made;

FIG. 2 is a view in perspective of a container assembled from the blank shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is an enlarged sectional view along section line III-III of FIG. 4 through the end portion of a container made according to the invention;

FIG. 4 is an end view in perspective of the container according to the invention; and

FIG. 5 is a view of a variable indicia-carrying, contents-identifying member according to the invention.

Referring to FIGS. 1-3, a generally rectangular blank 11 is cut and scored to provide side walls 13, outer end wall panels 15, bottom end closure flaps 17, bottom side closure flaps 19, inner end wall panels 21 and top closure flaps 23. The flaps 23 are provided with edge flaps 23a. One of the outer end wall panels 15 is provided with a stitch lap 15a to permit formation of the blank into a tube. The various flaps are folded in conventional manner to form the container shown in FIG. 2.

The inner end wall panels 21 each have a generally oblong opening 25 with rounded corners cut therein near the fold line between panels 15 and 21. One of the outer end wall panels 15 also has a generally oblong opening 25a, whereas the opposite outer end wall panel 15 has a generally triangular opening 27, the upper portion of which is of similar dimensions to those of the opening 25a and coincides with it when the panels are folded as shown in FIG. 2. The lower portion of the triangular opening 27 extends below that of the opening 25.

An indicia-carrying annular disc 29 is rotatably mounted between the panels 15 and 21 on a disc-shaped axle 31, located just below the opening 27 by means of a staple 33 holding the disc 29 in sliding contact with the axle 31 and with the panels 15 and 21. As best seen in FIGS. 4 and 5, the edge of the annular disc 29 has rounded notches 35 so that it can be easily rotated by finger pressure. The edge 35 does not interfere with the use of the openings 25 and 27 as handles. The annular disc 29 is provided with indicia, each one occupying a sector and identifying a respective ingredient, e.g., a bottled or canned beverage, as shown in legend. The legend portion is visible through the outer panel opening 27.

Of course, the end panels 15 and 21 may be further secured together by means of additional staples 37 as needed. The container or box may be made of any suitable material, and assembled or fabricated in any suitable manner.

The operation of the invention is obvious. Depending upon the contents, the disc 29 is rotated to a sector portion thereof the legend of which corresponds to the identity of the contents. That the contents are so indicated is very convenient in situations where boxes are stacked, re-used, or both. If desired, a blank sector may be provided in the disc 29 for printing any desired legend therein. For example, if a box has been used previously for holding bottled beverages, as indicated by the exemplary categorical legend in FIG. 5, and if the box is presently being used for holding a different category of items, the identity of said items may be inscribed on the blank sector. Obviously, the blank sector may be used to indicate an empty box.

Of course, more than one blank sector may be provided for the disc 29. Each box or container may, if desired, be provided with additional indicia-carrying means arranged according to the invention.

Since certain changes may be made in the above construction and different embodiments of the invention could be made without departing from the scope thereof, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description or shown in the accompanying drawing shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

It is also to be understood that the following claims are intended to cover all of the generic and specific features of the invention herein described, and all statements of the scope of the invention which, as a matter of language, might be said to fall therebetween.

Having described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. The combination of a paperboard container and apparatus for indicating the contents of said container, comprising: Outer and inner overlying panels defining at least one wall of the container; said panels having handle-forming opening portions of which are in substantial register with each other; the openings of said outer panel being of greater size than that of the inner panel thereby exposing a portion of the inner panel therethrough; an

indicia-carrying annular disc positioned between said outer and inner panels; and mounting means centrally located in respect to said annular disc and connected to said panels rotatably mounting said indicia-carrying disc in said panels whereby the portion of said disc carrying indicia is exposed through the opening of said outer panel, the exposed portion of said disc covering a substantial portion of the otherwise exposed inner panel.

2. The combination according to claim 1, wherein said mounting means comprises a disc located centrally of said annular disc in sliding contact with said annular disc.

3. The combination according to claim 2, wherein the edge of said annular disc is comprised of rounded notches.

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