

(57) **Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):**

adapted for pivot between a stored configuration in which the plurality of links (30) are positioned generally adjacent the perimeter (26) of the base (20), and an operative configuration in which the plurality of links (30) form a hook (46) adapted for hanging the purse (12).

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(71) Applicants and

(72) Inventors: **YAP, Kalika N.** [US/US]; 1512 16th Street No.#3, Santa Monica, CA 90404 (US). **MANGAN, Catherine A.** [US/US]; 1512 16th Street, Suite #3, Santa Monica, CA 90404 (US).

(74) Agent: **KARICH, Eric**; 2807 St. Mark Dr., Mansfield, tx 76063 (US).

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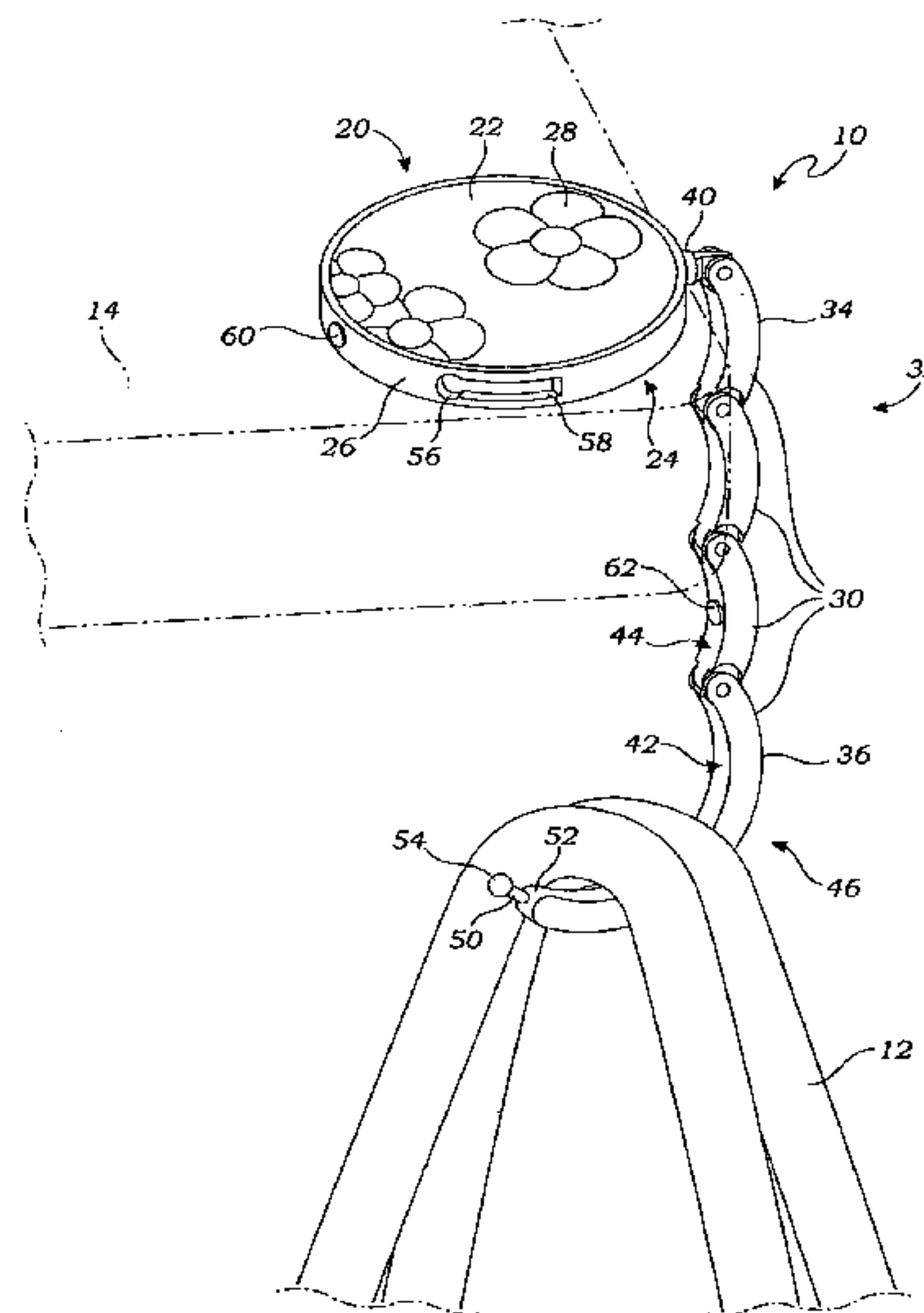
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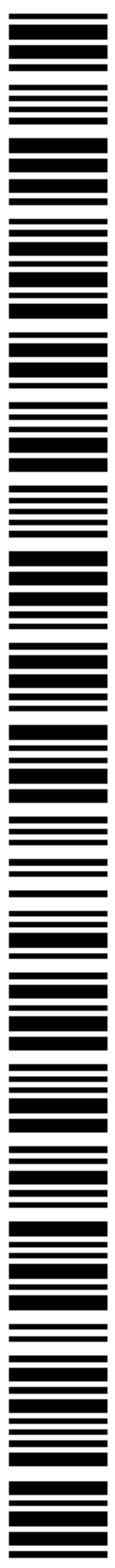
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(54) Title: PORTABLE HANGER FOR PURSE



(57) Abstract: A portable hanger (10) for hanging a purse (12) from a table (14) has a base (20) adapted to rest upon and frictionally engage the table (14). A plurality of links (30) are pivotally linked to each other in series to form a chain (32) having a first link (34) and a last link (36). A pivot pin (40) pivotally connects the base (20) and the first link (34) of the plurality of links (30). The plurality of links (30) are adapted for pivot between a stored configuration in which the plurality of links (30) are positioned generally adjacent the perimeter (26) of the base (20), and an operative configuration in which the plurality of links (30) form a hook (46) adapted for hanging the purse (12).



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TITLE: PORTABLE HANGER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 FIELD OF THE INVENTION:

This invention relates generally to hanging accessories, and more particularly to a portable hanger for hanging a purse from a table.

10 DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART:

The prior art teaches various forms of hangers for hanging a purse. For example, Czarny, U.S. D229,870, teaches a portable hanger for hanging a lady's purse beneath a table. The hanger includes a base with a planar lower surface, and a rigid hanger element that
15 extends from the side of the base and extends downwardly to a hook element for hanging the purse.

Alternative embodiments of the portable hanger are taught in Schwartz, U.S. D429,899, and Stewart, U.S. D384,505. These reference teach a purse holder that includes a planar
20 base with a rigid hook-shaped element that is pivotally attached to the base with that the hook can pivot with respect to the base. While the hook can pivot with respect to the base, the hook itself is rigid and cannot be folded.

Creed, U.S. 5,094,417, teaches a handbag adaptable support that includes a base with a
25 rigidly attached first hook element, and a second hook element that is pivotally attached to the first element.

30 The prior art teaches various forms of portable hangers that include a base and a rigid hook, or a hook with a limited pivoting and folding ability. However, the prior art does not teach a portable hanger that includes a plurality of links that can be collapsed from an operative, hook-shaped configuration adapted for hanging the purse, to a stored

configuration in which the plurality of links are wrapped around the perimeter of the base. The present invention fulfills these needs and provides further related advantages as described in the following summary.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention teaches certain benefits in construction and use which give rise to the objectives described below.

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The present invention provides a portable hanger for hanging a purse from a table. The portable hanger includes a base having a generally planar bottom surface and a perimeter. The bottom surface is adapted to rest upon and frictionally engage the table. A plurality of links are pivotally linked to each other in series to form a chain having a first link and a last link. A connector pivotally connects the base and the first link of the plurality of links, such that the first link can pivot between a first position and a second position with respect to the base. The plurality of links are adapted for pivot between a stored configuration in which the pivot pin is in the first position and in which the plurality of links are positioned generally adjacent the perimeter of the base, and an operative configuration in which the connector is in the second position and in which the plurality of links form a hook, such that the purse may be hung upon the hook when the base is positioned on the table.

A primary objective of the present invention is to provide a portable hanger having advantages not taught by the prior art.

Another objective is to provide a portable hanger that includes a plurality of links that can be collapsed from an operative, hook-shaped configuration, to a stored configuration in which the plurality of links are wrapped around the perimeter of the base.

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Another objective is to provide a portable hanger whose plurality of links can be folded to a ring configuration and removably attached to the base for storing the hanger on a purse as a purse accessory.

A further objective is to provide a portable hanger having a magnetic locking element for locking the plurality of links in the ring configuration.

5 In one embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising: a base having a generally planar bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to rest upon and frictionally engage the surface; a plurality of links pivotally linked to each other in series to form a chain having a first link and a last link; a pivot pin that pivotally connects the base and the first link of the plurality of links, such that the first link can pivot between a first position and a second position with respect to the base; 10 and a means for interlocking the last link with the base, wherein a portion of the last link extends into the base; wherein the plurality of links are adapted for pivot between a stored configuration in which the first link is in the first position and in which the plurality of links are positioned generally adjacent the perimeter of the base, and an operative configuration in which the first link is in the second position and in which the plurality of links form a hook, such that the article may 15 be hung upon the hook when the base is positioned on the surface.

In a further embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising: a base having a generally planar bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to rest upon and frictionally engage the surface; a 20 plurality of links pivotally linked to each other in series to form a chain having a first link and a last link; a pivot pin that pivotally connects the perimeter of the base and the first link so that the first link can pivot between a first position and a second position with respect to the base; wherein the plurality of links are adapted for pivot between a stored configuration in which the first link is in the first position and in which the plurality of links contact the perimeter of the base, and an 25 operative configuration in which the first link is in the second position and in which the plurality of links form a hook so that the article may be hung upon the hook when the base is positioned on the surface; and a locking means for securing the plurality of links in the stored configuration.

In a further embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an object, 30 the hanger comprising: a base having a substantially planar bottom surface; a plurality of links including a first link and a last link, the plurality of links being adapted to form a ring

configuration so that the first and last link are selectively attached to the base; and a connector that connects the first link to the base so that the plurality of links can move between (i) an operative configuration in which the last link provides a support structure for hanging the object, and (ii) a stored configuration.

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In a further embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising: a base having a generally planar bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to rest upon the surface; and a plurality of links that form a chain having a first link and a last link, the first link being pivotally connected to the perimeter of the base, the last link being adapted to interlock with the base; wherein the chain is adapted to move between a stored configuration in which the chain contacts the perimeter of the base, and an operative configuration in which the chain forms a hook that is adapted to suspend the article when the base is positioned on the surface.

15 In a further embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising: a base having a bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to contact the surface; a plurality of links that form a chain having a first link and a last link, the first link being movably connected to the perimeter of the base, the chain being movable between (i) an operative configuration in which the chain forms a support structure that is adapted to suspend the article when the bottom surface of the base is in contact with the surface, and (ii) a stored configuration in which at least a portion of the chain is positioned generally adjacent the perimeter of the base; and a locking means that selectively secures at least the portion of the chain against the perimeter of the base in the stored configuration.

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In a further embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising: a base having a perimeter, the base being adapted to contact the surface; three links that are coupled together in series to form at least a portion of a chain; and a connector that rotates about an axis to move at least one of the links between (i) a stored configuration wherein at least two of the links each abuts less than approximately 180 degrees of the perimeter of the base, and (ii) an operative configuration wherein at least one of the

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links is positioned to suspend the article relative to the surface, the connector selectively moving along the axis between a retracted position and an extended position.

5 In a further embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising: a base; a plurality of links including a first link and a last link that are connected to one another; and a connector that couples the first link to the base, the connector selectively moves along an axis between a retracted position and an extended position, the connector rotating about the axis to move the plurality of links between (i) a stored configuration, and (ii) an operative configuration in which at least one of the links is positioned to
10 suspend the article relative to the surface.

In a further embodiment of the present invention, there is provided a hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising: a base having a perimeter, the base being adapted to contact the surface, the perimeter of the base being substantially circular, the base including a
15 substantially planar bottom surface; three links that are coupled together in series to form at least a portion of a chain, the links being adapted to pivot relative to one another, at least two of plurality of links have different arcuate lengths relative to one another; and a connector that couples the first link to the base, the connector selectively moving along an axis that is substantially parallel to the bottom surface between a retracted position and an extended position, the connector
20 rotating about the axis to move at least one of the links between (i) a stored configuration wherein at least one of the three links abuts at least approximately 60 degrees of the perimeter of the base, and (ii) an operative configuration wherein at least one of the links is positioned to support the article relative to the surface.

Other features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following more detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which illustrate, by way of example, the principles of the invention.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The accompanying drawings illustrate the present invention. In such drawings:

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FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a portable hanger according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the portable hanger being illustrated in an operative configuration with a base on a table and a plurality of links forming a hook for hanging a purse;

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FIGURE 2 is a perspective view of the portable hanger in a ring configuration being carried on a purse;

FIGURE 3 is a bottom perspective view of the portable hanger in a stored configuration;

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FIGURE 4 is a perspective view of the portable hanger in the operative configuration; and

FIGURE 5 is a perspective view of the portable hanger in the ring configuration.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The above-described drawing figures illustrate the invention, a portable hanger 10 for hanging an article, such as a purse 12, from a table 14. Of course, the portable hanger 10

is also suitable for supporting other articles, such as coats, hats, umbrellas, shopping bags, etc., and such alternatives should be considered within the scope of the claimed invention.

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the portable hanger 10 according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the portable hanger 10 being illustrated in an operative configuration with a base 20 on a table 14 and a plurality of links 30 forming a hook 46 for hanging a purse 12. As shown in Fig. 1, the base 20 includes a top surface 22, a generally planar bottom surface 24 opposite the top surface 22, and a perimeter 26 connecting the top and bottom surfaces 22 and 24. As shown in Fig. 1, the bottom surface 24 (best illustrated in Fig. 3) is adapted to rest upon and frictionally engage the table 14. While we discuss hanging the portable hanger 10 on a table 14, the term table is hereby defined to include any generally planar surface upon which a user might want to hang the purse 12.

In the embodiment of Fig. 1, the base 20 is generally disk-shaped, and the top surface 22 includes a decorative indicia 28. However, the base 20 may be any operative shape and may include a variety of decorative shapes, indicia, and features, and all such alternative shapes and arrangements should be considered within the scope of the present invention. The base 20 may be constructed of any suitable material, including plastic for less expensive embodiments, metal for more expensive embodiments, and potentially even precious metals for the most expensive embodiments.

The portable hanger 10 further includes a plurality of links 30 pivotally linked to each other in series to form a chain 32 having a first link 34 and a last link 36. A connector 40, such as a pivot pin 40, pivotally connects the base 20 and the first link 34 of the plurality of links 30, such that the first link 34 can pivot between a first position, illustrated in Fig. 1, and a second position, illustrated in Fig. 3, with respect to the base 20. The plurality of links 30 are adapted for pivot between a stored configuration, shown in Fig. 3, in which the pivot pin 40 is in the first position and in which the plurality of links 30 are positioned generally adjacent the perimeter 26 of the base 20, and an operative configuration, shown in Figs. 1 and 4, in which the pivot pin 40 is in the second position and in which the plurality of links 30 form a support structure 46, such as a hook, such that the purse 12 may be hung upon the hook 46 when the base 20 is positioned on the table 14.

The last link 36 of the plurality of links 30 includes a concave inner surface 42 that functions to frictionally engage the purse 12. In the preferred embodiment, most or all of the plurality of links 30 are curved, or include concave inner surfaces 44, for forming the
 5 hook 46. In alternate embodiments, the links 30 might take on other shapes.

In the preferred embodiment, as shown in Fig. 1, the portable hanger 10 further includes a locking means for locking the plurality of links 30 in the stored configuration. In one embodiment, the locking means includes first and second magnets 60 and 62 that
 10 magnetically lock the plurality of links 30 in the stored configuration. In one embodiment, the first magnet 60 is mounted on the perimeter 26 of the base 20, and the second magnet 62 is mounted on one of the plurality of links 30, such as the concave inner surface 44 of one of the links 30. While one embodiment is illustrated, other embodiments should also be considered within the scope of the present invention. For
 15 example, multiple magnets could be used in various operative locations. Furthermore, while magnets are currently preferred, other forms of snaps, clips, friction-locks, or other features or locking mechanisms could be used, and such alternatives should be considered within the scope of the locking means.

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view of the portable hanger 10 in a ring configuration being carried on a purse 12. As shown in Figs. 4 and 5, the portable hanger 10 preferably includes means for interlocking the last link 36 with the base 20. The means for interlocking preferably includes a pin 50 extending from a terminal end 52 of the last link 36. The pin 50 preferably extends to a ball-end 54. For purposes of this application, the
 25 terms pin 50 and ball-end 54 are hereby defined to include any shaped elements that function as described below. A ball-receiver 56 in the base 20, preferably in the perimeter 26 of the base 20, includes a slot 58 shaped to receive the pin 50 and lockingly engage the ball-end 54, such that the last link 36 may be removably engaged with the base 20 and such that the base 20 and the plurality of links 30 together form a loop, and such that the
 30 portable hanger 10 is maintained in a ring configuration.

In the ring configuration, as shown in Fig. 2, the portable hanger 10 may be carried on the purse 12 as a decorative accessory. Other interlocking structures could also be employed

without departing from the disclosed invention, and should be considered within the scope of the present invention. The means for interlocking may alternatively include, for example, various forms of snaps, locking elements, or other structures known in the art.

5 FIGURE 3 is a bottom perspective view of the portable hanger 10 in the stored configuration. The bottom surface 24 of the base 20 is adapted to frictionally engage the table 13. The bottom surface 24 may include a non-skid coating (not shown) such as rubber, or a textured surface, for enhancing the frictional engagement between the bottom surface 24 and the table 14. In FIGURE 3, the connector 40 is illustrated in a retracted position 66.

10 FIGURE 4 is a perspective view of the portable hanger in the operative configuration. In FIGURE 4, the connector 40 is illustrated in an extended position 68. In the extended position 68, the connector 40 has extended away from the perimeter 26 of the base 20 along an axis 64 as shown by directional arrow 70. Additionally, in the embodiment illustrated in FIGURE 4, the
15 connector 40 has rotated about the axis 64 as shown by rotational arrow 72. By rotating the connector 40 as illustrated in FIGURE 4, the chain 32 has likewise rotated in a downward direction away from the perimeter 26 of the base 20.

FIGURE 5 is a perspective view of the portable hanger in the ring configuration. In FIGURE 5,
20 the connector 40 is illustrated in the extended position (illustrated in FIGURE 4) along the axis 64.

The terminology used in the preceding description includes the words described above, similar or equivalent words, and derivatives thereof. Additionally, the words “a,” “an,” and “one” are
25 defined to include one or more of the referenced item unless specifically stated otherwise. Also, the terms “have,” “include,” “contain,” and similar terms are defined to mean “comprising” unless specifically stated otherwise.

While the invention has been described with reference to at least one preferred embodiment, it is
30 to be clearly understood by those skilled in the art that the invention is not limited thereto. Rather, the scope of the invention is to be interpreted only in conjunction with the appended claims.

CLAIMS:

1. A hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising:
 - a base having a generally planar bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to rest upon and frictionally engage the surface;
 - a plurality of links pivotally linked to each other in series to form a chain having a first link and a last link;
 - a pivot pin that pivotally connects the base and the first link of the plurality of links, such that the first link can pivot between a first position and a second position with respect to the base;
 - a means for interlocking the last link with the base, wherein a portion of the last link extends into the base;
 - wherein the plurality of links are adapted for pivot between a stored configuration in which the first link is in the first position and in which the plurality of links are positioned generally adjacent the perimeter of the base, and an operative configuration in which the first link is in the second position and in which the plurality of links form a hook, such that the article may be hung upon the hook when the base is positioned on the surface; and
 - a locking means for securing the plurality of links in the stored configuration.
2. The hanger of claim 1, wherein the means for interlocking comprises:
 - a pin extending from a terminal end of the last link, the pin extending to a ball-end;
 - and
 - a ball-receiver in the perimeter of the base, the ball-receiver having a slot shaped to receive the pin and lockingly engage the ball-end, such that the last link may be removably engaged with the base and such that the base and the plurality of links together form a loop.
3. The hanger of claim 1, wherein the base is generally disk-shaped.
4. The hanger of claim 1, wherein the base includes a top surface opposite the bottom surface.

5. The hanger of claim 4, wherein the base includes a decorative indicia on the top surface.
6. The hanger of claim 1, wherein the last link of the plurality of links includes a concave inner surface that functions to frictionally engage the article.
7. A hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising:
 - a base having a generally planar bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to rest upon and frictionally engage the surface;
 - a plurality of links pivotally linked to each other in series to form a chain having a first link and a last link;
 - a pivot pin that pivotally connects the perimeter of the base and the first link so that the first link can pivot between a first position and a second position with respect to the base;
 - wherein the plurality of links are adapted for pivot between a stored configuration in which the first link is in the first position and in which the plurality of links contact the perimeter of the base, and an operative configuration in which the first link is in the second position and in which the plurality of links form a hook so that the article may be hung upon the hook when the base is positioned on the surface; and
 - a locking means for securing the plurality of links in the stored configuration.
8. The hanger of claim 7, wherein the locking means includes first and second magnets.
9. The hanger of claim 8, wherein the first magnet is mounted on the perimeter of the base, and the second magnet is mounted on one of the plurality of links.
10. A hanger for hanging an object, the hanger comprising:
 - a base having a substantially planar bottom surface;
 - a plurality of links including a first link and a last link, the plurality of links being adapted to form a ring configuration so that the first and last link are selectively attached to the base;

a connector that connects the first link to the base so that the plurality of links can move between (i) an operative configuration in which the last link provides a support structure for hanging the object, and (ii) a stored configuration; and

a locking means that selectively secures the plurality of links in the stored configuration.

11. The hanger of claim 10, wherein the base has a perimeter, and each of the plurality of links has a corresponding inner surface that is adapted to abut the perimeter of the base when the plurality of links are in the stored configuration.

12. The hanger of claim 10, wherein the support structure is a hook.

13. A hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising:
a base having a generally planar bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to rest upon the surface;

a plurality of links that form a chain having a first link and a last link, the first link being pivotally connected to the perimeter of the base, the last link being adapted to interlock with the base;

wherein the chain is adapted to move between a stored configuration in which the chain contacts the perimeter of the base, and an operative configuration in which the chain forms a hook that is adapted to suspend the article when the base is positioned on the surface; and

a locking means that selectively secures the chain in the stored configuration.

14. The hanger of claim 13 further comprising (i) a pin that extends from a terminal end of the last link, the pin including a ball-end, and (ii) a ball-receiver along the perimeter of the base, the ball-receiver having a slot shaped to receive the pin and lockingly engage the ball-end.

15. The hanger of claim 13 further comprising a connector that connects the first link to the base so that the plurality of links can move between the operative configuration and the stored configuration.

16. A hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising:
a base having a bottom surface and a perimeter, the bottom surface being adapted to contact the surface;

a plurality of links that form a chain having a first link and a last link, the first link being movably connected to the perimeter of the base, the chain being movable between (i) an operative configuration in which the chain forms a support structure that is adapted to suspend the article when the bottom surface of the base is in contact with the surface, and (ii) a stored configuration in which at least a portion of the chain is positioned generally adjacent the perimeter of the base; and

a locking means that selectively secures at least the portion of the chain against the perimeter of the base in the stored configuration.

17. The hanger of claim 16, wherein the locking means includes a magnet.

18. The hanger of claim 16, wherein the locking means includes a first magnet that is mounted to the perimeter of the base, and a second magnet that is mounted to one of the plurality of links.

19. A hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising:
a base having a perimeter, the base being adapted to contact the surface;
three links that are coupled together in series to form at least a portion of a chain;
a connector that rotates about an axis to move at least one of the links between (i) a stored configuration wherein at least two of the links each abuts less than approximately 180 degrees of the perimeter of the base, and (ii) an operative configuration wherein at least one of the links is positioned to suspend the article relative to the surface, the connector selectively moving along the axis between a retracted position and an extended position; and

a locking means that secures at least one of the links to the perimeter of the base on the stored configuration.

20. The hanger of claim 19, wherein at least two of the links have different arcuate lengths relative to one another.

21. The hanger of claim 19, wherein the perimeter of the base is substantially circular, and wherein in the stored configuration one of the links abuts approximately 60 degrees of the perimeter of the base.

22. The hanger of claim 19, wherein each of the links has a radius of curvature that is approximately the same as each of the remaining links.

23. The hanger of claim 19, wherein the base includes a substantially planar bottom surface, and wherein the axis is substantially parallel to the bottom surface.

24. The hanger of claim 19 further comprising a means for interlocking that is adapted to at least partially extend through the perimeter of the base to form a ring configuration.

25. The hanger of claim 19, wherein the links contact approximately 100% of the perimeter of the base in the stored configuration.

26. The hanger of claim 19, wherein the links are adapted to pivot relative to one another.

27. A hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising:
a base;

a plurality of links including a first link and a last link that are connected to one another;

a connector that couples the first link to the base, the connector selectively moves along an axis between a retracted position and an extended position, the connector rotating about the axis to move the plurality of links between (i) a stored configuration, and (ii) an operative configuration in which at least one of the links is positioned to suspend the article relative to the surface; and

a locking means that secures at least one of the links to the perimeter of the base on the stored configuration.

28. The hanger of claim 27, wherein at least two of plurality of links have different arcuate lengths relative to one another.

29. The hanger of claim 27, wherein the perimeter of the base is substantially circular, and wherein in the stored configuration one of the links abuts at least approximately 60 degrees of the perimeter of the base.

30. The hanger of claim 27, wherein one of the links abuts less than approximately 180 degrees of the perimeter of the base.

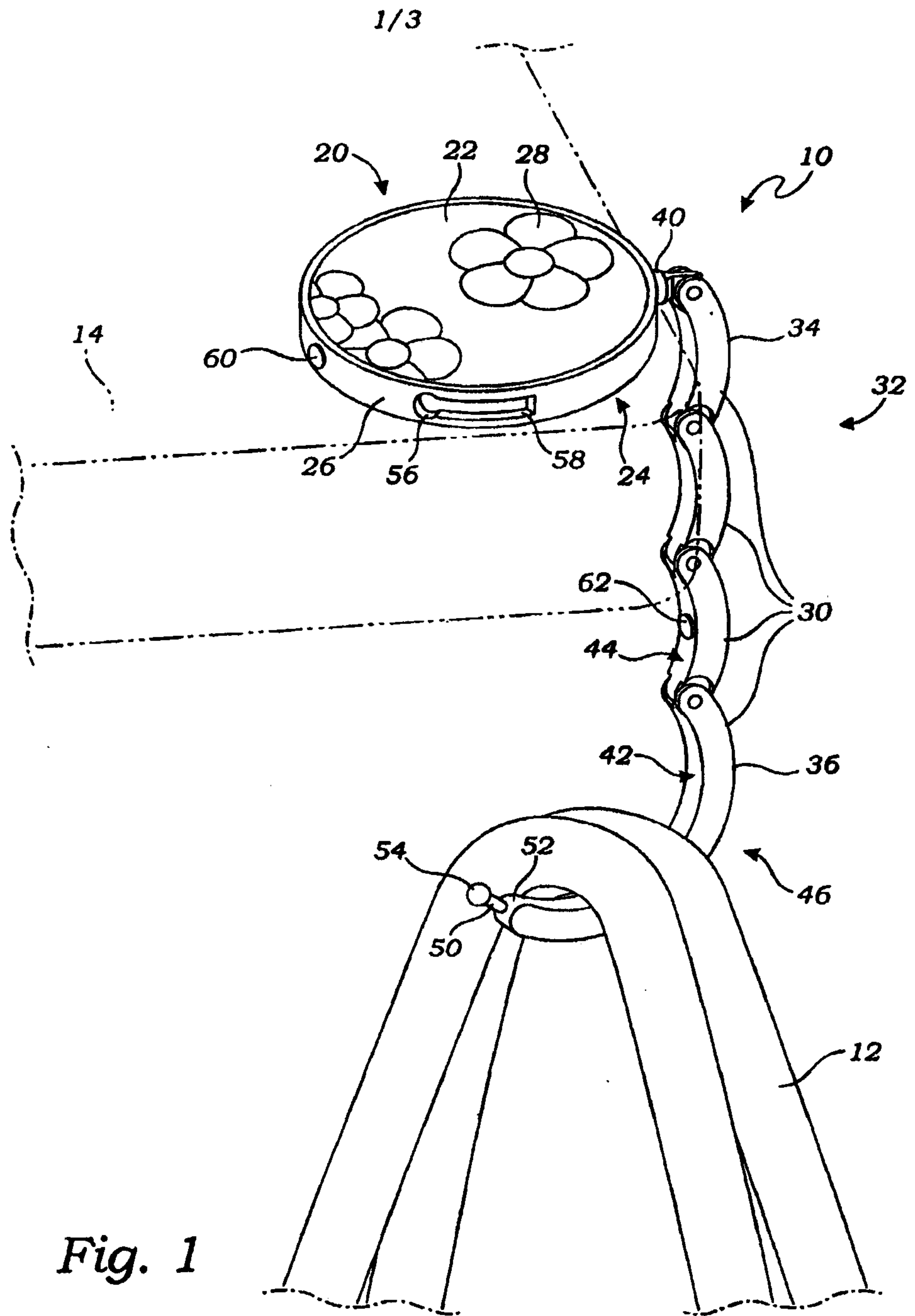
31. The hanger of claim 27, wherein the base includes a substantially planar bottom surface, and wherein the axis is substantially parallel to the bottom surface.

32. The hanger of claim 27 further comprising a means for interlocking that is adapted to at least partially extend through the perimeter of the base to form a ring configuration.

33. The hanger of claim 27, wherein the links contact approximately 100% of the perimeter of the base in the stored configuration.

34. The hanger of claim 27, wherein the links are adapted to pivot relative to one another.

35. A hanger for hanging an article relative to a surface, the hanger comprising:
- a base having a perimeter, the base being adapted to contact the surface, the perimeter of the base being substantially circular, the base including a substantially planar bottom surface;
 - three links that are coupled together in series to form at least a portion of a chain, the links being adapted to pivot relative to one another, at least two of plurality of links have different arcuate lengths relative to one another;
 - a connector that couples the first link to the base, the connector selectively moving along an axis that is substantially parallel to the bottom surface between a retracted position and an extended position, the connector rotating about the axis to move at least one of the links between (i) a stored configuration wherein at least one of the three links abuts at least approximately 60 degrees of the perimeter of the base, and (ii) an operative configuration wherein at least one of the links is positioned to support the article relative to the surface; and
 - a locking means for securing the plurality of links in the stored configuration.



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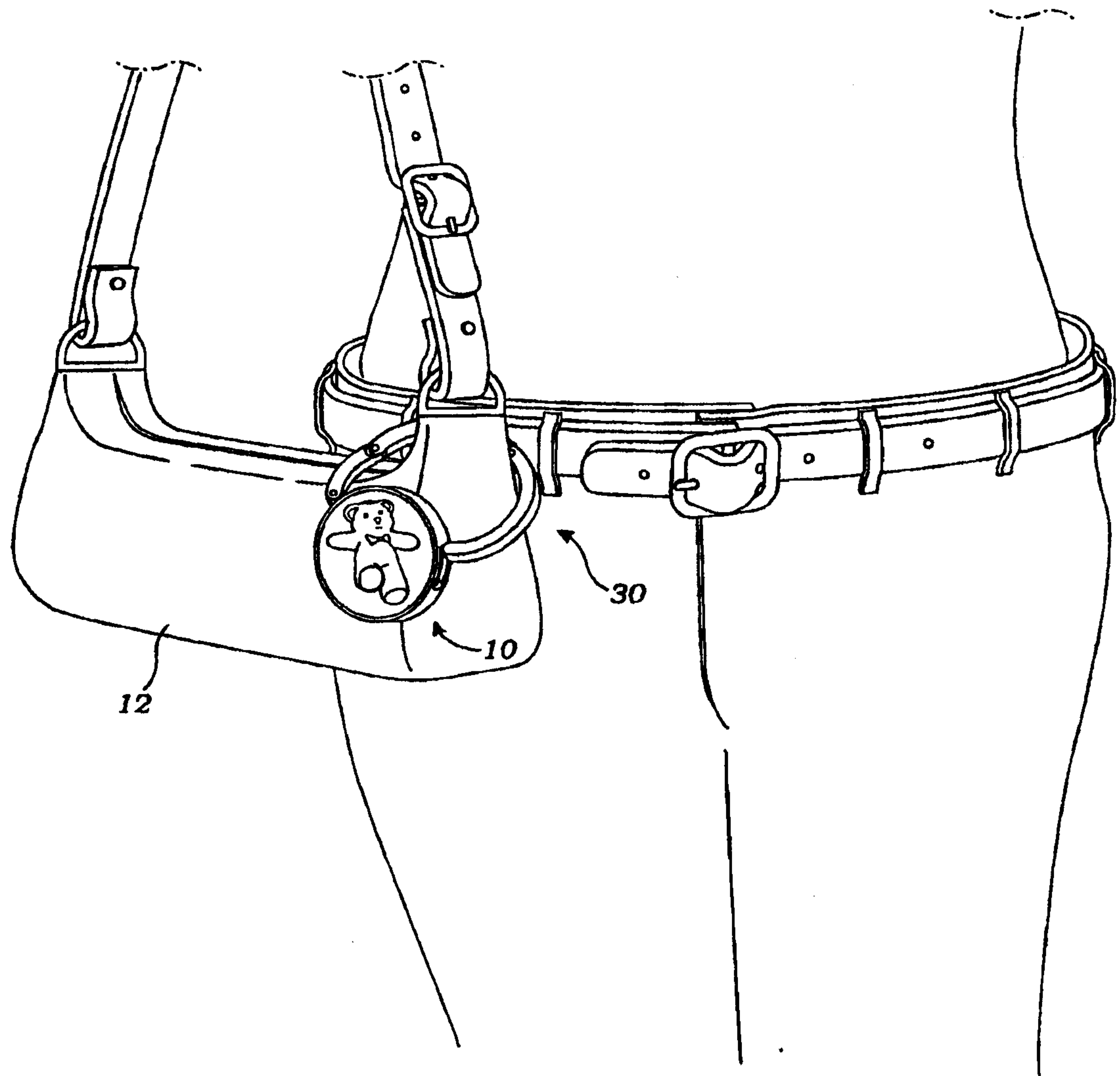


Fig. 2

