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(54) **DECORATIVE BOOT WARMERS AND
METHOD OF MAKING AND USING
DECORATIVE BOOT WARMERS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

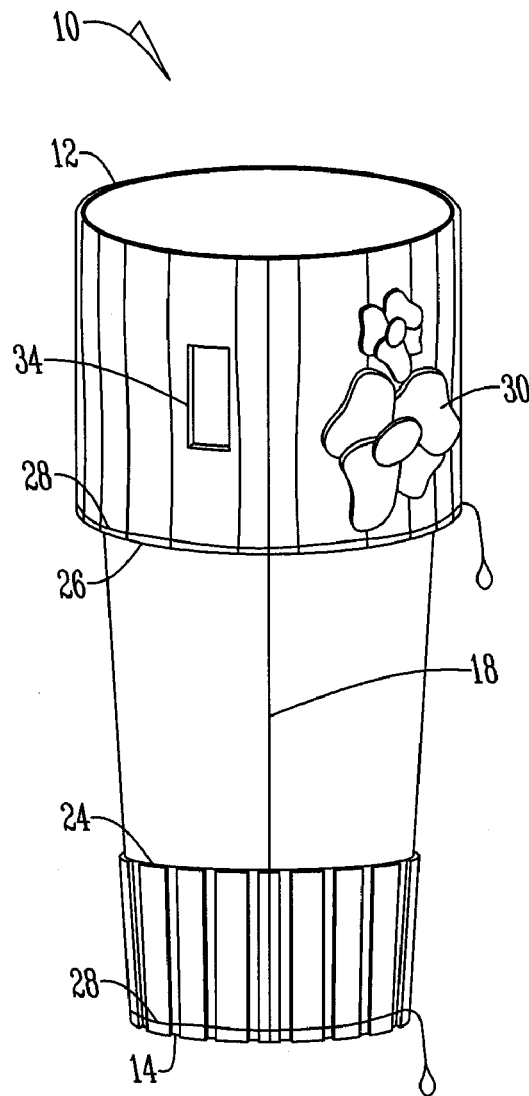
A decorative boot warmer is presented. The boot warmer has a sleeve which transitions from a top end to a bottom end in the form of a tube. The boot warmer has a first cuff piece positioned adjacent the top end of the boot warmer, and a second cuff piece positioned adjacent the bottom end of the boot warmer. A decorative feature is connected to the boot warmer. When worn on a user's leg or calf, the boot warmer serves to keep a user's leg warm while also improving the aesthetic appearance.

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Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 61/595,380, filed on Feb. 6, 2012.



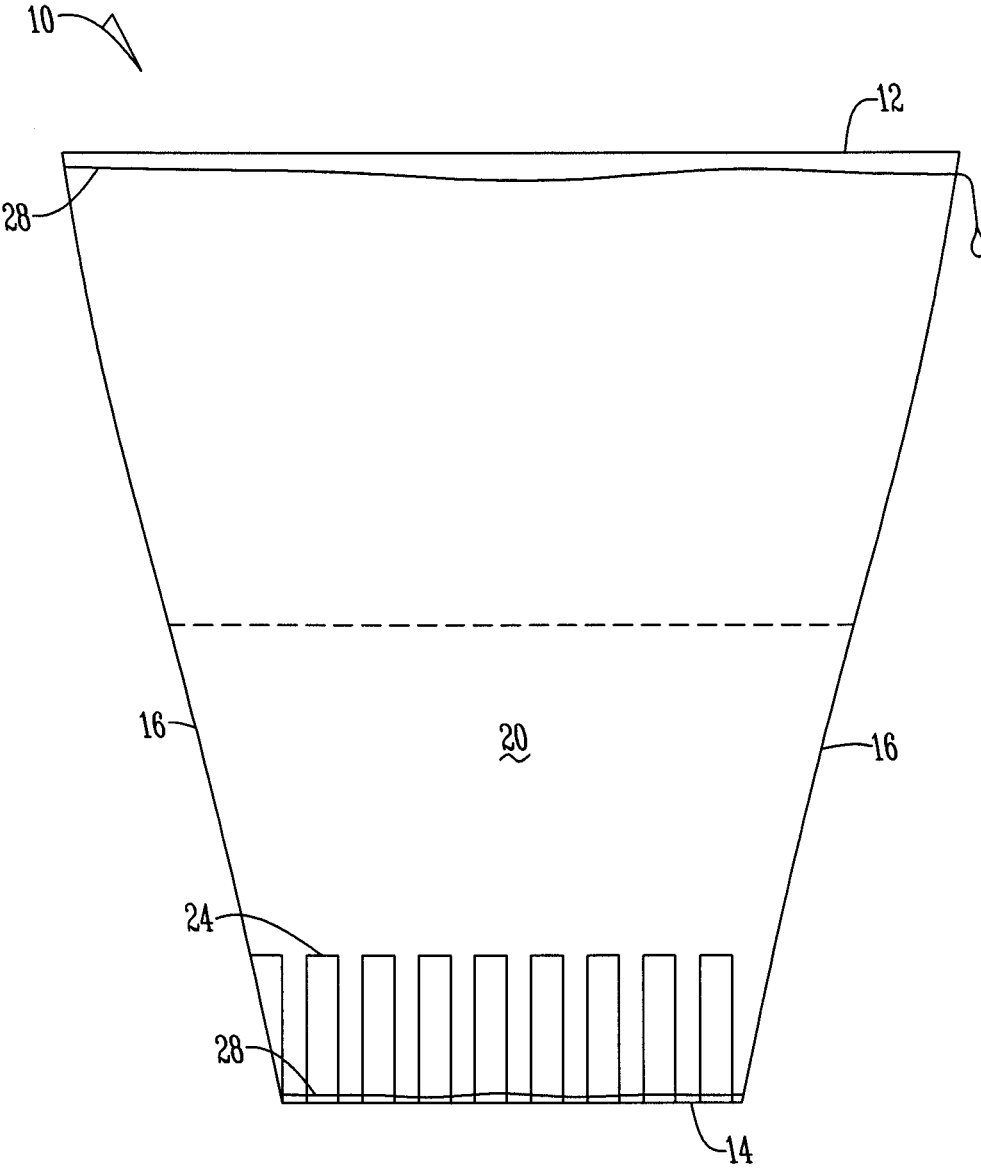


Fig. 1

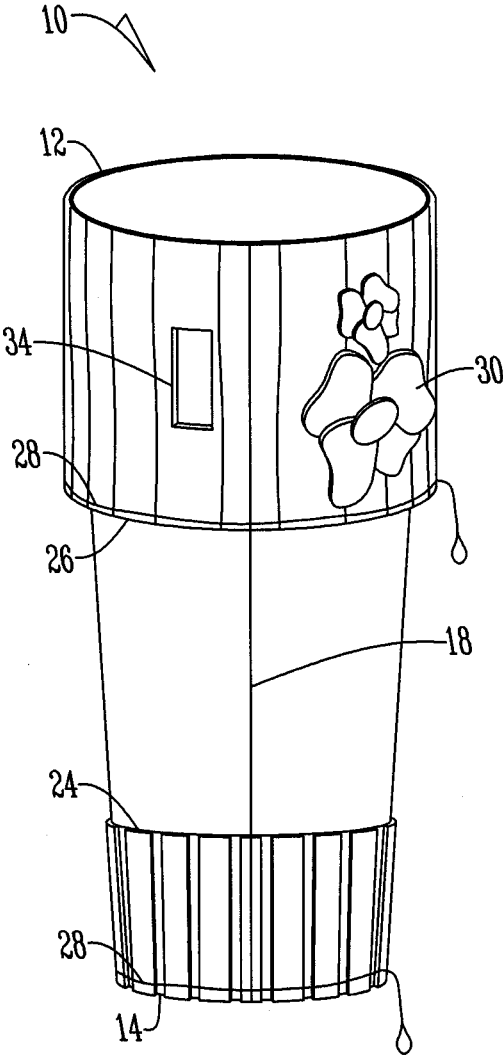


Fig. 2

DECORATIVE BOOT WARMERS AND METHOD OF MAKING AND USING DECORATIVE BOOT WARMERS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/595,380 filed Feb. 6, 2012.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention is directed toward boot warmers. More particularly and without limitation, this invention is directed toward decorative boot warmers and the method of making and using decorative boot warmers.

[0003] Footwear is old and well known in the art. While footwear initially served utilitarian purposes, the design and appearance of footwear has become increasingly important for style and fashion reasons. Recent years have seen an explosion in sales of various styles of shoes and boots. While many of these shoe and boot styles may be based on functional designs, such as work boots, cowboy boots, or equestrian boots, their adoption is mainly for ornamental, fashion and style-related purposes. Many people are known to purchase a great number of shoes and boots to keep up with ever-changing styles and trends. However, due to the relentless pace of style and fashion, these fashion-minded individuals must continuously purchase new footwear to stay abreast of the trends. This process often causes footwear to be obsolete or discarded well before the footwear wears out due to use.

[0004] Therefore problems exist in the prior art. Namely, persons are required to purchase a great number of shoes and boots to maintain the fashionable appearance of their footwear. Another problem exists in that the ornamental appearance of conventional footwear cannot be changed.

[0005] Thus, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a system, method and device which improves upon the state of the art.

[0006] Another object of the present invention is to provide a system, method and device that allows the user to modify the ornamental appearance of their footwear.

[0007] Yet another object of the present invention is to improve the ornamental appearance of footwear.

[0008] Another object of the present invention is to reduce the amount of footwear a user must purchase to stay relevant with current style and fashion trends.

[0009] Yet another object of the present invention is to extend the life of footwear.

[0010] These and other objects, features, or advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the specification and claims.

[0011] BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0012] A decorative boot warmer is presented. The boot warmer has a sleeve which transitions from a top end to a bottom end in the form of a tube. The boot warmer has a first cuff piece positioned adjacent the top end of the boot warmer, and a second cuff piece positioned adjacent the bottom end of the boot warmer. A decorative feature is connected to the boot warmer. When worn on a user's leg or calf, the boot warmer serves to keep a user's leg warm while also improving the aesthetic appearance.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] FIG. 1 is a plan view of a decorative boot warmer.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a decorative boot warmer.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0015] FIG. 1 illustrates an example of a decorative boot warmer 10. Boot warmer 10 is preferably made of a single piece of material having a top end 12, a bottom end 14 and opposing sides 16. The boot warmer 10 is offered in short, medium and longer lengths and various sizes to accommodate infants, children, teens and adults and to accommodate different user's styles. To assemble the boot warmer 10, opposing sides 16 are connected to one another by a seam 18 or any other conventional attachment device such as buttons, snaps, a zipper, Velcro or the like to form a tube or sleeve shaped device or object. Alternatively, the boot warmer 10 is formed as a single continuous piece without the need for a seam 18 or other attachment device. Alternatively, the seam 18 is replaced with a connection device such as a zipper, overlapping Velcro® (or the generic version of hooks and loops) strips, buttons, snaps or the like, such that the boot warmer can be formed into a tube as well as opened into a flat piece of material.

[0016] Boot warmer 10 is made of any material such as a sweater material, flannel, canvas, cloth, wool, spandex, knitting, real or imitation fur, printed material, argyle material, solid colored material, multi-colored material, textured material, corduroy, or any other cloth-like material. Preferably, the material from which boot warmer 10 is made from has a certain amount of elastic give or stretch so that the boot warmer 10 stretches to fit over the users foot and leg and holds itself thereto, so as to comfortably fit a user's leg. In addition, preferably, the material from which boot warmer 10 is made from is both breathable as well as insulating so as to allow a user's leg to breath while keeping the user's leg warm.

[0017] When boot warmer 10 is formed into a tube or sleeve, preferably the tube or sleeve narrows as it transitions from top end 12 to bottom end 14. This narrowing serves the purpose of providing a better fit the users calf or leg. Also, when boot warmer 10 is formed into a tube or sleeve, the boot warmer 10 has an exterior surface 20 and an opposing interior surface 22 (not shown).

[0018] Connected to the boot warmer 10 adjacent the bottom end 14 is lower cuff piece 24. Preferably lower cuff piece 24 is connected to the exterior surface 20 of boot warmer 10, however lower cuff piece 24 can also be attached to the interior surface 22 of boot warmer 10. Lower cuff piece 24 is made of any material as is described herein. In one arrangement, lower cuff piece 24 is attached to the exterior surface 20 of boot warmer 10 by any method known in the art such as sewing, stitching, gluing, welding, Velcroing, buttoning, zipping, or the like. In this arrangement lower cuff piece 24 is attached to the boot warmer 10 as a single piece. In another arrangement, lower cuff piece 24 is a plurality of individual pieces which are independently connected to boot warmer 10. In yet another arrangement, lower cuff piece 24 is formed integrally as a piece of boot warmer 10. In another arrangement, lower cuff piece 24 is merely another tube of material (like boot warmer 10) which fits over boot warmer 10 in frictional engagement, but it is unattached to boot warmer 10. In one arrangement, lower cuff piece 24 is a different material

or a different color or a different design as boot warmer 10 so as to offer an ornamental contrast to boot warmer 10.

[0019] Connected to the boot warmer 10 adjacent the top end 14 is upper cuff piece 26. Upper cuff piece 26 has all the herein described attributes of lower cuff piece 24 as is described herein. That is, upper cuff piece 26 is made of any material, as is described herein. In one arrangement, upper cuff piece 26 is attached to boot warmer 10 by any method known in the art such as sewing, stitching, gluing, welding, Velcroing, buttoning, zipping, or the like. In this arrangement upper cuff piece 26 is attached to the boot warmer 10 as a single piece. In another arrangement, upper cuff piece 26 is a plurality of individual pieces which are independently connected to boot warmer 10. In yet another arrangement, upper cuff piece 26 is formed integrally as a piece of boot warmer 10. In another arrangement, upper cuff piece 26 is merely another tube of material (like boot warmer 10) which fits over boot warmer 10 in frictional engagement, but it is unattached to boot warmer 10. In one arrangement, upper cuff piece 26 is a different material or a different color or a different design as boot warmer 10 so as to offer an ornamental contrast to boot warmer 10.

[0020] Upper cuff piece 26 and/or lower cuff piece 24 are attached to either the exterior surface 20 or the interior surface 22 of boot warmer 10 depending on whether the boot warmer 10 is to be folded over during use. If the intended use of the boot warmer 10 is to be folded over, then the upper cuff piece 26/lower cuff piece 24 is connected to the interior surface 22 of boot warmer 10, as it will be on the outside of the device when it is folded over. Alternatively, if the boot warmer 10 is not to be folded over then the upper cuff piece 26 is to be connected to the exterior surface 20 of the boot warmer 10. Alternatively, upper cuff piece 26 is connected to both the interior surface 22 and exterior surface 20 of boot warmer 10 so as to allow boot warmer 10 to be reversible. Reversibility allows boot warmer 10 to provide additional ornamental appearance. The arrangement where the unattached nature of upper cuff piece 26 and lower cuff piece 24 also assists with reversibility as well as forming various combinations out of various boot warmers 10.

[0021] In another arrangement, boot warmer 10, upper cuff piece 26 and lower cuff piece 24 are formed of a single continuous piece of material. In this arrangement, boot warmer 10 is knitted or stitched out of a single piece of material. In this arrangement, the main body of boot warmer 10, between the lower portion of upper cuff piece 26 and the upper portion of lower cuff piece 24 is smooth and of consistent thickness and does not contain any elastic bands or other components which assist with the stretching. In contrast, the upper cuff portion 26 and/or the lower cuff portion 24 are not smooth and are not of a constant thickness. Instead, upper cuff portion 26 and/or the lower cuff portion 24 are ribbed with an array of rectangular raise portions separated by rectangular valley portions positioned in parallel space alignment with one another aligned adjacent the top edge 12 or the bottom edge 14 respectively. In one arrangement, the density of stitching and/or knitting of the raised portions and valley portions is different than the density of stitching and/or knitting of the body of boot warmer 10. In this arrangement, the density of both the raised portions and valley portions is higher than the body portion, and the density of the valley portions being higher than the raised portions. This variation in the density of stitching helps to narrow the boot warmer 10 at the top 12 and bottom 14, helps to hold the boot warmer on

the leg of an individual, the raised and valley portions help to provide additional stretch, and the raised and valley portions provide an improved aesthetic and textured appearance on or around the cuffs 24, 26. In addition, to help provide additional stretch, the cuff portions 24, 26 also include elastic bands or material or other material that is conducive to stretching, which is not included in the body of the boot warmer.

[0022] To enhance the fit and function of boot warmer 10, elastic bands 28 or draw strings are attached to boot warmer 10. These elastic bands 28 help the boot warmer 10 to hold onto the user or the user's footwear and prevent boot warmer 10 from moving during use. Preferably an elastic band 28 is connected to boot warmer 10 adjacent its bottom end 14 to help hold the bottom end 14 in place. Also, preferably, an elastic band 28 is connected to boot warmer 10 adjacent its top end 12 to help hold top end 12 in place. Other elastic bands or drawstrings 28 can be added to any portion of boot warmer 10 for functional or ornamental purposes.

[0023] Connected to boot warmer 10 is at least one ornamental feature 30. Ornamental feature 30 is any ornamental object which improves the aesthetic appearance of boot warmer 10 such as a cloth or fabric flower or floret, a pin, a button, a piece of cloth or material, a design, a name, brand or symbol, or any other ornamental object or device. Preferably a plurality of ornamental features 30 are connected to boot warmer 10 adjacent its top end 12 by any means known in the art such as pinning, sewing, stitching, gluing, welding, Velcroing, buttoning, zipping, or the like. Ornamental features 30 are either permanently affixed to boot warmer 10, upper cuff piece 26, lower cuff piece 24 or any other portion of boot warmer 10, such as by sewing or gluing, or alternatively they are removably affixed to boot warmer 10, such as by pinning, Velcroing or buttoning. Ornamental feature 30 is attached to either the interior surface 22 or the exterior surface 20 depending on whether the top end 12 of boot warmer is to be folded over during use. If the intended use of the boot warmer 10 is to be folded over, then the ornamental feature 30 should be connected to the interior surface 22 of boot warmer 10, upper cuff piece 26 or lower cuff piece 24 as it will be on the outside of the device when it is folded over. Alternatively, if the boot warmer 10 is not to be folded over then the ornamental feature 30 is to be connected to the exterior surface 20 of the boot warmer 10.

[0024] As one example, as is shown in FIG. 1, a plurality of cloth flowers or florets 30 are shown attached adjacent the top end 12 of boot warmers 10. As can be seen in this arrangement there are two dedicated boot warmers 10, one for the user's right leg and one for the user's left leg. The ornamental features 30 are arranged in a cluster on the outside surface of the boot warmer 10, or the side facing away from the other boot warmer 10, so that the ornamental features do not interfere with the user's walking, and also so as to maximize other's ability to see the ornamental feature 30.

[0025] A sock portion 32 is also permanently or removably attached adjacent the bottom end 14 of boot warmer 10. In addition, a label 34 is also attached to boot warmer 10 preferably adjacent the top end 12 of seam 18.

[0026] In Operation: A user wanting to improve the aesthetic appearance of their footwear selects a pair of decorative boot warmers 10. If the boot warmers 10 have a seam 18, the user aligns the seams 18 to extend up the back of their legs. The user also ensures that the ornamental features 30 are aligned with the outside of each leg assuring that left boot warmer 10 is placed on the left leg and the right boot warmer

is placed on the right leg. Next, the user pulls the boot warmers over their feet and socks such that the bottom end **14** of the boot warmers **10** are positioned somewhere underneath the users intended footwear, whereas the top end **12** of the boot warmers extend above the top of the users intended footwear.

[0027] Next the user puts their footwear on over the bottom end **14** of the boot warmer **10**. In this position, if the ornamental feature **30** is on the exterior of the boot warmer **10** the boot warmers **10** are ready for use. If, however, the decorative features **30** are on the interior surface **22** of the boot warmer **10**, the user folds the top end **12** of the boot warmers **10** over the top end of the user's footwear. In this way, the boot warmers **10** partially overlap the user's footwear while exposing the ornamental features **30**. In this way the ornamental appearance of the user's footwear is modified and improved.

[0028] If the decorative features **30** are removable and replaceable the user removes, replaces, arranges, re-arranges the decorative features **30** to the boot warmers **10** to present new and additional aesthetic appearances.

[0029] Method Of Making: First a suitable piece of material is selected for the boot warmer **10** which exhibits the proper aesthetic, elasticity and warmth properties. The material is cut to length between the top end **12** and the bottom end **14**, which are cut in parallel spaced alignment. The opposing sides **16** are cut so as to taper towards one another as they extend from the top end **12** to the bottom end **14** so as to better fit the contours of a user's leg. The opposing sides **16** are attached to one another by sewing or any other means, so as to form seam **18** where the opposing sides slightly overlap one another. The lower cuff piece **24** is attached adjacent the bottom end **14** of boot warmer **10** and the upper cuff piece **26** is attached adjacent the top end **12** of the boot warmer. The lower cuff piece **24** and upper cuff piece **26** are attached to either the interior surface **20** or exterior surface **22** depending on the intended use of the boot warmers as is described above. In the event that drawstrings or additional elastic bands **28** are needed, they are also attached adjacent the top end **12**, bottom end **14** or at any other portion of boot warmer **10**. Finally, the ornamental features **30** are attached to the boot warmers **10** adjacent the top end **12** and are arranged in an aesthetically pleasing arrangement. The ornamental features **30** are attached to either the interior surface **20** or exterior surface **22** depending on the intended use of the boot warmers as is described above. In this way, decorative boot warmers **10** are made.

[0030] In another arrangement, sleeves of preexisting shirts or sweaters are used to form decorative boot warmers.

[0031] From the above discussion it will be appreciated that the above-described decorative boot warmers offer many features and advantages over the prior art. Accordingly, the decorative boot warmers described provide a system, method and device that allows the user to modify the ornamental appear-

ance of their footwear. The invention also allows the user to improve the ornamental appearance of footwear. The invention also reduces the amount of footwear a user must purchase to stay relevant with current style and fashion trends and extends the life of the users footwear.

[0032] It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that other various modifications could be made to the device without parting from the spirit and scope of this invention. All such modifications and changes fall within the scope of the claims and are intended to be covered thereby.

What is claimed:

1. A boot warmer comprising:
 - a sleeve which transitions from a top end to a bottom end, wherein said sleeve is formed into a tube having an exterior surface and an interior surface;
 - a first cuff piece having a top end and a bottom end connected to the sleeve, wherein said first cuff piece is formed into a tube having an exterior surface and an interior surface;
 wherein the boot warmer is positioned over a user's leg or calf area thereby improving its aesthetic appearance.
2. The boot warmer of claim 1 further comprising a second cuff piece connected to the sleeve.
3. The boot warmer of claim 1 wherein the first cuff piece is connected adjacent the top end of the boot warmer, and the second cuff piece is connected adjacent the bottom end of the boot warmer.
4. The boot warmer of claim 1 wherein the boot warmer is reversible.
5. The boot warmer of claim 1 wherein a seam extends from the top end of the boot warmer to the bottom end or the boot warmer thereby connecting opposite edges of the boot warmer into the tube shape.
6. The boot warmer of claim 1 wherein a connecting device extends from the top end of the boot warmer to the bottom end or the boot warmer thereby removably connecting opposite edges of the boot warmer into the tube shape.
7. The boot warmer of claim 6 wherein the connecting device is selected from the group consisting of zippers, Velcro®, buttons, and snaps.
8. The boot warmer of claim 1 wherein a drawstring is connected to the boot warmer, which, when in operation assists with holding the boot warmer onto a user's leg.
9. The boot warmer of claim 1 wherein an elastic band is connected to the boot warmer, which, when in operation assists with holding the boot warmer onto a user's leg.
10. The boot warmer of claim 1 further comprising an ornamental feature connected to the boot warmer.
11. The boot warmer of claim 10 wherein the ornamental feature is in the form of a flower.

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