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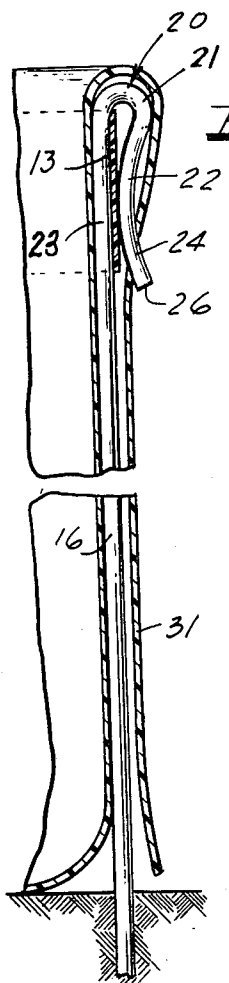
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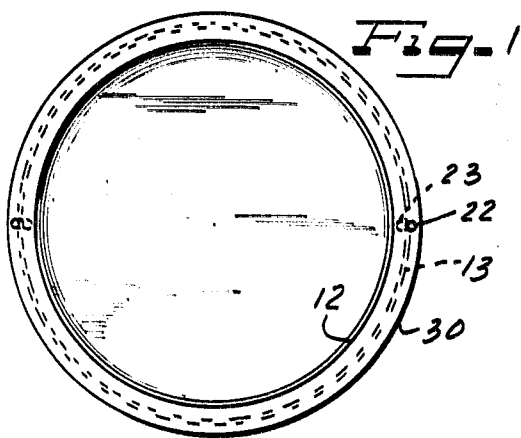
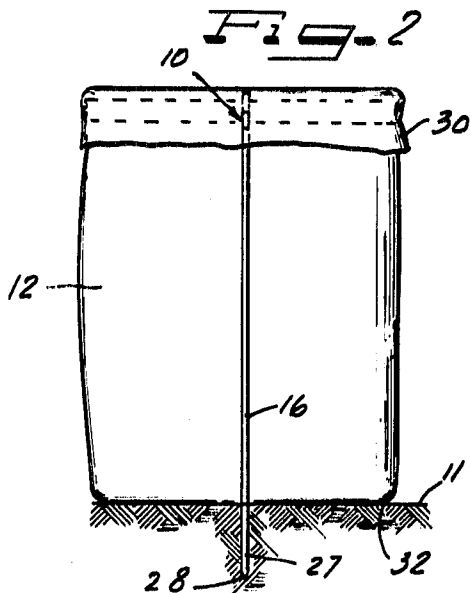
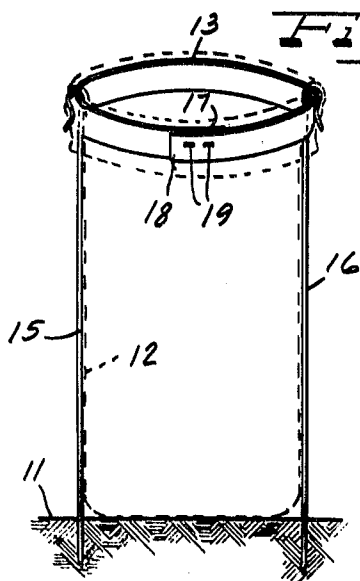
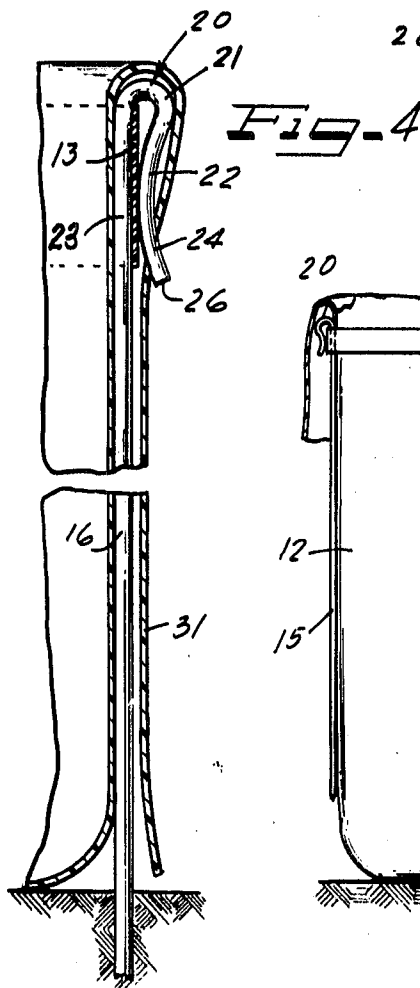
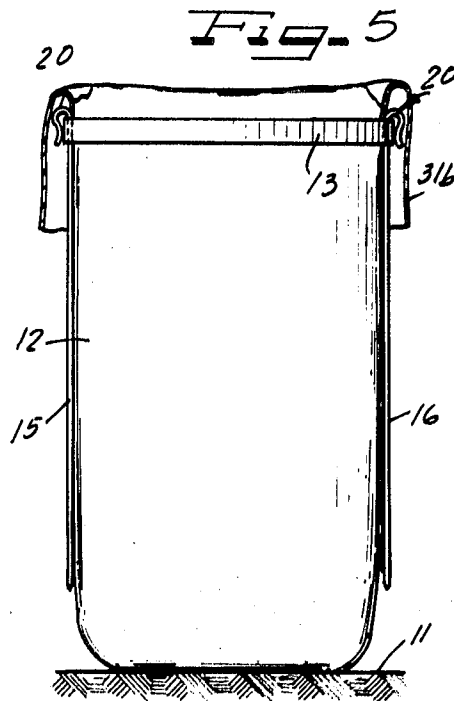
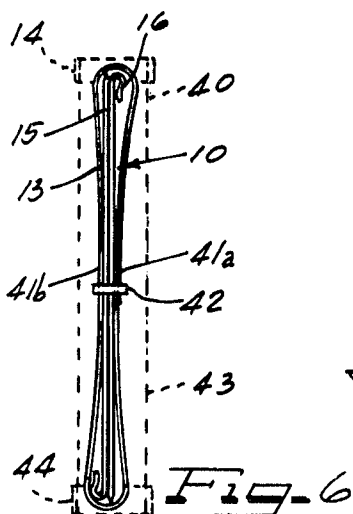
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[54] **BAG HOLDER**
2 Claims, 6 Drawing Figs.

[52] U.S. Cl..... **248/97,**
 248/99, 248/150
 [51] Int. Cl..... **B65b 67/00**
 [50] Field of Search..... 248/99, 97,
 156, 94, 150

ABSTRACT: A three-piece holder for large bags consisting of a flexible linear strip whose ends are fastened together to form a wide-mouthed hoop and two leg members having sheperd's crook bent ends for enclampingly receiving the hoop. The other ends of the leg members are pointed and are designed to be stuck into the ground in an upright position to hold the hoop in a horizontal position above the ground. The bag is placed interiorly of the hoop with a portion thereof rolled over the top of the hoop and affixed to a complementary portion of the leg members whereby the bag will be held in an upright, open position.





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BAG HOLDER**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****1. Field of the Invention**

This invention relates to support structures and more particularly to a device for holding a flexible bag in an upright open position for filling.

2. Prior Art

Large flexible bags with large open ends are popular receptacles for numerous items including trash and grass and yard clippings. These bags are most conveniently utilized when some method is provided for holding them in an upright, open position. The bags are incapable of retaining such a position on their own due to their thin-walled construction and flexibility. Therefore, various retainers have been designed to receive the bags and retain them in an upright, open position.

Such prior art retainers have taken the form either of rigid enclosed structures such as barrels or the like, or multipiece frame assemblies with the pieces attached to one another. Such multipiece frames are usually self-standing and therefore require a rigid structure.

Both prior art solutions are cumbersome, expensive to manufacture, and difficult to move and store.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention provides a simple, economical holder for large flexible bags which retains the bags in an upright, open position for receipt of yard clippings or the like trash.

The bag holder of this invention is designed to be used out-of-doors where its legs or support members can be inserted in the ground to achieve stability.

The holder consists of three basic members, one of which is used to form a hoop and two of which are leg or suspension members. The hoop member is preferably formed from a linear strip of flexible resilient plastic or metal or the like with the ends attached together as by staples to form a circular hoop. The leg members are attached to the hoop by snapping their shepherd's crook-shaped ends over the hoop member. The leg members are pointed at their ends remote from the curved end so that they may thrust into the ground, and thereafter support the structure.

Means are provided in connection with the leg members to attach a flap of a bag received within the hoop. The flap is pulled over the hoop and downwardly outside thereof. Thereafter, the portion of the flap adjacent the legs is attached to the legs to prevent the bags from slipping back down through the hoop.

The legs are not rigidly attached to the hoop member and can therefore be assembled and disassembled to form a convenient storage assembly. The hoop member is flexible and can be collapsed into a doubled elongated member which, together with the leg members, may be inserted in a tube for sale or storage.

With the leg members firmly implanted in the ground, the hoop will retain a large flexible bag in an upright, open-mouthed position. When the bag has received a sufficient amount of trash or the like to be partially self-standing, the leg members can be withdrawn from the ground so as to move the hoop further up the height of the bag. Thereafter, with the bag self-standing, the hoop will retain the mouth of the bag in an open position.

It is therefore an object of this invention to provide improved, economical holder for large open-ended bags.

It is another object of this invention to provide an inexpensive bag holder which retains flexible bags in an upright, open-ended position.

It is yet another object of this invention to provide a bag holder which has support legs thereon designed to be removably implanted into the ground to retain the bag holder in an operative position.

It is yet another and more important object of this invention to provide a three-piece bag holder which, in its assembled

form, consists of a liner strip formed into a hoop which is supported by two leg members depending from the hoop and implanted into the ground.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be readily apparent from the following description of certain preferred embodiments thereof, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, although variations and modifications may be effected without departing from the spirit and scope of the novel concepts of the disclosure, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of the bag holder of this invention illustrated as receiving a bag with the underlying portions of the holder illustrated by broken lines.

FIG. 2 is a side plan view of the holder of this invention with a bag retained therein.

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the bag holder of this invention with the bag dotted in.

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view of one of the leg members of this invention illustrated as retaining the hoop and bag.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view, partially in section, of the bag holder of this invention illustrated as used with a self-standing bag.

FIG. 6 is a phantom view of the bag holder of this invention as packed for shipping, illustrating the shipping container in phantom.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

FIG. 2 illustrates the bag holder 10 of my invention implanted in the ground 11 and supporting a bag 12.

The bag holder 10 is designated to hold large open-ended flexible bags. Recently, such large bags have become commercially available, constructed of a thin tear-resistant plastic. These bags are designed for disposability and are conveniently and economically usable as trash receivers. One specific use for such bags is as a receptacle for grass cuttings, yard clippings, leaves and the like. After the bag is filled, its open end may be tied closed, presenting a convenient, sanitary, disposable bundle.

These bags and other flexible bags are difficult to work with unless retained in an upright, open position. Because of the flexibility of the bag, they are incapable of remaining in a self-standing, opened position when empty without auxiliary support. The bag holder 10 of my invention is designed to provide this support in an economical, easy-to-use construction.

The bag holder 10 consists primarily of a linear strip 13 and two leg members 15 and 16. The strip 13 is preferably formed of a resilient, springy plastic, but may be formed of resilient metal such as spring steel. The strip 13 is curved so that its ends 17 and 18 slightly overlap. The ends are then fastened together by means such as rivets 19, so that the strip 13 forms a hoop having a greater axial dimension than radial thickness.

The leg members 15 and 16 are preferably made of metal rods and are of a metal grade which is resilient or springy. One end 20 of the rods 15 and 16 is curved backwardly in a U-shaped curve 21. Thereafter the curvature is continued until a central portion 22 of the bent-over end contacts a portion 23 of the main stem of the rod. The curvature is then reversed and the end portion 24 is spaced from the rod. The curvature may be described as being a shepherd's crook. In the preferred embodiment, the portion 22 is slightly spaced from the portion 23 to facilitate ease of insertion of the hoop member, however the space is less than the thickness of the hoop member. Due to the resiliency of the material of the rod, the curved end may be spread apart so as to enclampingly receive the hoop 13 between the portions 22 and 23.

The tip 26 may be pointed so as to easily pierce the flap of a bag received in the holder. The ends of the leg members 27 remote from the curved end 20 are pointed as at 28 so that they may be thrust into the ground to hold them in a vertical position. With the legs on opposite sides of the hoop diametri-

cally opposed from one another and with the hoop enclampingly received between the portions 22 and 23 of the leg members, the hoop will be supported on the members. With the legs implanted into the ground, suspending the hoop 13, the bag holder is ready to receive the bag 12. The bag 12 is disposed inside of the hoop with the top portion 30 thereof drawn over the hoop and folded outwardly in a flap which extends over the hoop and downward outside of the bag.

As long as the flap 30 is restrained from being drawn back through the hoop, the bag will be supported in an upright, open position. FIG. 4 illustrates the preferred way of preventing the flap from being drawn upwardly and then downwardly through the hoop. The pointed ends 26 of the leg members extend outwardly away from the remainder of the leg member. When the bag is inserted through the hoop and the flap is folded over, it is pulled against the points 26 until it is bound thereon. Thus, the points 26 of the leg members may protrude through the flap to firmly anchor it to the legs. This will prevent the bag from collapsing back through the hoop and it will therefore be retained in an upright, open position for receipt of trash or the like. FIG. 4 illustrates the pointed ends as being used with a large bag, the flap of which extends downward considerably beyond the hoop. It is to be understood that this is illustrative only and that in practice such large bags do not need to be restrained by piercing the pointed ends 26 therethrough, however, this method of restraining the bag is preferably used with smaller length bags which should be restrained from being drawn back down through the hoop. Further, it is to be understood that in those cases where the rod diameter of the leg members is sufficiently small, it may not be necessary to point the ends 26. When it is desired to remove the bag from the holder, the flap need only be drawn back down in the area of the points until it is free from them.

FIG. 2 illustrates the bag holder receiving a bag therein. It is to be noted that the bottom 32 of the bag rests on the ground 11 so that the majority of the weight of the trash received in the bag will be supported by the ground and the bag holder need only retain the bag in an upright, open position. Thus, the bag holder is not used primarily to support the weight of the trash, but only to retain the bag in an open position. In this manner, the enclamping action between the portions 22 and 23 of the leg members will be sufficient to retain the hoop in position.

The bag illustrated in FIG. 2 is a short bag wherein the flap extends downwardly from the hoop only a short distance. However, longer bags may be utilized in connection with the bag holder as illustrated in FIG. 4 where the flap 31 extends a considerable distance downwardly from the hoop. When such bags are filled to the top as determined by the placement of the hoop, the bags will be found to be substantially self-standing. When this occurs, the bag holder of this device may be utilized, as illustrated in FIG. 5, to retain the bag in an open position without the leg members being implanted in the ground. Thus, when the bag illustrated in FIG. 4 has been filled to a point adjacent the hoop, the bag may be removed from the points 26 if attached thereto and the hoop hoisted upwardly along the bag to a higher position. Even though the leg members are no longer implanted in the ground, because the bag is self-standing due to the presence of trash therein, the flap may then be refolded over the hoop and locked

therein if desired as by piercing the pointed ends 26 through the flap 31b illustrated in FIG. 5. The hoop will then retain the bag mouth in an open position.

The bag holder 10 is easily disassembled and packaged for sale or storage. FIG. 6 illustrates the disassembled holder 10 as being stored in a storage or shipping container 40. The hoop 13, after being disconnected from the legs, is collapsed inwardly to form an oblong with the center portions 41a and 41b closely spaced from one another. Thereafter, the leg members 15 and 16 can be placed alongside one another adjacent the hoop. A fastening band 42 can be placed around the center sections of the three members to retain them all together. Thereafter, they may be inserted in a tubular container 43 having closable end caps 44. Alternatively, a cardboard or the like tube may be utilized and the ends thereof crimped closed to maintain the contents therein.

It can therefore be seen from the above that my invention provides for a holder for large open-ended bags. The holder consists, in a preferred embodiment, of three members, one of which is dimensioned to form a hoop and the other two of which comprise support legs for the hoop. Means are provided for attaching the legs to the hoop and for preventing a bag inserted in the hoop and folded outwardly over the hoop from being drawn back down through the hoop whereby the hoop may provide a top rim support for the bag, holding it an upright, open position.

Although the teachings of my invention have herein been discussed with reference to specific theories and embodiments, it is to be understood that these are by way of illustration only and that others may wish to utilize my invention in different designs or applications.

I claim as my invention:

1. A device for holding flexible open-ended bags in an upright, open position which comprises: an elongated flexible strip member, said strip curved into overlapping end-to-end relationship, the said ends permanently fastened to one another whereby a hoop is formed by said strip, said hoop collapsible to an elongated substantially oval configuration for insertion into a shipping container having a width dimension substantially less than the diameter of the hoop, a pair of support members, one end of each support member having a curved gripping portion, said curved gripping portion bent to resemble a shepherd's crook with portions thereof in resilient face-to-face contact, said gripping portion resilient whereby the hooped formed plastic strip can be axially inserted between the face-to-face contact portions of the support member to enclampingly position the said hoop between the said portions, the said hoop easily removable from the said support members, the said support members attachable to the said hoop at opposite ends of a diameter through the hoop, the said support members being receivable in the said shipping container along with the said collapsed hoop, and means for attaching a portion of a flexible bag to portions of said support members with the said bag received through the said hoop and overlapped to the exterior of the said hoop.

2. The holder to claim 1 wherein the support members are rods having pointed ends remote from the said curved end and the said means for attaching a portion of a flexible bag comprise the rod ends of the said shepherd's crook which are adapted to pierce the material of the said flexible bag.