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(54) **METHOD FOR WRAPPING A FLORAL GROUPING**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

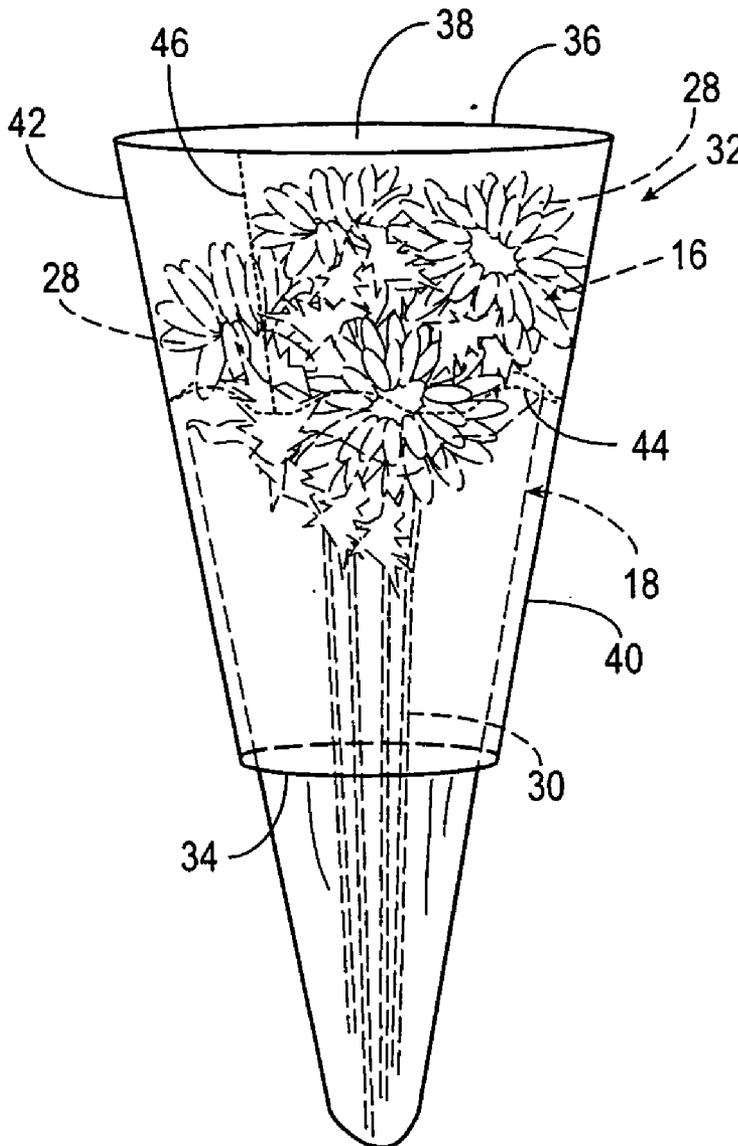
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A method for wrapping a floral grouping having a bloom end and a stem end. A wrapper is formed from a sheet of material or bag which is wrapped about at least a portion of the stem end of the floral grouping. The wrapped floral grouping is then positioned within a receiving space of a sleeve whereby the wrapper is secured in a stable position about at least a portion of the stem end of the floral grouping by the sleeve. A detaching element defines the detachable upper portion and a lower portion of the sleeve so that the upper portion can be removed from the lower portion.



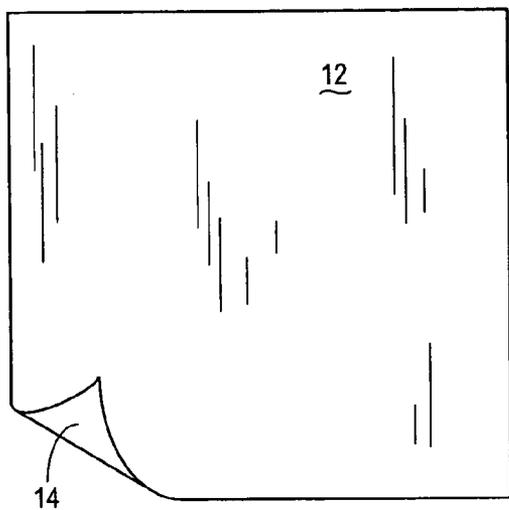


Fig. 1

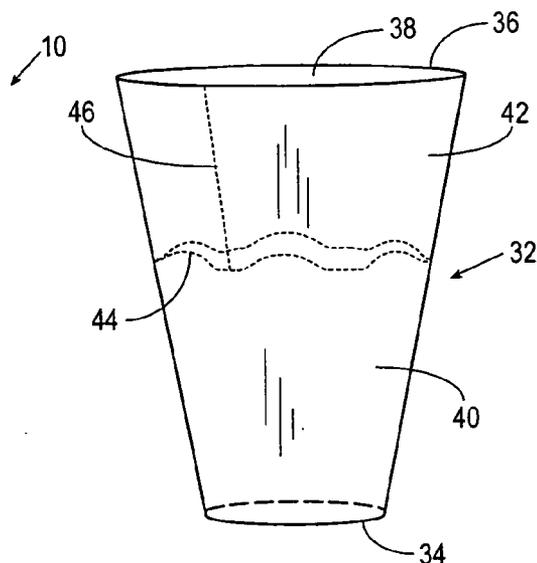


Fig. 3

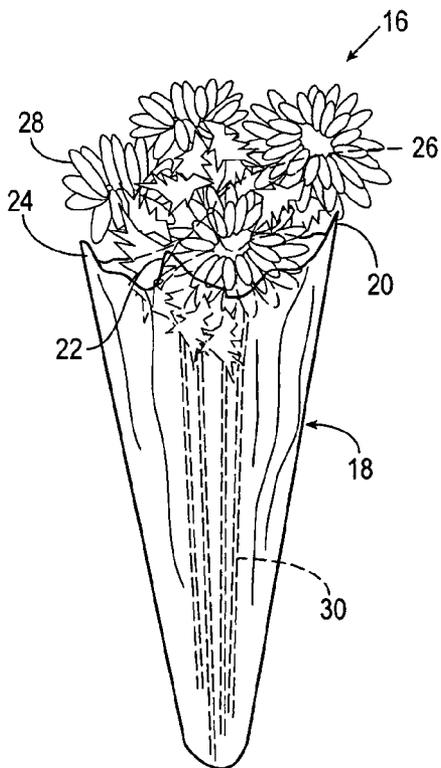


Fig. 2

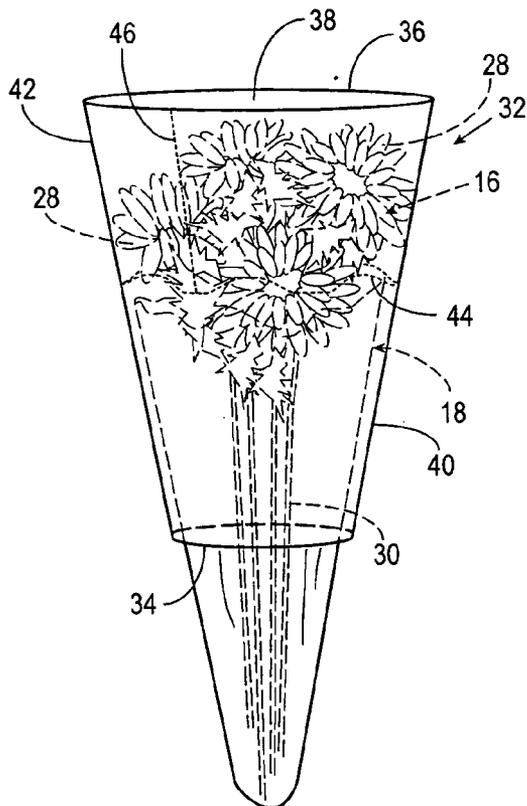


Fig. 4

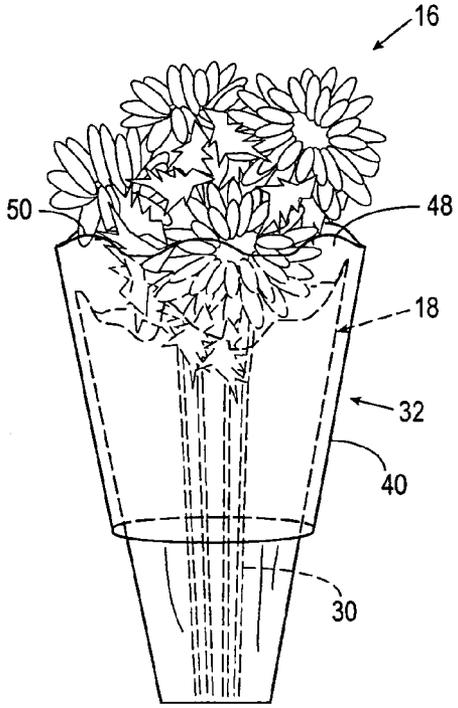


Fig. 5

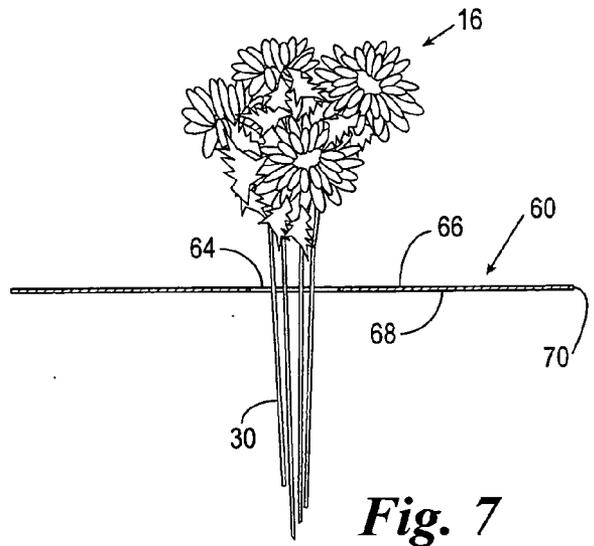


Fig. 7

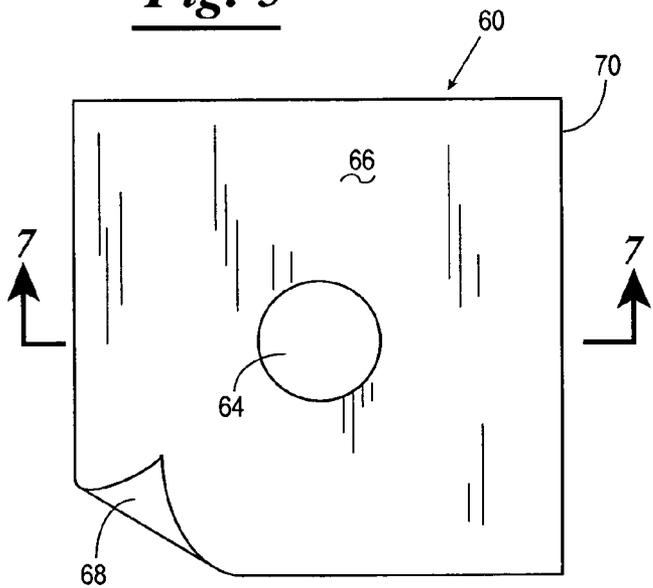


Fig. 6

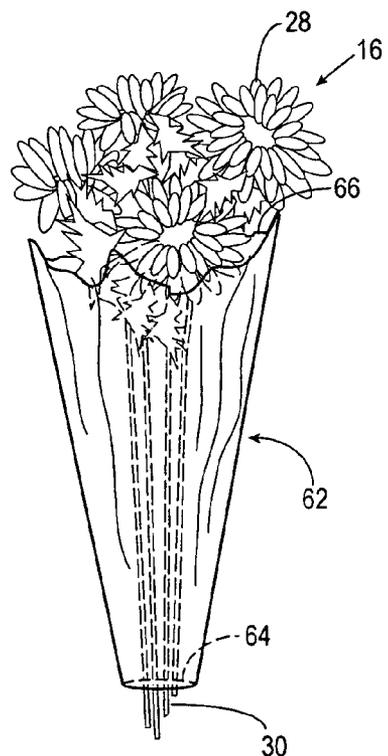


Fig. 8

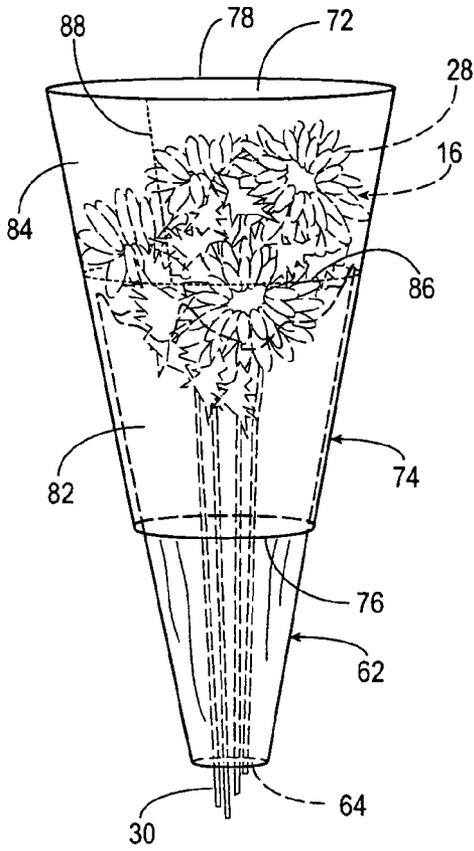


Fig. 9

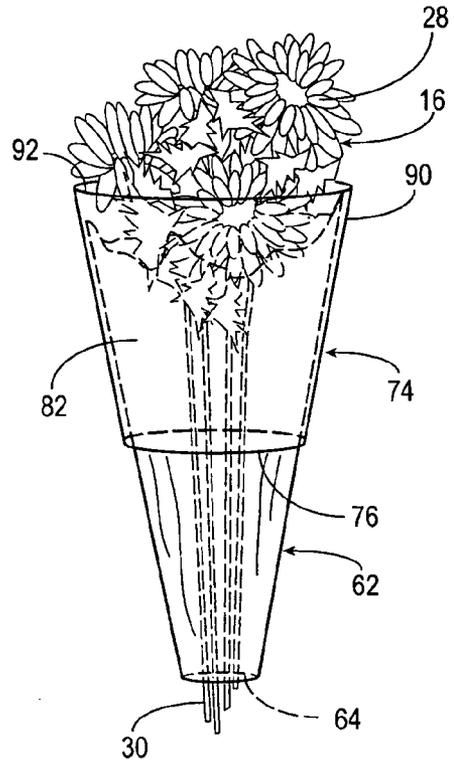


Fig. 10

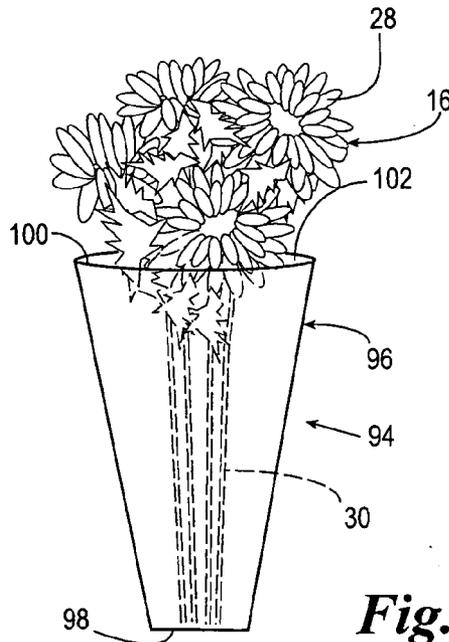


Fig. 11

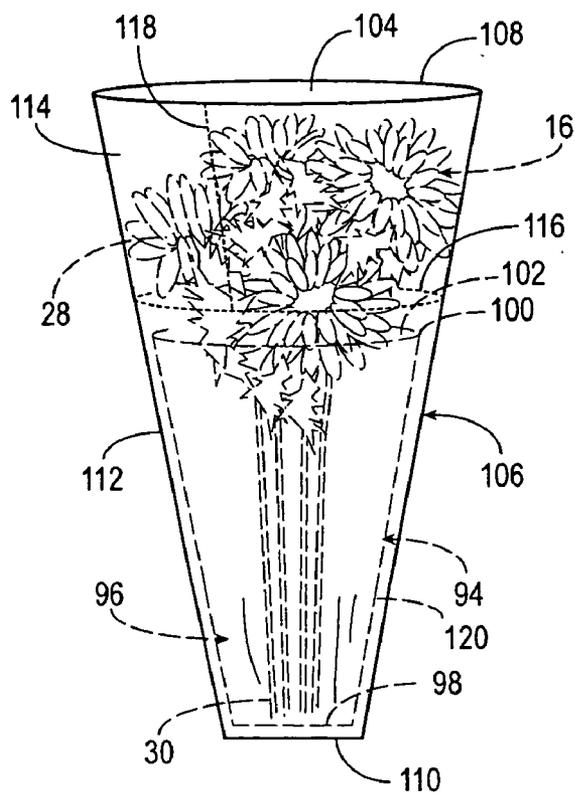


Fig. 12

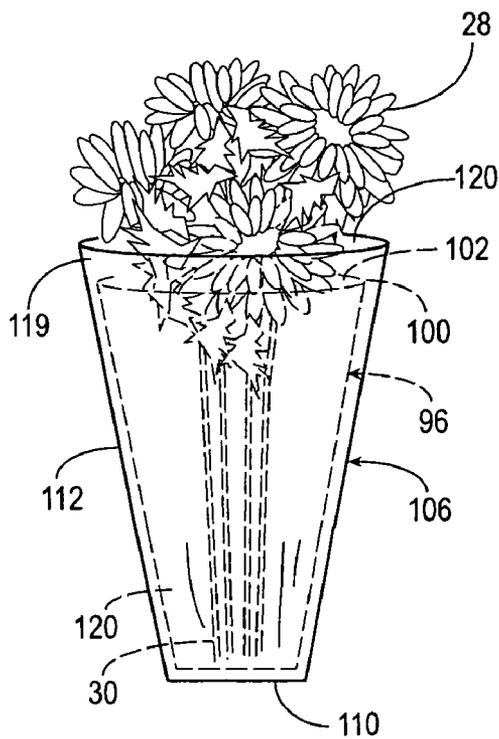


Fig. 13

METHOD FOR WRAPPING A FLORAL GROUPING

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

1. Field of Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to a method for wrapping a floral grouping, and more particularly but not by way of limitation, to a method for wrapping a floral grouping which includes forming a wrapper about the floral grouping and securing the wrapper about the floral grouping with a sleeve.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention relates generally to a method for wrapping a floral grouping whereby a floral grouping is wrapped with a wrapper and the wrapper is secured about the floral grouping with a sleeve which frictionally engages the wrapper. The sleeve is provided with a detaching element which defines a detachable upper portion and a lower portion and the lower portion of the sleeve remains about the wrapper to secure the wrapper about the floral grouping when the detachable upper portion of the sleeve is removed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0004] FIG. 1 is a top plan view of a sheet of material having a substantially square-shaped configuration used for wrapping a floral grouping, one corner of the sheet of material being upwardly turned to show a lower surface of the sheet of material.

[0005] FIG. 2 is a pictorial representation of a floral group having a wrapper formed thereabout from the sheet of material of FIG. 1.

[0006] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a floral sleeve having a detaching element defining a detachable upper portion and a lower portion of the sleeve.

[0007] FIG. 4 is a pictorial representation of the floral sleeve of FIG. 3 disposed about the wrapper of FIG. 2 for securing the wrapper about the floral grouping.

[0008] FIG. 5 is a pictorial representation of the floral sleeve disposed about the wrapper for securing the wrapper about the floral grouping of FIG. 4 wherein an upper portion of the sleeve has been detached.

[0009] FIG. 6 is a top plan view of another embodiment of a sheet of material having a substantially square-shaped configuration used to form a wrapper about a floral grouping, the sheet of material having an opening therein adapted to receive at least a portion of a stem end of the floral grouping, one corner of the sheet of material being upwardly turned to show a lower surface of the sheet of material.

[0010] FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of the sheet of material of FIG. 6 taken along line 7-7 and having the stem of the floral grouping disposed through the opening thereof.

[0011] FIG. 8 is a pictorial representation of a floral grouping having a wrapper formed thereabout from the sheet of material of FIG. 6.

[0012] FIG. 9 is a pictorial representation of the floral sleeve of FIG. 3 disposed about the wrapper of FIG. 8, the sleeve securing the wrapper about the floral grouping.

[0013] FIG. 10 is a pictorial representation of the sleeve disposed about the wrapper and floral grouping wherein the detachable upper portion of the sleeve has been detached.

[0014] FIG. 11 is an elevational view of a bag disposed about a floral grouping to form a wrapper thereabout.

[0015] FIG. 12 is a pictorial representation of the floral sleeve of FIG. 3 disposed about the bag and the floral grouping for securing the bag about the floral grouping.

[0016] FIG. 13 is an elevational view of the floral sleeve of FIG. 12 disposed about the bag wherein the detachable upper portion of the sleeve has been detached.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION DEFINITIONS

[0017] The term "floral grouping" as used herein refers to a single flower having a bloom end and a stem end, a plurality of flowers at least a portion of which have a bloom end and a stem end, foliage, botanical items, propagules, cut flowers, artificial flowers and/or other fresh and/or artificial plants or floral materials, including secondary plants and/or other ornamentation which adds to the synthetic qualities of the overall floral grouping.

[0018] The term "botanical item" when used herein means a natural or artificial herbaceous or woody plant, taken singly or in combination. The term "botanical item" also means any portion or portions of natural or artificial herbaceous or woody plants including stems, leaves, flowers, blossoms, buds, blooms, cones, or roots, taken singly or in combination, or in groupings of such portions such as bouquet or floral grouping.

[0019] The term "propagule" when used herein means any structure capable of being propagated or acting as an agent of reproduction including seeds, shoots, stems, runners, tubers, plants, leaves, roots or spores.

[0020] The term "polymeric film" as used herein refers to a film formed of synthetic polymers, such as polypropylene or naturally occurring polymers such as cellophane, which are relatively strong and not subject to tearing (substantially non-tearable). Various types of "polymeric films" are described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,311,991, issued to Weder et al. on May 17, 1994, the contents of which are hereby expressly incorporated herein by reference.

[0021] The term "floral sleeve or sleeve" when used herein is initially a flexible, flat, collapsed piece of material which is openable to the form of a tube or sleeve. The sleeve may have a closed lower end or an open lower end and may be tapered outwardly from the lower end towards a larger diameter and its upper end so as to be substantially frusto-conical when opened.

[0022] The term "detaching element" as used herein means any element or combination of elements, which enable the tearing away or detachment of one object or portion of an object from another object or portion of an object.

DESCRIPTION OF VARIOUS EMBODIMENTS

[0023] Referring now to the drawings, and more particularly to FIG. 1, shown therein is a sheet of material 10 having an upper surface 12 and a lower surface 14. The sheet of material 10, which is shown as having a substantially square-shaped configuration, is sized so that the sheet of material 10 can be wrapped about a floral grouping 16 to form a wrapper or cover 18 about the floral grouping 16

substantially as shown in FIG. 2. When employing a substantially square-shaped sheet of material 10 to form the wrapper 18, the wrapper 18 so formed is provided with four petal-like portions 20, 22, 24 and 26, each of which terminates with a substantially pointed end formed by the four corners of the substantially square-shaped sheet of material 10.

[0024] The floral grouping 16 about which the sheet of material 10 is wrapped to form the wrapper 18 is provided with a bloom end 28 and a stem end 30. The sheet of material 10 is desirably wrapped about the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16 such that the four petal-like portions 20, 22, 24 and 26 are flared upwardly and outwardly about the bloom end 28 substantially as shown.

[0025] The sheet of material 10 used to form the wrapper 18 can be fabricated of any material having sufficient flexibility and structural integrity to enable one to form the wrapper 18 about the floral grouping 16. Further, the sheet of material 10 employed in the construction of the wrapper 18 will desirably have a substantially planar cross-section and desirably have a thickness from about 0.1 mil to about 30, and more desirably from about 1 mil to about 10 mil. However, it should be understood that the thickness of the sheet of material 10 may vary depending on the type of material from which the sheet of material 10 is constructed, the only requirement being that the sheet of material 10 be capable of being wrapped about the floral grouping 16 to form the wrapper 18. That is, it should be understood that the sheet of material 10 can have any thickness as long as the sheet of material 10 retains sufficient flexibility and foldability so that the sheet of material 10 can be formed about the floral grouping 16 to provide the wrapper 18. For example, the sheet of material 10 can be constructed of paper (untreated and treated in any manner), metal foil, polymeric film, fabric (woven, non-woven, synthetic or natural), cardboard, fiber, cloth, burlap or laminations and combinations thereof.

[0026] If desired, a decorative pattern, such as a color and/or an embossed pattern and/or a hologram and/or other decorative surface ornamentation may be applied to the upper and/or lower surfaces 12 and 14 of the sheet of material 10 or portions thereof, including but not limited to, printed designs, embossed designs, coatings, colors, flocking or metallic finishes. Further, the sheet of material 10 may be totally clear or partially clear or a tinted transparent material.

[0027] Although the sheet of material 10 has been shown and described herein as having a substantially square-shaped configuration, it should also be understood that the sheet of material 10 may assume any geometric, non-geometric, asymmetrical or fanciful shape having any appropriate size so long as the sheet of material 10 can be disposed about the floral grouping 16 to form the wrapper 18. While the wrapper 18 has been described as being formed of one sheet of material 10, it should be understood that the wrapper 18 can be formed of two or more sheets of material 10. In addition, when employing two or more sheets of material 10 to form the wrapper 18 about the floral grouping 16, the configuration of the sheets of material 10 may vary depending on the overall design desired for the wrapper 18. For example, when using two sheets of material 10 to form the wrapper 18, the sheets of material 10 can have the same configuration, such as a square-shaped configuration, or the two sheets of material 10 can have different configurations,

such as a square-shaped configuration and a rectangular-shaped configuration, and if desired, the two sheets of material 10 can be oriented differently relative to one another.

[0028] Referring now to FIG. 3 shown therein is a sleeve 32 which, when disposed about the wrapper 18 containing the floral grouping 16, secures the wrapper 18 about the floral grouping 16 in a manner hereinafter described. The sleeve 32, also known as a tubular or floral sleeve, is provided with a lower end 34, an upper end 36 and a receiving space 38 extending therebetween. The configuration of the sleeve 32 can vary widely but generally will be tapered outwardly from the lower end 34 toward a larger diameter at the upper end 36. That is, the sleeve 32 will generally have a substantially frusto-conical configuration.

[0029] The sleeve 32 is demarcated into a lower portion 40 and an upper portion 42 by a detaching element 44. The detaching element 44 which enables detachment of the upper portion 42 from the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32, may have a non-linear pattern or shape substantially as shown in FIGS. 3 and 4 or a linear pattern or shape.

[0030] The detaching element can be any element, or combination of elements which permits the detachable upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 to be removed from the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32. Examples of such detaching elements include, but are not limited to, perforations, tear strips, zippers and any other devices or elements known in the art, or any combination thereof, which enables the detachment of the detachable upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 from the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32. As previously stated, the detaching element may have a linear or arcuate pattern as well as a non-linear pattern as shown.

[0031] To assist in the removal of the detachable upper portion 42 from the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32, the sleeve 32 may also be provided with a substantially vertically disposed detaching element 46 which extends from the upper end 36 of the sleeve 32 to the detaching element 44. Thus, the substantially vertically disposed detaching element 46 cooperates with the detaching element 44 to remove the detachable upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 in a manner which will be described in more detail hereinafter.

[0032] The sleeve 32 can be constructed of any material capable of being formed into a sleeve and the sleeve 32 can be provided with any size or configuration as long as the sleeve 32 can be disposed about the wrapper 18 and frictionally engage at least a portion of the wrapper 18 to secure the wrapper 18 about the floral grouping 16. For example, the sleeve 32 can be fabricated of paper (untreated and treated in any matter), metal foil, polymeric film, fabric (woven, non-woven, synthetic or natural), cardboard, fiber, cloth, burlap, or laminations and combinations thereof. Further, the material from which the sleeve 32 can be treated to render such material fluid impermeable by any well know technique, if desired.

[0033] Any thickness of material may be utilized in the construction of the sleeve 32 as long as the sleeve 32 functions in accordance with the present invention as described herein. Desirably, the material from which the sleeve 32 is constructed has a thickness in the range from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mil, and more desirably from about 0.5 mil to about 10 mil. The sleeve 32 may be constructed of a single layer of material or a plurality of layers of the same or different types of material. When employing layers of material in the construction of the sleeve 32, the layers of

material may be connected together, laminated or may be employed as separate layers. Such materials used to construct the sleeve 32 are described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,111,637 entitled "Method For Wrapping A Flower Grouping", issued to Weder et al., on May 12, 1992, the entire contents of which are especially incorporated herein by reference.

[0034] The lower end 34 of the sleeve 32 may be open or closed; and the sheet of material 10 employed in the construction of the wrapper 18 can be fabricated of a fluid impermeable material or the material 10 can be treated to render the sheet of material fluid impermeable so that at least a lower portion of the sleeve 32 formed from the sheet of material 10 can be rendered fluid impermeable whereby a fluid, such as water, applied to the floral grouping 16 is retained within the confines of the wrapper 18 and/or the sleeve 32.

[0035] As shown in FIGS. 3 and 4, the sleeve 32 is open and the wrapper 18 containing the floral grouping 16 is disposed within receiving space 38 of the sleeve 32 whereby the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32 frictionally engages the wrapper 18 so that the wrapper 18 is secured in a stable position about at least a portion of the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16 by the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32. That is the floral grouping 16 having the wrapper 18 disposed thereabout (i.e. the wrapped floral grouping) is disposed within the receiving space 38 of the sleeve 32 and the sleeve 32 is size such that, upon positioning the wrapped floral grouping in the receiving space 38 of the sleeve 32, the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32 engages a portion of the wrapper 18 formed about the floral grouping 16 and frictionally engages the wrapper 18 to secure the wrapper 18 about the floral grouping 16. When the sleeve 32 is disposed about the wrapper 18 and the floral grouping 16, the upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 encircles and protects the bloom end 28 of the floral grouping 16 while the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32 encircles a portion of the wrapper 18 and secures the wrapper 18 in position about the floral grouping 16. It should be noted that in the embodiment shown in FIG. 4, the lower end 34 of the sleeve 32 is open.

[0036] As shown in FIG. 5, the upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 has been removed while the lower portion 40 remains intact about the wrapper 18 and at least the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16. It should be noted that when the upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 is removed, the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32 defines a skirt portion 48 having a non-linear upper peripheral edge 50. While the skirt portion 48 defined by the lower portion 40 of the sleeve 32 by the removal of the upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 is shown as having the non-linear upper peripheral edge 50, it should be understood that the upper peripheral edge 50 of the skirt portion 48 can be substantially linear.

[0037] In operation, the sheet of material 10 is wrapped about the floral grouping 16 to provide the wrapper or cover 18 for the floral grouping 16. Once the wrapper 18 has been formed about the floral grouping 16, the sleeve 32 is opened so as to permit the floral grouping 16 having the wrapper 18 formed thereabout to be disposed within the receiving space 38 of the sleeve 32. The sleeve 32 is sized such that the sleeve 32 frictionally engages a portion of the wrapper 18 and secures the wrapper 18 about the floral grouping 16.

[0038] To remove the upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 from the lower portion 40, the upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 is torn along the detaching elements 44 and 46 whereby the upper portion 42 of the sleeve 32 is removed from the

lower portion 40 and the lower portion 40 remains about the wrapper 18 formed of the sheet of material 10 and secures same about the floral grouping 16.

[0039] Referring now to FIG. 6 shown therein is another embodiment of a sheet of material 60 employed to form a wrapper 62 about the floral grouping 16. The sheet of material 60 is similar in construction to the sheet of material 10 hereto for described, except that the sheet of material 60 is provided with an opening or hole 64 formed through a portion of the sheet of material 60. More particularly, the opening or hole 64 is formed through a central portion of the sheet of material 60 and the opening or hole 64 intersects an upper surface 66 and lower surface 68 of the sheet of material 60. Further, the opening or hole 64 is spaced a distance from an outer periphery 70 of the sheet of material 60. While the opening or hole 64 is shown as being substantially centrally located within the sheet of material 60, it should be understood that the opening or hole 64 can be offset relative to the center of the sheet of material 60 if desired.

[0040] Referring now to FIG. 7, the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16 is inserted through the hole or opening 64 to a position where at least a portion of the stem end 30 extends through the hole or opening 64 and extends a distance beyond the lower surface 68 of the sheet of material 60. The sheet of material 60 is then formed about the floral grouping 16 with the upper surface 66 of the sheet of material disposed near the floral grouping 16 and the wrapper 62 formed from the sheet of material 60 encompassing a substantial portion of the floral grouping 16 while a portion of the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16 extend from the wrapper 62 substantially as shown in FIG. 8. Desirably, the wrapper 62 substantially encompasses the bloom end 28 of the floral grouping 16. However, it should be understood that the bloom end 28 of the floral grouping 16 can extend above the wrapper 62 as illustrated in FIG. 8.

[0041] The wrapper 62 is desirably tightly folded or wrapped about the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16. To secure the wrapper 62 about the floral grouping 16, the wrapper 62 formed about the floral grouping 16 is disposed within a receiving space 72 of sleeve 74 substantially as shown in FIG. 9. The sleeve 74, which may also be referred to as a tubular sleeve or a floral sleeve, is provided with an open lower end 76, an open upper end 78 and the receiving space 72 is sized and configured to receive the floral grouping 16 having the wrapper 62 formed thereabout. The sleeve 74 is shown as having a substantially frusto-conical configuration. That is, the sleeve 74 is tapered outwardly from the lower end 76 toward a larger diameter at the upper end 78 thereof. However, it should be understood that the sleeve 74 can be provided with any configuration as long as the sleeve 74 is provided with a receiving space 72 capable of receiving and retaining the wrapped floral grouping therein; and as long as at least a portion of the sleeve 74 is sized to frictionally engage the wrapper 62 disposed about the floral grouping 16 for securing the wrapper 62 about the floral grouping 16.

[0042] The sleeve 74 is similar in construction to the sleeve 32, (i.e. the lower end 76 of the sleeve 72 is open) so that a lower portion of the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16 can extend below the open lower end 76 of the sleeve 74 substantially as shown in FIGS. 9 and 10.

[0043] The sleeve 74 is demarcated into a lower portion 82 and an upper portion 84 by a detaching element 86. The

detaching element **86**, which enables detachment of the upper portion **84** from the lower portion **82**, may have a substantially linear pattern or shape substantially as shown in FIG. 9, or a substantially non-linear pattern or shape as heretofore described with reference to FIG. 3.

[0044] To assist in the removal of the detachable upper portion **84** of the sleeve **74**, the sleeve **74** may also be provided with a substantially vertically disposed detaching element **88** which extends from the upper end **78** of the sleeve **74** to the detaching element **86**. Thus, the substantially vertically disposed detaching element **88** cooperates with the detaching element **86** to remove the detachable upper portion **84** of the sleeve **74**.

[0045] As shown in FIG. 10, the upper portion **86** of the sleeve **74** has been removed while the lower portion **82** remains intact about the wrapper **62** and at least a portion of the stem end **30** of the floral grouping **16**. It should be noted that when the upper portion **84** of the sleeve **74** is removed, the lower portion **82** of the sleeve **74** defines a skirt portion **90** having a substantially linear upper peripheral edge **92**. While the skirt portion **90** defined by the lower portion **82** by the removal of the upper portion **84** of the sleeve **74** is shown as having a substantially linear upper peripheral edge **92**, it should be understood that the upper peripheral edge **92** of the skirt portion **90** can be substantially non-linear.

[0046] The sleeve **74** can be constructed of any material capable of being formed into a sleeve and the sleeve **74** can be provided with any size or configuration as long as the sleeve **74** can be disposed about the wrapper **62** and frictionally engage at least a portion of the wrapper **62** to secure the wrapper **62** about the floral grouping **16**. Thus, the sleeve **74** can be constructed of substantially the same materials as the sleeve **32**; and the material used in the construction of the sleeve **74** can have a thickness substantially corresponding to the materials used in the construction of the sleeve **32**.

[0047] If desired, a decorative pattern, such as a color and/or an embossed pattern and/or a hologram and/or other decorative surface ornamentation may be applied to the upper and/or lower surfaces **66** and **68** of the sheet of material **60** or portions thereof, including but not limited to, printed designs, embossed designs, coatings, colors, flocking or metallic finishes. Further, the sheet of material **60** may be totally clear or partially clear or a tinted transparent material.

[0048] Although the sheet of material **60** has been shown and described herein as having a substantially square-shaped configuration, it should also be understood that the sheet of material **60** may assume any geometric, non-geometric, asymmetrical or fanciful shape having any appropriate size so long as the sheet of material **60** can be disposed about the floral grouping **16** to form the wrapper **62**. While the wrapper **62** has been described as being formed of one sheet of material **60**, it should be understood that the wrapper **62** can be formed of two or more sheets of material **60**. In addition, when employing two or more sheets of material **60** to form the wrapper **62**, the configuration of the sheets of material **60** may vary depending on the overall design desired for the wrapper **62**. For example, when using two sheets of material **60** to form the wrapper **62**, the sheets of material **60** can have the same configuration, such as a square-shaped configuration, or the two sheets of material **60** can have different configurations, such as a square-shaped configuration and a rectangular-shaped configura-

tion, and if desired, the two sheets of material **60** can be oriented differently relative to one another.

[0049] In operation, the stem end **30** of the floral grouping **16** is disposed through the hole or opening **64** of the sheet of material **60** and the sheet of material **60** is wrapped about the stem end **30** of the floral grouping **16** to provide the wrapper **62** which is folded or wrapped about the stem end **30** of the floral grouping **16**. Once the wrapper **62** has been formed about the floral grouping **16**, the sleeve **74** is opened and the floral grouping **16** having the wrapper **62** formed thereabout is disposed within the receiving space **72** of the sleeve **74**. The sleeve **74** is sized such that the sleeve **74** frictionally engages a portion of the wrapper **62** and secures the wrapper **62** about the floral grouping **16**.

[0050] To remove the upper portion **84** of the sleeve **74** from the lower portion **82**, the upper portion **84** is torn along the detaching elements **86** and **88** whereby the upper portion **84** of the sleeve **74** is removed from the lower portion **82** and the lower portion **82** frictionally engages the wrapper **62** and secures the wrapper **62** about the floral grouping **16**.

[0051] Referring now to FIGS. 11-13 shown therein is a bag **94** sized and configured to form a wrapper **96** about at least the stem **30** of the floral grouping **16**. The bag **94** is provided with a lower closed end **98**, an open upper end, and a receiving space **102** extending therebetween. The bag **94** is wrapped about the stem end **30** of the floral grouping **16** to form the wrapper **94**.

[0052] The material from which the bag **94** used to form the wrapper **96** is formed can be fabricated of any material having sufficient flexibility and structural integrity to provide the wrapper **96** and enclose at least the stem portion **30** of the floral grouping **16**. To secure the wrapper **96** formed from the bag **94** about the stem end **30** of the floral grouping **16**, the floral grouping **16** is disposed within the receiving space **102** of the bag **94** substantially as shown in FIG. 11. Thereafter, the wrapper **96** formed from the bag **94** is disposed within a receiving space **104** of a sleeve **106** substantially as shown in FIG. 12. The sleeve **106**, which may also be referred to as a tubular sleeve or floral sleeve, is provided with an open upper end **108**, a lower end **110** and the receiving space **104** which extends between the open upper end **108** and the lower end **110**. In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 12 and 13, the lower end **110** of the sleeve **106** is shown as being a closed end. However, it should be understood that the sleeve **106** can be provided with an open end in the same manner as the sleeves **32** and **74** hereinbefore described with reference to FIGS. 3, 4 and 5 and FIGS. 9 and 10, respectively.

[0053] The sleeve **106** is sized and configured to receive the floral grouping **16** having the wrapper **96** formed thereabout from the bag **94**. Further, the sleeve **106** is shown as having a substantially frusto-conical configuration. That is, the sleeve **106** is tapered outwardly from the lower end **110** toward a larger diameter at the open upper end **108** thereof. However, it should be understood that the sleeve **106** can be provided with any configuration as long as the sleeve **106** is provided with the receiving space **104** which is capable of receiving and retaining the wrapped floral grouping therein; and as long as at least a portion of the sleeve **106** is sized to frictionally engage the wrapper **96** formed from the bag **94** when the bag **94** is disposed about the floral grouping **16** for securing the wrapper **96** formed from the bag **94** about the floral grouping **16**.

[0054] The sleeve 106 is similar in construction to the sleeves 32 and 72 hereinbefore described, except that the lower end 110 is closed as previously described.

[0055] Thus, the sleeve 106 is demarcated into a lower portion 112 and an upper portion 114 by a detaching element 116. The detaching element 116, which enables detachment of the upper portion 114 from the lower portion 112, may have a substantially linear pattern or shape substantially as shown in FIGS. 12 and 13 or a substantially non-linear pattern or shape as hereinbefore described with reference to FIG. 3.

[0056] To assist in the removal of the detachable upper portion 114 of the sleeve 106, the sleeve 106 may be provided with a substantially vertically disposed detaching element 118. Thus, the substantially vertically disposed detaching element 118 cooperates with the detaching element 116 in the removal of the detachable upper portion 84 of the sleeve 74.

[0057] In FIG. 13, the upper portion 114 of the sleeve 106 has been removed while the lower portion 112 remains intact about the wrapper 96 and at least the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16. It should be noted that when the upper portion 114 of the sleeve 106 is removed, the lower portion 112 of the sleeve 106 defines a skirt portion 119 having a substantially linear upper peripheral edge 120. While the skirt portion 119 defined by the lower portion 112 by the removal of the upper portion 114 of the sleeve 106 is shown as having a substantially linear upper peripheral edge 120, it should be understood that the upper peripheral edge 120 of the skirt portion 119 can be substantially non-linear.

[0058] The sleeve 106 can be constructed of any material capable of being formed into a sleeve and the sleeve 106 can be provided with any size or configuration as long as the sleeve 106 can be disposed about the wrapper 96 formed from the bag 94 and at least a portion of the sleeve 106 frictionally engages at least a portion of the wrapper 96 to secure the wrapper 96 about the floral grouping 16. Thus, the sleeve 106 can be constructed of substantially the same materials as the sleeves 32 and 74 hereinbefore described; and the material used in the construction of the sleeve 106 can have a thickness substantially corresponding to the thickness of the materials used in the construction of the sleeves 32 and 74.

[0059] If desired, a decorative pattern, such as cutter and/or an embossed pattern and/or a hologram and/or other decorative surface ornamentation may be applied to an outer surface 120 of the bag 94 used to form the wrapper 96 about the floral grouping 16. Such ornamentation may include, but is not limited to, printed designs, embossed designs, coatings, colors, flocking or metallic finishes. Further, the bag may be made so as to be totally clear or partially clear or of a tinted transparent material.

[0060] In operation, the bag 96 is positioned about at least the stem end 30 of the floral grouping 16 to provide the wrapper 96 for the floral grouping 16. Once the wrapper 96 has been formed about the floral grouping 16, the sleeve 106 is opened so as to permit the floral grouping 16 having the wrapper 96 formed thereabout to be disposed within the receiving space 104 of the sleeve 106. The sleeve 106 is sized such that the sleeve 106 frictionally engages a portion of the wrapper 96 and secures the wrapper 96 about the floral grouping 16.

[0061] To remove the upper portion 114 of the sleeve 106 from the lower portion 112, the upper portion 114 of the

sleeve 106 is torn along the detaching elements 116 and 118 whereby the upper portion 114 of the sleeve 106 is removed from the lower portion 112 and the lower portion 112 remains secured about the wrapper 96 formed from the bag 94 and secures same about the floral grouping 16.

[0062] While certain embodiments of a sleeve have been disclosed herein, including both open bottom and closed bottom sleeves, it is to be understood that any sleeve capable frictionally engaging a wrapper formed about the floral grouping can be employed for forming the wrapper about the floral grouping.

[0063] Changes may be made in the construction or operation of the various components, elements and assemblies described herein or in the steps or the sequence of steps of the methods described herein without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for wrapping a floral grouping comprising: providing the floral grouping having a bloom end and a stem end; providing a sheet of material capable of being wrapped about at least a portion of the bloom end and the stem end of the floral grouping; wrapping the sheet of material about at least a portion of the stem end of the floral grouping whereby at least a portion of the bloom end of the floral grouping is encompassed by the sheet of material so as to provide a wrapped floral grouping; providing a tubular sleeve having a lower end, an upper end and a floral grouping receiving space extending therebetween, the tubular sleeve having a detaching element provided therein for defining a detachable upper portion and a lower portion; disposing the wrapped floral grouping in the floral grouping receiving space of the tubular sleeve whereby the wrapper is secured in a stable portion about at least a portion of the stem end of the floral grouping and the detaching element defining the detachable upper portion and the lower portion of the tubular sleeve is disposed near an upper end of the wrapper.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet of material is provided with an opening extending therethrough, the opening spaced a distance from an outer peripheral of the sheet of material and wherein in the step of wrapping the sheet of material about at least a portion of the stem end of the floral grouping such step comprises: disposing at least a portion of the stem end of the floral grouping through the opening in the sheet of material; and wrapping the sheet of material about the floral grouping.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein the sheet of material is a substantially flat square-shaped sheet of material having four corners and wherein the four corners of the sheet of material are flared so as to extend a distance outwardly and upwardly wherein the sheet of material is wrapped about the floral grouping.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein the sheet of material has a thickness in the range of from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mil.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein the sheet of material is constructed of a material selected from the group consisting of paper, metal foil, polymeric material, cloth, burlap and laminations and combinations.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the sheet of material is a substantially flat, flexible sheet of material.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the substantially flat, flexible sheet of material is a substantially square-shaped sheet of material having four corners and wherein the four corners are flared so as to extend a distance outwardly and upwardly when the substantially square-shaped sheet of material is wrapped about the floral grouping.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the substantially flat, flexible sheet of material has a thickness in the range of from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mil.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the substantially flat, flexible sheet of material is selected from the group consisting of paper, metal foil, polymeric material, cloth, burlap and laminations and combinations thereof.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the lower end of the tubular sleeve is open.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the lower end of the tubular sleeve is closed and at least the lower portion of the tubular sleeve is fluid impermeable.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising detaching the detachable upper portion of the tubular sleeve from the lower portion thereof whereby the lower portion of the tubular sleeve cooperates with the wrapper to provide a decorative cover for the floral grouping.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the lower end of the tubular sleeve is open.

14. The method of claim 12 wherein the lower end of the tubular sleeve is closed and at least the lower portion of the tubular sleeve is fluid impermeable.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the lower portion of the tubular sleeve further comprises a skirt portion having a non-linear upper peripheral edge.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the lower portion of the tubular sleeve further comprises a skirt portion.

17. A method for wrapping a floral grouping comprising:

providing the floral grouping;

providing a wrapper having an open upper end, a closed lower end and a floral grouping retaining space extending therebetween;

disposing the floral grouping the floral grouping retaining space of the wrapper whereby at least a portion of the floral grouping is encompassed by the wrapper to provide a wrapped floral grouping;

providing a sleeve having a lower end, an upper end and a receiving space extending therebetween, the sleeve tapered outwardly from the lower end toward a larger diameter at the upper end, the sleeve having at least one

detachable element provided therein for defining a detachable upper portion and a lower portion;

disposed the wrapped floral grouping in the receiving space of the sleeve whereby at least a portion of the lower portion of the sleeve frictionally engages a portion of the wrapper and secures the wrapper in a stable portion about at least a portion of the floral grouping.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the wrapper is constructed of a material selected from the group consisting of paper, metal foil, polymeric material, cloth, burlap and laminations and combinations.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein the sleeve is fabricated of a material having a thickness in the range of from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mil.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the lower end of the sleeve is open.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the wrapper is formed of a fluid impermeable material.

22. The method of claim 17 further comprising detaching the detachable upper portion of the tubular sleeve from the lower portion thereof whereby the lower portion of the tubular sleeve cooperates with the wrapper to provide a decorative cover for the floral grouping.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein the lower end of the sleeve is open.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the lower portion of the sleeve further comprises a skirt portion having a non-linear upper peripheral edge.

25. The method of claim 17 wherein the lower portion of the sleeve further comprises a skirt portion.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein the skirt portion has a non-linear upper peripheral edge.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein the sleeve is fabricated of a material having a thickness in the range of from about 0.1 mil to about 30 mil.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the lower end of the sleeve is open.

29. The method of claim 27 wherein the wrapper is constructed of a material selected from the group consisting of paper, metal foil, polymeric material, cloth, burlap and laminations and combinations.

30. The method of claim 29 further comprising detaching the detachable upper portion of the tubular sleeve from the lower portion thereof whereby the lower portion of the tubular sleeve cooperates with the wrapper to provide a decorative cover for the floral grouping.

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