A novelty drinking straw formed of flexible transparent tubing has a central section formed in the shape of script spelling a name or short phrase. Two end sections extend from the ends of the central section and are joined by a knot to form a necklace. Two tube sections connect at the knot to the ends of the central section and can connect to a fluid container and the user’s mouth. By sucking on the mouth section, fluid is drawn from the container, through the central section and then the mouthpiece.
NECKLACE STRAW, NAME STRAW, AND PHRASE STRAW

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority of U.S. Provisional Application 61/764,752 filed Feb. 14, 2013, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates to novelty drinking straws, and more particularly to straws that have sections configured to spell names or phrases.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Drinking straws formed in convoluted patterns so that children using the straws can be entertained by watching liquid progress through the straws have been sold for a number of years.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] The present invention relates to novelty items which in one embodiment comprise necklaces formed of plastic drinking straws having sections bent into names or short phrases, in script form, and configured in such a way as to allow a user to wear the straw as a necklace with the name or phrase section hanging across the user’s chest while allowing the necklace to be used as the intermediate section of a novelty drinking straw. The liquid being drawn through the straw progresses from a liquid container through the entire necklace, including the name or phrase section, to a mouthpiece.

[0005] A preferred embodiment of the invention utilizes a unique knotted necklace to support the ends of the necklace and to connect them to a relatively long plastic tubing section which can be placed in a liquid container such as a bottle or cup and a relatively short plastic tubing mouthpiece.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] Other objects, advantages, and applications of the present invention will be made apparent by the following detailed description. The description makes reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0007] FIG. 1 is a photograph of a girl wearing a necklace formed of drinking straws formed with her name, in accordance with the first embodiment of the invention, and drinking a beverage through the straw;

[0008] FIG. 2 is a view of the necklace of FIG. 1;

[0009] FIG. 3 is a detailed view of the knot used to form the necklace; and

[0010] FIGS. 4-7 illustrate the method of forming the knot used with the embodiments of FIGS. 1 and 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE INVENTION

[0011] FIG. 1 illustrates a model wearing a necklace 5 formed of a plastic drinking straw formed into her name with one end 6 extending into a glass 7 of a soft drink and the other end 8 in her mouth. When she sucks on the straw liquid is drawn through the straw. Preferably the plastic of the straw is transparent so that the progress of the liquid through the straw may be visualized.

[0012] A version of the necklace by itself is illustrated in FIG. 2. The necklace includes a central section of tubular plastic, preferably vinyl, bent into a script form of a user’s name or a short phrase, indicated at 5. This section terminates in two ends 12 and 14 like the ends 6 and 8 shown in FIG. 1. These ends are respectively coaxially connected to two sections of tubing 16 and 18, respectively. At their far ends the sections 16 and 18 both terminate in a knot section, generally indicated at 20.

[0013] As illustrated in FIG. 3, the knot section 20 has four terminating ends, a relatively short end 22, a parallel terminating longer end 24, and short and long ends 26' and 28' extending at an obtuse angle to the ends 22 and 24', in the opposite direction. The longer ends 24' and 28' connect respectively to the two tubular sections 16 and 18 that in turn connect to the script section 10. The short ends 22' and 26' connect to an elongated tubular mouthpiece 30 and a longer tubing section 32 with a free end that can be placed within a bottle or other source of fluid.

[0014] The script used to form the name or short phrase out of the drinking straw tubing is unique in that the upper ends of the tubing sections which would otherwise require sharp bends in the tubing to form the required letters are bent laterally out of the plane of the script at less acute angles. This avoids sharp bends in the script tubing which would block or impede the flow of liquid through the tubing when used as a drinking straw but still provides the appearance of normal script when viewed from the side, as in FIG. 1. By way of example, in the script form of the name “Erica” shown at 5 in FIG. 1, the upper terminations of the E, I, and the vertical line in the letter K are all bent outwardly from the plane of the balance of the script, in rounded loops.

[0015] The method of forming the knot is detailed in FIGS. 4-7.

[0016] As shown in FIG. 4, the knot is formed of two 8-inch rods. The rods are heated to approximately 120° or so in order to make them more flexible. They are then positioned parallel to one another as shown in FIG. 5 with their opposed ends offset by approximately 1/2-3/4 of an inch. This is clearly illustrated in FIG. 6. The two 8-inch tubes, while still warm and flexible, are bent into a knot as shown in FIG. 7 resulting in the completed knot illustrated in FIG. 3. The two vinyl tubes 16 and 18 connected to the two ends of the name or phrase straw are then joined to the two longer ends of the knot 24' and 28' while the tubing section 32 which is inserted into the fluid source is connected to the other short end.

[0017] The wearer may use the straw while wearing the necklace so that the liquid flows through the entire tubing structure or the necklace may be removed, the section 32 may be placed within a bottle or cup of liquid, and the liquid may be ingested through sucking on the mouthpiece 30.

[0018] A second, alternative embodiment of the invention is not formed as a necklace but uses the unique form of straw tubing script employed as a name straw. This may be used as a drinking straw with the script with the rounded nonplanar upper end terminations employed to avoid fluid restrictions in the tubing.

[0019] A third embodiment of the invention comprises a drinking straw formed of two or more sections of tubing each containing a short phrase or part of a name, formed using a plastic drinking straw bent into the name or phrase in the unique script described and illustrated above. The sections are joined coaxially, possibly with short, larger diameter connectors, into a single straw.
This configuration avoids the difficulty of producing, shipping, and storing unitary straws of the required length.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. A novelty drinking straw formed of flexible plastic tubing comprising:
   a central section bent so as to spell out, in script, a short phrase with the ends of the tubing section terminating in a knotted section joining the two ends;
   a first tubing section connected through the knot to one of the ends of the central section and adapted to be inserted into a liquid container; and
   a second tubing section connected to the other end of the central section through the knot and adapted to be inserted into a user’s mouth, whereby the central section will lie across the chest area of the user and the user may suck liquid from the liquid container, through the central section, and into the mouthpiece.

2. The novelty drinking straw of claim 1, wherein the short phrase constitutes a name.

3. The novelty drinking straw of claim 1, wherein the short phrase of the central section generally lies in a first plane with certain of the script elements, comprising relatively sharp transitions, extending out of said first plane to avoid restrictions in the straw which would impede the flow of liquid.

4. The novelty drinking straw of claim 1, wherein the knot has four terminating ends, two of which represent the ends of the central section and the other two represent said first and second tubing sections.

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