Claims

1. A bearing protector comprising

   an annular structure having a front face defining an annular shaft contacting surface, and a side face, said side face comprising a locking collar portion and a conical portion,
   wherein an inner diameter of the locking collar portion is configured surround an outer diameter of a bearing locking collar,
   wherein the conical portion extends axially and away from the locking collar portion and terminates at an outer race-facing surface, and
   wherein the annular structure of the bearing protector is interrupted by a slit which defines a first end and a second end of the annular structure, and
   wherein an inside surface of said conical portion and said bearing define a conical cavity configured to receive grease expelled from said bearing, and wherein said outer race-facing surface and a surface of said race form a non-contact grease-filled gap.

2. The bearing protector of claim 1, configured to be twisted so that said first and second ends may be displaced from one-another to allow passage of a shaft there-between.

3. The bearing protector of claim 1, further comprising means to securely fix said first end to said second end.

4. A method of protecting a shaft bearing, comprising:

   providing an open ring-shaped flexible bearing protector,
   said open-ring-shaped flexible bearing protector comprising an annular structure having a side face comprising a conical portion having an end that terminates at an outer race-facing surface, and
   deforming said open ring-shaped flexible bearing protector to separate first and second ends of said open ring shaped flexible bearing protector to allow passage of a shaft,

fitting said open-ring shaped flexible bearing protector about said shaft and said shaft bearing, abutting said first and second ends to one-another and

affixing them to one-another to prevent movement of said open ring-shaped flexible bearing protector and create a cone-shaped cavity between said conical portion, said outer race-facing surface and said shaft bearing,

said cavity configured to receive grease from said bearing and prevent leakage of said grease from an interior thereof.