Oct. 5, 1965 R. L. SCOTT 3,209,382

LIFE-PRESERVER COMBINATION

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Fig. 3

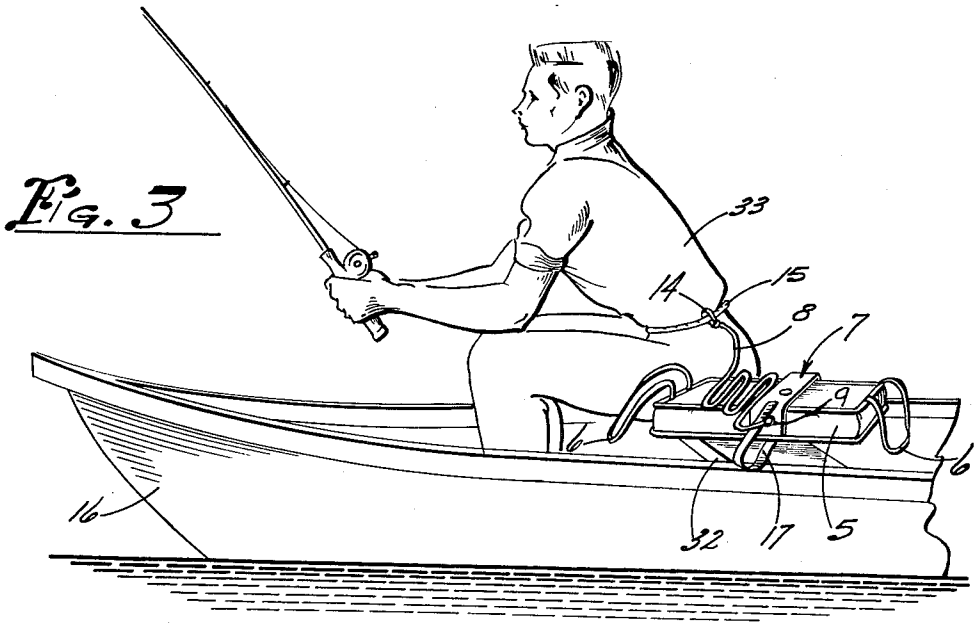
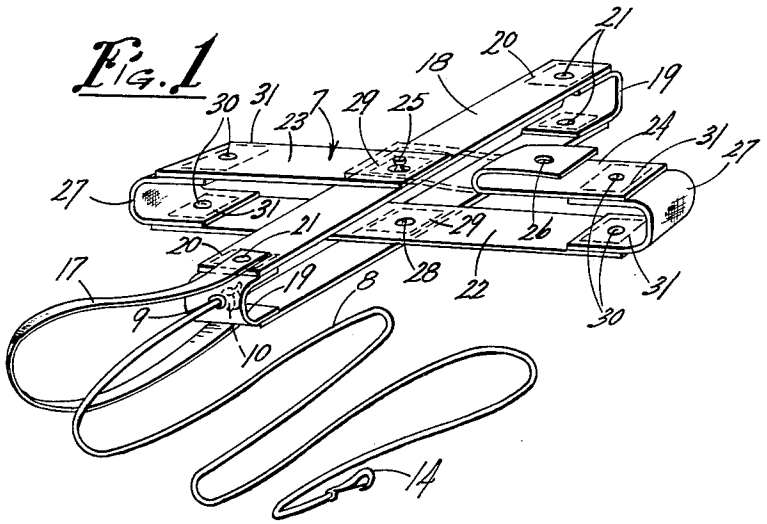


Fig. 1



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Fig. 4

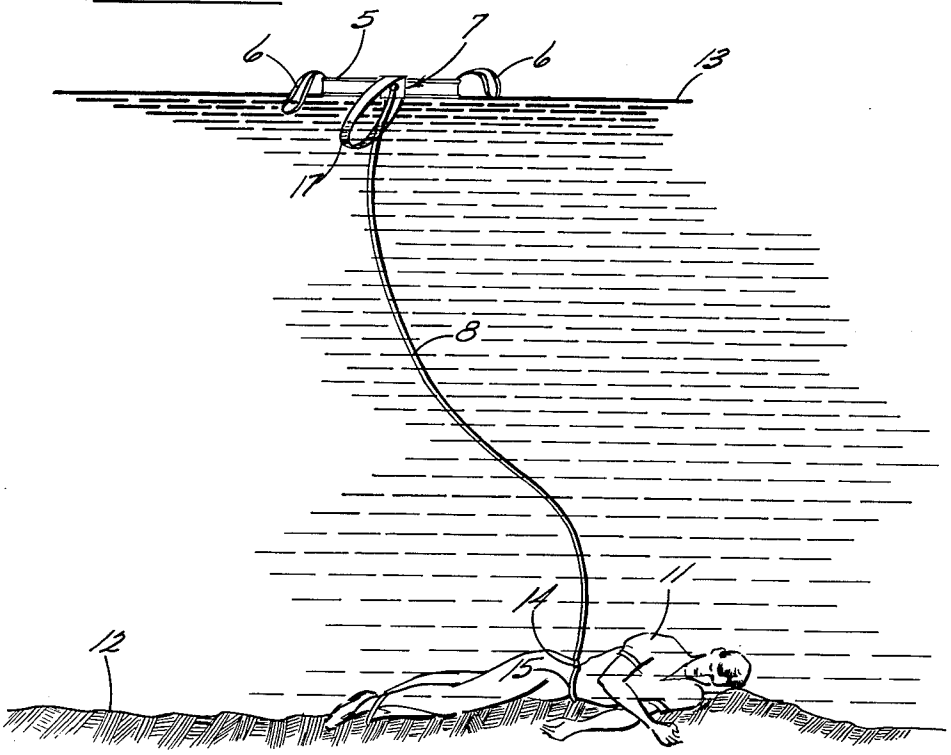
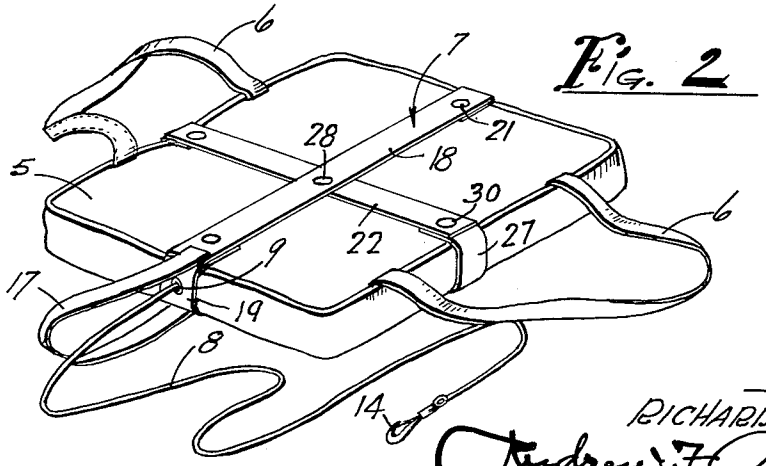


Fig. 2



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LIFE-PRESERVER COMBINATION

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2 Claims. (Cl. 9—311)

This invention relates to a novel life-preserver combination consisting of a life-line connecting a person with a harness applied to a life-preserver cushion of the kind commonly used in rowboats and speedboats, whereby to enlarge greatly the range of usefulness of such cushions and also make them much more effective in saving life.

Life-preserver cushions have been used extensively and doubtlessly many lives have been saved as a result of the increased sale and use thereof, and some states have with good reason passed laws requiring that every occupant of a boat have a life-preserver cushion for his or her protection in the event of falling into the water. However, in many instances, especially where persons go out alone and there is no one to throw the cushion to them in the event they fall overboard or their boat is swamped, the presence of the cushion has not helped, and, in the event such individuals are drowned, too much time is consumed in recovering the body whereas if the exact location was known immediately resuscitation efforts could be applied with good effect in a large percentage of such cases. Also, the chances are that a good percentage of such persons could save their lives if there was some way of their getting hold of the life-preserver cushion in time, as such a cushion is enough to enable most anyone to remain afloat at least until help can arrive. It is, therefore, the principal object of my invention to provide a harness easily applicable to existing life-preserver cushions and having connected therewith one end of a life-line of suitable length, the other end of which has facilitaties for easily connecting the same to the person at or around the waistline, so that in the event of an accident or a sudden seizure of illness or dizziness causing the person to fall into the water, the line will pull the cushion out of the boat and enable the person to get it in time to avoid drowning, and, where the conditions are such that the person goes to the bottom before the cushion can be used as a life-preserver, the cushion still serves a very useful purpose simply as a float to mark the spot where the body can be found quickly so that efforts at resuscitation can be made with minimum time loss.

To facilitate a person's getting hold of the cushion when it is being pulled toward this person in the water by means of his line, an extra handle loop of appreciable length is provided on the harness at the point where the line is connected to the harness and extends in the same direction therefrom as the line, thereby greatly increasing the chances of saving life, because under such circumstances it goes without saying that every second counts.

The invention is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the harness and attached life-line with snap fastener on the outer end as provided in accordance with my invention;

FIG. 2 is another perspective view showing the harness applied to a life-preserver cushion;

FIG. 3 is a view showing the life-line fastened around the waist of a person seated in a boat and illustrating the cushion on the seat alongside him, and

FIG. 4 illustrates how the cushion attached by the line to the body of a person drowned serves to indicate the location of the body.

The same reference numerals are applied to corresponding parts throughout these views.

Referring to the drawings, a conventional rectangular

life-preserver cushion is designated by the reference numeral **5**, these cushions being usually provided with handle loops **6** on opposite sides. A harness, indicated generally by the reference numeral **7**, is provided in accordance with my invention and is applicable to the cushion in the manner best shown in FIG. 2, whereby to provide a means of securely connecting to the cushion one end of a life-line **8**, as by extension of the line through an eyelet **9**, the end being knotted as indicated at **10** in FIG. 1 beyond the eyelet to eliminate any likelihood of the line becoming disconnected from the harness. The life-line **8** will be provided of a suitable length depending in each case on the depth of the water at the particular lake or river where the life-preserver combination of my invention is to be used, so that in the event the person onto whom the other end of the line is attached should be drowned despite the facilities which this invention affords, as illustrated in FIG. 4, for example, where the body is indicated at **11** lying on the bottom **12** while the cushion **5** is afloat on the surface of the water indicated at **13**, the location of the body is immediately indicated by the cushion **5** and hence the body can be recovered without too much delay, and in a good percentage of such incidents the greatly reduced time of immersion should make restored breathing through resuscitation possible. It should be possible by virtue of the buoyancy of the water to raise a body by means of the line **8** readily enough so that grappling hooks are usually not needed. The snap-buckle indicated at **14** attached to the other end of the line **8** permits quickly attaching the line to the trouser belt as indicated at **15** in FIG. 3 or fastening that end of the rope to the person by extending it around the waist and closing the loop thus formed by attaching the buckle **14** onto the line itself. A person falling into the water from a boat **16**, if unable to swim, can easily save his life by pulling the cushion **5** toward himself by means of the line **8**, and, once he has taken hold of the cushion **5**, he can easily keep himself afloat long enough for help to reach him, if he is unable to reach the boat **16** and get back into it. The additional elongated handle loop **17** provided on the harness **7** at the point of connection of the line **8** and extending from the harness in the same direction as the line greatly facilitates the person's getting hold of the cushion **5**, and the chances are that a good percentage of cases where accidental drownings would otherwise occur this additional safety feature will mean the difference between failure and success, because when a person is in difficulty in the water every additional second becomes very important and therefore the sooner the person in difficulty can get a reliable hold on the cushion **5** the better.

The harness **7** comprises one generally rectangular loop **18** made of cotton webbing except for the two end portions **19** which are made of cotton webbing with elastic incorporated to enable stretching these end portions enough to accommodate cushions that are a trifle thicker than the loop **18** might otherwise be big enough to accommodate. The ends of the elastic webbing **19** are sewed to the ends of the other webbing as indicated by the squares of stitches **20** in FIG. 1, and, in addition, rivets indicated at **21** are provided to make certain that the parts never become disconnected in the event the stitches become frayed and torn. Another generally rectangular loop **22** is provided in criss-cross relationship to the middle portion of loop **18**, and one side of the loop **22** is made in two pieces **23** and **24**, the inner ends of which are adapted to be detachably connected by means of a snap-fastener, whose two parts are indicated at **25–26**, whereby to enable easy application of the harness **7** to a cushion **5**, the cushion being first entered in loop **18** as far as the open loop **22** will permit it to go after which the loop **22** is closed by means of the snap-

fastener **25–26**. Loop **22** is shown as provided with elastic webbing at opposite ends, as indicated at **27**, the stretching of which enables tighter application of the harness, the latter fitting fairly snugly by reason of the stretching of the elastic portions **19** and **27**. The snap-fastener at **25** provides one rivet connection and there is another rivet **28** on the other side of the loop **22** at the point of intersection with loop **18** to insure permanent connections at these two points in the event stitching indicated at **29** becomes frayed and torn. Other rivets are indicated at **30** in addition to stitching **31** where the overlapping ends of the non-elastic and elastic webbing are fastened together at the opposite ends of loop **22**.

The operation of the invention is believed to be clear from the foregoing description. The life-line **8**, being light, does not encumber the person and he can therefore move about freely in the boat, and, since the line is always provided of a suitable length in relation to the depth of the water, there is every assurance that the cushion **5** will mark the spot where the body is, in the event the person onto whom the line is attached should be drowned, despite the facilities which this invention affords. In some cases the cushion **5** will be laid on the seat **32** alongside the person **33** in the boat, and in some cases the person will sit on the cushion. In any event, so long as the line **8** extending from the harness **7** is of adequate length and fastened securely around the person's waist, the present combination will function quite satisfactorily under any and all conditions and for greatly increased safety to young and old alike while out on the water in whatever kind of craft may be used. If the person falls into the water and is unable to swim, he can easily save his life by pulling the cushion **5** toward himself by means of the line **8**, and, once he has taken hold of the cushion, he can easily keep himself afloat long enough for help to reach him, if he is unable to reach the boat **16** and get back into it, and it is in this operation of pulling the cushion toward himself that the additional elongated handle loop **17** plays such an important part as it is provided on the harness **7** at the same point of connection with the line **8** and extends from the harness in the same direction as the line, thus greatly facilitating the person's getting hold of the cushion. The lightness of the line is important because it means that the person is not sacrificing any buoyancy on this account, as is true with some other combinations that have been proposed, where the means intended to save life actually militated against it by reducing the person's buoyancy in the water to such an appreciable extent. Thus, the lightness of the line **8** gives the twofold advantage of not encumbering the person while in the boat or bogging him down if he happens to fall into the water. As previously indicated, some states have passed laws requiring that every occupant of a boat have a life-preserver for his or her protection in the event of falling into the water. It is believed that after the present invention becomes better known such laws in many states will be amended to require further that there be some connection as herein shown between each person and the life-preserver cushion intended for him or her, with a view to further reducing likelihood of drownings that could otherwise have been avoided. The harness **7** is considered essential to the success of the invention, because:

(1) it assures a reliable connection for the line **8** with the cushion **5**, whereas any effort to tie the line **8** directly to the cushion would most likely end in something makeshift and the cushion would not be attached securely enough in an emergency;

(2) it leaves the cushion **5** in substantially as good shape as before to be sat upon comfortably;

(3) it does not interfere with the cushion being picked up and carried by means of either of its handles **6** or the handle **17**, and

(4) it is far more reliable than tieing the line **8** to either of the handles **6**, which are only sewed to the covering of the cushion and would be too apt to tear off.

It is believed the foregoing description conveys a good understanding of the objects and advantages of my invention. The appended claims have been drawn to cover all legitimate modifications and adaptations.

I claim:

1. A life-preserver combination comprising a buoyant seat cushion, an enclosing harness for said seat cushion, a life-line attached at one end to said harness and of suitable length bearing a predetermined relationship to the depth of the water where the life-preserver combination is to be used, whereby to reach approximately from the buoyant seat cushion on the surface of the water down to the bottom to enable location of a body to which the other end of the line is connected, and means on the other end of said life-line for detachably connecting the same to the body of the person using said life-preserver combination either as a life-saving means or as an indicator of the location of the body on the bottom, the seat cushion enclosing harness at the point of connection therewith of the first mentioned end of the life-line having an outwardly projecting elongated handle loop of appreciable length extending in the same direction therefrom as the life-line to facilitate the person utilizing the life-line in pulling the buoyant seat cushion toward himself and taking a firm hold on the seat cushion so as to remain afloat.

2. A life-preserver combination as set forth in claim **1** wherein the seat cushion is of generally rectangular form and the harness comprises two seat cushion encircling loops connected together at the middle in right angle relationship, the one loop being closed and of a size to encircle the seat cushion, and the other loop being openable to encircle the seat cushion in right angle relationship to the first mentioned loop and having means for securing the loose ends of the loop together thereafter, including stretchable resilient members in both loops permitting stretching of the loops to encompass a seat cushion that would otherwise be too large to fit inside the harness, whereby to insure tight gripping of the seat cushion by the harness and enable application of the harness to seat cushions of slightly different sizes and thicknesses.

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