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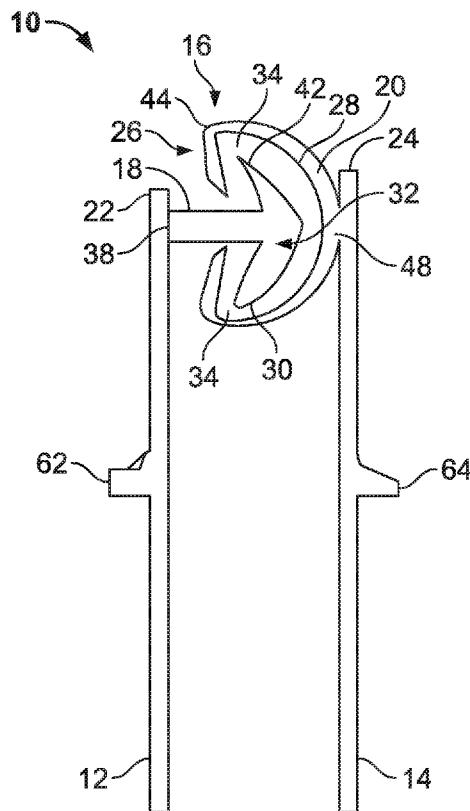
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(54) Title: IMPROVED RECLOSEABLE CONTAINER



(57) Abstract: This invention is directed to an improved reclosable bag having first and second walls and an open top. The open top has first and second flexible fastener strips attached thereto. One of the strips has a profile portion forming a groove; the other strip has a profile portion forming a rib with a portion of the rib received and retained in the groove when the bag top is closed. Each of the fastener strips has a base connected to the respective walls. The bag has a slider mounted on the fastener strips which is moveable longitudinally along the fastener strip to progressively separate the rib from the groove to open the bag, and is movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib to a retained condition in the groove and create a leak-proof seal. A cradle is formed near one end of the fastener strip which is sized, constructed, and arranged to receive and retain the base of the slider when the fastener strip is sealed to prevent leakage from that end of the fastener strip. The cradle preferably has a length greater than the length of the slider so it is retained therein and is curved in its interior configuration. In a preferred embodiment, the cradle has a tab which is also curved and extends angularly from the cradle for abutment against the retention of the slider within the cradle.

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FIG. 1



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## IMPROVED RECLOSEABLE CONTAINER

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

**[0001]** The present invention relates generally to reclosable containers, and in particular, to fastener strips and sliders that may be incorporated into the reclosable containers.

**[0002]** Reclosable bags are well known in the art. A conventional reclosable bag comprises flexible sidewalls having complimentary fastener strips mounted along an upper edge of the sidewalls, and a slider mounted thereon. The slider traverses along a longitudinal length of the fastener strips. Each fastener strip has a sealing member that has a profile that is complimentary to the sealing member of the opposing fastener strip. As the slider traverses the fastener strips in one direction, the sealing members of the opposing fastener strips are urged into an engaged, interlocking condition by closing gates disposed at one end of the slider, thereby providing a substantially leak-proof seal. When the slider traverses the fastener strips in the opposite direction, the fastener strips are disengaged by a separating mechanism also forming a part of the slider in an opposite end thereof, thereby breaking the seal and allowing access to the interior of the reclosable container. There are drawbacks to conventional reclosable containers that need to be addressed, including, for example, secure placement of the sliders to the fastener strips, inadvertent removal of the sliders from the bag, and sealing the fastener strips in a leak-proof manner. The present invention provides improvements to fastener strips and sliders that may be incorporated into reclosable containers, specifically, reclosable bags.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

**[0003]** A reclosable bag having first and second walls is disclosed with an open top defined by first and second elongate flexible fastener strips attached to the first and second walls, respectively, adjacent the top of the walls. One of the fastener strips has a profile portion forming a groove, and the other fastener strip has a profile portion forming a rib, with

a portion of the rib received and retained in the groove when the bag top is closed. Each of the fastener strips has a base connected to the respective wall and each of the strips has an upper edge adjacent the upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip. The bag has a slider mounted on the fastener strips which is moveable in one direction longitudinally of the fastener strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to open the bag and the slider is moveable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to a retained condition in the groove to close the bag. The improvement over the prior art is a cradle provided near one end of the fastener strip sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of the slider therein, while the fastener strip is engaged with the corresponding sealing portion of the complementary sealing member. As a result, the sealing members remain interlocked and closed to provide a leak-tight seal. In one embodiment, the cradle has a tab extending therefrom at an angle of approximately 45° for abutment against and retention of the slider in the cradle. In a preferred embodiment, the cradle is of a length greater than the length of the slider so as to allow variations in the size of the slider during manufacture while still retaining the slider within the cradle and, thus, sealing the fastener strip. The cradle preferably has a tab extending therefrom at an angle of approximately 45° for abutment against and retention of the slider in the cradle. In a preferred embodiment the cradle is substantially C-shaped in its internal configuration so as to retain the slider therein. The tab, although preferably at 45° extending from the cradle, can also extend at an angle from 15°–30° so as to abut against the slider and retain the slider within the cradle. In one embodiment the tab can abut against the separator within the slider. The cradle is preferably curved on at least one end so as to retain the slider therein. It is preferably curved at both ends.

**[0004]** Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to manufacture slide fasteners in which the fasteners are easily opened, but are substantially leakproof when sealed.

**[0005]** It is an additional object of the invention to provide sliders or slide fasteners which are extremely difficult to remove from the bag, in order to provide a child safety feature.

**[0006]** It is a further object of the invention to provide fastener strips having a cradle for receiving and selectively retaining the slider therein so that the slider fasteners remain substantially leakproof at their ends when the slider has been moved to a fully closed position on the fastener strips.

#### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

**[0007]** FIG. 1 of the drawings is a vertical section of the reclosable fastener profile of the present invention, partially broken away, showing male and female profiles, and guide ribs disposed on the outer walls of the reclosable bag.

**[0008]** FIG. 2 of the drawings is a top view of the slider of the present invention.

**[0009]** FIG. 3 of the drawings is a bottom view of the slider of the present invention.

**[0010]** FIG. 4 of the drawings is a front cutaway view of the slider of FIGS. 2 and 3 showing a separator extending downwardly from the top surface thereof.

**[0011]** FIG. 5 of the drawings is a rear cutaway view of the slider of FIGS. 2–4.

**[0012]** FIG. 6 of the drawings is a vertical section taken along the lines BB of FIG. 3 showing the internal configuration of the slider of FIGS. 2–5.

**[0013]** FIG. 7 of the drawings is a front perspective view of the reclosable container of FIG. 1.

**[0014]** FIG. 8 of the drawings is a vertical section of the male and female profiles of FIG. 1 extending from the bag walls, with the slider disposed on the fastener and held in place by the bottom track extending laterally from the bag walls, as well as the separator extending between the male and female profiles.

**[0015]** FIG. 9 of the drawings is a vertical section of the bag and fastener strip of FIG. 10 showing in particular the male and female profiles interlocked and the slider affixed to the fastener strip by the bottom tracks.

**[0016]** FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a reclosable container in accordance with the present invention.

**[0017]** FIG. 11 is a partial, cross-sectional view of exemplary fastener strips in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

**[0018]** FIG. 12 is a perspective view of an exemplary slider in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention.

**[0019]** FIG. 13 is a front elevation view of the exemplary slider of FIG. 12.

**[0020]** FIG. 14 is a rear elevation view of the exemplary slider of FIG. 12.

**[0021]** FIG. 15 is a bottom plan view of the exemplary slider of FIG. 12.

**[0022]** FIG. 16 is a partial, cross-section view of the exemplary fastener strips and the exemplary slider illustrating operation thereof in accordance with the present invention.

**[0023]** FIG. 17 is a partial, cross-section view of the exemplary fastener strips and the exemplary slider illustrating operation thereof in a partially open position.

**[0024]** FIG. 18 is a partial, cross-section view of an alternative embodiment of the reclosable fastener profiles of FIG. 1 showing male and female profiles and guide ribs disposed on the outer walls of the profiles.

**[0025]** FIG. 19 is a vertical section of an alternative embodiment of the container showing in particular a cradle proximate the first end of the fastener strip which is sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of a slider when the slider is positioned at the first end of the fastener strip.

**[0026]** The foregoing description of drawings merely explains and illustrates the invention and the invention is not limited thereto, except insofar as those who have the

disclosure before them are able to make modifications and variations therein without departing from the invention.

#### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT**

**[0027]** As shown in FIG. 1 of the drawings, a reclosable bag 10 having first and second walls 12 and 14 and an open top 16 is defined by first and second elongate flexible strips 18 and 20 attached to the first and second walls 12 and 14, respectively, adjacent the top 22 and 24 of the walls. One of the fastener strips 20 has a profile portion 26 which forms a groove 28. The other fastener strip 18 has a profile portion 30 forming a rib 32 with a portion of the rib 34 received and retained within the groove 28 when the bag 10 is closed. Each of the strips 18 and 20 has a base 38 and 48 connected to the respective walls 12 and 14 and each of the strips 18 and 20 further has an upper edge 42 and 44 adjacent the upper edge of the other strip 18 and 20, respectively.

**[0028]** As shown in FIGS. 1–7, bag 10 has a slider 46 mounted on the strips 18 and 20 and moveable in one direction 48 longitudinally of the strips 18 to 20 to progressively separate the rib 32 from the groove 28 to open the bag 10. Slider 46, being moveable in the opposite direction 50, progressively returns the rib 32 portion to retain condition in the groove 28 to close the bag.

**[0029]** As shown in FIGS. 1–7, the slider 46 further has a top 52. The slider 46 further has a separator 54 situated therein having a proximal portion 56 attached to the top 52 of the slider 46 and extending downwardly therefrom and having a distal portion 58 residing in a first space 70 between the top of the slider and the upper edges of the groove 28 when the rib portion 32 is retained in the groove 28 of the profile. The separator 54 has an arrow-shaped tip 60 constructed and arranged, i.e., positioned and sized to facilitate selective separation of the rib 32 from the groove 28.

**[0030]** In the preferred embodiment the separator has a length of  $2.3\text{ mm} \pm .3\text{ mm}$ . The separator 54 is preferably integrally formed from the slider 46 and is made of one homogeneous unit of plastic, preferably injection molded POM ocetel rock or that sold by RTP Company, Winona, Minnesota, or polypropylene with additive for lubrication.

**[0031]** In the preferred embodiment the slider is constructed of polyethylene, polycarbonate, polystyrene, acryl nitryl butyldirene styrene or other commonly formed injection molded plastic pieces.

**[0032]** As a further feature of the invention as shown in FIG. 1, the outside walls 12, 14 have a pair of flanges 62 and 64 or tracks extending outwardly therefrom and running parallel to the upper edges 22, 24 of the walls. The flanges 62 and 64 are sized for telescopic reception in slider 46, as will be further described herein.

**[0033]** As seen in FIGS. 2–6, slider 46 has a top portion 52. Extending downwardly from top portion 52, as is seen in FIG. 4, is a separator 54 having a distal portion 58. The distal portion 58 of separator 54 has an arrowhead-shaped tip 60 mounted thereon. The arrowhead has an angle of  $60^\circ \pm 10^\circ$  which is to facilitate opening of groove 28 of profile portion 26 with rib 32 profile portion 30 as contained therein.

**[0034]** In the preferred embodiment, top portion 52 of slider 46 is approximately 1.2 mm in thickness. The distal portion 58 extends approximately 2.3 mm from the inside surface 66 of top 52. Slider 46 preferably has a height of approximately 8.6 mm, a thickness at its ends of 1.15 mm, a length of 14.8 mm, and the arrowhead-shaped tip 60 of a height of approximately 1 mm.

**[0035]** In the preferred embodiment, slider 46 has a series of gripping ribs 68 which are vertically disposed along its lateral edges 71 and 72, respectively. These gripping ribs 68 in the preferred embodiment have a radius of approximately 1.25 mm.

**[0036]** In the preferred embodiment, slider 46 has an interior chamber 70 having vertical walls at the front and rear ends 73 and 74, and having curved sidewalls 76 and 78 which have a radius of 9.9 mm.

**[0037]** As best seen in FIG. 5, slider 46 has a centrally disposed gap 80. Gap 80 in the preferred embodiment is 1.15 mm in width. The left and right bottom surfaces 82 and 84 are approximately 2.5 mm in width having beveled surfaces 86 and 88. Beveled surfaces 86 and 88 are approximately 0.8 mm and are beveled at an angle of 45° relative to the left bottom surface 82 and right bottom surface 84. Gap 80 is designed to receive rib 32 and to retain rib 32 within chamber 70.

**[0038]** In addition, as seen in FIGS. 7 and 11, chamber 70 is also designed to receive exterior flanges 62 and 64 which are retained within chamber 70 so as to retain slider 46 on fastener strips 18 and 20. In the preferred embodiment, a force of at least three pounds and preferably 5 pounds is required to remove slider 46 from fastener strips 18 and 20.

**[0039]** As further seen in FIG. 7, slider 46 has a first travel and stop position 90 where the bag 10 is in the closed position and the fastener strips 18 and 20 are interlocked and a second travel and stop position 92 in which fastener strips 18 and 20 are separated from each other to allow dispensing of product from bag 10 or insertion of product therein.

**[0040]** As further seen in FIG. 7, the proximal and distal ends 100 and 102 are fastener strips 18 and 20 and are ultrasonically sealed to each other and to bag walls 12 and 14, proximate the lateral edges 106 and 108 of bag 10. The ultrasonic seal is to prevent the fastener strips 18 and 20 from opening, and to prevent the bag 10 from being torn when the fastener strips 18 and 20 are open.

**[0041]** Returning to FIG. 5, within slider 46 are inwardly facing channels 103 and 104, which are sized and positioned for slidable reception of flanges 62 and 64 and for retention of flanges 62 and 64 in slot or gap 80. On the bottom of slider 46 are a pair of inwardly facing

shoulder members 110 and 112 with gap 80 therebetween. Shoulder members 110 and 112 have beveled surfaces 86 and 88 thereon for guiding fastener strips 18 and 20 into said gap 80.

**[0042]** Similarly, as shown in FIG. 8, profile portion 26 has a groove 28. Groove 28 is formed from a pair of arms 28b and 28c of barbed members 34b and 44b extending inwardly and downwardly with a gap 28d extending therebetween sized for reception of male profile 32. Barbs 32b and 32c are sized, constructed, and arranged for interlocking with hooks 34b and 44b when male profile 32 is telescopically inserted into groove 28. Groove 28 and fastener 10 must be sufficiently flexible to allow barbs 32b and 32c, as well as fastener 32, to be inserted therein. Consequently, arms 28b and 28c are sufficiently flexible to allow such insertion, but are sufficiently stiff to retain male fastener profile 32 within groove 28 when interlocked with barbs 32b and 32c. Similarly, when it is decided to remove male fastener 32 from groove 28, arms 28b and 28c are sufficiently flexible to allow such removal. It should be noted in this regard that barb 32 is larger in size and has a greater downward angle than barb 34b so as to make it more difficult for product within bag 10 to force fastener 16 open.

**[0043]** As best seen in FIGS. 8 and 9 of the drawings, flanges 62 and 64 are formed on the exterior walls of 12 and 14 of bag 10. Bag 10, of course, is formed from the thermoplastic film, which is extruded through a die. As further seen in FIG. 9, separator 54 has a length of 2.3 mm  $\pm$  .3 mm. Slider 46 has its proximal portion 56 of separator 54 attached to the top 52 of the interior surface of the slider 46 and has a distal portion 58 residing in a first space 70 within slider 46.

**[0044]** Referring now to FIG. 10, a bag or, more generally, a reclosable container 200 similar to container 10 shown in FIG. 7 is illustrated. As shown, the bag 200 comprises walls 202, 204 sealed along the lateral edges 202b, 202c of the walls 12, 14 to form an open-ended container. Materials commonly used in the art, such as Linear Low Density Polyethylene

(LLDPE), Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE), Nylon Polypropylene (PP), or Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET), may be used to form the walls 202, 204 with edges 205 and 205a. Complementary fastener strips 206, 208 in accordance with the present invention are mounted along upper edges of the walls 202, 204. In a presently preferred embodiment, the fastener strips 206, 208 are formed integrally with, and from the same material as, the walls 202, 204 through an extrusion process. However, the present invention is not limited in this regard and other techniques known to those having skill in the art may be employed to attach the fastener strips 206, 208 to their corresponding walls 202, 204. A slider 210 in accordance with the present invention (preferably constructed of polyethylene, polycarbonate, polystyrene, acryl nitryl butyldirene styrene or other materials commonly used in the fabrication of formed injection molded plastic pieces) is disposed on the fastener strips 206, 208. As known in the art, the slider 210 may slide in a first or opening direction 212 or, oppositely, in a second or closing direction 214 along a longitudinal length of the fastener strips 206, 208 as shown. Travel of the slider 210 along the fastener strips 206, 208 is limited at a proximal end 216 by a first stop position 218 and, at a distal end 220 by a second stop position 222. In practice, the stop positions 218, 222 are formed by fusing the fastener strips 206, 208 together using known techniques, such as ultrasonic sealing.

**[0045]** Referring now to FIG. 11, a partial, cross-sectional view of another exemplary embodiment where fastener strips 206, 208 are illustrated. The strips can be used with bag 200 of FIG. 10. Generally, the cross-sectional profiles of the various components illustrated in FIG. 12 run the entire longitudinal length of the fastener strips 206, 208. As shown, each fastener strip 206, 208 comprises a base 230, 232 and a sealing member 234, 236 formed thereon, preferably in a continuous, integral fashion. In a presently preferred embodiment, each fastener strip 206, 208 is mounted on upper edge of a corresponding wall 302, 304 of the bag 200. The sealing members 234, 236 each comprise a plurality of complementary

sealing portions 238, 240 that, when coupled together in an engaged condition (see FIG. 12), provide a substantially leak-proof seal for the bag 200. The sealing portions 238, 240 preferably have profiles that cause the sealing members 234, 236 to interlock when fully engaged with each other. As known in the art, the interdigitation of the complementary sealing portions 238, 240 when the sealing members 206, 208 are fully engaged provides multiple sealing points that substantially run along the entire longitudinal length of the fastener strips. Although particular profiles are shown for the complementary sealing portions 238, 240 for the purposes of illustration, the present invention is not limited to the profiles shown.

**[0046]** As further shown in FIG. 11, profile 224 has two fastener strip 206, 208 that preferably comprise upward extending guide rails 226, 228. In a presently preferred embodiment, the guide rails 226, 228 serve to retain a slider on the fastener strips 206, 208. To this end, each guide rail 226, 228 preferably comprises a protrusion 230, 232. In the example illustrated in FIG. 11, each protrusion 230, 232 comprises an outward-facing flange, although other configurations, such as an inward-facing flange, a combination of inward- and outward-facing flanges or a substantially circular profile could be equally employed. Furthermore, the present invention is not limited to a particular implementation of the guide rails 226, 228, and more conventional guide rail configurations (for example, along the opposite, outward-facing sides of the bases 230, 232) may be equally employed.

**[0047]** In a further aspect of the present invention, one of the plurality of sealing portions 238 of a first sealing member 234 additionally comprises one or more finger members 242. Although the finger members 242 are illustrated as forming part of only one of the sealing portions 238 and of only the first sealing member 234, it is understood that additional finger members may be equally incorporated into other ones of the sealing portions 238 of the first sealing member 234, or additionally into one or more of the sealing portions 240 of the

second sealing member 236. In a presently preferred embodiment, the one or more finger members 242 are incorporated into a lower-most sealing portion of the plurality of sealing portions 238. Furthermore, each finger member 242 preferably extends laterally and/or partially upwardly relative to the sealing portion in which it is formed. Further still, where more than one finger member 242 is employed, each finger member 242 preferably extends at a different angle relative to the others. As described in greater detail below, particularly with reference to FIG. 17, the finger members 242 provide a sealing engagement with a complementary portion of the sealing member 236 of the second fastener strip 208 when the fastener strips 206, 208 are maintained in a partially engaged condition, i.e., at the point along the longitudinal length of the fastener strips 206, 208 where a separation 312 of the slider 300 causes the disengagement of the fastener strips 206, 208.

**[0048]** Referring now to FIGS. 12–17, an exemplary slider 300 in accordance with the present invention is further illustrated. Generally, the slider 300 comprises an elongated body 302 having a top wall 304 and sidewalls 306, 308 extending downwardly from the top wall 304. Although the sidewalls 306, 308 may extend substantially perpendicular to the top wall 304, they may also be angled relative to the top wall 304 and, in one embodiment of the present invention (as best illustrated in FIGS. 12–17), they are preferably tilted inward approximately 2 degrees from perpendicular relative to the top wall 304. At a proximal end 301 of the slider 300, a front wall 310 is provided and, likewise, a back wall 305 is provided at a distal end 303. The front and back walls 310, 305 are preferably (but not necessarily) substantially perpendicular to the top and sidewalls 304, 306, 308. Collectively, the top wall 304 and sidewalls 306, 308 form an opening 314 (FIG. 12) running along the entire length of the elongated body 302, thereby allowing passage of the fastener strips 206, 208 through the slider 300 as the slider traverses along the longitudinal length of the fastener strips 206, 208.

**[0049]** As further illustrated in FIGS. 12–17, the slider 300 further comprises substantially opposing, inward-facing flanges or rails 418, 420. The inward-facing flanges 418, 420 extend substantially perpendicularly relative to the sidewalls 306, 308, although this is not a requirement and other angles may be equally employed. Furthermore, the distal ends of the flanges 418, 420 define a gap 422 having dimensions such that the sealing members of the opposing fastener strips 206, 208, and particularly the sealing portion 238 having the at least one finger member 242 and its complementary sealing portion 240, are urged together to provide an additional degree of sealing, yet not completely interlocking, engagement, as best illustrated in FIG. 17. Note that where, as in the above-described preferred embodiment, the sidewalls 306, 308 are angled inwardly, the flanges 418, 420 may likewise be angled upwardly (relative to parallel with the top wall 304). In a presently preferred embodiment, the gap 422 is configured to be smaller than a combined width of the fastener strips 206, 208 when they are in a partially engaged condition. In another aspect of a presently preferred embodiment, the inward-facing flanges 418, 420 are preferably formed within the front wall 310. In a similar vein, an additional pair of inward-facing flanges 514, 516, defining therebetween another gap 512, are likewise disposed within the back wall 501. The additional inward-facing flanges 514, 516 are preferably affected by any angle of the sidewalls 306, 308 in a substantially identical manner as the first-mentioned inward-facing flanges 418, 420. Those having ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the inward-facing flanges could run along the entire length of the elongated body 302 rather than being disposed solely within the end walls 310, 301 of the slider 300, although this is not presently preferred.

**[0050]** In order to retain the slider 300 on the fastener strips 306, 308, downward-facing channels 502, 504 are formed in the front wall 310. In a presently preferred embodiment, each downward-facing channel 502, 504 is defined by side portions 306, 308 of separator 312 and by upper surfaces of grip rails 510, 512. In the same manner, the resulting of profiles

410, 412 of the downward facing channels 502, 504 substantially match the profiles of the corresponding guide rails 512, 510. The separator 312 comprises dimensions and is configured to induce separation of the sealing members 237, 239 of the corresponding fasteners strips 206, 208 without actually extending between sealing members 234, 236. As the slider 300 traverses the engaged fastener strips 206, 208, the separator block 312 causes the fastener strips 206, 208 to disengage, thereby opening the bag 200.

**[0051]** Referring to FIG. 14, the back wall 501 has formed therein additional downward-facing channels 502, 504 having profiles 506, 508 that substantially match the profiles of the guide rails 512, 514. Once again, additional grip rails 810, 812 are provided to engage the protrusions 520, 522 of the guide rails 510, 512 thereby retaining the slider 300 on the fastener strips 206, 208. In contrast to the front wall 310, the back wall 501 comprises closing gates 511, 513 configured such that the space provided between the closing gates 511, 513 forces together the sealing portions 234 of the first fastener strip 206 and the complementary sealing portions 236 of the second fastener strip 208 (see FIG. 16), thereby establishing an interlocking, engaged condition between the fastener strips 206, 208 and providing a substantially leak-proof seal.

**[0052]** Referring now to FIGS. 16 and 17, operation of the slider 300 in conjunction with the fastener strips 206, 208 is further illustrated. In particular, as the slider 300 is moved in the closing direction 214, the closing gates 511, 513 cause the complementary sealing portions of the sealing members 234, 236 to engage in an interlocking fashion as shown. Once again, note that the inward facing flanges 514, 516 provide substantially no aid in retaining the slider 300 on the fastener strips 206, 208. In contrast, and as illustrated in FIG. 10, as the slider 300 travels along the fastener strips 206, 208 in the opening direction 102, the separator 312 causes the plurality of complementary sealing portions 238, 240 of the sealing members 234, 236 to disengage, thereby opening the bag. Note that, at the position of

the slider 300 along the fastener strips 206, 208, particularly the position of the separator 312, the sealing members 234, 236 are maintained in a partially engaged condition that, in prior art devices, would cause leaks at that location. In accordance with the present invention, however, the configuration of the inward-facing flanges 418, 420 and the resulting gap 422 defined therebetween, causes the one or more finger members 242 to engage a corresponding portion of the opposing sealing member, thereby providing additional leak resistance at the point of the slider 300 along the fastener strips 206, 208.

**[0053]** As seen in FIGS. 18–19, the fastener strip and reclosable bag 600 are disclosed having first and second walls 602 and 604 and an open top 606 defined by first and second elongate flexible fastener strips 608 and 610 attached to the first and second walls 602 and 604, respectively. Adjacent the top of the walls one of the fastener strips 608 has a groove 612 formed therein and the other fastener strip 610 has a rib 614, substantially similar to the rib previously shown in FIGS. 1–5. A portion of the rib 614 is received and retained within the groove 612 when the bag top 606 is closed. Each of the fastener strips 608 and 610 has a base 616 and 618, respectively, shown in FIG. 18 and similarly in FIG. 13. Each of the fastener strips 608 and 610 has an upper edge 620 and 622, respectively, with a slider shown in FIG. 3. The slider 300b is moveable in a first longitudinal direction 624 to progressively separate the rib 614 from the groove 608 to open the bag. The slider 300b is moveable in the opposite direction 626 to progressively return the rib 614 to a retained condition in the groove 612 to close the bag 600. As further seen in FIG. 19, a cradle 628 is provided proximate one end 630 of the fastener strip. The cradle 628 is sized, constructed and arranged to receive the base 632 of the slider 600 therein while the fastener strip 608 is sealingly engaged with the corresponding sealing portion 634 of the complementary sealing member, i.e., the rib 608. The cradle 628 preferably has a length greater than the length of the slider so as to retain the slider 600 within the cradle 628. In the embodiment shown, the cradle 628 has a tab 636

extending at an angle of approximately 45° therefrom for abutment against and retention of the slider 600 within the cradle 628.

**[0054]** In a preferred embodiment the cradle is substantially C-shaped so as to retain the slider therein. By C-shaped it is meant that it has a recessed interior and at least one tab extending therefrom at an angle of 15–30° so as to abut against the slider and retain the slider within the cradle. On the opposite side from the tab 636 is a curved lip 638 for abutting against the slider 600 therein. As further seen in FIG. 21, the end portion of the fastener strips has a spot seal section 640 in which the fastener strips are ultrasonically or heat-sealed together so that the ends of the bag and the ends of the fastener strips will not leak.

**[0055]** As further seen in FIG. 19 of the drawings, in a preferred embodiment cradle 628 has a length of 9.78 mm and a depth of 3.35 mm. The base of the cradle is approximately 2.03 mm. All of these dimensions are, of course, subject to variation in manufacture of up to .25 mm.

**[0056]** In the embodiment shown, the cradle tip has a radius of 0.07 so as to allow easier passage of the slider 300b thereover.

**[0057]** While the invention has been described with respect to certain preferred embodiments, it will be understood by those of skill in the art that there are modifications, substitutions and other changes that can be made, yet will still fall within the intended scope of the invention.

**CLAIMS**

We claim:

1. In a reclosable bag having first and second walls and an open top defined by first and second elongate flexible fastener strips attached to the first and second walls, respectively, adjacent the top of the walls, one of the fastener strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other fastener strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion of the rib received and retained in the groove when the bag top is closed, each of the fastener strips having a base connected to the respective wall, and each of the strips having an upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip, and the bag having a slider mounted on the fastener strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the fastener strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to open the bag, and the slider being movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to a retained condition in the groove to close the bag, the improvement comprising:

a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said cradle being sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member.

2. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said cradle has a length greater than the length of said slider so as to retain slider within said cradle.

3. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said cradle has a tab extending therefrom at an angle of approximately 45° for abutment against and retention of said slider in said cradle.

4. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said slider further comprises:  
a separator situated on the slider and having a proximal portion attached to the top of the slider and extending downwardly therefrom and having a distal portion residing in a first space between the top of the slider and the upper edges of the fastener strip when the rib portion is retained in the groove of the groove-forming profile;  
said separator having an arrow-shaped tip having an angle of  $60^\circ \pm 30^\circ$  constructed and arranged to facilitate selective separation of said rib from said groove;  
said rib remaining retained within said groove when said slider is within said cradle so as to provide a seal of said fastener strip.

5. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein:

the separator has a length of  $2.3 \text{ mm} \pm .3 \text{ mm}$ .

6. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein:

the separator is integral with the slider and is made of one integral homogenous unit of plastic.

7. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein:

each of the outside walls has a flange turned outwardly from the wall and running parallel to the said upper edges 22 and 24 thereof, said flange being constructed and arranged to retain said slider thereon.

8. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein:

the slider has first and second travel-end stop positions on the strips, the first stop position being the bag-closed stop position, and the second being the bag-opened stop position.

9. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said cradle is substantially C-shaped in its internal configuration so as to retain said slider therein.

10. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said cradle comprises a recessed portion therein and at least one tab extending therefrom for selective retention of said slider within said cradle.

11. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said tab extends at an angle of 15–30° from said cradle so as to abut against said slider and retain said slider within said cradle.

12. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said cradle comprises a tab and said tab abuts against said separator when said slider is within said cradle.

13. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said cradle is curved on at least one end so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

14. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said cradle is curved on both ends so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

15. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein the proximal and distal ends of each of said fastener strips are ultrasonically sealed to each other and to said bag walls proximate the lateral edge of said bag.

16. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said slider has a pair of inwardly facing channels so as to form a slot for slidable reception of said flanges and for retention of said flanges within said slot.

17. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said channel includes oppositely disposed inwardly facing shoulder members having a gap therebetween, said shoulder members being disposed on the bottom of said slides.

18. The reclosable bag of claim 1, wherein said shoulder members each have a beveled surface positioned to guide said fastener into said gap.

19. A bag closure assembly comprising:  
first and second elongate flexible strips securable to marginal portions of a bag opening, one of the strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion received and retained in the groove to hold the strips together, each of the strips having an upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip;

a slider mounted on the strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to separate the strips, and the slider being movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to retained condition in the groove to join the strips;

a separator situated in the slider and having a proximal portion attached to the slider and having a distal portion residing in the groove; and

a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said cradle being sized, constructed and arranged to retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member, thereby retaining said rib and said groove in a sealed interlocked position.

20. The reclosable bag of claim 19, wherein said cradle comprises a recessed portion therein and at least one tab extending therefrom for selective retention of said slider within said cradle.

21. The reclosable bag of claim 19, wherein:  
the slider is integral with the separator and is made of one integral homogenous unit of plastic.

22. The reclosable bag of claim 19, wherein:

each of the strips has an upper outside wall parallel to the upper outside wall of the other strip, and a pair of flanges turned outwardly from the wall disposed parallel to said upper outside wall, said flanges being sized, constructed and arranged for retention within the slider.

23. The reclosable bag of claim 19, wherein:

the separator has a point at its distal end for entering between the touching edges of the strips and pivoting downward to separate the rib from the groove when the slider is moved in the one direction, thereby wedging the strips apart.

24. The reclosable bag of claim 19, wherein:

the point is formed by sides of the separator;  
the slider has interior walls that converge to squeeze the strips together when the slider is moved in said opposite direction; and  
the point and the walls converge in the said one direction.

25. In a reclosable bag having first and second walls and an open top defined by first and second elongate flexible fastener strips attached to the first and second walls, respectively, adjacent the top of the walls, one of the fastener strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other fastener strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion of the rib received and retained in the groove when the bag top is closed, each of the fastener strips having a base connected to the respective wall, and each of the strips having an upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip, and the bag having a slider mounted on the fastener strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the fastener strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to open the bag, and the slider being movable

in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to a retained condition in the groove to close the bag, the improvement comprising:

each of the outside walls has a flange extending outwardly from the wall and running parallel to the said upper edges thereof, said flange being constructed and arranged to retain said slider thereon; and

a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said platform being sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member.

26. The reclosable bag of claim 25, wherein:

the slider has first and second travel-end stop positions on the strips, the first stop position being the bag-closed stop position, and the second being the bag-opened stop position.

27. The reclosable bag of claim 25, wherein:

said flanges are substantially rectangular in shape.

28. The reclosable bag of claim 25, wherein:

each of said walls of said bag has a single one of said flanges extending from said wall.

29. A bag closure assembly comprising:

first and second elongate flexible strips securable to marginal portions of a bag opening, one of the strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion received and retained in the groove to hold the strips together, each of the strips having an upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip;

a slider mounted on the strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to separate the strips, and the slider being movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to retained condition in the groove to join the strips;

each of the strips has an upper outside wall parallel to the upper outside wall of the other strip, and a pair of flanges turned outwardly from the wall disposed parallel to said upper outside wall, said flanges being sized, constructed and arranged for retention within the slider;

a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said cradle being sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member.

30. The reclosable bag of claim 29, wherein the proximal and distal ends of each of said fastener strips are ultrasonically sealed to each other and to said bag walls proximate the lateral edge of said bag.

31. The reclosable bag of claim 29, wherein said slider has a pair of inwardly facing channels so as to form a slot for slidable reception of said flanges and for retention of said flanges within said slot.

32. The reclosable bag of claim 29, wherein said channels have oppositely disposed inwardly facing shoulder members having a gap therebetween, said shoulder members being disposed on the bottom of said channels.

33. The reclosable bag of claim 29, wherein said shoulder members each have a beveled surface positioned to guide said fastener into said gap.

34. The reclosable bag of claim 29, wherein said flanges are substantially rectangular in shape.

35. The reclosable bag of claim 29, wherein each of said walls of said bag has a single one of said flanges extending from said wall.

36. The bag closure assembly of claim 29, wherein said cradle comprises a recessed portion therein and at least one tab extending therefrom for selective retention of said slider within said cradle.

37. The bag closure assembly of claim 29, wherein said tab extends at an angle of 15–30° from said cradle so as to abut against said slider and retain said slider within said cradle.

38. The bag closure assembly of claim 29, wherein said cradle comprises a tab and said tab abuts against said separator when said slider is within said cradle.

39. The bag closure assembly of claim 29, wherein said cradle is curved on at least one end so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

40. The bag closure assembly of claim 29, wherein said cradle is curved on both ends so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

41. The bag closure assembly of claim 29, wherein said cradle is slightly larger than the slides so as to allow variations in the size of the slider provided while still retaining said slider within said cradle.

42. An elongate flexible fastener strip for use with a reclosable bag, the fastener strip comprising:

a base;

a sealing member, attached to the base, including a plurality of sealing portions configured to engage complementary sealing portions forming part of a complementary sealing member of a complementary fastener strip; and

at least one finger member extending from a first sealing portion of the plurality of sealing portions, the at least one finger member configured to sealingly engage a first complementary portion of the complementary sealing member;

a slider for selectively engaging and disengaging said sealing portion; and

a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said platform being sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member.

43. The elongate fastener strip of claim 42, wherein said cradle comprises a recessed portion therein and at least one tab extending therefrom for selective retention of said slider within said cradle.

44. The elongate fastener strip of claim 42, wherein said tab extends at an angle of 15–30° from said cradle so as to abut against said slider and retain said slider within said cradle.

45. The elongate fastener strip of claim 42, wherein said cradle comprises a tab and said tab abuts against said separator when said slider is within said cradle.

46. The elongate fastener strip of claim 42, wherein said cradle is curved on at least one end so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

47. The fastener strip of claim 42, wherein said cradle has a length greater than the length of said slider so as to retain slider within said cradle.

48. The fastener strip of claim 42, wherein said cradle has a tab extending therefrom at an angle of approximately 45° for abutment against retention of said slider in said cradle.

49. The fastener strip of claim 42, wherein said plurality of sealing portions comprises at least one post.

50. The fastener strip of claim 42, wherein the first portion of the sealing member is a lowermost portion of the sealing member.

51. The fastener strip of claim 42, wherein the at least one finger member extends laterally and partially upwardly from the first portion of the sealing member.

52. The fastener strip of claim 42, wherein each finger member of said plurality of finger members extends from the first portion at a different angle relative to other finger members of said plurality of finger members.

53. The fastener strip of claim 42, wherein the at least one finger member sealingly engages the first complementary portion in a region of the fastener strip where a slider, when retained on the fastener strip, resides.

54. The fastener strip of claim 42, further comprising:  
an elongate guide rail disposed on an upper edge of the fastener strip, the guide rail including at least one protrusion configured to retain a slider on the fastener strip.

55. A reclosable bag comprising:  
first and second flexible walls; and  
complementary fastener strips attached to and adjacent an opening formed by the first and second walls, respectively, each of the complementary fastener strips comprising a base

and a sealing member attached to the base, each sealing member comprising a plurality of sealing portions configured to engage complementary sealing portions forming part of the sealing member of the complementary fastener strip; and

for a first fastener strip of the complementary fastener strips, at least one finger member extending from a first sealing portion of the plurality of sealing portions, the at least one finger member configured to sealingly engage a first complementary portion of the sealing member of the complementary fastener strip;

a slider having:

an elongate body having a top wall and sidewalls extending downward from, and substantially perpendicular to, the top wall;

inwardly facing flanges at lower ends of the sidewalls, the inwardly facing flanges defining a gap therebetween configured to urge the first portion of the first sealing member and the first complementary portion of the sealing member of the complementary fastener strip together such that the at least one finger sealingly engages the first complementary portion; and

at least one of said fastener strips further having a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said platform being sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member.

56. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the plurality of sealing portions comprises at least one post.

57. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the first portion of the sealing member is a lowermost portion of the sealing member.

58. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the at least one finger member extends laterally and partially upwardly from the first portion of the sealing member.

59. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein each finger member of a plurality of finger members extends from the first portion at a different angle relative to other finger members of the plurality of finger members.

60. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the at least one finger member sealingly engages the first complementary portion in a region of the fastener strip where a slider, when retained on the fastener strip, resides.

61. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the inwardly facing flanges are substantially perpendicular to the sidewalls.

62. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the sidewalls are configured to extend downwardly past the fastener strips.

63. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the gap defined by the inwardly facing flanges is smaller than a combined width of the complementary fastener strips when they are in a partially engaged condition, thereby urging the at least one finger member to sealingly engage the first complementary portion.

64. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the plurality of sealing portions comprises at least one post.

65. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the first portion of the sealing member is a lowermost portion of the sealing member.

66. The reclosable bag of claim 55, wherein the means for sealingly engaging the first complementary portion in a region of the fastener strip comprises a slider retained on the fastener strip; and

a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said cradle being sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member.

67. The fastener of claim 55, wherein said tab extends at an angle of 15–30° from said cradle so as to abut against said slider and retain said slider within said cradle.

68. The bag of claim 55, wherein said cradle comprises a tab and said tab abuts against said separator when said slider is within said cradle.

69. The bag of claim 55, wherein said cradle is curved on at least one end so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

70. The bag of claim 55, wherein said cradle is curved on both ends so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

71. The elongate fastener strip of claim 55, wherein said cradle is curved on both ends so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

72. In a reclosable bag having first and second walls and an open top defined by first and second elongate flexible fastener strips attached to the first and second walls, respectively, adjacent the top of the walls, one of the fastener strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other fastener strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion of the rib received and retained in the groove when the bag top is closed, each of the fastener strips having a base connected to the respective wall, and each of the strips having an

upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip, and the bag having a slider mounted on the fastener strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the fastener strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to open the bag, and the slider being movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to a retained condition in the groove to close the bag, the improvement comprising:

a separator situated in the slider and having a proximal portion attached to the top of the slider and extending downwardly therefrom and having a distal portion residing in a first space between the top of the slider and the upper edges of the fastener strip when the rib portion is retained in the groove of the groove-forming profile;

said separator having an arrow shaped tip having an angle of  $60^\circ \pm 30^\circ$  constructed and arranged to facilitate selective separation of said rib from said groove.

73. The reclosable bag of claim 72, wherein:

the separator has a length of  $2.3 \text{ mm} \pm .3 \text{ mm}$

74. The reclosable bag of claim 72, wherein:

the separator is integral with the slider and is made of one integral homogenous unit of plastic.

75. The reclosable bag of claim 72, wherein:

each of the outside walls has a flange turned outwardly from the wall and running parallel to the said upper edge 22 and 24 thereof, said flange being constructed and arranged to retain said slider thereon.

76. The reclosable bag of claim 72, wherein:

the slider has first and second travel-end stop positions on the strips, the first stop position being the bag-closed stop position, and the second being the bag-opened stop position.

77. A bag closure assembly comprising:

first and second elongate flexible strips securable to marginal portions of a bag opening, one of the strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion received and retained in the groove to hold the strips together, each of the strips having an upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip;

a slider mounted on the strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to separate the strips, and the slider being movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to retained condition in the groove to join the strips;

a separator situated in the slider and having a proximal portion attached to the slider and having a distal portion residing in the groove;

78. The reclosable bag of claim 77, wherein:

the slider is integral with the separator and is made of one integral homogenous unit of plastic.

79. The reclosable bag of claim 77, wherein:

each of the strips has an upper outside wall parallel to the upper outside wall of the other strip, and a pair of flanges turned outwardly from the wall disposed parallel to said upper outside wall, said flanges being sized, constructed and arranged for retention within the slider.

80. The reclosable bag of claim 77 and wherein:

the separator has a point at its distal end for entering between the touching edges of the strips and pivoting downward to separate the rib from the groove when the slider is moved in the one direction, thereby wedging the strips apart.

81. The reclosable bag of claim 77, wherein:

the point is formed by sides of the separator;

the slider has interior walls that converge to squeeze the strips together when the slider is moved in said opposite direction; and

the point and the walls converge in the said one direction.

82. The reclosable bag of claim 77, wherein the proximal and distal ends of each of said fastener strips are ultrasonically sealed to each other and to said bag walls proximate the lateral edge of said bag.

83. The reclosable bag assembly of claim 77, wherein said slider has a pair of inwardly facing channels so as to form a slot for slidable reception of said flanges and for retention of said flanges within said slot.

84. The reclosable bag of claim 77, wherein said channel includes oppositely disposed inwardly facing shoulder members having a gap therebetween, said shoulder members being disposed on the bottom of said slides.

85. The reclosable bag of claim 77, wherein said shoulder members each have a beveled surface positioned to guide said fastener into said gap.

86. In a reclosable bag having first and second walls and an open top defined by first and second elongate flexible fastener strips attached to the first and second walls, respectively, adjacent the top of the walls, one of the fastener strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other fastener strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion of the rib received and retained in the groove when the bag top is closed, each of the fastener strips having a base connected to the respective wall, and each of the strips having an upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip, and the bag having a slider mounted on

the fastener strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the fastener strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to open the bag, and the slider being movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to a retained condition in the groove to close the bag, the improvement comprising:

each of the outside walls has a flange extending outwardly from the wall and running parallel to the said upper edges thereof, said flange being constructed and arranged to retain said slider thereon.

87. The reclosable bag of claim 86, and wherein:

the slider has first and second travel-end stop positions on the strips, the first stop position being the bag-closed stop position, and the second being the bag-opened stop position.

88. The reclosable bag of claim 86, and wherein:

said flanges are substantially rectangular in shape.

89. The reclosable bag of claim 86, and wherein:

each of said walls of said bag has a single one of said flanges extending from said wall.

90. A bag closure assembly comprising:

first and second elongate flexible strips securable to marginal portions of a bag opening, one of the strips having a profile portion forming a groove and the other strip having a profile portion forming a rib with a portion received and retained in the groove to hold the strips together, each of the strips having an upper edge adjacent the upper edge of the other strip;

a slider mounted on the strips and movable in one direction longitudinally of the strips to progressively separate the rib from the groove to separate the strips, and the slider being

movable in the opposite direction to progressively return the rib portion to retained condition in the groove to join the strips;

each of the strips has an upper outside wall parallel to the upper outside wall of the other strip, and a pair of flanges turned outwardly from the wall disposed parallel to said upper outside wall, said flanges being sized, constructed and arranged for retention within the slider.

91. The reclosable bag of claim 90, wherein the proximal and distal ends of each of said fastener strips are ultrasonically sealed to each other and to said bag walls proximate the lateral edge of said bag.

92. The reclosable bag of claim 90, wherein said slider has a pair of inwardly facing channels so as to form a slot for slidable reception of said flanges and for retention of said flanges within said slot.

93. The reclosable bag of claim 90, wherein said channel oppositely disposed inwardly facing shoulder members having a gap therebetween, said shoulder members being disposed on the bottom of said channels.

94. The reclosable bag of claim 90, wherein said shoulder members each have a beveled surface positioned to guide said fastener into said gap.

95. The reclosable bag of claim 90, wherein said flanges are substantially rectangular in shape.

96. The reclosable bag of claim 90, wherein each of said walls of said bag has a single one of said flanges extending from said wall.

97. An elongate flexible fastener strip for use with a reclosable bag, the fastener strip comprising:

a base;

a sealing member, attached to the base, including a plurality of sealing portions configured to engage complementary sealing portions forming part of a complementary sealing member of a complementary fastener strip; and

at least one finger member extending from a first sealing portion of the plurality of sealing portions, the at least one finger member configured to sealingly engage a first complementary portion of the complementary sealing member;

a slider for selectively engaging and disengaging said sealing portion;

a cradle proximate one end of said fastener strip said platform being sized, constructed and arranged to receive and retain the base of said slider therein while said fastener strip is sealingly engaged with said corresponding sealing portion of said complementary sealing member; and

a spot seal on said fastener strip opposite said cradle for preventing the bag and fastener strip from leaking.

98. The elongate fastener strip of claim 97, wherein said cradle comprises a recessed portion therein and at least one tab extending therefrom for selective retention of said slider within said cradle.

99. The elongate fastener strip of claim 97, wherein said tab extends at an angle of 15–30° from said cradle so as to abut against said slider and retain said slider within said cradle.

100. The elongate fastener strip of claim 97, wherein said cradle comprises a tab and said tab abuts against said separator when said slider is within said cradle.

101. The elongate fastener strip of claim 97, wherein said cradle is curved on at least one end so as to retain said slider within said cradle.

102. The fastener strip of claim 97, wherein said cradle has a length greater than the length of said slider so as to retain slider within said cradle.

103. The fastener strip of claim 97, wherein said cradle has a tab extending therefrom at an angle of approximately 45° for abutment against retention of said slider in said cradle.

104. The fastener strip of claim 97, wherein said plurality of sealing portions comprises at least one post.

105. The fastener strip of claim 97, wherein the first portion of the sealing member is a lowermost portion of the sealing member.

106. The fastener strip of claim 97, wherein the at least one finger member extends laterally and partially upwardly from the first portion of the sealing member.

107. The fastener strip of claim 97, wherein each finger member of said plurality of finger members extends from the first portion at a different angle relative to other finger members of said plurality of finger members.

108. The fastener strip of claim 97, wherein the at least one finger member sealingly engages the first complementary portion in a region of the fastener strip where a slider, when retained on the fastener strip, resides.

109. The fastener strip of claim 97, further comprising:  
an elongate guide rail disposed on an upper edge of the fastener strip, the guide rail including at least one protrusion configured to retain a slider on the fastener strip.

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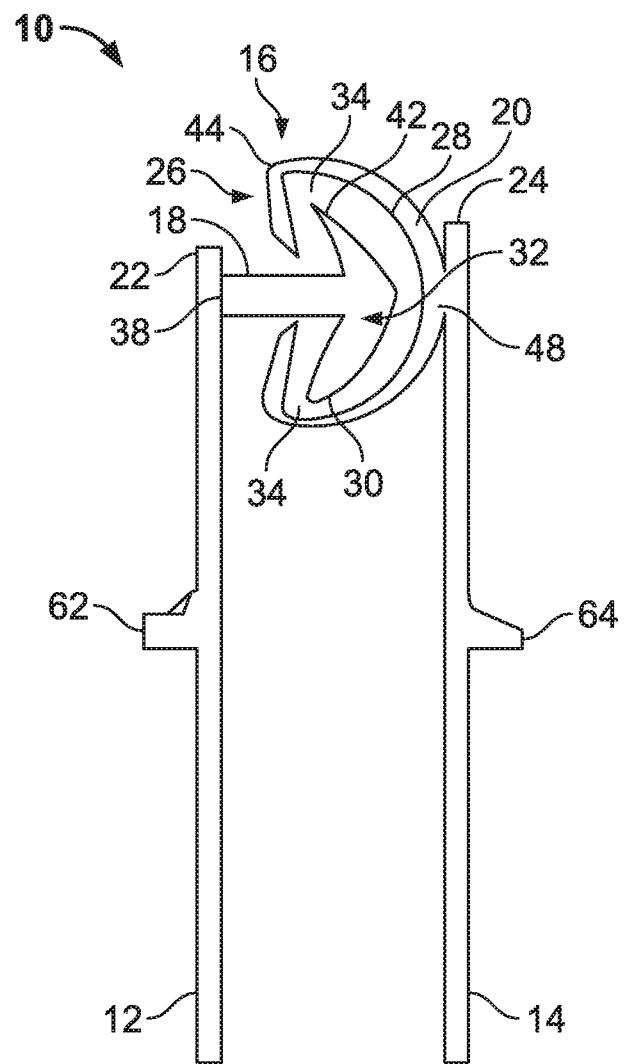


FIG. 1

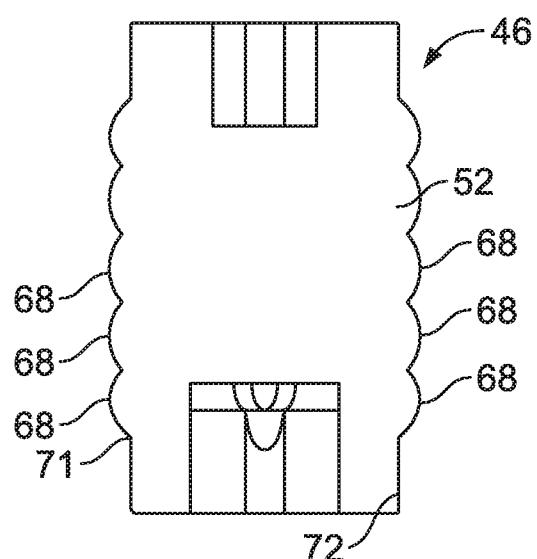


FIG. 2

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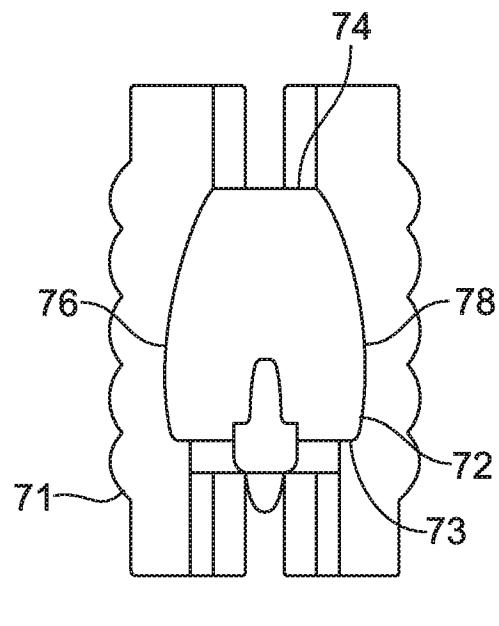


FIG. 3

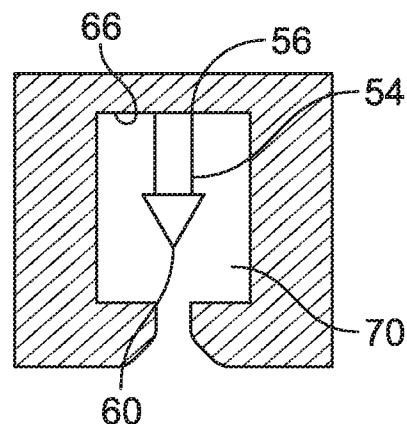


FIG. 4

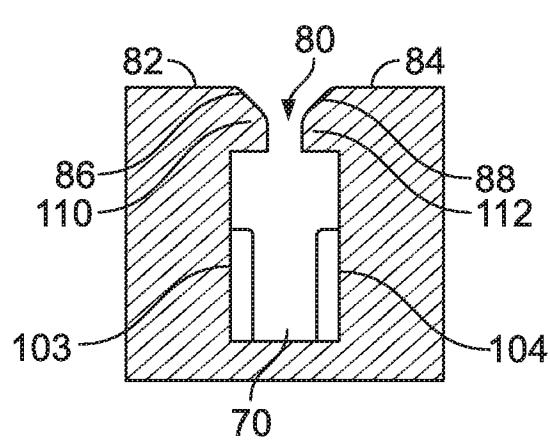


FIG. 5

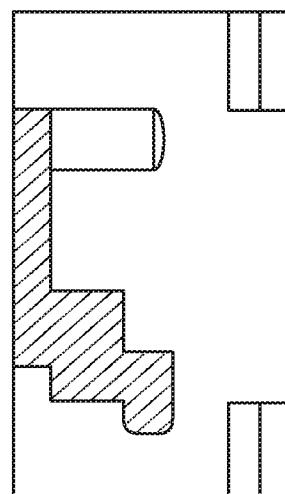


FIG. 6

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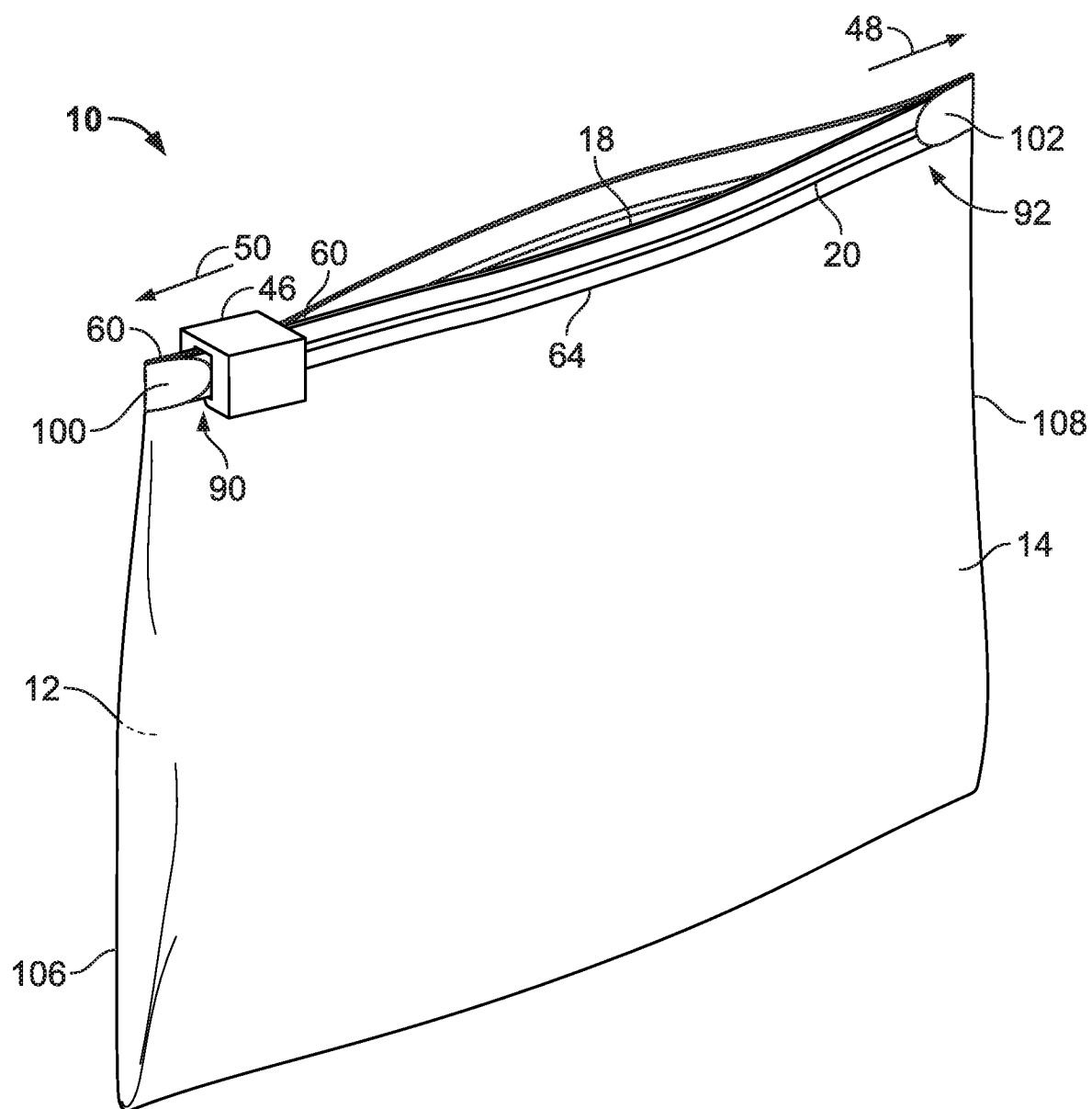


FIG. 7

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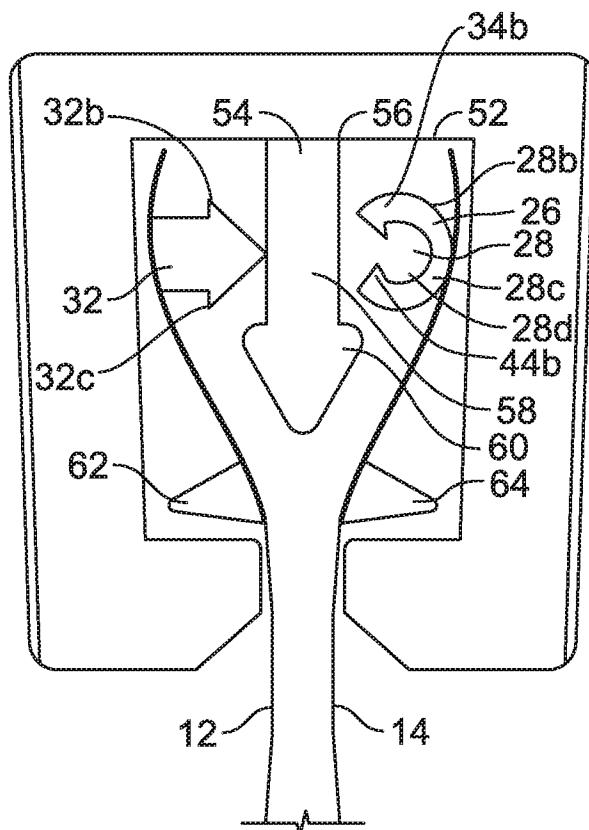


FIG. 8

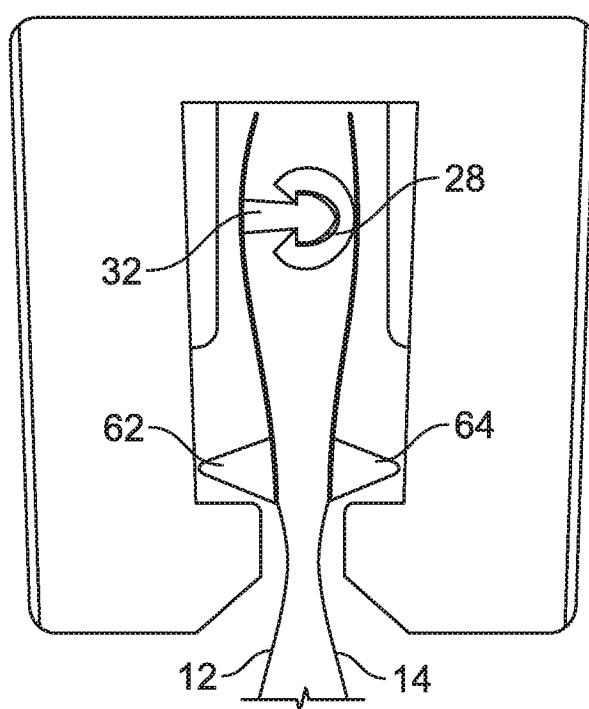


FIG. 9

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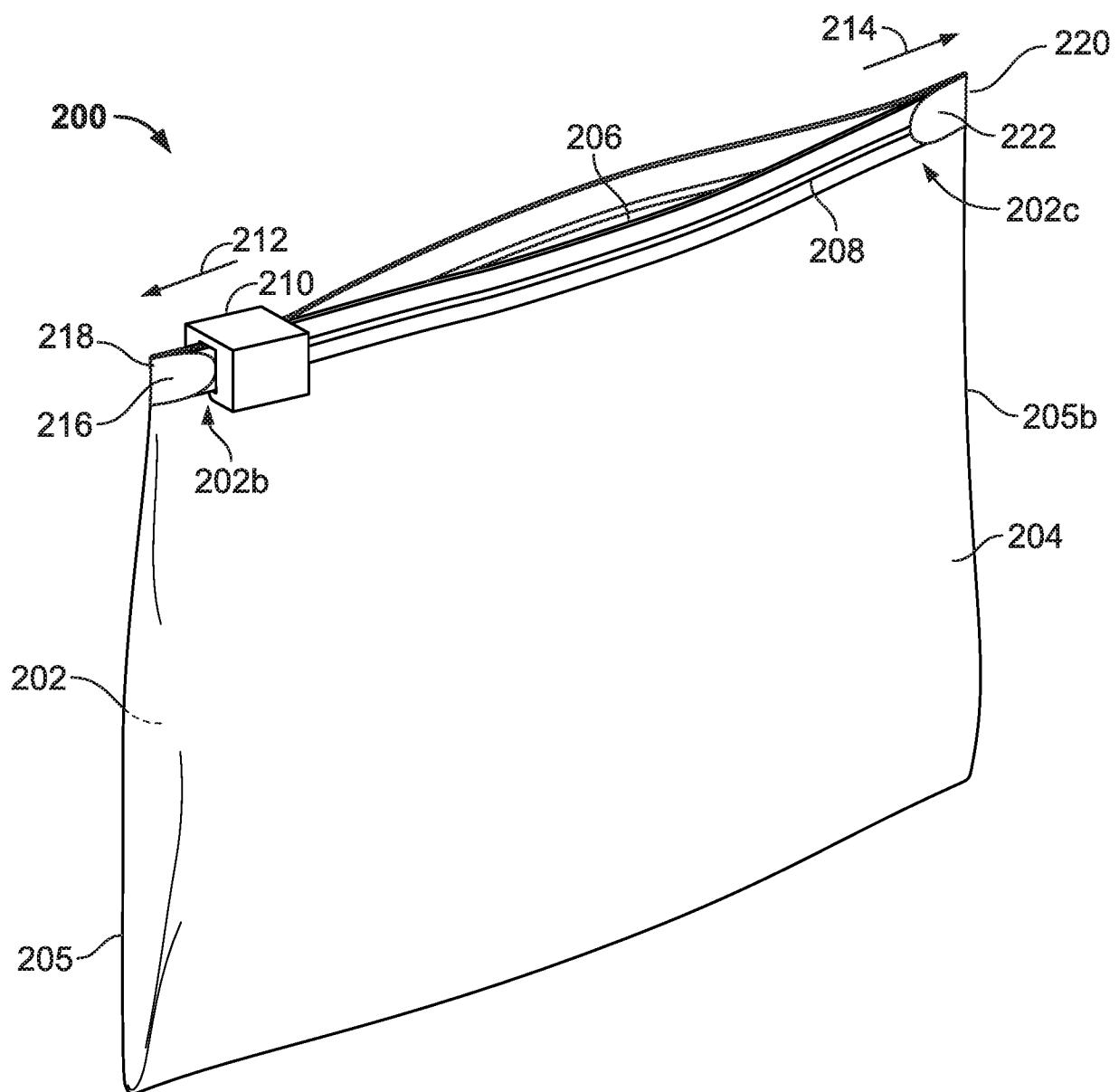


FIG. 10

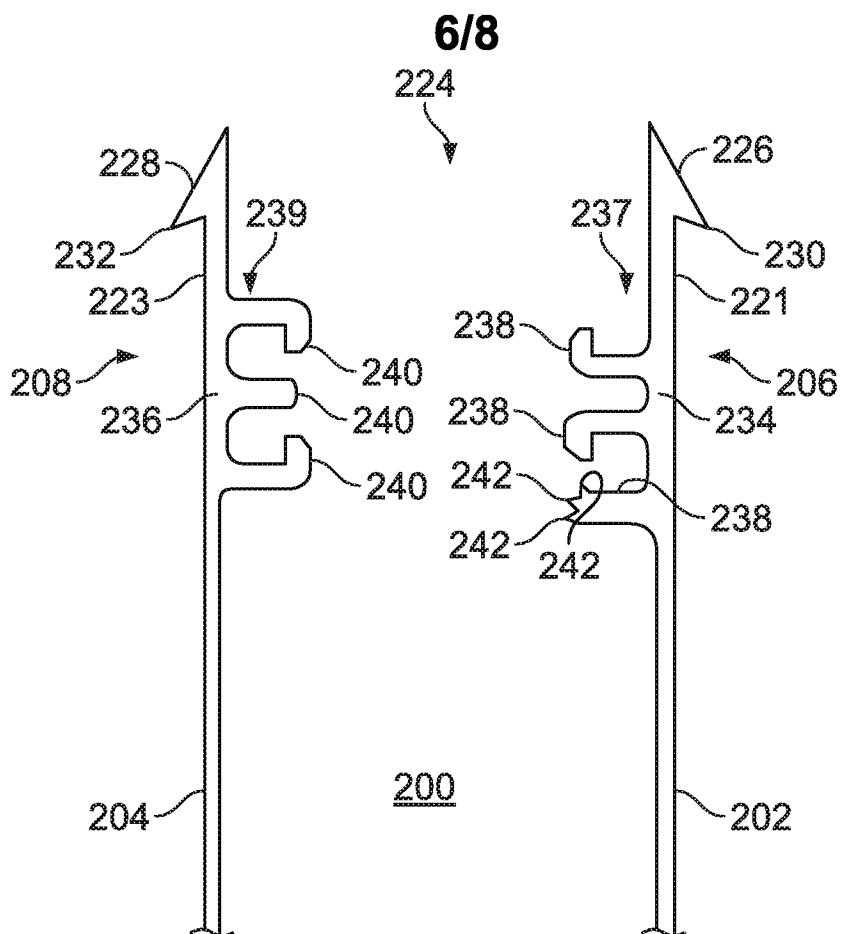
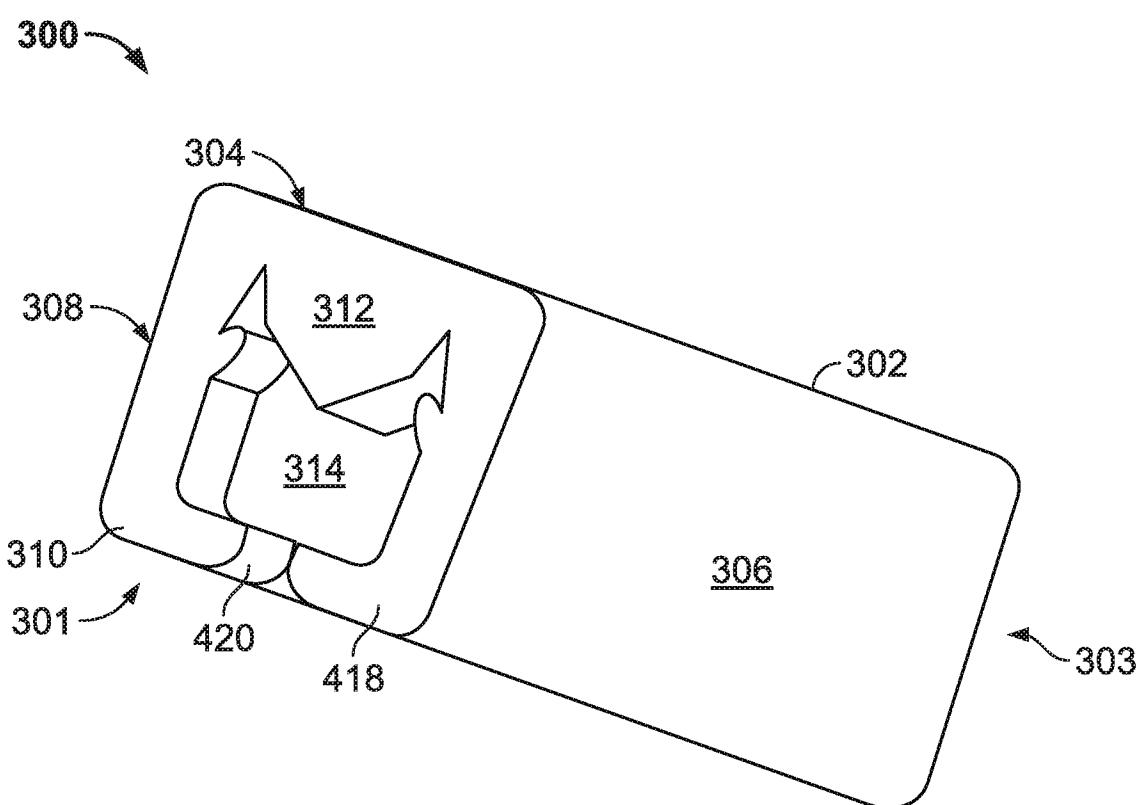


FIG. 11



**FIG. 12**

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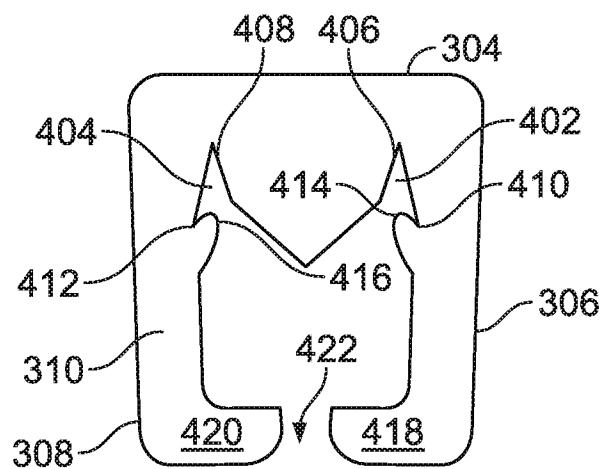


FIG. 13

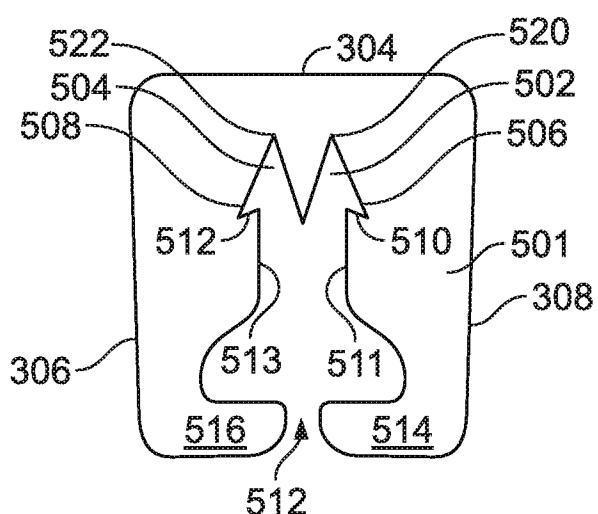


FIG. 14

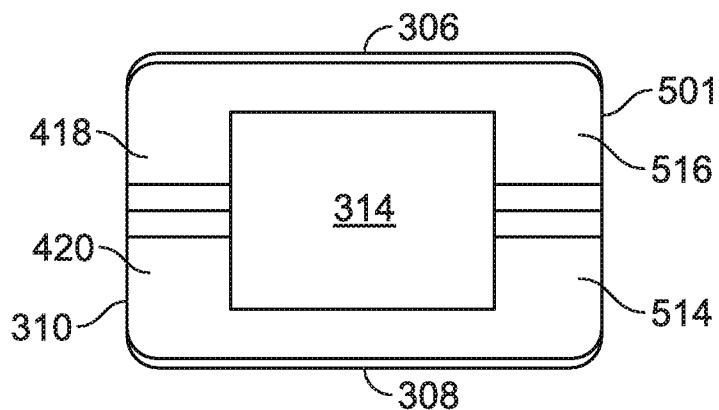


FIG. 15

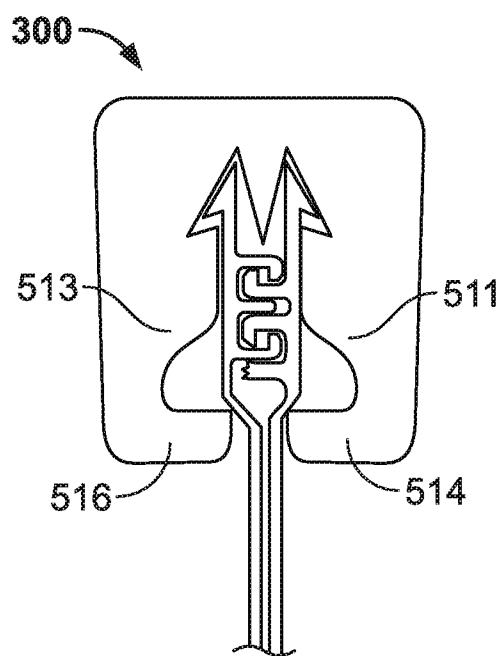


FIG. 16

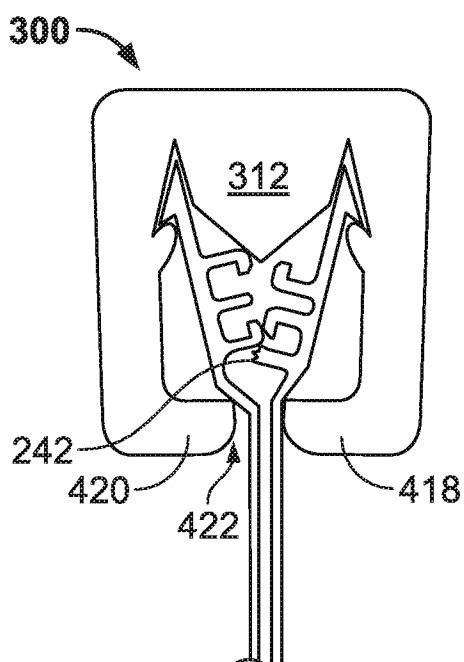


FIG. 17

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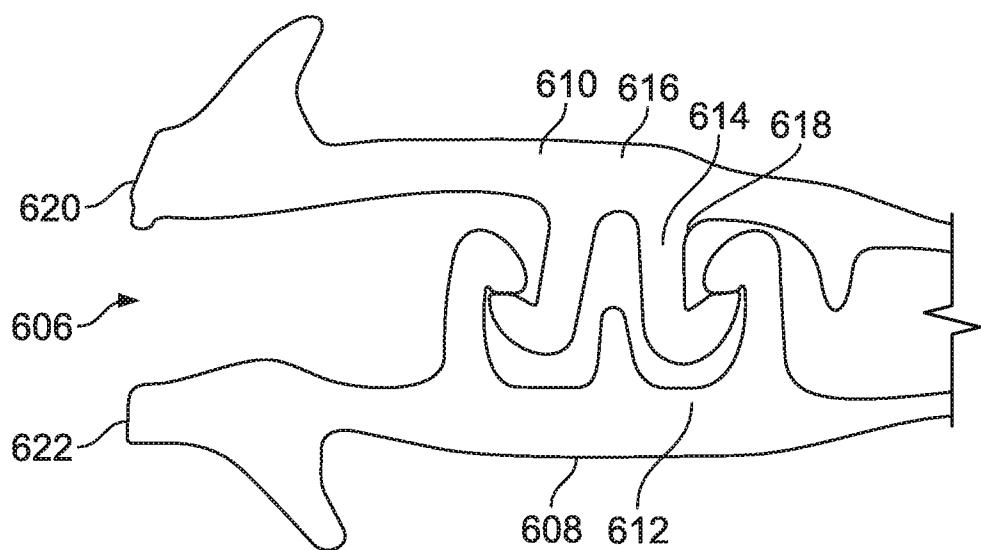


FIG. 18

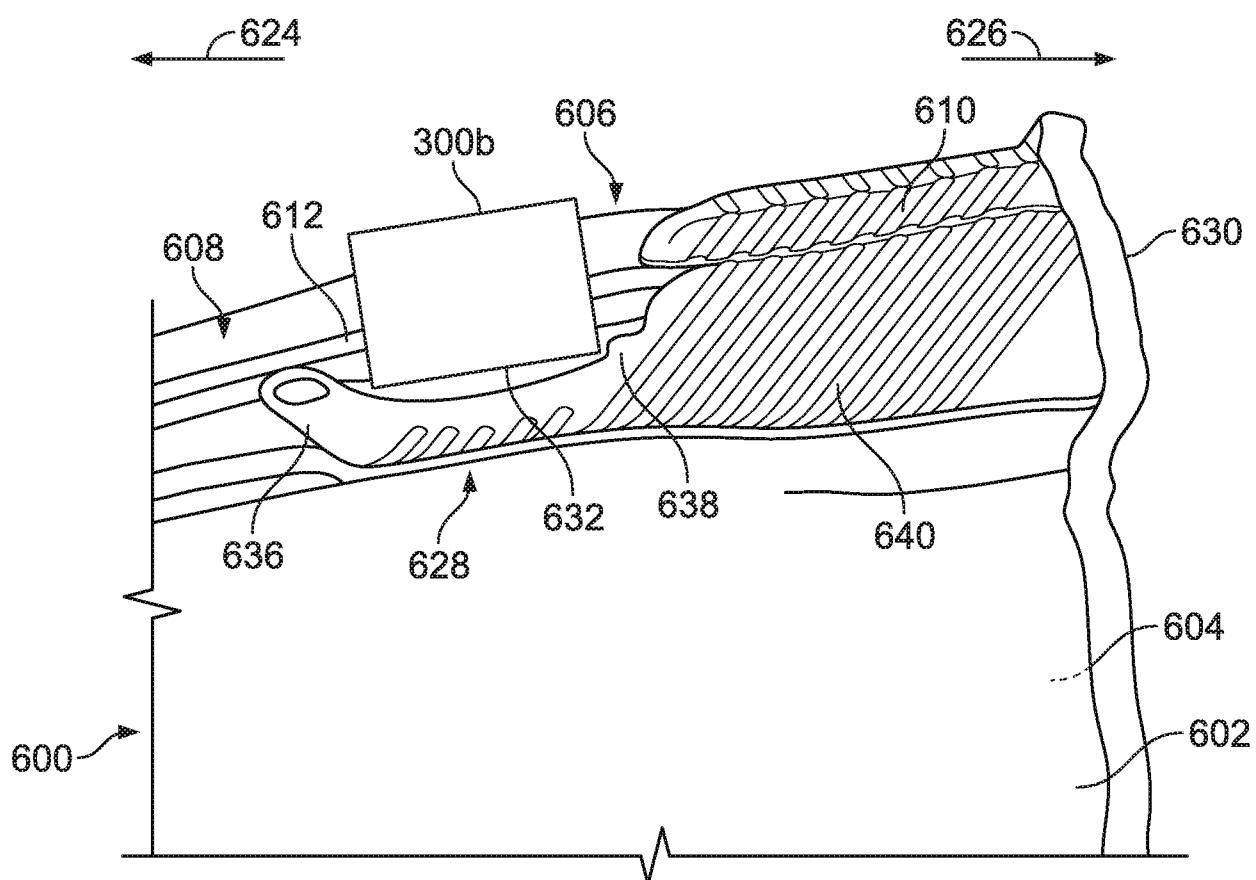


FIG. 19