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(54) **Combination bag and display dish**

(57) A combination candy bag and candy dish (10) is defined. A candy bag (10) is made with a flat circular base (12) that forms the lower portion (18) of the bag. The bag converts to a candy dish when the upper edges of the bag are folded or rolled down. The lower portion

(18) and inside surface of the bag can be decorated with color or graphics to simulate a candy dish. Brand name advertising can also be imprinted thereon, which will be exposed when the upper edges are rolled outwardly and down.

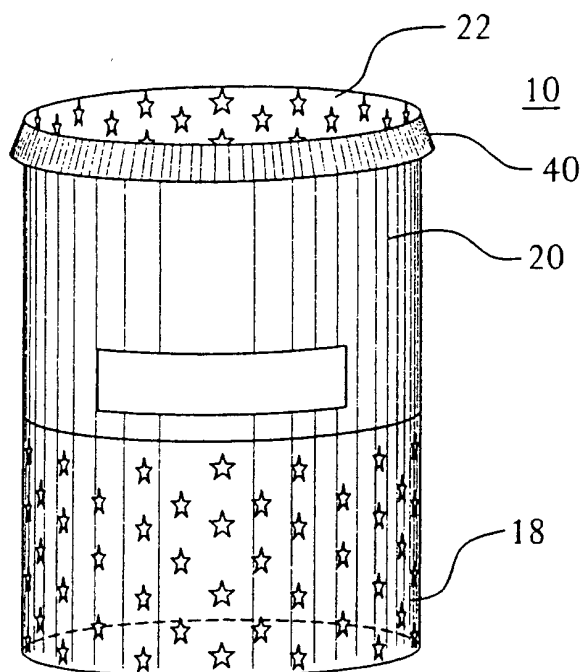


FIG. 3

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to packaging for foodstuffs. In particular the invention is directed to an improved confectionery bag which may also serve as a decorative dish for serving the confectionery.

[0002] Candy bags are widely used to store, ship, and keep articles of candy fresh. Manufacturers of candy have long attempted to find candy bags which contain and protect the candy while presenting a pleasant appearance. It is desirable to provide a package which is decorative and informative, thereby encouraging the consumer to purchase a particular candy product.

[0003] It is known to have packages that may be disposed in an upright position while they are open at one end. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 3,099,568 to Brody *et al* shows a candy package comprising a rigid base disposed within a clear circular bag. A toy or trinket is disposed on the top of the package when filled. The toy is secured to the top of the package. When removed, the open end of the package forms an open structure.

[0004] U.S. Pat. No. 1,846,748 to Palmer shows a package having a rigid base, providing a place for labels, with a clear flexible material attached to the inside wall of the base and extending upwardly. The flexible material forms a container for the storage of goods. When full, a tie is placed at the top of the flexible material, enclosing the goods.

[0005] In addition to the above noted patents, Myers U.S. Pat. No. Des. 296,870 shows a gift sack formed on its bottom or base to support the package in an upright, open condition. Woods U.S. Pat. No. 1,889,882 shows a similar type bag.

[0006] Colato U.S. Pat. No. 3,285,495 shows a package having a cup shaped base with an outer sleeve projecting from the upper rim of the cup. The top of the sleeve is folded to close the package. When opened, the sleeve provides an open top for access to the food within the cup.

[0007] Hulbert U.S. Pat. No. 1,753,928 shows cup shaped packages having an inner sleeve that retains food. The inner sleeve is capable of extending upwardly from the cup and serves to close the container by inward folding.

[0008] The present invention provides a container comprising: a bag made of flexible material comprising: an outer surface; an inner surface; a top end; a bottom end; and a base disposed on the bottom end of the bag, forming a support surface for the bag, the container forming a serving dish when the top end of the bag is folded outwardly and rolled down towards the bottom end of the bag. The inner surface of the bag may be decorated with graphics which will therefore be exposed once the top end is rolled downwardly converting the bag into its dish configuration.

[0009] The outside surface of the bag may be divided into upper and lower sections. Only the lower section is preferably visible when the bag is in its dish configuration.

Therefore, decorative printing or advertisements may be provided on the lower section. The decoration may or may not be the same as that printed on the inside surface. The upper section may be imprinted with consumer information which the user may wish to be hidden from sight once the bag is in the dish configuration.

[0010] For the purpose of illustrating the invention, there is shown in the drawings a form which is presently preferred; it being understood, however, that this invention is not limited to the precise arrangements and instrumentalities shown.

[0011] FIG. 1 illustrates a perspective front view, in simplified form, of an embodiment of the present invention while in a closed configuration.

[0012] FIG. 2 is a side view of the embodiment of FIG. 1.

[0013] FIG. 3 illustrates the embodiment of Figure 1 with the bag in the open configuration.

[0014] FIG. 4 illustrates the embodiment of Figure 1 with the sides of the bag rolled down.

[0015] FIG. 5 illustrates the embodiment of Figure 1 in the dish configuration.

[0016] In the drawings, where like numerals identify like elements, there is shown a combination candy bag and candy dish which is generally identified by the numeral 10. As shown in FIG.'s 1 and 2, the preferred embodiment of the candy bag 10 is in its sealed configuration as a consumer might find the candy bag in a store. The candy bag 10 has a circular, substantially rigid base member 12. Base member 12 may be made of any suitable stiff material such as cardboard, metal or plastic. Base member 12 has a circumference 30. The sides of the bag are formed from a flexible sheet material which extends upwardly from the base member 12 to form a tubular structure 14. The flexible sheet material may be any conventional packaging material such as cellophane or glassine, but is preferably a material which substantially holds its shape while free of external forces (e.g. manipulation by the customer). Preferred materials for the flexible sheet include various paper and polymer laminates, foil, low density polyethylene and copolymers. The use of polypropylene, polyvinylchloride, nylon resins and the like are also contemplated as a single sheet or as part of a multi-ply laminate or coextrusion. The bottom of the tubular structure 14 is attached to the base member around its circumference 30. A variety of conventional methods may be used to attach the sheet material to the circumference of the base member, such as adhesives, heat sealing or by mechanical fastening. The appropriate attachment method may vary with the materials used.

[0017] The tubular structure 14 has a top 40 which may be sealed upon itself in a number of ways to form an enclosed cavity 16. FIG.'s 1 and 2 show the candy bag after being sealed by a preferred method. This seal is formed by bringing two opposing points 42 and 44 of the circular top into contact with each other and applying a heat seal. In FIG. 1, point 42 is located directly behind

point 44 and attached thereto; the two opposing points of the top which are farthest and equidistant from points 42 and 44 during the sealing method are designated points 46 and 48. Once the bag is sealed, as shown in FIG. 1, points 46 and 48 become opposing end points of the seal.

[0018] FIG. 2 is a view looking directly at the side of the candy bag while in its sealed, unrolled configuration. The top of the side is point 46 defined above. Points 42, 44 and 48 lie behind point 46 and are not visible.

[0019] The tubular structure 14 may further include a lower section 18 and a top section 20, each on the exterior of the bag. Lower section 18 may be printed with distinctive designs or decorations. The designs on lower section 18 may be changed from time to time to correspond with an upcoming holiday for which the manufacturer wishes to specially market the candy. Such designs could include cheerful Easter bunnies near Easter or scary monsters near Halloween. In contrast to lower section 18, upper section 20 may have conventional consumer information printed thereon. Such information may include trademarks, nutritional information, price and the like. Both lower section 18 and upper section 20 are visible to the consumer while the product is displayed at a store. Once the candy bag is converted into its candy dish configuration, as described below, upper section 20 is no longer visible.

[0020] As shown in FIG. 3, the candy bag may form an open topped cylinder once opened by the consumer. Preferably, the bag maintains its vertically extending cylindrical shape until manipulated by the customer. Once the candy bag has been opened, the inside surface 22 of the bag is visible. The inside surface is decorated in similar fashion to the lower section 18 of the outside.

[0021] The decorations or designs placed thereon need not be identical, but preferably enkindle human feelings related to the same holiday. It is not necessary that the decorative printing on the inside or lower section of the outside of the bag be of a holiday nature. Those skilled in the arts of marketing and advertising should understand that any desirable design may be imprinted thereon.

[0022] As shown in FIG. 4, the top of the candy bag may be outwardly rolled or folded down in the direction of arrow 50. As this process proceeds, a lip 52 is formed. The lip 52 becomes substantially rigid as the folding or rolling continues.

[0023] As shown in FIG. 5, the top section 20 of the candy bag may be rolled down until no part of top section 20 is visible to the consumer. Once rolled to the desired height, the candy bag is transformed into its candy dish configuration, revealing candy 60. Lip 52 is now substantially rigid.

[0024] The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential attributes thereof and, accordingly, reference should be made to the appended claims, rather than to the foregoing specification, as indicating the scope of

the invention.

Claims

1. A container comprising:
 - a bag made of flexible material comprising:
 - an outer surface;
 - an inner surface;
 - a top end;
 - a bottom end; and
 - a base disposed on the bottom end of the bag, forming a support surface for the bag, the container forming a serving dish when the top end of the bag is folded outwardly and rolled down towards the bottom end of the bag.
2. The container of claim 1 wherein the flexible material is also semirigid.
3. The container of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the flexible material is a transparent film.
4. The container of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the flexible material is paper.
5. The container of claim 4 wherein the paper is coated.
6. The container of any preceding claim wherein the inner surface of the bag is decorated with color or graphics.
7. The container of claim 6 wherein the color or graphics is exposed to form a decorative rim when the container is folded outwardly and rolled down to form a serving dish.
8. The container of any preceding claim wherein the base is flat and circular.
9. The container of claim 8 wherein the base is disposed on the inner surface.
10. The container of any preceding claim wherein the outer surface comprises an upper section and a lower section, said lower section being decorated with color or graphics.
11. The container of claim 10 wherein consumer information is imprinted on the upper section of the outer surface.
12. A combination bag and dish comprising:
 - a bag made of flexible material comprising:
 - a decorated outer surface;

a decorated inner surface;
an openable top end;
a closed bottom end; and
a flat circular base member disposed on the inner surface proximate the bottom end of the bag, 5
the bag forming a decorative dish when the top end of the bag is open, folded outwardly and rolled down towards the bottom end of the bag, 10
exposing the decorated inner surface adjacent the decorated outer surface.

13. The combination bag and dish of claim 12 wherein candy is disposed within the bag.

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14. A combination candy bag and candy dish comprising:

a flat circular base member; and
a vertically projecting upper portion extending from the edge of the base member and defining with the base an inner volume, 20
the upper portion having an inner surface and an outer surface, the inner surface being decorated with color or graphics, the outer surface 25
having an upper section and a decorated lower section, and
the upper portion being foldable outwardly and downwardly to form a rim and exposing the decorative color graphics on the inner surface. 30

15. The combination candy bag and candy dish of claim 14 further comprising:

candy disposed within the inner volume; and 35
wherein the candy is exposed when the upper portion is opened and folded downwardly.

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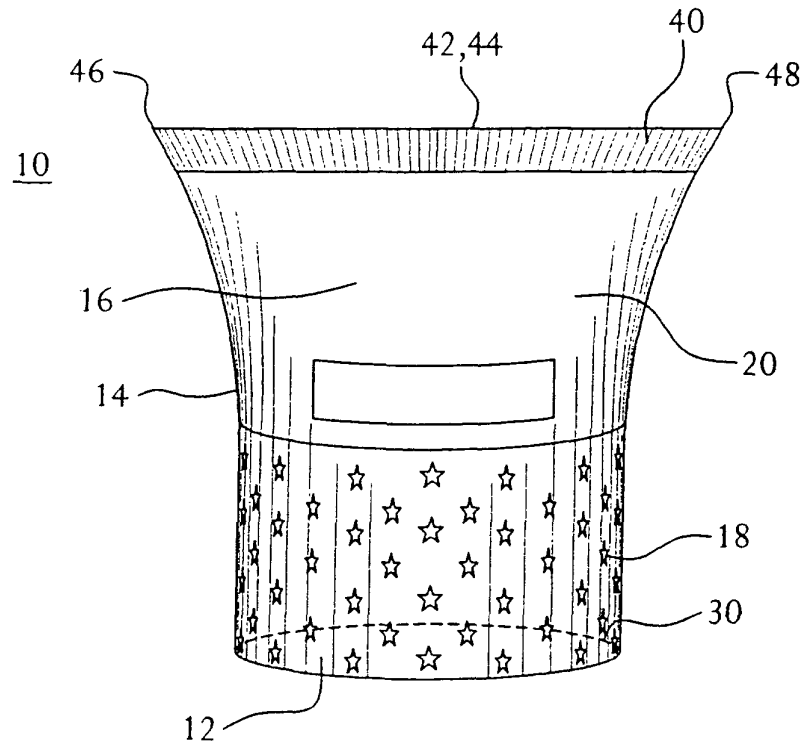


FIG. 1

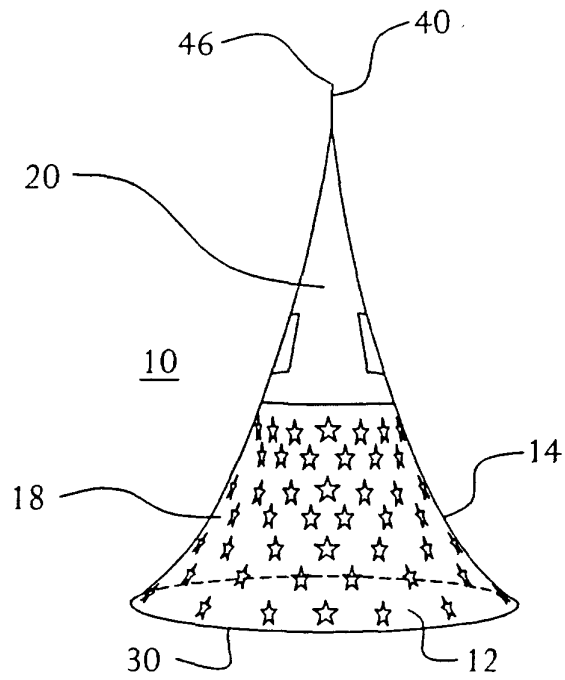


FIG. 2

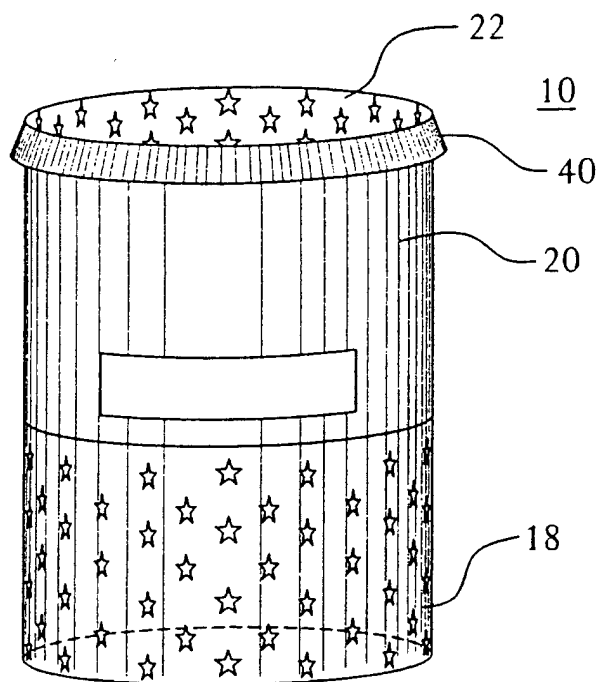


FIG. 3

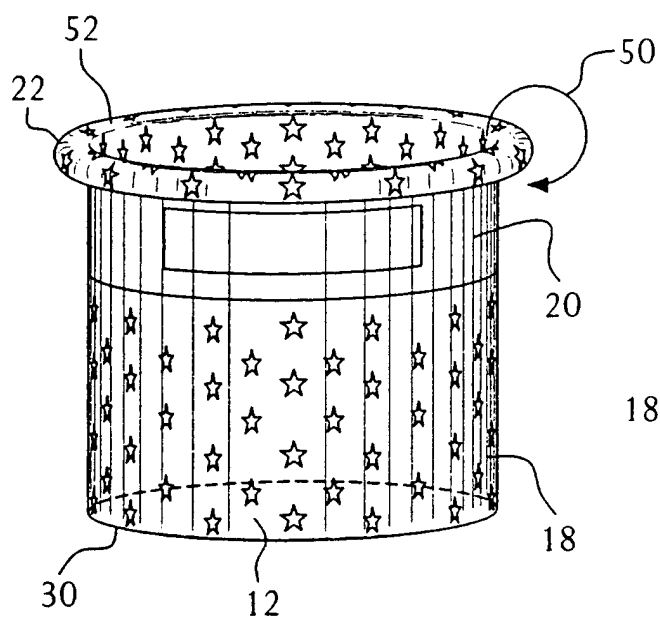


FIG. 4

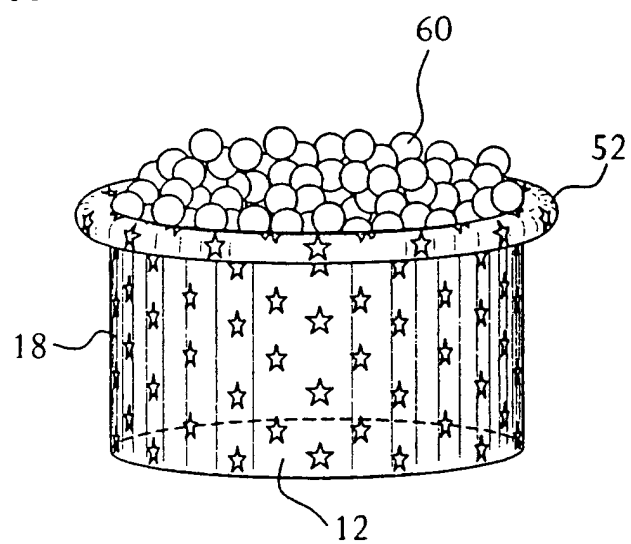


FIG. 5