



US 20060116049A1

(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Reese

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2006/0116049 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Jun. 1, 2006**

(54) **KIT FOR SIMULATING A VISIT BY SANTA CLAUS**

Publication Classification

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A63H 33/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **446/75**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

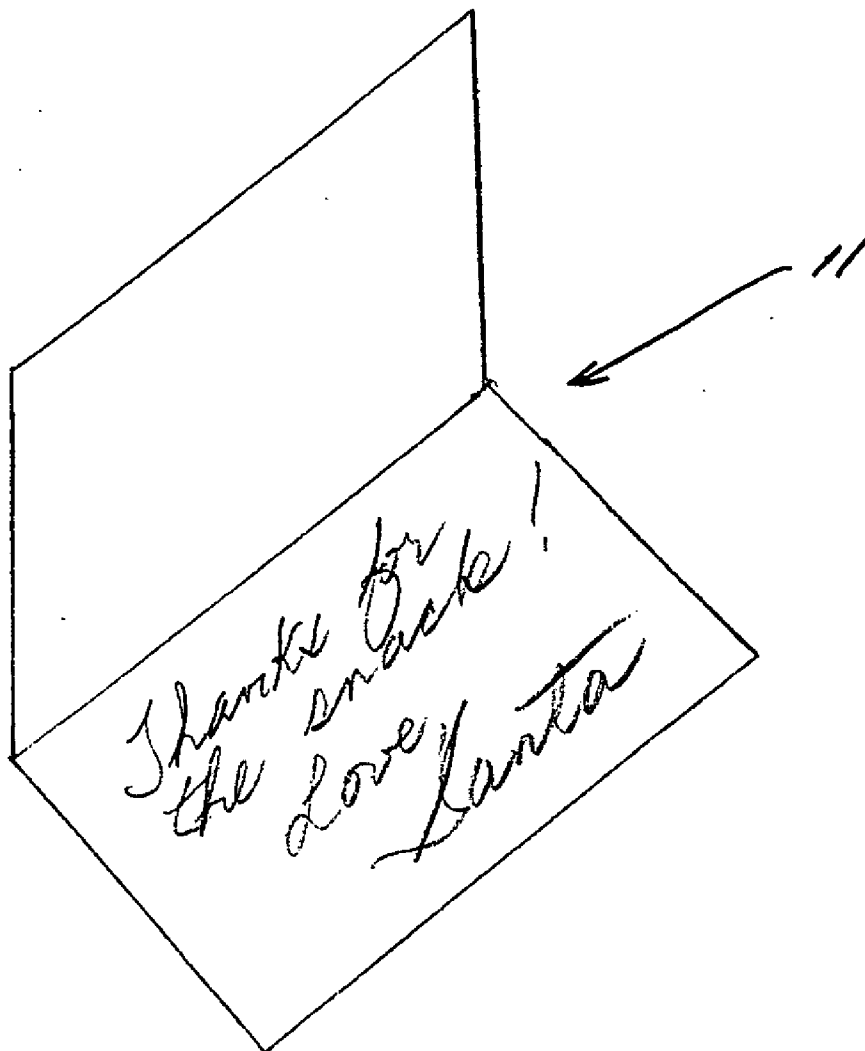
A kit for simulating a visit by Santa Claus, especially for the enjoyment of a child or children, includes a plurality of items to be placed in and/or around a dwelling or other location at which one or more children are to be present for the celebration of Christmas, to enhance the impression and belief that Santa Claus and his reindeer had been present in and around the dwelling. In the preferred embodiment of the invention the kit further includes an openable container for storing items comprising the kit, and also includes a set of written instructions with information regarding suggested uses and placement of the items. A method of simulating a visit by Santa Claus is also disclosed.

(21) Appl. No.: **11/264,664**

(22) Filed: **Nov. 1, 2005**

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 60/624,763, filed on Nov. 3, 2004.



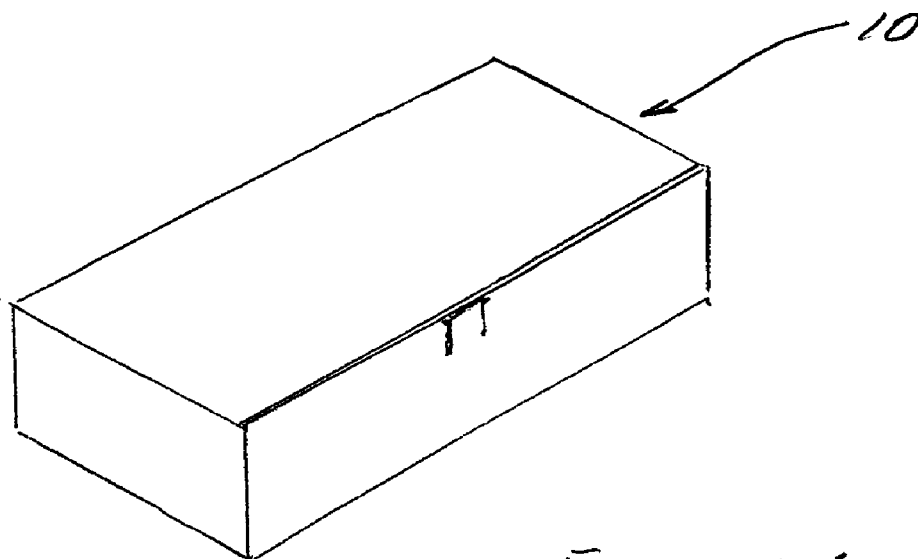


FIGURE 1

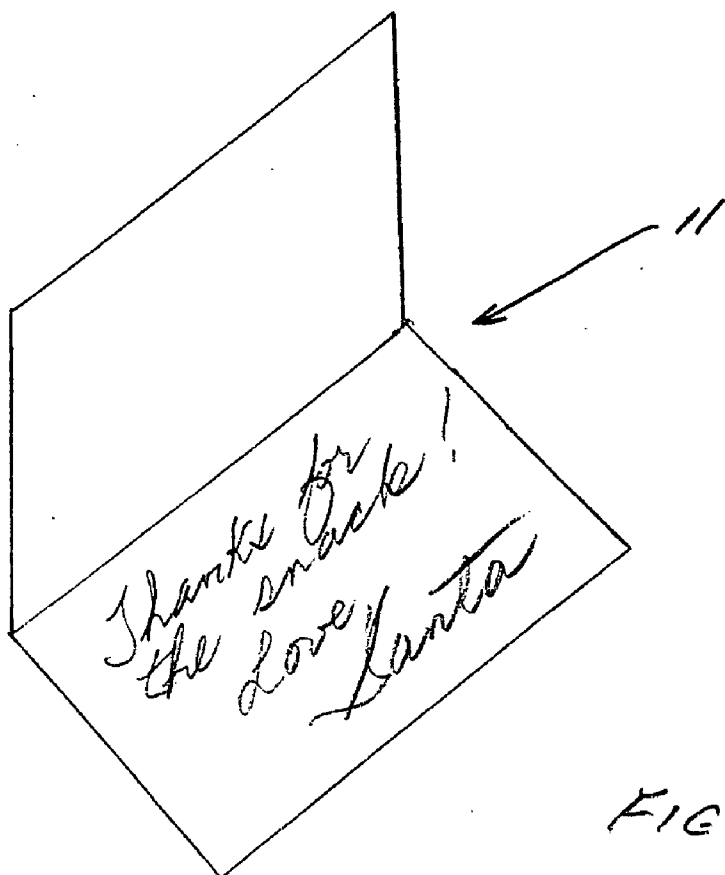


FIGURE 2

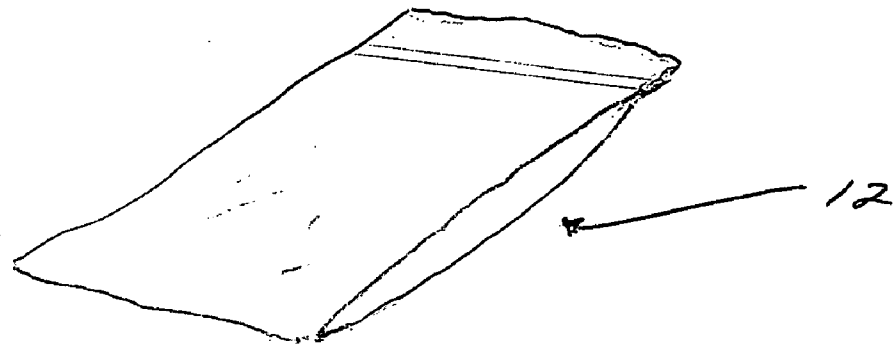


FIGURE 3

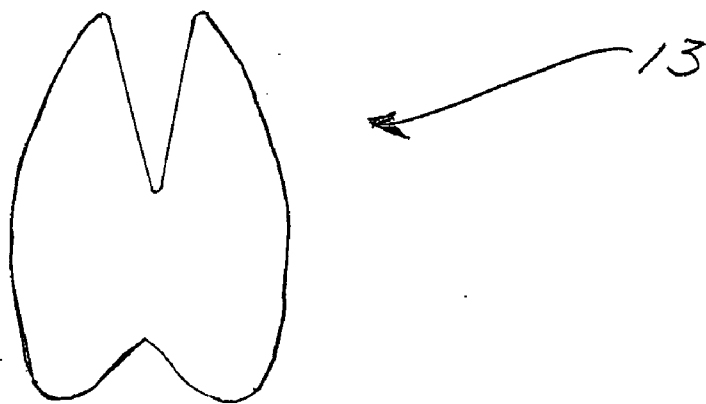


FIGURE 4

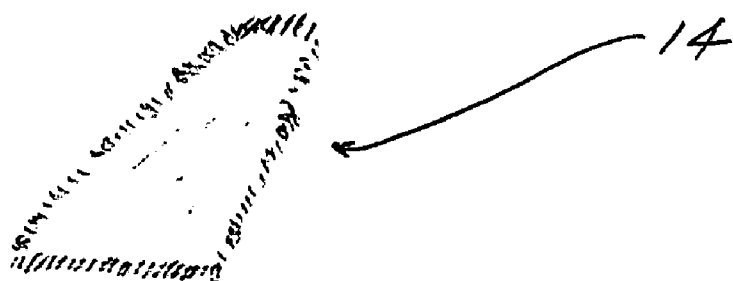


FIGURE 5

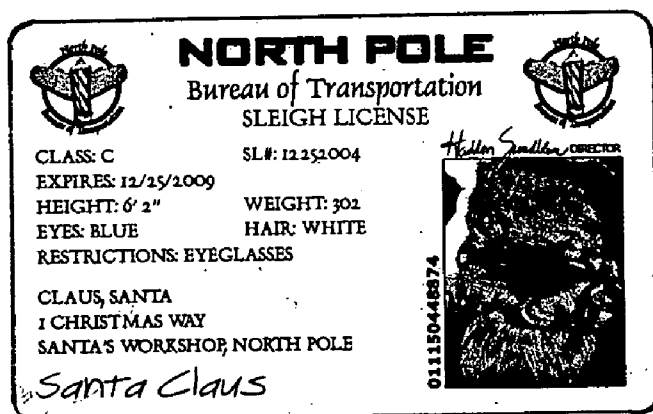




FIGURE 6



"Santa Was Here" Instruction Sheet

- 1 Do NOT show this kit to your child! That would ruin the surprise. On Christmas morning (or Christmas Eve) before your child wakes up, follow steps 2-6.
- 2 Place the "Thank You" card where Santa's snacks were left (after disposing of the snacks, of course). Skip this step if you did not leave out snacks.
- 3 Scatter the corn outside on your lawn, porch, or doorstep to make it seem as if Santa's reindeer had a little snack as well.
- 4 Use the enclosed hoof to make prints in the snow or soft ground in your yard. If no suitable ground is close by, fill a small pan with mud and dip the hoof in it. Use the muddy hoof to create prints on your porch, driveway, or other hard surface. Try to create the illusion that Santa's reindeer were milling about.
- 5 Place the piece of torn fabric ("a piece of Santa's jacket") on or nearby something Santa might have "snagged it on", like a loose nail, corner, fireplace grate, etc.
- 6 Place Santa's license on the floor as if Santa dropped it in his haste. Assure your child that Santa can get a replacement; losing his license won't keep anyone from getting gifts.



← 16

FIGURE 7

**KIT FOR SIMULATING A VISIT BY SANTA
CLAUS**

RELATED APPLICATION DATA

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/624,763, filed Nov. 3, 2004, titled "Kit For Simulating A Visit By Santa Claus".

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention generally relates to the field of theatrical or play acting props or devices, and in its preferred embodiments more specifically relates to a kit including items for use by parents or others to simulate a visit by Santa Claus for the enjoyment of children.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The legend of Santa Claus is very well known and enjoyed around the world. A child's belief in Santa Claus and belief that Santa Claus has visited his or her home or place of residence at Christmas time is often among a child's most treasured experiences and memories. A child's excitement about and enjoyment of a visit by Santa Claus is also a source of great pleasure to the child's parents and other adults associated with the child, and they often encourage the child's belief by providing some indication that Santa Claus has paid a visit to the home. Perhaps the most common practice is to participate with the child in leaving a snack for Santa Claus to enjoy before the child goes to sleep on Christmas Eve, and then making it appear that Santa Claus has eaten the snack before the child awakes the next morning. Often, parents and others who wish to enhance the child's enjoyment of the event and reinforce the appearance that Santa Claus has indeed paid a visit would like to provide more indication that a visit has occurred. However, it is often difficult for them to do so in the limited time available and in the midst of other, often hectic, holiday preparations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] The invention encompasses, and the novelty of the invention is based upon the cumulation, in the form of a kit, of a plurality of items which can, both individually and in combination, be used and placed where they will be discovered by a child or children on Christmas morning, to create the impression that Santa Claus, and, optionally, his sleigh and reindeer, have visited. In its preferred embodiments the kit is provided with a box or other container that includes various items such as a note to the child from Santa, a package of "reindeer food", a piece of fabric "torn from Santa's jacket", a "sleigh driver's license", a "reindeer hoof" imprinter, and a set of instructions for using to items in the kit. The items in the kit may be placed, as appropriate, inside or outside the dwelling by the user of the kit in order to enhance the impression of a visit by Santa Claus. A child's sequential discovery of the pieces of "evidence" provided with the use of the kit of the invention prolongs and enhances the child's enjoyment and excitement about the event, and encourages the child's continued belief in the cherished legend of Santa Claus.

[0005] The composition of the kit within the scope of the invention and the manner of the use of the kit will be described in detail with reference to the accompanying drawing figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] FIG. 1 is an illustration of a box appropriate for use as a container for the items comprising the kit of the invention.

[0007] FIG. 2 is an illustration of a note from Santa comprising one of the items of a preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention.

[0008] FIG. 3 is an illustration of a package of dried corn kernels comprising one of the items of a preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention.

[0009] FIG. 4 is an illustration of the bottom of a reindeer hoof stamp comprising one of the items of a preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention, showing the imprint made.

[0010] FIG. 5 is a general illustration of a piece of torn fabric comprising one of the items of a preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention.

[0011] FIG. 6 is an illustration of the front face of a preferred embodiment of a "sleigh drivers license" comprising one of the items of a preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention.

[0012] FIG. 7 is a general illustration of a set of instructions regarding use of the kit of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0013] In the preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention, items for creating the desired impression are packaged for distribution to final users in a box 10, although it will be understood that other packaging means, such as but not limited to an envelope, bag, case, or other enclosure. It is preferred that the outer surfaces of the enclosure not include any indicia that would indicate to a child the nature or purpose of the kit. It is also preferred, although not critical or necessary within the scope of the invention, that the enclosure include a printed suggestion that the enclosure not be opened in the presence of a child, and that the contents not be shown to a child before the contents are used as intended.

[0014] In the preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention, the items included in the kit for use to create the impression that a visit by Santa Claus has occurred comprise a note from Santa, 11, thanking the child for the snack the child has left for Santa; a package 12 containing kernels of dried corn or other food items that might be commonly fed to reindeer or that a child would expect to be fed to reindeer; a deer hoof stamp 13, formed of plastic or other suitable material, to be used to create simulated reindeer hoof prints or tracks; a small patch or swatch of red cloth 14 to appear to be a piece torn from Santa's jacket; and a simulated "sleigh drivers license" 15 issued to Santa Claus. More specifically, in the preferred embodiment the note from Santa comprises a piece of stationery paper with words printed on one surface of the paper in a script font representing a short communication to a child or children in the nature of a "thank you" for a snack, a "Merry Christmas" wish, or the like. The package of "reindeer feed" is preferably a small container such as a plastic or paper bag containing a few ounces of corn kernels. In the preferred embodiment of the kit the deer hoof stamp, or imprinter, is a plastic body with one flat face formed in the approximate

shape and size of a deer hoof, to be held by a user of the kit and pressed onto the ground, or into snow, to create the appearance of hoof prints. The cloth for simulating a piece of Santa's jacket is preferably a small piece of red woven material such as velvet with slightly raveled edges to appear to a child that it was torn from a garment. In the preferred embodiment the "sleigh drivers license" is a generally rectangular piece of plastic, or of laminated paper or card stock, the approximate size of a typical vehicle drivers license, printed on one side with a photo of a person dressed as Santa Claus, in the nature of a typical drivers license photo, identification of the issuing authority, such as the "North Pole Bureau of Transportation", and with identifying information of the type typically included on a drivers license; and printed on the opposite side with, e.g., information regarding the type of sleigh the holder of the license is authorized to operate. It is preferred that the "license" be sufficiently realistic in appearance to be comparable to, for example, a parent's actual driver's license, but it will be understood that the design of the license is subject to a great deal of variation within the scope of the invention.

[0015] It is preferred that the kit include, in addition to the items that may be used to indicate that a visit by Santa Claus has occurred, a set of instructions or suggestions for use, identified by reference number 16. The instructions outline suggested steps that may be followed for using each of the other items contained in the kit and packaged in enclosure 10. In the preferred embodiment the following wording for the instructions is used:

[0016] 1. Do not show this kit to your child! That would ruin the surprise. On Christmas morning (or Christmas eve) before your child wakes up, follow steps 2-6.

[0017] 2. Place the "Thank You" card where Santa's snacks were left (after disposing of the snacks, of course). Skip this step if you did not leave out snacks.

[0018] 3. Scatter the corn outside on your lawn, porch, or doorstep to make it seem as if Santa's reindeer had a little snack as well.

[0019] 4. Use the enclosed hoof to make prints in the snow or soft ground in your yard. If no suitable ground is close by, fill a small pan with mud and dip the hoof in it. Use the muddy hoof to create prints on your porch, driveway, or other hard surface. Try to create the illusion that Santa's reindeer were milling about.

[0020] 5. Place the piece of torn fabric ("a piece of Santa's jacket") on or nearby something Santa might have "snagged it on", like a loose nail, corner, fireplace grate, etc.

[0021] 6. Place Santa's license on the floor as if Santa dropped it in his haste. Assure your child that Santa can get a replacement; losing his license won't keep anyone from getting gifts. It is to be understood that the foregoing preferred wording and order of instructions is not limiting, and that any desired order, wording, or other presentation of instructions can be used within the scope of the invention. Instructions may be provided with pictorial illustrations to indicate how the items in the kit may be used, either in addition to or in lieu of written instructions. Instructions may be provided in any desired language, or in more than one language. It is not essential to the invention that instructions be included within the kit at all, although it is certainly preferred that instructions be provided, to facilitate under-

standing of the purpose of the other items included within the kit and to facilitate use of those items in an effective way.

[0022] The items identified above for inclusion in the preferred embodiment of the kit are subject to variation within the scope of the invention. For example, the specific wording of the note is not critical to the invention, and any desired message maybe used, such as, "Thanks for the snack", with a simulated "Santa" or "Santa Claus" signature. It is preferred that the message in the note be printed in a script or from an image of a handwritten original, that will appear to a child to be in Santa's handwriting. Alternatively, a blank note or "thank you card" may be used, with or without a printed heading or cover such as "Thank You From Santa" or "From The Desk Of Santa Claus", so that a person using the kit may compose and write his or her own message from Santa to the child. As another example of a variation within the scope of the invention, the package of "reindeer food" may be provided with oats or other grains, with a small amount of hay, or with any other items that a child would be likely to recognize or accept as being an appropriate snack or food for a reindeer. As a further example, a small patch of fur or simulated fur, preferably white in color, may be provided in addition to or as a substitute for the patch of red cloth, to create the impression that a small path of fur trim was torn from Santa's jacket during his visit.

[0023] It is also to be understood that the items identified above are not exhaustive of the items that could be included in a kit within the scope of the invention. Other items may be provided as part of the kit in addition to or instead of some or all of the items identified above. Non-limiting examples of items that could be included in the kit of the invention include a small bell that can be placed outside (especially in the area in which reindeer tracks are made, if the hoof is used) to suggest that the bell fell from a reindeer harness; simulated reindeer droppings, comprising materials such as chocolate covered raisins, chocolate covered peanuts or other nuts, or simulated droppings formulated of plastic or other suitable materials may be provided in the kit, for use if deemed appropriate by the user of the kit; a glove that can be placed in an appropriate location (such as near a present or near a snack left for Santa) to suggest that Santa removed and then forgot one of his gloves; a hat that can be used in the same manner as the glove to suggest that Santa forgot his hat; a pen or pencil (with or without imprinted wording such as "Santa's Workshop") with ink or lead color to match that of the note from Santa, that can be placed next to the note to suggest that Santa forgot his or pencil; a container of, e.g., powdered material that can be used with the reindeer hoof to make tracks, to facilitate the step of making mud for that purpose; and a boot sole imprinter that can be used to make imprints of Santa's boots (especially for use in homes with a fireplace and chimney). Additional items that can be included in a kit within the scope of the invention will occur to others upon the basis and with the guidance of the foregoing description.

[0024] It will be understood that the kit and the items included in a particular embodiment of the kit are subject to alternative embodiments consistent with the traditions of different cultures and variations in the "Santa Claus" theme, all within the scope of a kit provided with items to create the impression of a visit and enhance a child's enjoyment of the celebration of Christmas.

[0025] It will be understood as well that all items provided in a kit need not be used at the same time, and that it is within the discretion of the user to determine which items to use to create the desired impression of a visit by Santa Claus. It will also be understood that the instructions provided with the kit will preferably be modified from the illustration provided above as appropriate to the items selected for inclusion in the kit.

[0026] As noted above, the description and identification of items for inclusion in the preferred embodiment of the kit of the invention is intended to be illustrative and not limiting. The kit of the invention is susceptible to variations and alternative embodiments in addition to those described above, all within the scope of the invention.

1. A kit for simulating a visit by Santa Claus, comprising a plurality of items to be displayed in and around a place of habitation occupied by at least one child such that said items are visible to said child, said items being of a nature so as to evoke in said child the impression that said items were left in said place of habitation by an ephemeral being believed by said child to be Santa Claus.

2. The kit of claim 1, further comprising an openable container for the storage of said items.

3. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a sheet of stationery paper bearing a message directed to said child purporting to be written by Santa Claus.

4. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a package containing feed material, perceivable by a child to be suitable for consumption by reindeer.

5. The kit of claim 4, wherein said feed material comprises corn.

6. The kit of claim 4, wherein said feed material comprises hay.

7. The kit of claim 4, wherein said feed material comprises oats.

8. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a small patch of red fabric, perceivable by a child to have been torn from a garment worn by Santa Claus.

9. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a hoof stamp, formed as a body having one face of the approximate size and shape of the bottom of a deer hoof, said face of said body to be pressed against a surface to create a simulation of a hoofprint of a reindeer.

10. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a simulation of a drivers license for the operation of a sleigh, purporting to have been issued to Santa Claus.

11. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a small piece of material, perceivable by a child to be a piece of fur torn from a garment worn by Santa Claus.

12. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a glove, perceivable by a child to have been worn and inadvertently left by Santa Claus.

13. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a hat, perceivable by a child to have been worn and inadvertently left by Santa Claus.

13. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a bell, perceivable by a child to be a bell from harness worn by reindeer.

14. The kit of claim 1, wherein one of said items comprises a package containing a small quantity of simulated reindeer droppings, formed of a non-toxic, non-injurious material.

15. The kit of claim 1, further comprising written instructions directed to an adult associated with said child regarding the suggested use and placement of said items.

16. A kit for simulating a visit by Santa Claus, comprising at least two items to be displayed in and around a place of habitation occupied by at least one child such that said items are visible to said child, said items being of a nature so as to evoke in said child the impression that said items were left in said place of habitation by an ephemeral being believed by said child to be Santa Claus, said items comprising said kit selected from a group including

a. a sheet of stationery paper bearing a message directed to said child purporting to be written by Santa Claus;

b. a package containing feed material, perceivable by a child to be suitable for consumption by reindeer;

c. a small patch of red fabric, perceivable by a child to have been torn from a garment worn by Santa Claus;

d. a hoof stamp, formed as a body having one face of the approximate size and shape of the bottom of a deer hoof, said face of said body to be pressed against a surface to create a simulation of a hoofprint of a reindeer;

e. a simulation of a drivers license for the operation of a sleigh, purporting to have been issued to Santa Claus;

f. a small piece of material, perceivable by a child to be a piece of fur torn from a garment worn by Santa Claus;

g. a glove, perceivable by a child to have been worn and inadvertently left by Santa Claus;

h. a hat, perceivable by a child to have been worn and inadvertently left by Santa Claus;

i. a bell, perceivable by a child to be a bell from harness worn by reindeer;

j. a package containing a small quantity of simulated reindeer droppings, formed of a material that is non-toxic and non-injurious to a child;

k. a boot stamp, formed as a body having one face of the approximate size and shape of the bottom of the sole of a boot perceivable by a child to be worn by Santa Claus, said face of said body to be pressed against a surface to create a simulation of a boot print; and

l. a package containing a powdered material to be applied to said face of said hoof stamp or said face of said boot stamp for transfer to said surface against which said face is pressed to create said print.

17. The kit of claim 16, further comprising an openable container for the storage of said items.

18. The kit of claim 16, further comprising written instructions directed to an adult associated with said child regarding the suggested use and placement of said items.

19. A method of simulating a visit by an ephemeral being identified as Santa Claus to a selected location, comprising placing in or around said location a plurality of items selected to create the impression that said items were left in said in or around said location in the course of a visit to said location by an ephemeral being identified as Santa Claus.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said items are selected from a group including

- a. a sheet of stationery paper bearing a message appearing to be have been written by Santa Claus;
- b. a small quantity of feed material suitable for consumption by reindeer, for creating the impression that food was eaten by a group of visiting reindeer;
- c. a small patch of red fabric, for creating the impression that said patch was torn from a garment worn by Santa Claus;
- d. a hoof stamp, formed as a body having one face of the approximate size and shape of the bottom of a deer hoof, said face of said body to be pressed against a surface to create a simulation of a hoofprint of a reindeer, for creating the impression of the presence of a group of reindeer;
- e. a simulation of a drivers license for the operation of a sleigh, purporting to have been issued to Santa Claus, for creating the impression that the license was inadvertently left by Santa Claus;
- f. a small piece of fur material, for creating the impression that a piece of fur was torn from a garment worn by Santa Claus;
- g. a glove, for creating the impression that said glove was worn and inadvertently left by Santa Claus;
- h. a hat, for creating the impression that said hat was worn and inadvertently left by Santa Claus;
- i. a bell, for creating the impression that said bell dropped from harness worn by visiting reindeer;
- j. a package containing a small quantity of simulated reindeer droppings, for creating the impression of the presence of a group of reindeer;
- k. a boot stamp, formed as a body having one face of the approximate size and shape of the bottom of the sole of a boot, said face of said body to be pressed against a surface to create a simulation of a boot print to create the impression that said boot print was made by Santa Claus; and
- l. a package containing a powdered material to be applied to said face of said hoof stamp or said face of said boot stamp for transfer to said surface against which said face is pressed to create said print.

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