Nov. 3, 1970 R. H. CONOVER 3,537,726

PASSENGER CARRYING TOY

Filed March 4, 1968

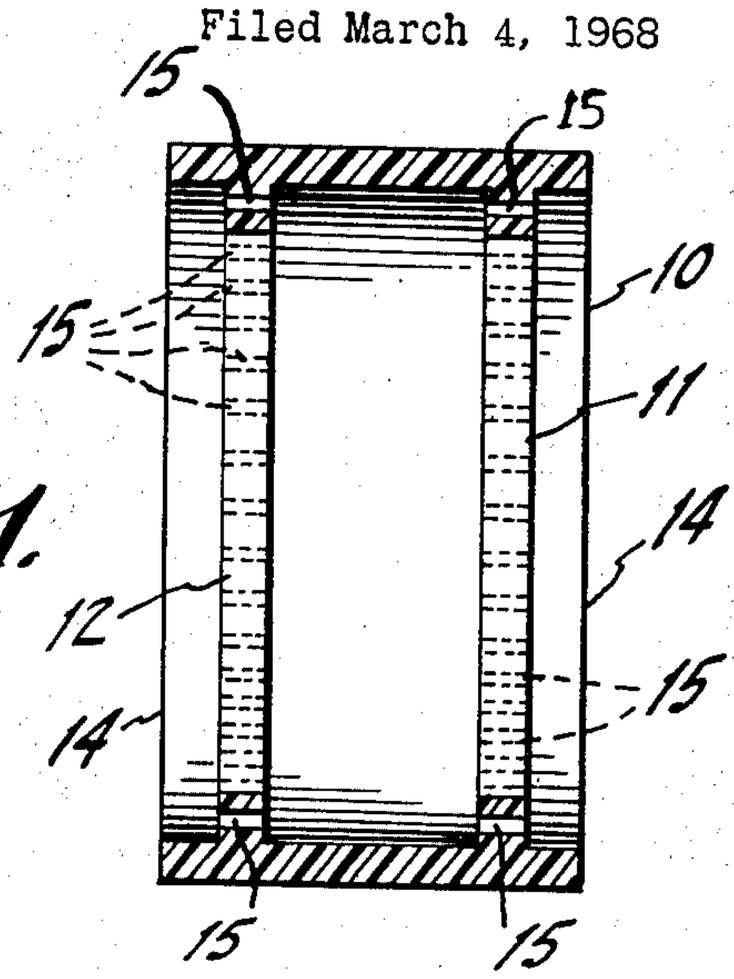


Fig. 1.

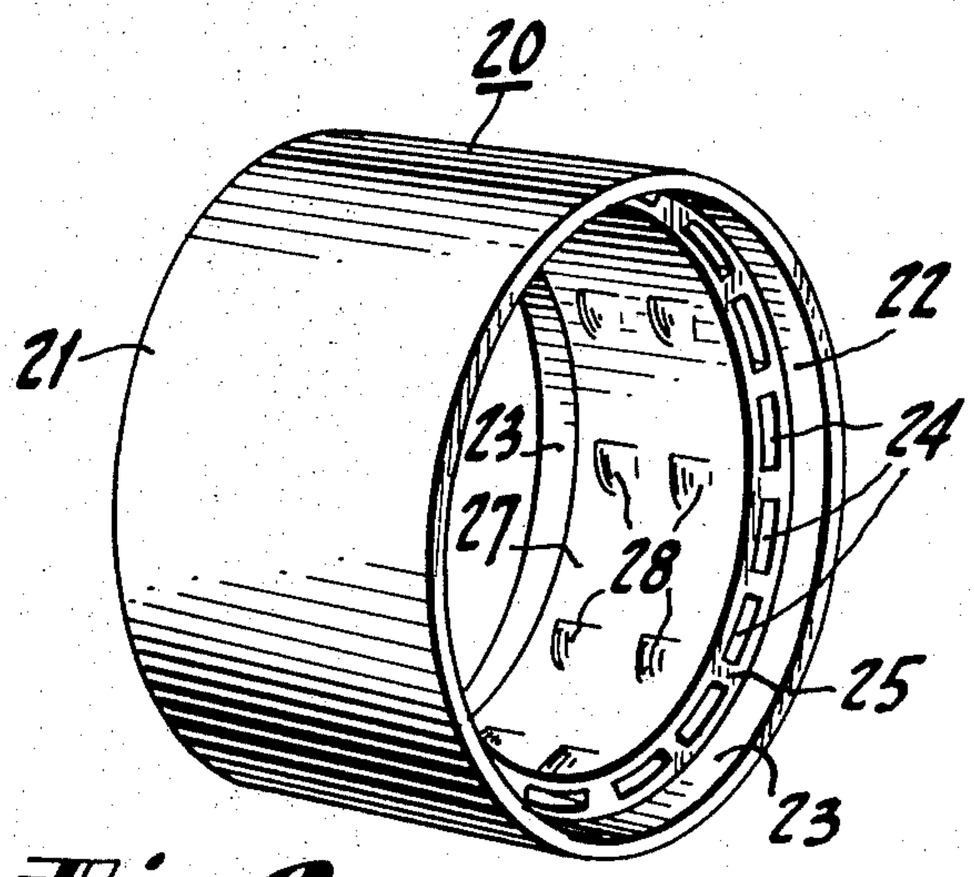


Fig. 2.

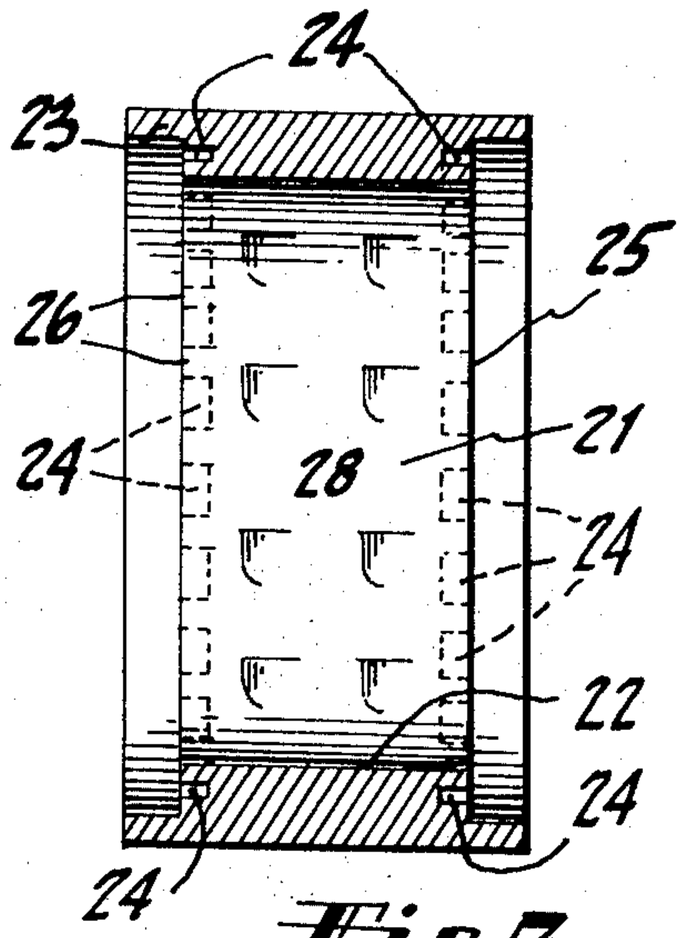


Fig. 3.

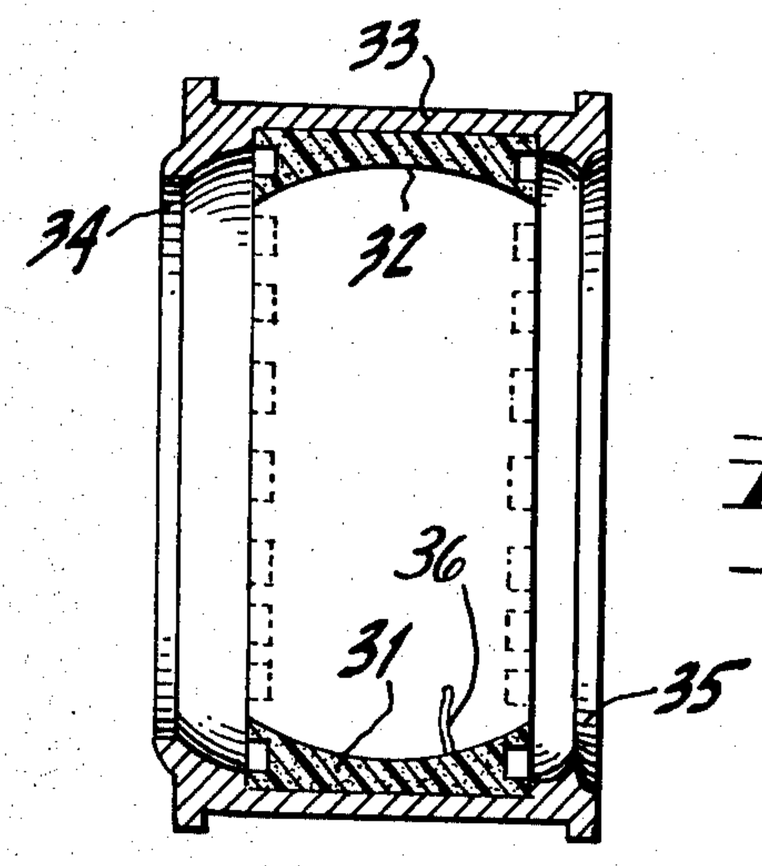


Fig. 4.

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3,537,726
Patented Nov. 3, 1970

3,537,726

PASSENGER CARRYING TOY

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Filed Mar. 4, 1968, Ser. No. 710,220
Int. Cl. B62k *1/00*
U.S. Cl. 280—206 11 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A passenger carrying rolling toy of the type comprised of a cylindrical body has finger gripping means with holes therein extending inwardly from and circumferentially around the inner cylindrical surface of the toy. The finger gripping means is recessed from the outer periphery of the toy such that the passenger's entire body including the hands are confined within the toy when holding the finger gripping means.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Prior art passenger carrying rolling toys are generally comprised of hoop-like members with transverse supports which must be screwed or welded together prior to use. One disadvantage of such toys is that the screws generally loosen and may cause the toy to fall apart, making it dangerous for a child passenger. Also, in order for the toy to be sufficiently strong, the hoops were generally made of metal. This made the toy heavier and more costly than desirable. Another disadvantage of prior art rolling toys of the relatively inexpensive type is that adequate means for supporting oneself within the toy were not provided.

It is therefore an object of this invention to provide an improved passenger carrying rolling type toy.

It is a further object to provide such a toy which has adequate means for supporting oneself therein and which is capable of being made inexpensively.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A passenger carrying rolling toy of the type comprised of an essentially cylindrical body having a width and an inner diameter large enough to completely contain said passenger therein in a seated position has two sets of finger gripping means. Each set of these finger gripping means is recessed from an outer peripheral edge of the cylindrical body and extends circumferentially around the inner diameter of the body.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a sectional view of an embodiment of the invention in one of its simplest forms.

FIG. 2 is an isometric view of another embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a sectional view of still another embodiment of the invention showing additional features of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The structure shown in FIG. 1 is a cross sectional view of a simple embodiment of the invention. This and other embodiments offer an inexpensive passenger carrying rolling toy for children. It is comprised of a cylindrical or barrel shaped body **10**. The inside diameter of the body **10** is large enough to allow a child to sit therein. The inner portion of the body **10** has finger gripping means **11** and **12** extending circumferentially around the inner cylindrical surface **13** of the body **10** and recessed from the outer peripheral edges **14** thereof. The finger gripping means **11** and **12**, as shown in FIG. 1, are comprised of two

continuous annular or flange-like members **11** and **12** which extend radially from the inner surface **13** of the body **10**. The members **11** and **12** have a plurality of closely spaced holes **15** therethrough. These holes are of such a size that a child occupying the toy can grasp the finger gripping means **11** and **12** by placing his fingers in or through the holes **15**. In this manner the child can stabilize and support himself within the toy. Another use for the finger gripping means is to allow the child to shift his weight within the toy by bending various amounts while still maintaining his balance and stability. This causes a shift in his center of gravity and permits some control of the speed at which the toy rolls.

The holes **15** in the finger gripping means **11** and **12** need not extend completely through the finger gripping means **11** and **12** but should be of a depth to allow the child to have a secure grip therein. Also the holes **15** need not be circular and may be of a size and shape that allow the child to place more than one finger in each hole. However, it is preferable that the finger gripping means **11** and **12** be recessed from the outer peripheral edges **14** of the body **10** such that the hand does not extend beyond the edges **14** when the child places his fingers in the finger gripping means. It is also preferable that the edges around the holes be rounded and that they be lined with a soft material so as not to cut into the fingers of the occupant.

An alternative configuration for the finger gripping means **11** and **12** is that they be discontinuous, spaced members extending circumferentially around the inner portion of the body **10** rather than a continuous annular member as shown.

The toy may be formed of any suitable inexpensive yet durable material such as wood, metal or plastic. It is preferred that it be made of plastic and that it be in the form of a molded unitary integral body. It is also preferable that the body be comprised of a transparent plastic so as to allow the passenger to see where he is going when riding in the toy.

Another embodiment of the novel toy is shown with respect to FIGS. 2 and 3. In this embodiment the finger-gripping means differs from the embodiment of FIG. 1 in that it is a single flange-like or raised portion which extends through the body **21** and which provides the cylindrical body **21** of the toy **20** with a thicker inner portion **22** than outer edge portion **23**. It is preferred that this thick portion **22** be wider than the occupant. Also the holes **24** which extend transversely from the edges **25** and **26** of the thick inner portion **22**, are in the form of spaced slots such that an occupant can place four fingers therein. The inner surface **27** of the thick inner portion **21** has a plurality of indentations **28** therein. The indentations **28** are of a size and configuration **50** as to permit the occupant of the toy to brace his feet therein, thereby providing additional stability for the occupant.

A third embodiment of the novel toy is shown with reference to FIG. 4. This embodiment incorporates a thicker inner portion **31** which is preferably comprised of or contains a resilient material, such as a polyurethane foam, so as to provide added comfort and safety to the occupant. The inner portion **31**, as shown in FIG. 4, has a concave shaped inner surface **32** which conforms more to the shape and contour of the seated occupant than a flat surface. It thereby adds to the comfort and stability of the occupant.

Alternatively, the thickened portion **31** may be made to be inflatable. In this event, a simple tieable air stem or a valve **36** is required for inflating purposes. If the outer walls **33** are made sufficiently thin and the thickened portion **31** is of the inflatable type, the toy can be made to collapse for easy storage when deflated.

Another feature of the embodiment shown in FIG. 4 is the ability to interconnect or interlock a plurality of the toys together so that several children can roll in their toys together and cooperatively. This can be accomplished, for example, by having an outwardly flaring extension **34** around the circumference of one outer edge of the toy and a recessed or shoulder portion **35** shaped to receive and mate with a similar outward extension from a second one of said toys.

When the toy is comprised of an opaque material which would prevent the occupant from viewing his direction of travel, the body of the toy can include a plurality of slots (not shown) therein through which the occupant can view where he is going.

What I claim is:

1. A passenger carrying rolling toy of the type comprised of an essentially cylindrical body having a width and an inner diameter large enough to completely contain said passenger in a seated position, the improvement comprising two sets of finger-gripping means having finger receiving holes each set recessed from an outer peripheral edge of said cylindrical body and extending circumferentially around the inner diameter of said body.

2. A passenger carrying toy as described in claim **1** wherein said finger-gripping means are flange-like portions extending radially inwardly from the inner surface of said cylindrical body and having a plurality of holes therein which extend in a direction transverse to said cylindrical body and start from the outer edges of said flange-like members, each of said holes being large enough for said passenger to insert at least one finger therein, said flange-like portion being sufficiently recessed from said outer peripheral edges of said cylindrical body such that the passenger's hand or fingers are completely within said body when his fingers are placed within the holes of said finger-gripping means.

3. The toy described in claim **1** comprising a unitary molded plastic body.

4. The toy described in claim **1** including a plurality of spaced depressions around the inner surface of said cylindrical body, said depressions being of a size and configuration so as to allow said passenger to brace his feet therein.

5. The toy described in claim **1** wherein said cylindrical body is comprised of a continuous inner portion recessed from said outer peripheral edges which inner portion has a thickness greater than that at the outer peripheral edges, said inner portion having outer edge surfaces through which a plurality of finger grip holes extend transversely into said inner portion.

6. The toy described in claim **5** wherein said inner portion is comprised of a resilient material.

7. The toy described in claim **5** wherein said inner portion has a concave shaped inner surface so as to be better contoured with the body of said passenger.

8. The toy described in claim **5**, said toy being comprised of a moldable plastic body.

9. The toy described in claim **5** wherein said inner portion is inflatable, said toy including means for inflating and deflating said toy.

10. The toy described in claim **1** including means for interlocking a plurality of said toys together in a manner such that said interlocked toys can roll together.

11. The toy described in claim **10** wherein said interlocking means is comprised of an outwardly flaring extension around the circumference of one outer edge of said body of said toy and the other of said outer edges having a shoulder portion shaped to receive and mate with a similar outward extension from a second of said toys.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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