



US 20080128421A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Ulbrand et al.

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2008/0128421 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Jun. 5, 2008**

(54) **INSULATED CONTAINER WITH CAP**

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

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Nov. 30, 2006 (AU) 2006101009

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
B65D 55/16 (2006.01)
B65D 81/38 (2006.01)
B65D 25/20 (2006.01)

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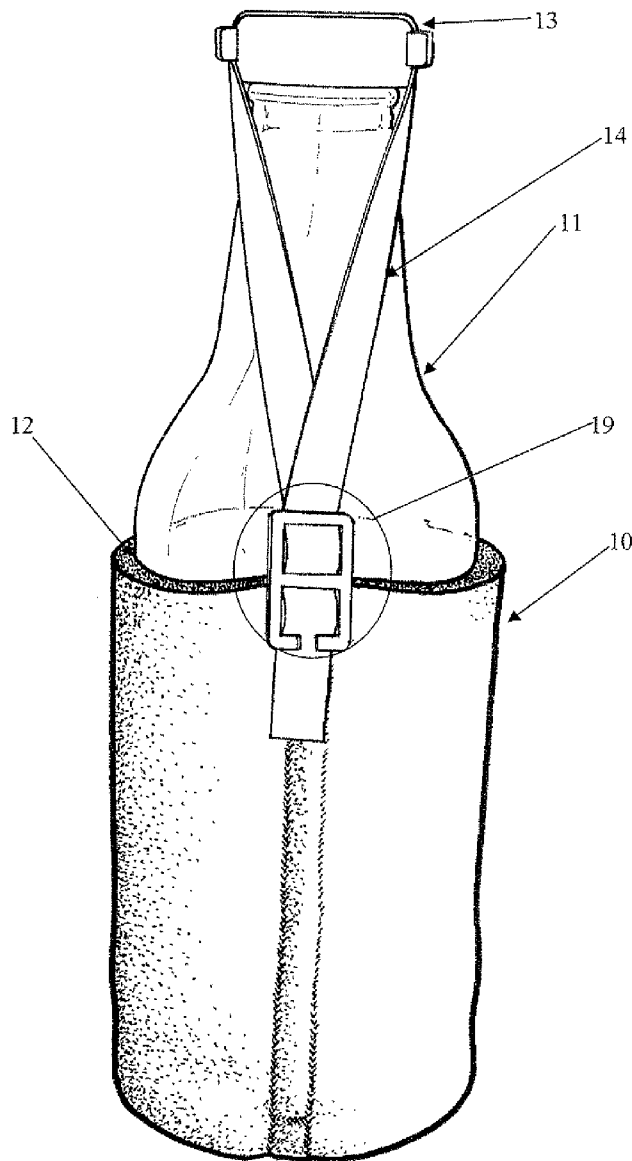
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **220/375; 220/592.2; 220/739**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An insulated container with cap, the insulated container formed from a sleeve of resilient material to receive a container, a cap for closing the opening of a received container, and a resilient attachment strap attaching the cap to the insulated container.

(21) Appl. No.: **11/947,414**

(22) Filed: **Nov. 29, 2007**



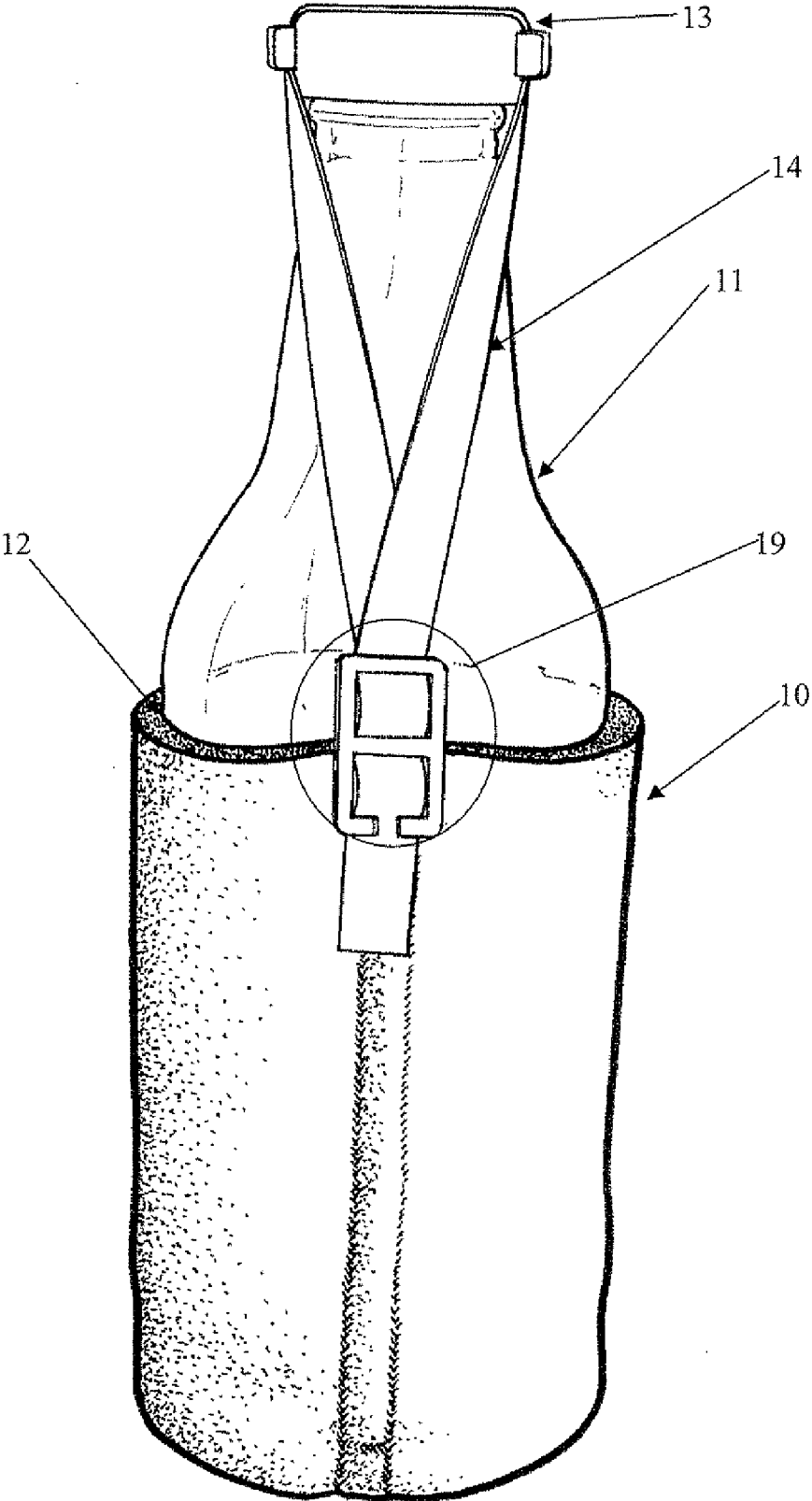


Figure 1

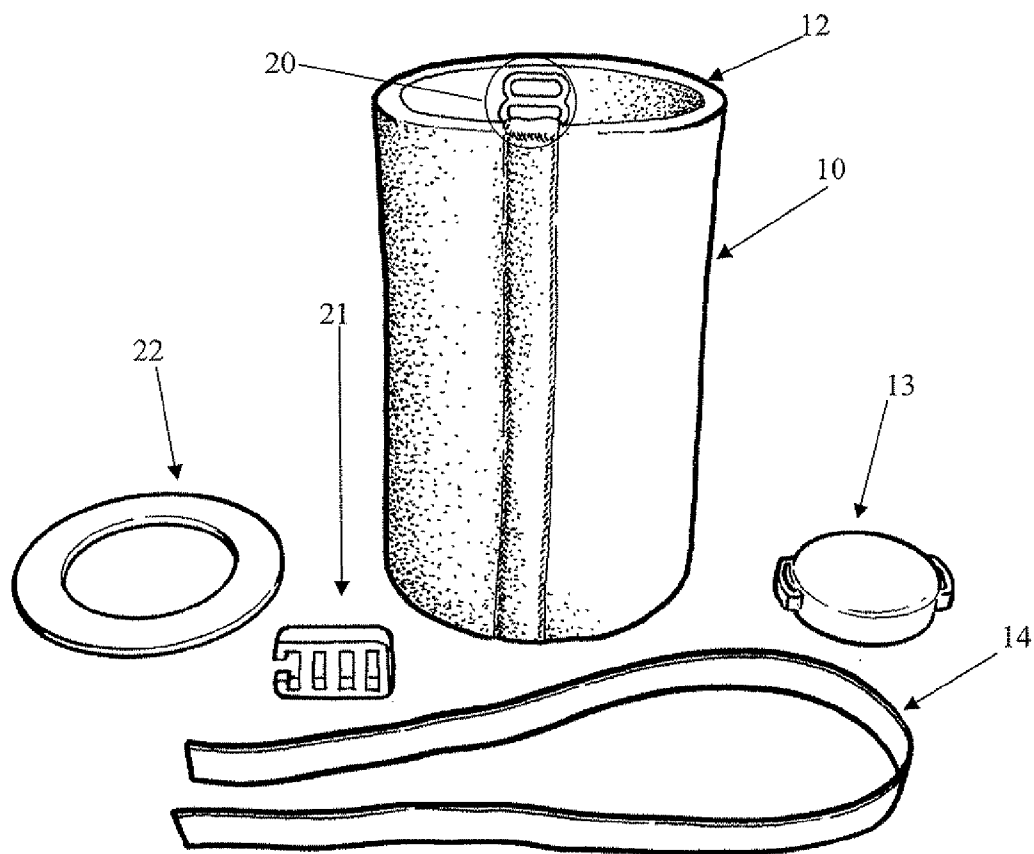


Figure 2

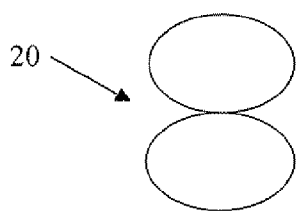


Figure 3

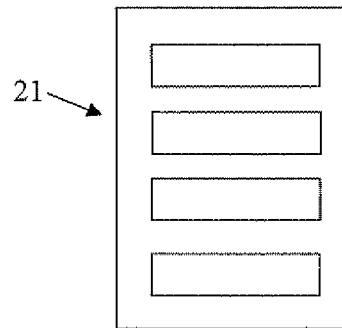


Figure 4

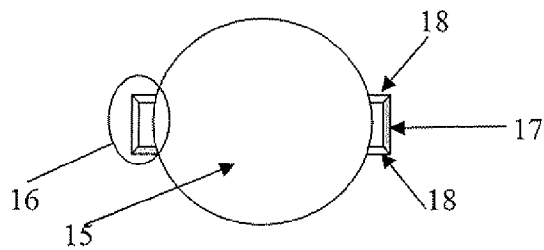


Figure 5

INSULATED CONTAINER WITH CAP

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to containers to hold a containers and particularly beverage containers which thermally insulate beverage containers.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] Insulated beverage can containers are well known, especially of the type dimensioned to telescopically receive a metal beverage can in an arrangement in which the upper marginal edge of the can projects somewhat above the top of the insulated container to facilitate consumption of the contents. Conventionally, such can containers are without lids and thus the beverage can is exposed to ambient contamination; e.g., dust, insects and the like.

[0003] The insulated contained is usually an annular band of insulating material which may or may not have a circular bottom piece depending upon the preference of the manufacturer.

[0004] One apparatus directed to overcoming some of these issues includes the provision of an attachment closure that includes a lid and means for mounting the lid on the container, which means includes a hinge whereby the lid may be opened and closed. The means mounting the lid on the can features an annular band for removably encircling the insulated container about its marginal upper edge. The band is adjustable as to size and thus adapted to fit containers of different diameters. The lid is of insulating material to match that of the container. The lid is easily opened and closed, and the entire attachment is of sturdy design and low-cost construction capable of use over an extended period of time.

[0005] However, insulated beverage containers such as those described above can also be used for bottles. The type of improved apparatus described above cannot accommodate a bottle which has a neck portion which places the drinking opening of the bottle a relatively large distance above the top of the insulated container.

[0006] Bottles in insulated containers face the same sorts of problems as a can and the needs of users with respect to bottles held in insulated containers such as those described above, have gone unmet.

[0007] It would therefore be a substantial contribution to the art to provide an insulated container for a bottle which overcomes or ameliorates the problem of exposure of the bottle opening to ambient contamination; e.g., dust, insects and the like.

[0008] It will be clearly understood that, if a prior art publication is referred to herein, this reference does not constitute an admission that the publication forms part of the common general knowledge in the art in Australia or in any other country.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The present invention is directed to a drink holder with cap, which may at least partially overcome at least one of the abovementioned disadvantages or provide the consumer with a useful or commercial choice.

[0010] In one form, the invention resides in a insulated container with cap, the insulated container having

[0011] a) an annular wall terminating in an upper marginal edge providing an open top for receiving a container wherein the height of the wall is less than that of

the received container whereby a portion of the received container is exposed above the aforesaid marginal edge,

[0012] b) A cap for closing the opening of the received container; and

[0013] c) A resilient attachment strap attaching the cap to the insulated container, the effective length of the resilient attachment strap being shorter than the distance between the marginal edge of the insulated container and the cap.

[0014] The combination of the insulated drink holder with an attached cap provides means by which the cap is not lost when removed from the opening of the container and which is also replaceable after use. This results in a minimisation of bugs and other undesirable animals or detritus from entering the container as well as potential losses through spillage. It also assists with keeping whatever the container is storing in a fresher state, for example, in the case of a carbonated beverage, the cap would assist with the retention of "fizz" in the drink. An important aspect of using the insulated container with cap is again in the field of holding drinks as when properly used, replacing the cap after each drink is taken from the received container, the dangers from drink spiking may be minimised.

[0015] The insulated container used according to the invention is typically similar or the same as that termed a "stubby cooler" which may be referred to in the alternative as a koozie or coozie. However, other insulated coolers are known. The insulated cooler will typically be used for bottles, cans or any container holding material. The material held in the container will typically be food or drinks, but may be other material held for transport or the like. Importantly, insulated containers are normally used for material which is temperature fragile.

[0016] The insulated container of the present invention includes an annular wall terminating in an upper marginal edge providing an open top for receiving a container wherein the height of the wall is less than that of the received container whereby a portion of the received container is exposed above aforesaid marginal edge.

[0017] The insulated container is typically cylindrical in configuration with open ends. The lower end of the insulated container may be closed. The annular wall is typically formed by providing a planar sheet of material and by joining the first end of the sheet to the opposite end, rolling the sheet as required. The joining of the ends of the sheet may be performed by stitching the ends together, gluing or by other means.

[0018] According to a particularly preferred embodiment, a sealing strip may be provided, stitched over the region of the joint to provide reinforcement.

[0019] The annular wall (and bottom wall if provided) will typically be formed of a flexible, resilient material. A foam plastic material is preferred and especially preferred is a material such as neoprene. The neoprene will preferably be approximately 5 mm in thickness, although the thickness can vary according to the application.

[0020] Alternatively, the insulated container may be formed using an injection moulding or similar process using appropriate materials. In this form, the container is preferably formed as a unitary product. The insulated contained may have portions of the strap attachment assembly integrally formed therewith.

[0021] The overall size of the insulated container is not considered to be a limiting factor and the container may be

manufactured in a variety of sizes. Typically, an outside surface of the annular wall will be provided with printing or advertising material.

[0022] The insulated container of the invention has a cap for closing an opening of the received container. The cap provided will preferably be rigid, but it need not be in order to perform its function.

[0023] The cap provided will be sized to cover the opening of the received container. This may be accomplished in a variety of ways. For example, the device of the invention may be sold with multiple caps, provided in a size-graduated set so that the cap can be interchanged when a different sized container is used. Alternatively, a single cap may be provided having a plurality of concentric ribs on an inner surface to receive the container mouth between adjacent ribs. As a farther alternative, a flexible cap may be provided.

[0024] The cap will preferably be of unitary construction. A circular cap is preferred. The cap will typically have a substantially planar body portion and a circumferentially depending skirt portion extending from an edge of the body portion. Sealing means such as an O-ring may also be provided to enhance the seal between the cap and the container opening.

[0025] Mounting means are typically provided to mount the attachment strap to the cap. According to a preferred configuration, a mounting means is provided on either lateral side of the cap. The provision of two opposed mounting means typically balances the load on the cap to maintain the cap in position.

[0026] The mounting means is preferably a U-shaped member with a base wall and a pair of spaced apart side walls. The side walls preferably have an end attached to the base wall, normally integrally formed therewith, and a free end. The free end is preferably attached to the skirt portion of the cap. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the U-shaped member is integrally formed with the cap. The attachment strap is preferably received through an opening defined between the skirt portion of the cap and each U-shaped member.

[0027] The device of the present invention also includes a resilient attachment strap attaching the cap to the insulated container, the effective length of the resilient attachment strap being less than the distance between the marginal edge of the insulated container and the cap. The strap can be removed from each of the cap and the insulated container.

[0028] The strap is preferably manufactured of a resilient material and materials such as silicone, rubber or substitutes are preferred. Normally, a single strap is provided but there may be more than one.

[0029] The attachment strap typically extends from an attachment assembly mounted on or relative to the insulated container, upwardly through the U-shaped mounting member provided on one side of the cap, across the cap and down through the other U-shaped mounting member, to the attachment assembly.

[0030] A particular longitudinal shape of the strap is not essential to the invention, neither is a particular cross-sectional shape. The most important aspect of the strap is that it be length adjustable, typically by using the attachment assembly to allow for containers of different heights to be accommodated.

[0031] The device of the present invention will also typically include a strap attachment assembly. The strap attachment assembly may include one or more parts, provided that

it attaches the strap securely to the insulated container and that it allows length adjustment of the strap.

[0032] Typically, the strap attachment assembly includes two components. The first component is preferably attached to the insulated container, although it may be integrally formed depending upon the method of manufacture of the container. The first component is normally manufactured of either a metal or plastic material. The first component is normally figure-8 shaped or lemniscate shaped. The first component normally has two openings, the first opening preferably used to attach the first component to the insulated container. Typically, the first component is attached to the insulated container using the sealing strip covering the region of the join in the insulated container, looped through the first opening in the first component and stitched or otherwise attached to the outer and inner surfaces of the insulated container. The second opening in the first component is typically used to attach to the second component.

[0033] The second component is normally provided to attach the strap and to provide the length adjustment. The second component is similarly manufactured of a metal or plastic material. The second component is normally an elongate member with multiple, usually three or four, openings spaced over its length. This is a preferred method only and the attachment may be provided according to any method.

[0034] Usually, a portion of the attachment strap is received through the openings to temporarily fix the length of the strap. The strap normally extends through the openings in an annulated or S-shaped pattern. Normally, both free ends of the strap are fed through the openings. Typically, once tension is placed on the strap by stretching the strap to place the cap in position on the opening of the container, the strap will be held even more securely in the second component due to the resilience of the material used.

[0035] The device of the present invention may further include a container support means, usually located in the insulated container adjacent the base wall. The container support will normally be either circular or annular in shape. It will also normally be manufactured of a rigid plastic or light metal. Preferably the container support will be dimensioned to be closely received within the insulated container and of a similar cross sectional shape.

[0036] The insulated container may be provided with an opening in the sidewall thereof in order to more easily insert and remove the container holding the drink. In some embodiments, the opening in the sidewall may have an associated closure means such as a zip or Velcro® or similar. According to preferred embodiments, the first component of the strap attachment assembly may be attached to the closure means such that the strap may be grasped to open and close the closure means.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0037] Various embodiments of the invention will be described with reference to the following drawings, in which:

[0038] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0039] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the holder illustrated in FIG. 1 in a disassembled state.

[0040] FIG. 3 is a front view of a first component of a preferred attachment assembly.

[0041] FIG. 4 is a front view of a second component of a preferred attachment assembly.

[0042] FIG. 5 is a top view of a cap according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0043] According to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, an insulated container with cap is provided.

[0044] As illustrated in the Figures, the preferred embodiment, the insulated container 10 used according to the invention is a “stubby cooler”, The insulated container is used for bottles 11 (as illustrated), cans or any container holding material. The insulated container 10 includes an annular wall terminating in an upper marginal edge 12 providing an open top for receiving a bottle 11 or other container. The height of the wall is less than that of the bottle 11 so that a portion of the bottle 11 is exposed above the marginal edge 12. The insulated container also includes a cap 13 for closing the opening of the bottle 12 and a resilient attachment strap 14 attaching the cap 13 to the insulated container 10, the effective length of the resilient attachment strap 14 being shorter than the distance between the marginal edge 12 of the insulated container and the cap 13.

[0045] The insulated container 10 of the preferred embodiment is cylindrical in configuration with an open upper end. The lower end of the insulated container is closed by a base-wall (not shown). The annular wall is formed by providing a planar sheet of material and by joining the first end of the sheet to the opposite end, rolling the sheet as required.

[0046] A sealing strip is provided, stitched over the region of the joint to provide reinforcement.

[0047] The walls of the container are formed of neoprene approximately 5 mm in thickness, although the thickness can vary according to the application.

[0048] The insulated container of the invention has a cap 13 for closing an opening of the received bottle 11. The cap 13 is rigid and sized to cover the opening of the received bottle 11.

[0049] The cap has a substantially planar body portion 15 and a circumferentially depending skirt portion (not shown) extending from an edge of the body portion 15.

[0050] A U-shaped mounting member 16 with a base wall 17 and a pair of spaced apart side walls 18, The side walls 18 have an end attached to the base wall 17 and an end attached to the skirt portion of the cap 13. According to the preferred configuration, a mounting member 16 is provided on either lateral side of the cap 13. The provision of two opposed mounting means typically balances the load on the cap 13 to maintain the cap in position. The attachment strap 14 is received through an opening defined between the skirt portion of the cap 13 and each U-shaped member 16.

[0051] The device of the present invention also includes a resilient attachment strap 14 attaching the cap 13 to the insulated container 10, the effective length of the resilient attachment strap 14 being less than the distance between the marginal edge 12 of the insulated container and the cap 13.

[0052] The strap 14 of the preferred embodiment is manufactured of a resilient material such as silicone.

[0053] The attachment strap 14 extends from an attachment assembly 19 mounted on or relative to the insulated container 10, upwardly through the U-shaped mounting member 16 provided on one side of the cap 13, across the cap 13 and down through the other U-shaped mounting member 16, to the attachment assembly 19.

[0054] A particular longitudinal shape of the strap 14 is not essential to the invention, neither is a particular cross-sectional shape.

The most important aspect of the strap 14 is that in the length adjustable, by using the attachment assembly 19 to allow for containers of different heights to be accommodated.

[0055] The strap attachment assembly 19 of the preferred embodiment includes two components. The first component 20 which is illustrated in FIG. 3, is attached to the insulated container 10 and is figure-8 shaped or lemniscate shaped. The first component 20 has two openings, the first opening used to attach the first component 20 to the insulated container using the sealing strip covering the region of the join in the insulated container 10, looped through the first opening in the first component 20 and stitched or otherwise attached to the outer and inner surfaces of the insulated container. The second opening in the first component is used to attach to the second component 21.

[0056] The second component 21 is provided to attach the strap 14 and to provide the length adjustment. The second component 21 of the preferred embodiment as illustrated in FIG. 4 is an elongate member with four openings spaced over its length.

[0057] A portion of both ends of the attachment strap 14 is received through the openings in an annodated or S-shaped pattern to temporarily fix the length of the strap. Once tension is placed on the strap 14 by stretching the strap 14 to place the cap 13 in position on the opening of the container 11, the strap 14 is held even more securely in the second component 21 due to the resilience of the material used.

[0058] The device of the preferred embodiment further includes a container support means 22, located in the insulated container adjacent the base wall. The container support 22 of the preferred embodiment is annular in shape.

[0059] In the present specification and claims (if any), the word “comprising” and its derivatives including “comprises” and “comprise” include each of the stated integers but does not exclude the inclusion of one or more further integers.

[0060] Reference throughout this specification to “one embodiment” or “an embodiment” means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment of the present invention. Thus, the appearance of the phrases “in one embodiment” or “in an embodiment” in various places throughout this specification are not necessarily all referring to the same embodiment. Furthermore, the particular features, structures, or characteristics may be combined in any suitable manner in one or more combinations.

[0061] In compliance with the statute, the invention has been described in language more or less specific to structural or methodical features. It is to be understood that the invention is not limited to specific features shown or described since the means herein described comprises preferred forms of putting the invention into effect. The invention is, therefore, claimed in any of its forms or modifications within the proper scope of the appended claims (if any) appropriately interpreted by those skilled in the art.

1. An insulated container with cap, the insulated container having
 - a. an annular wall terminating in an upper marginal edge providing an open top for receiving a container wherein the height of the wall is less than that of the received container whereby a portion of the received container is exposed above the aforesaid marginal edge
 - b. a cap for closing the opening of the received container; and

- c. a resilient attachment strap attaching the cap to the insulated container, the effective length of the resilient attachment strap being shorter than the distance between the marginal edge of the insulated container and the cap.
- 2. An insulated container with cap according to claim 1 wherein the cap provided is sized to cover the opening of the received container.
- 3. An insulated container with cap according to claim 1 further including mounting means to mount the attachment strap to the cap.
- 4. An insulated container with cap according to claim 3 wherein a mounting means is provided on either lateral side of the cap to balance the load on the cap to maintain the cap in position.
- 5. An insulated container with cap according to claim 4 wherein each mounting means is a U-shaped member integrally formed with the cap to define an opening.
- 6. An insulated container with cap according to claim 5 wherein the attachment strap extends from an attachment assembly mounted relative to the insulated container, upwardly through the U-shaped mounting member provided on one side of the cap, across the cap and down through the other U-shaped mounting member, to the attachment assembly.
- 7. An insulated container with cap according to claim 1 wherein the attachment strap is length adjustable to allow for containers of different heights to be accommodated.
- 8. An insulated container with cap according to claim 1 further including a strap attachment assembly to attach the strap to the insulated container and allow length adjustment of the strap.
- 9. An insulated container with cap according to claim 8 wherein the strap attachment assembly includes two components, a first component attached to the insulated container, and a second component to attach the strap and to provide the length adjustment.

- 10. An insulated container with cap according to claim 9 wherein the first component is figure-8 or lemniscate shaped.
- 11. An insulated container with cap according to claim 10 wherein a first opening attaches the first component to the insulated container and a second opening attaches the strap and the second component.
- 12. An insulated container with cap according to claim 9 wherein the second component attaches the strap and provides the length adjustment.
- 13. An insulated container with cap according to claim 9 wherein the second component is an elongate member with multiple openings spaced over its length to receive and temporarily lock the attachment strap.
- 14. An insulated container with cap according claim 1 further including an at least partially rigid container support means, located in the insulated container adjacent the base wall.
- 15. An insulated container with cap according claim 1 wherein the insulated container is provided with an opening in a sidewall thereof in order to more easily insert and remove the container holding the drink.
- 16. An insulated container with cap according to claim 15 wherein the opening in the sidewall has an associated closure means.
- 17. An insulated container with cap according to claim 16 wherein the strap attachment assembly is attached to the closure means such that the strap can be grasped to open and close the closure means.
- 18. An insulated container with cap, the insulated container formed from a sleeve of resilient material to receive a container, a cap for closing the opening of a received container, and a resilient attachment strap attaching the cap to the insulated container.

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