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COMPARTMENTED CONTAINER

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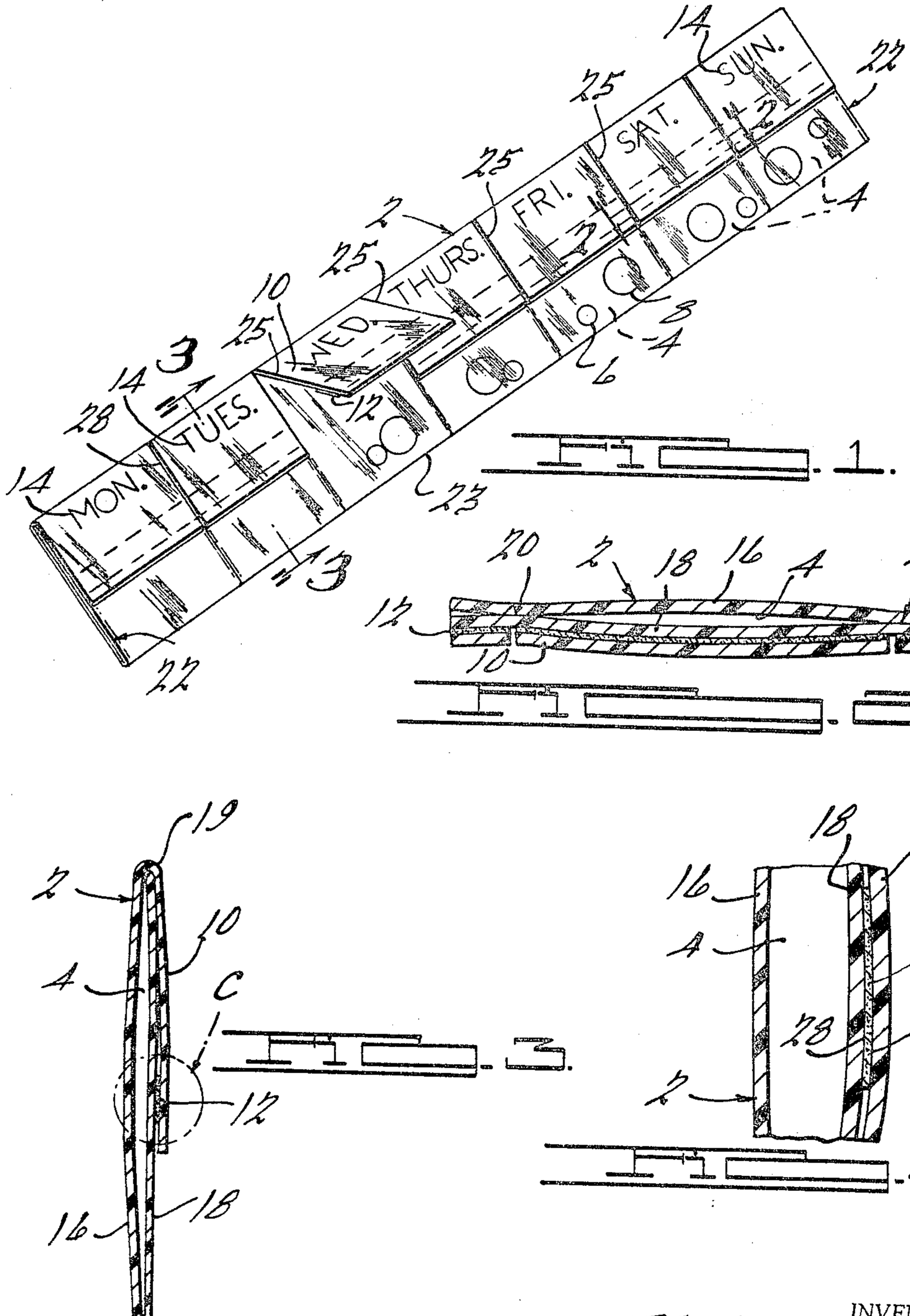

FIG. 1.

FIG. 2.

FIG. 3.

FIG. 4.

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COMPARTMENTED CONTAINER

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A compartmented container made of clear plastic for use in dispensing medicinal pills at periodic intervals such as daily on a mistake-proof basis. The plastic container is light weight and can be folded over for easy carrying on the person. Specifically, the plastic container is divided into seven compartments each marked with the day of the week. A party using the container removes the pills from the compartments one day at a time and since the container material is clear plastic the party can readily tell at a glance whether the pill(s) have been taken for that particular day of the week.

This invention broadly relates to a flexible, compartmented container made of non-opaque plastic which is suitable for dispensing of pills or the like, and to a method of preparing the compartmented container. More particularly, the invention relates to a flexible plastic compartmented container for the dispensing of pills for human consumption which container is light weight, can easily be carried on the person, and is marked or coded with indicia such that the pills can be taken on a daily basis in a mistake-proof manner enabled by markings on the container and the visibility of the pills within the individual compartments of the container.

In the past persons having to take medical pills such as on a daily basis in order to counteract continued sickness or the like have been forced to carry these pills on their persons in some form of container. The difficulty which arises in this situation is that the person having to take the pills on a daily basis normally carries a plurality of the pills in a container and from day to day removes one or more of the pills from the container for consumption. This creates a problem in that the person becomes forgetful of whether the pills have as yet been taken during any particular day, or on the other hand the person can by mistake take more than the required number of pills on the day in question. There has therefore been a long felt need for a container which would solve the above problems and allow a person to take pills at periodic intervals on a mistake-proof basis.

General objects of the present invention are: to provide an improved compartmented container for the dispensing of pills or the like, and to provide a method of preparing the container which is rapid, inexpensive, and commercially practicable.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved flexible plastic compartmented container which is non-opaque and contains markings distinguishing each compartment from any other.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved compartmented container for the dispensing of pills or the like at periodic intervals on a mistake-proof basis.

A specific object of the invention is to provide a non-opaque, flexible, plastic container which is divided into seven compartments for the dispensing of pills on a daily basis for one week in a mistake-proof manner.

Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the subsequent description and the appended claims, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 illustrates a container divided into seven compartments each of which compartments has an openable and closeable flap member to enable removal of the pills and a printed indicia on each of the seven respective flap members signifying the particular day of the week;

FIGURE 2 is a cross-sectional view taken along line 2—2 of FIGURE 1, illustrating the structure of an individual compartment and its flap member which enables the pills to be maintained in the compartment until ready for consumption;

FIGURE 3 is a cross-sectional view along line 3—3 of FIGURE 1 further illustrating the relationship of the flap member to the compartment and an adhesive member which maintains the flap in closed position; and

FIGURE 4 is an enlarged view of the portion C indicated by circular dotted lines in FIGURE 3, further illustrating the flap member and its relation to the walls of the compartment together with the adhesive member for holding the flap in closed position.

In its product aspect broadly stated, the present invention consists of a compartmented container for dispensing pills and the like. The container is made of a flexible non-opaque plastic material which forms the two side walls of the container as well as the individual flap members for closing off said compartments. The two side walls are heat sealed or bonded together to form the plurality of compartments and there is an adhesive means such as a strip disposed on the flap members for holding the members in a closed position over the compartments. The adhesive means or strip contains an adhesive composition on both sides thereof. However, the adhesive on the side which contacts the flap member is of greater bonding strength than the adhesive on the reverse side such that the strip will permanently adhere to the flap member when the flap is opened and closed with respect to a particular compartment. Each compartment or the individual flap members also contain indicia on their exterior such as a printed abbreviation of the day of the week, which indicia enables a person taking pills on a continued or daily basis to make a mistake-proof, programmed removal of the pills from the container each day.

In its method aspect broadly stated, the present invention comprises preparation of the above referred to compartmented container by folding a rectangular sheet of plastic into partially overlapping position and then heat sealing the plastic at its end portions and intermediate the ends to form a plurality of compartments within an envelope formed by the plastic side walls. The remainder of the plastic sheet not in overlapping position is then used to form a plurality of individual flap members for closing off each of the compartments and this is carried out by placing an adhesive strip on this portion of the plastic and then cutting the plastic with the strip member in position such that both are severed at positions coinciding with the intermediate portions of the plastic envelope which have been heat sealed together. This forms individual flap members with an adhesive strip thereon for use in releasably sticking the flap member to the outside of the plastic envelope to thereby close off the individual compartments.

In more detailed description of the invention reference is now made to FIGURE 1 which illustrates a specific embodiment of the compartmented container wherein a single rectangular sheet of plastic designated **2** has been folded and formed by the process of the invention into a compartmented container with seven compartments **4** suitable for holding the pills **6** and **8** as shown therein. The plastic used in constructing the container should preferably be a flexible, non-opaque material, such as poly-

ethylene or the like. The choice of the plastic is not critical and any number of materials can satisfactorily be used. Each of the compartments **4** contains a flap **10** suitable for closing off the compartments to hold the pills therein. The flaps **10** have disposed on their underside an adhesive strip **12** which is capable of holding the flaps in closed position. The container shown in FIGURE 1 has seven compartments each of which is marked by a printed abbreviation **14** indicating the day of the week. A person using the compartmented container can carry a weekly supply of pills and consumption of the pills on each day can be carried out in a substantially mistake-proof manner by simply looking at the container which, due to the use of non-opaque or "see through" type plastic **2** enables an easy determination of whether the pills for that particular day have as yet been taken.

FIGURES 2, 3, and 4 illustrate in more detail the particular construction of the compartmented container of FIGURE 1. These figures show the unitary plastic sheet **2** folded such that side walls **16** and **18** are formed as well as the flap members **10**. The cross-sectional view of FIGURE 2 more clearly illustrates the compartment **4** and the heat sealed structural connections generally designated **20** which bond the side walls together at spaced apart intervals along the length of the container, as well as at the ends of the container generally designated at **22** in FIGURE 1.

FIGURE 3 in side view illustrates more clearly the manner in which the plastic material or sheet **2** is folded into partially overlapping position to form side walls **16** and **18** of the compartment. Flap member **10** can then be folded either up or down pivotally about the upper edge portion **19** of side wall **18** to close off the interior of the compartment **4**. The bottom **23** of the compartment is shown as generally formed by the joiner or folding relationship between the two side walls of the compartment.

FIGURE 4 is an enlarged or magnified view of the portion shown within the circular dotted lines in FIGURE 3 generally designated C to further illustrate the adhesive strip **12** which is shown positioned between the flap member **10** and the exterior of side wall **18**. On the side **26** of the adhesive strip which is adhered to the flap member the adhesive composition is of higher bonding strength relative to the adhesive composition on side **28** of the strip such that the strip will adhere to the flap member rather than to side wall **18** when the flap is opened and closed from its contacting position with the side wall. This prevents the undesirable result of having the adhesive strip torn away from the flap member.

To more fully describe the method of the invention, the compartmented container shown in the drawing, is prepared by folding the rectangular sheet of plastic generally designated **2** into overlapping position such that the side walls **16** and **18** are placed in substantially parallel position to form an enveloped section between the walls. The side walls are then heat sealed at the ends **22** and at the intermediate portions designated **20** along the length of the container to form a plurality of compartments within the container defined by the bottom of the container, the side walls, and the heat sealed portions **20** and **22**. The adhesive strip **12** is placed on the flap member such that the side of the adhesive strip which has the adhesive composition of greater bonding strength is in contact with the flap portion of the plastic sheet. The unitary piece of plastic which contains the strip in place is then cut along the edges **25** to form the individual flap members.

While it will be apparent that the prefered embodiments of the invention disclosed are well calculated to fulfill the objects above stated, it will be appreciated that the invention is suspectible to modification, variation and change without departing from the proper scope or fair meaning of the subjoined claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A compartmented container for use in dispensing pills and the like from a plurality of compartments, said container comprising a flexible, non-opaque plastic which

forms two side walls of the container as well as individual flap members for enclosing said compartments, said two side walls being substantially parallel and joined to form a bottom of the compartmented container, said two side walls being sealed together at the end portions thereof and intermediate said end portions to thereby form a plurality of compartments defined by said side walls and said bottom, adhesive means disposed on said flap members for holding the members in a closed position relative to the opening of the individual compartments, and a plurality of different indicia on the exterior of the container relative to each compartment to thereby enable a substantially mistake-proof, programmed removal of the pills from the container.

2. A compartmented container as set forth in claim **1** further characterized as comprising a unitary, flexible, non-opaque, plastic material which forms two side walls of the container as well as individual flap members for enclosing said compartments, said two side walls being substantially parallel and joined to form a bottom of the compartmented container, said two side walls being heat sealed together at the end portions thereof and intermediate said end portions to thereby form a plurality of compartments defined by said side walls and said botom, adhesive means disposed on said flap members for holding the members in a closed position relative to the opening of the individual compartments, and a plurality of different printed indicia on the exterior of the container relative to each compartment to thereby enable a substantially mistake-proof programmed removal of the pills from the container.

3. A compartmented container as set forth in claim **1** further characterized as being comprised of a plurality of seven compartments, said container comprising a unitary, flexible, non-opaque, plastic material which forms two side walls of the container as well as seven flap members for enclosing said compartments, said two side walls being substantially parallel and joined to form a bottom of the compartmented container, said two side walls being heat sealed together at the end portions thereof and intermediate said end portions to thereby form the seven compartments which are defined by said side walls and said bottom, adhesive means disposed on said seven flap members for holding said members in closed position relative to the opening of each of the seven compartments, and different printed indicia on the exterior of each of the seven flap members to thereby label each compartment with a day of the week enabling a substantially mistake-proof, programmed removal of the pills from the container on a daily basis.

4. A method of preparing a compartmented container comprised of a flexible, non-opaque plastic which forms two side walls of the container as well as individual flap members for enclosing said compartments, said two side walls being substantially parallel and joined to form a bottom of the compartmented container, said two side walls being sealed together at the end portions thereof and intermediate said end portions to thereby form a plurality of compartments defined by said side walls and said bottom, adhesive means disposed on said flap members for holding the members in closed position relative to the opening of the individual compartments, and a plurality of different indicia on the exterior of the container relative to each compartment to thereby enable a substantially mistake-proof, programmed removal of the pills from the container, said method comprising the steps of: (a) folding a generally rectangular sheet of plastic material into partially overlapping position to form said side walls of the container, (b) heat sealing the side walls to provide a connecting bond therebetween at said end portions and intermediate said ends to thereby form the compartments, (c) placing an adhesive strip on the plastic material in a transverse position from end to end with the strip being disposed on the portion of the material which is not in overlapping position, said strip having an adhesive on

both sides thereof with the adhesive on each side being of differing bonding strength, and (d) cutting the plastic material containing the adhesive strip to form said individual flap members.

5. A compartmented container for use in dispensing things from a plurality of compartments, said container comprising plastic material which forms side walls of the container as well as pivotal closure means for enclosing said compartments, said side walls being substantially parallel and joined at a bottom of the compartmented container, said side walls being structurally joined at the end portions thereof and intermediate said end portions to thereby form a plurality of compartments generally defined by said side walls and said bottom, securing means for holding the closure means in a closed position relative to the individual compartments, and a plurality of

different indicia on the exterior of the plastic material relative to each compartment for enabling substantially mistake-proof removal of the things from the container.

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