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(54) ILLUMINATED WRITING ASSEMBLY

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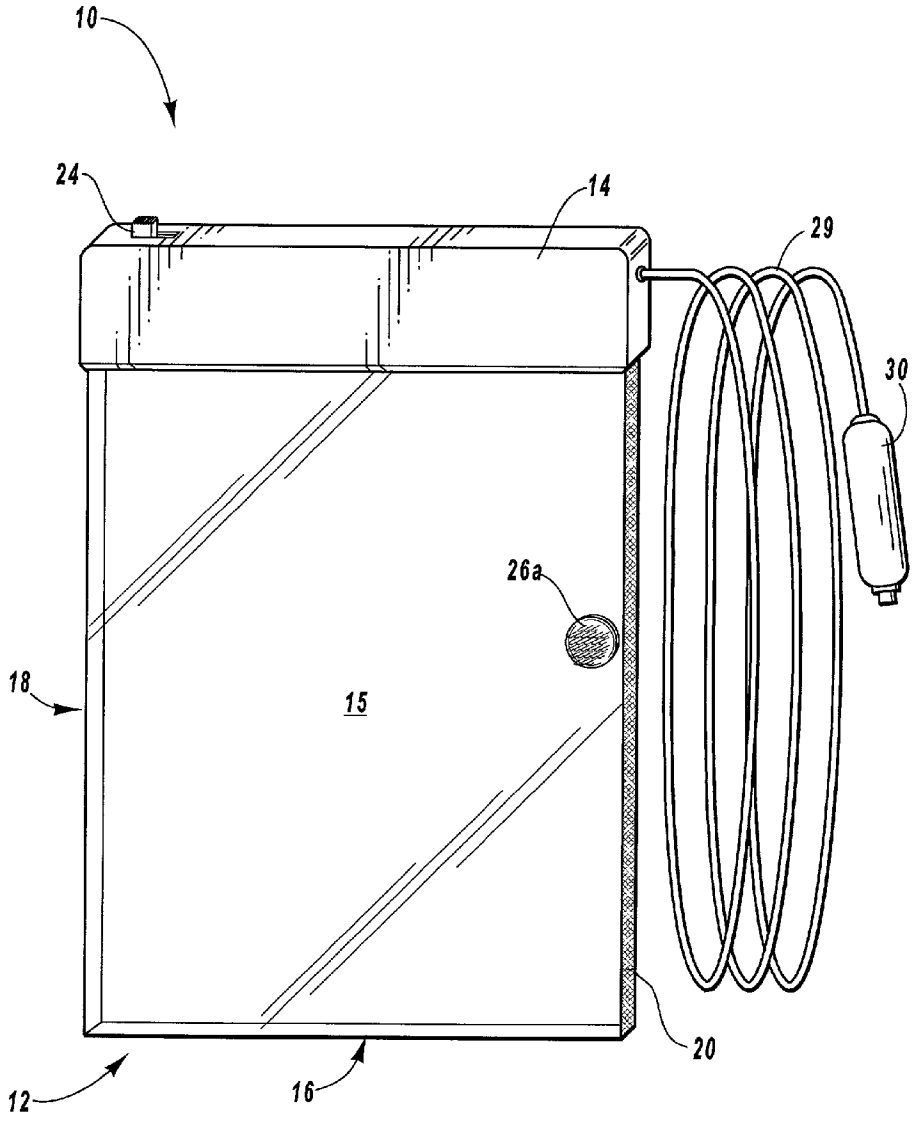
(57) ABSTRACT

An illuminated writing assembly of the present invention includes: a writing surface comprised of a material selected from the group consisting of a transparent and a translucent material; a light source that is configured to be mounted on the writing surface; a power source and a switch configured to actuate the power source.



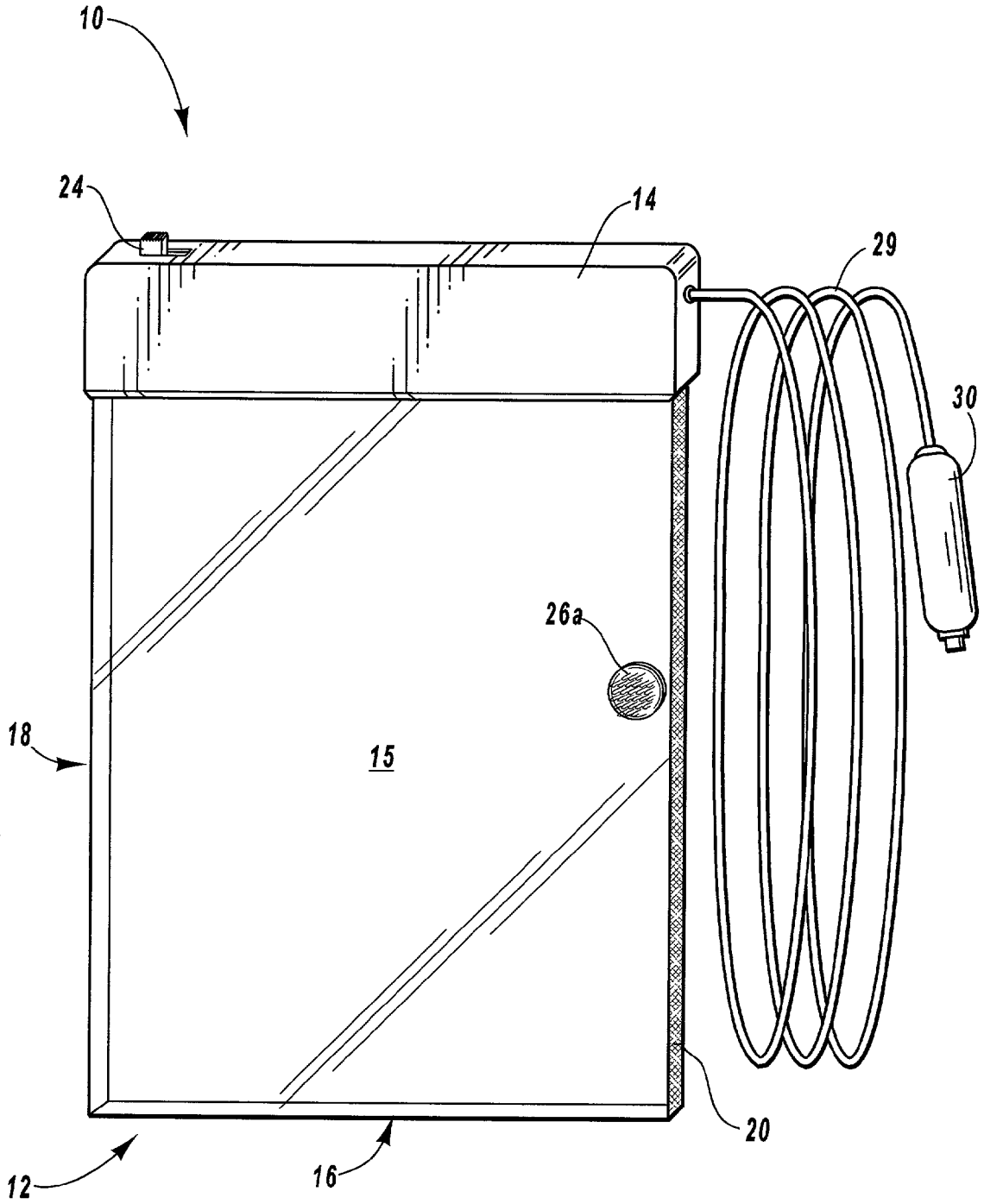



Fig. 1

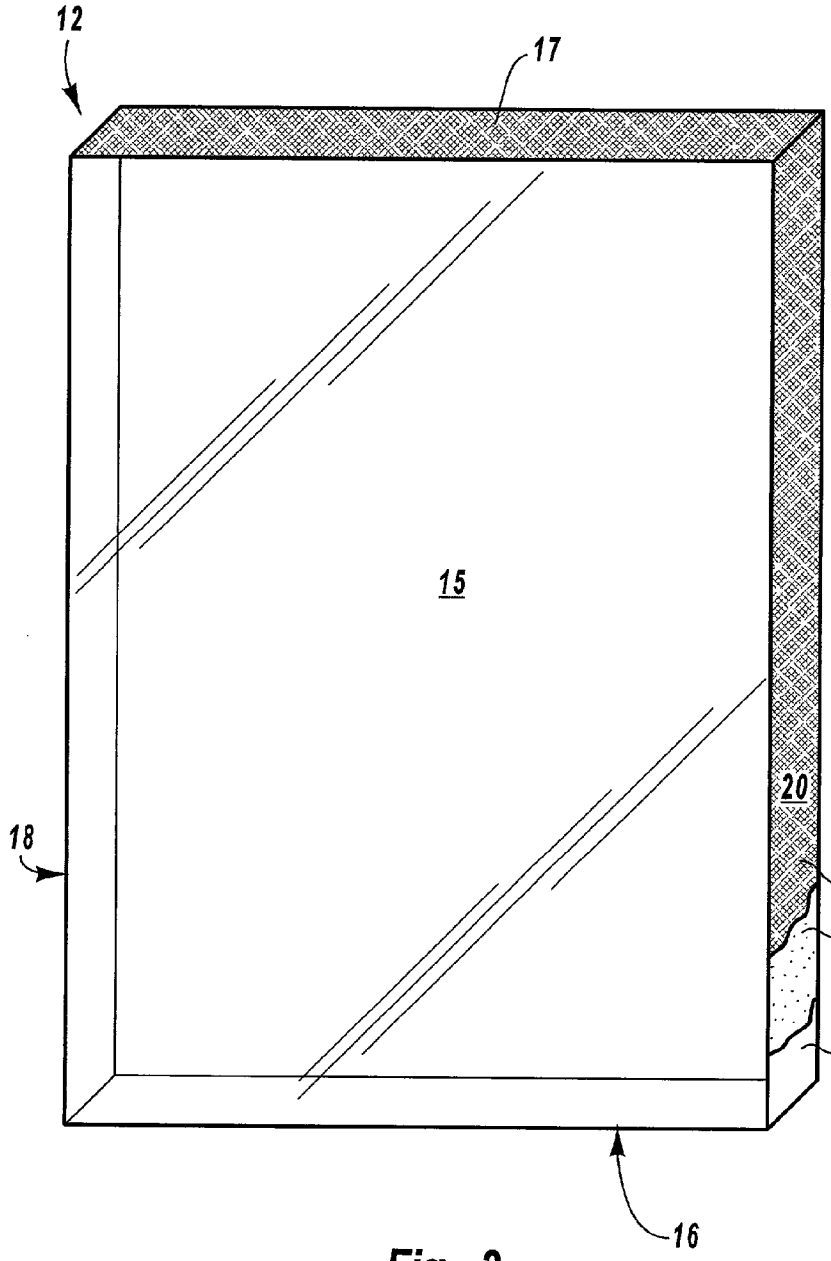



Fig. 2

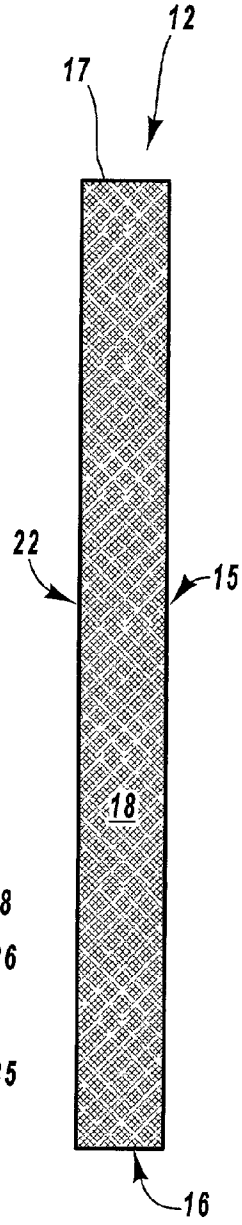



Fig. 3

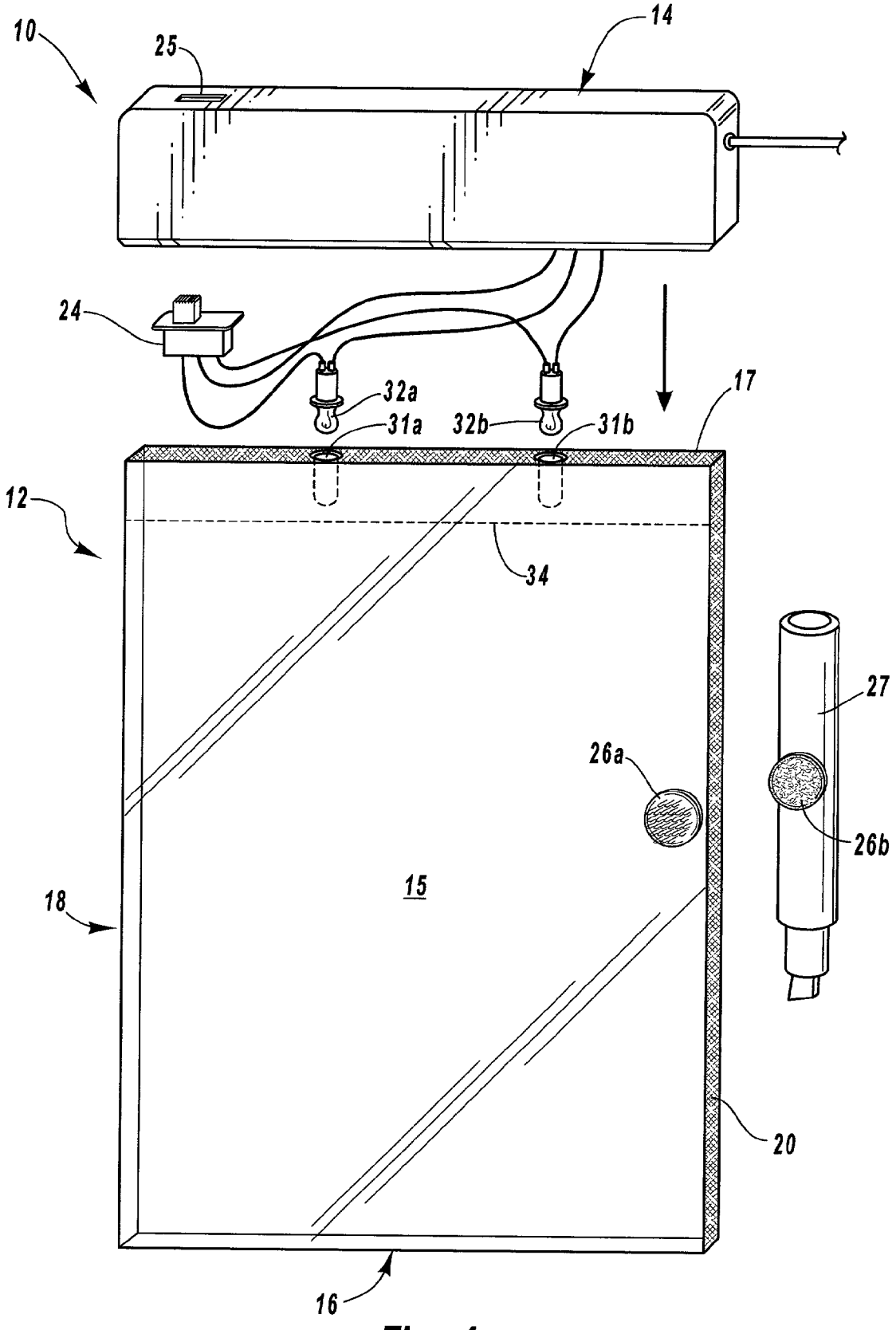



Fig. 4

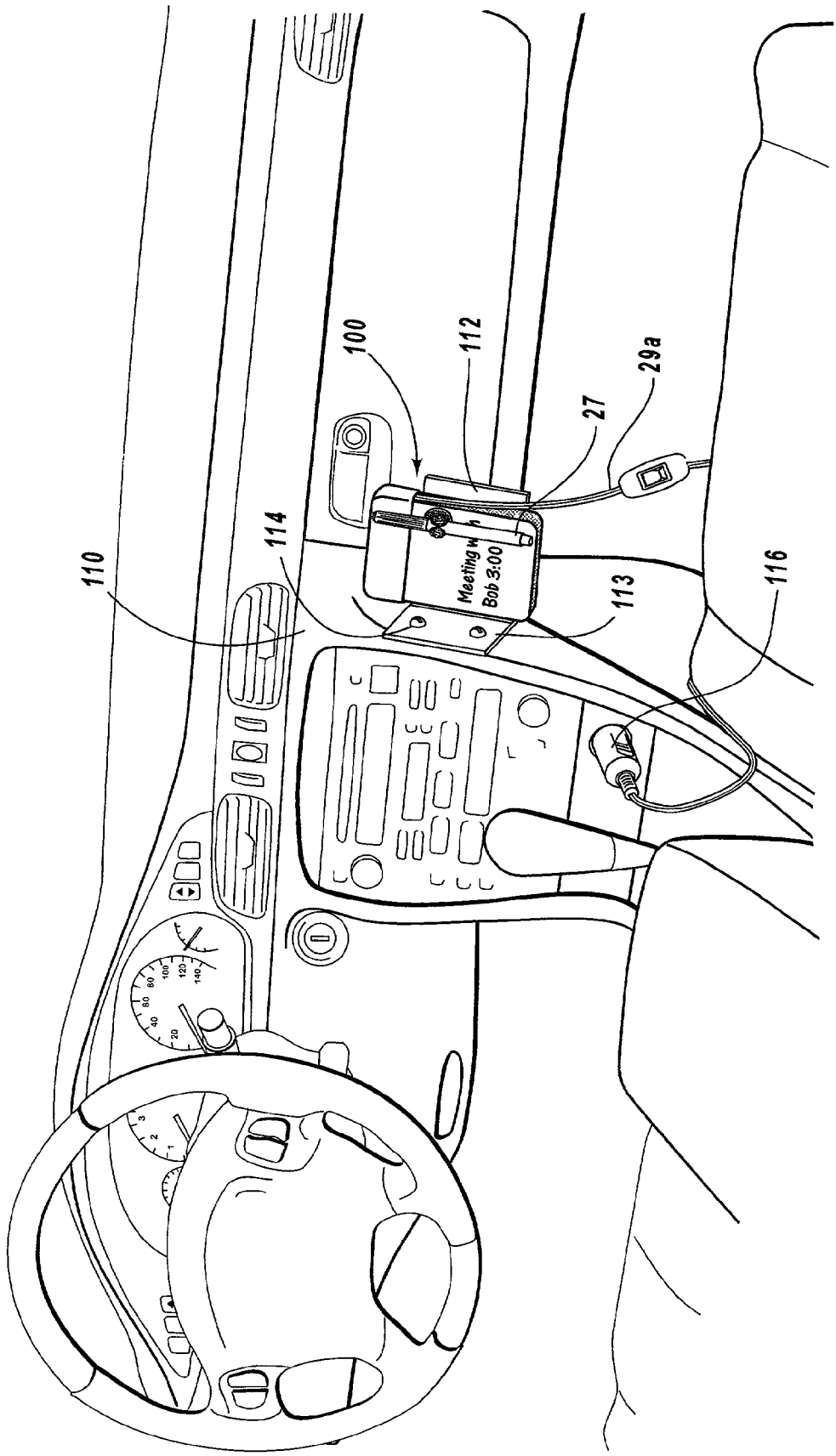



Fig. 5

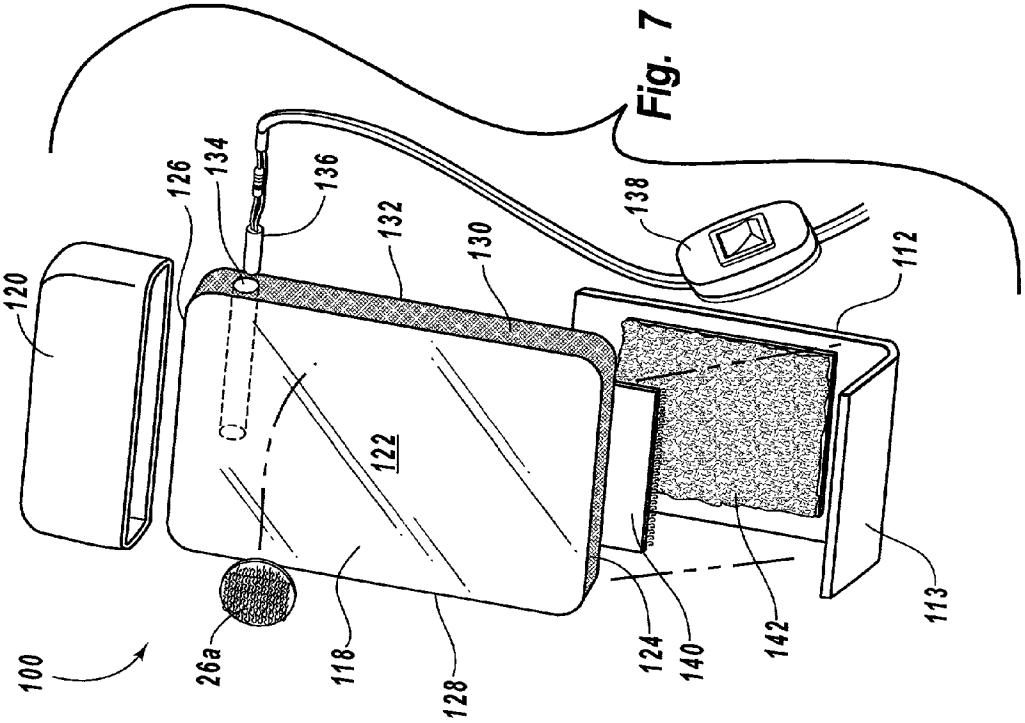

100
120
126
134
136
132
130
138
112
122
26a
118
128
124
140
142
113

Fig. 7

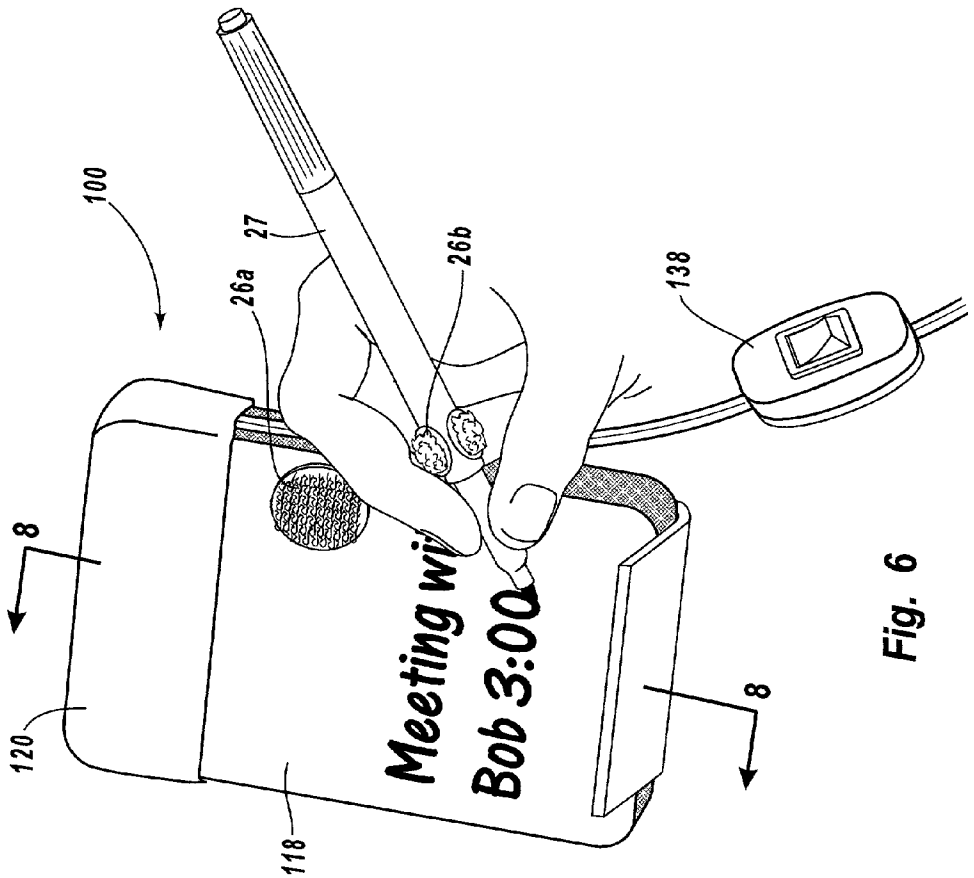

100
27
26a
26b
138
8
8
120
118
Meeting wi
Bob 3:00

Fig. 6

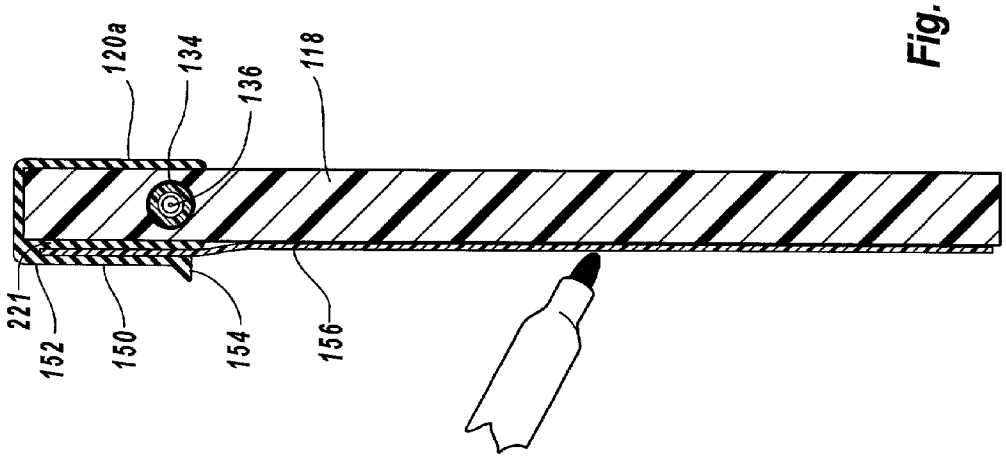

120a
134
136
118
221
152
150
154
156

Fig. 8B

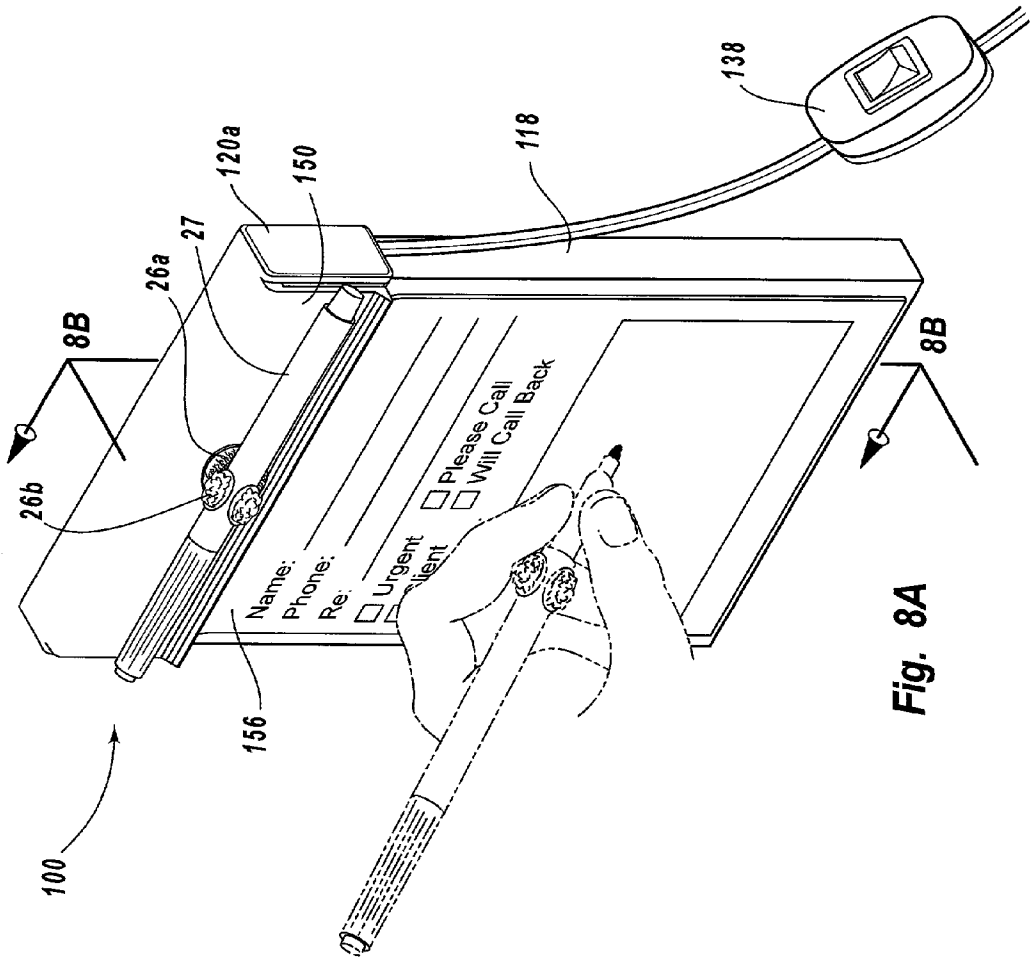

138
118
120a
150
27
26a
8B
8B
26b
Name:
Phone:
Re:
Urgent
Please Call
Will Call Back
156
100

Fig. 8A

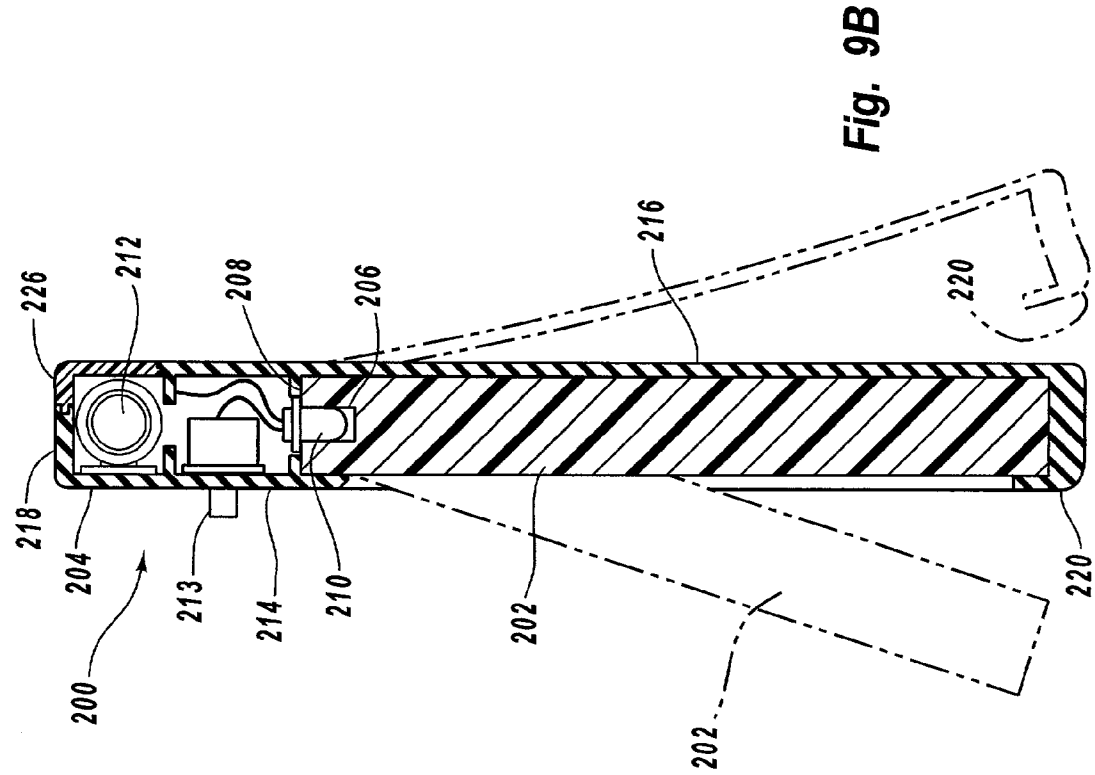

226
212
208
206
216
220
218
204
213
214
210
202
220
200
202

Fig. 9B

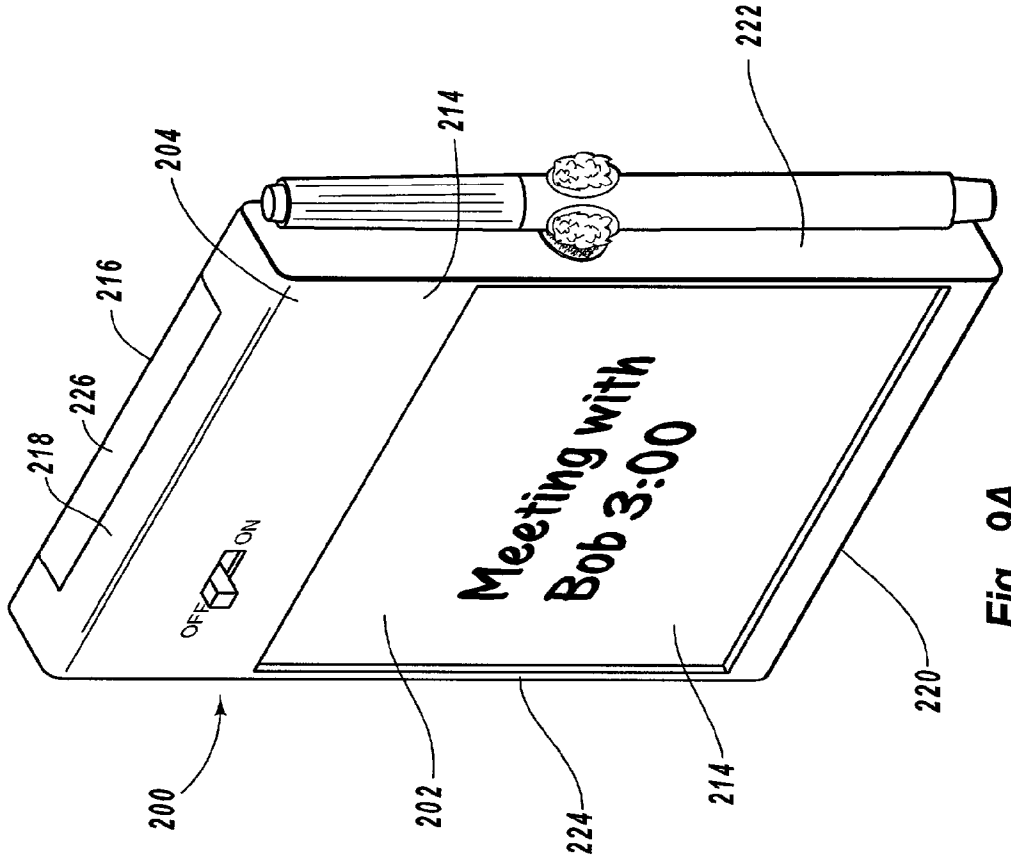

222
214
204
216
226
218
Meeting with
Bob 3:00
OFF
ON
220
200
202
224
214

Fig. 9A

# ILLUMINATED WRITING ASSEMBLY

## RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This non-provisional patent application claims priority to the U.S. Provisional Patent Application filed on Mar. 16, 2001, entitled "Illuminated Writing Pad," serial No. 60/276,412, inventor James F. Richards, which is incorporated herein by reference.

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. The Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to a writing surface that may be selectively illuminated by a user.

[0004] 2. The Prior State of the Art

[0005] Individuals have traditionally used a variety of surfaces for writing thereon. One such writing surface includes slate, which is a fine-grained rock formed by the metamorphosis of clay, shale, etc. Slate is generally a dull, dark bluish gray rock that when in contact with a light colored limestone allows the limestone to appear on the slate. As such, slate has been used, in combination with limestone, as a writing surface.

[0006] The concept used by the combination of slate and limestone is commonly used today and is referred to as a chalkboard or blackboard. A chalkboard is a surface, commonly green in color, which allows chalk to appear thereon. Furthermore, once used to write on the chalkboard, the chalk can be removed from the chalkboard in order to allow additional writing thereon.

[0007] More recently, "whiteboards" have been employed as writing surfaces. A whiteboard is typically a plastic surface, often white in color, which may be written thereon by marker pens. The marker pens may be wiped off of the whiteboard to allow additional writing thereon.

[0008] Other examples of writing surfaces include paper, which is often manufactured as a pad of paper or alternatively as individual sheets. A variety of writing instruments may be employed to write or draw on the paper.

[0009] While the traditional writing surfaces have proven to be useful in writing thereon, each requires the room or environment where the writing surface is employed to be illuminated. In other words, when a chalkboard, a whiteboard, or a paper is employed, the room or environment is typically lit by natural or electric lights to enable the writing on the surface to be visible. In a room or location that is dim or dark, the writing on the surface is often not visible.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] The present invention relates to a writing surface that may be selectively illuminated by a user. More specifically, the present invention is directed to a writing assembly having a smooth surface for writing thereon and at least one light source that may be selectively actuated by a user to provide lighting with respect to the smooth surface, to cause the writing on the surface to be visible.

[0011] Implementation of the present invention includes a transparent or translucent surface and at least one light source. The light source, when actuated, provides lighting to the surface. Therefore, when a user writes with, for example, an erasable marker on the transparent surface, the lighting of the light source enables the writing to been seen in a dim or dark location.

[0012] In one implementation, the light source is electrically coupled to a power source, such as an electrical cord coupled to a cigarette lighter adapter that can be electrically coupled to a battery of a vehicle. A user may then selectively illuminate the writing surface by triggering a switch. Other power sources may be utilized for providing the power to illuminate the one or more light sources, such as one or more batteries or an electrical cord that couples to a wall mounted outlet. Each of these power sources (e.g., electrical cord and battery) are examples of means for providing electrical power to the one or more light sources.

[0013] The present invention is useful in a variety of settings. By way of example, police officers, workers, and/or other individuals who desire to write on a writing surface after dusk may utilize the illuminated writing surface of the present invention to see what is being written on the surface or what has already been written the surface due to the lighting provided by the present invention.

[0014] Additional features and advantages of the present invention will be set forth in the description that follows, and in part will be obvious from the description, or may be learned by the practice of the invention. The features and advantages of the invention may be realized and obtained by means of the instruments and combinations particularly pointed out in the appended claims. These and other features of the present invention will become more fully apparent from the following description and appended claims, or may be learned by the practice of the invention as set forth hereinafter.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] In order that the manner in which the above recited and other advantages and features of the invention are obtained, a more particular description of the present invention briefly described above will be rendered by reference to specific embodiments thereof that are illustrated in the appended drawings. Understanding that the drawings depict only typical embodiments of the invention and are not therefore to be considered to be limiting of its scope, the invention will be described and explained with additional specificity and detail through the use of the accompanying drawings in which:

[0016] **FIG. 1** illustrates a perspective view of an embodiment of the present invention;

[0017] **FIG. 2** illustrates a front perspective view of a writing surface of the embodiment of **FIG. 1**;

[0018] **FIG. 3** illustrates a side view of the writing surface of **FIG. 2**;

[0019] **FIG. 4** illustrates an exploded view of the embodiment of **FIG. 1**;

[0020] **FIG. 5** illustrates an alternate writing assembly of the present invention mounted on the dashboard of the a vehicle;

[0021] **FIG. 6** illustrates a perspective view of the writing assembly of **FIG. 5**;

[0022] **FIG. 7** illustrates an exploded view of the alternative embodiment of **FIG. 5**;

[0023] **FIG. 8A** illustrates yet another alternative embodiment of the present invention;

[0024] **FIG. 8B** illustrates a cross-sectional view of the alternative embodiment of **FIG. 8A**;

[0025] **FIG. 9A** illustrates still another alternative embodiment of the present invention; and

[0026] **FIG. 9B** illustrates a cross-sectional view of the alternative embodiment of **FIG. 9A**, the phantom lines showing the selective coupling of a housing to a writing surface.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0027] The present invention extends to a writing surface that may be selectively illuminated by a user. More specifically, the present invention is directed to a writing assembly having a smooth surface for writing thereon and at least one light source that may be selectively actuated by a user to provide lighting with respect to the smooth surface, to cause the writing on the surface to be visible.

[0028] In the disclosure, reference is made to a light source that provides lighting for the writing surface. In the disclosure and in the claims, the term "light source" refers to any component or device that is capable of emitting light, such as, for example, an incandescent light bulb, a fluorescent light bulb, other light bulbs, a light emitting diode ("LED"), and/or other light sources, each of which is an example of a means for providing illumination.

[0029] While the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **1-4** includes a generally rectangular writing surface, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the writing surface may comprise a variety of different sizes and/or shapes. Furthermore, while the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. **1-4** includes two light sources that are configured to be in electric communication with a car battery through the use of an electrical cord and an adaptor, those skilled in the art will appreciate that a variety of different means for providing electrical power may be utilized in the present invention, including, for example, an electrical cord which may be mounted in a wall socket, a portable source such as one or more batteries, and/or others. Also, embodiments of the present invention embrace one light source or more than two light sources to provide the lighting. Furthermore, those skilled in the art will appreciate that a variety of different components may be utilized to implement the features of the present invention.

[0030] With reference to **FIG. 1**, an illuminated writing assembly **10** is illustrated that comprises a writing surface **12** and a cap **14**. Writing surface **12** comprises a transparent or semi-transparent material, such as plexi-glass, glass, plastic, or other materials. In the illustrated embodiment, writing surface **12** is plexi-glass. In one embodiment, cap **14** comprises a non-conductive vacuum formed material, such as plastic. Rubber may also be employed for cap **14**. Cap **14** is an example of a housing that is mounted on writing surface **12**.

[0031] With reference to **FIG. 2**, writing surface **12** comprises a front face **15**, a bottom edge **16**, a top edge **17**, a first side edge **18**, a second side edge **20**, and a back face **22**, as further illustrated in **FIG. 3**. By way of example, in one embodiment, the dimensions of the writing surface **12** are about 5/2 inches tall, by about 4 inches wide, by about ½ inch thick. Furthermore, writing surface **12** may comprise a clear laser cut plexi-glass material. In one embodiment, the comers of the writing surface are rounded.

[0032] In the illustrated embodiment, edges **16,17,18, 20** and/or back face **22** are first colored a light color (e.g., through painting, staining, or the use of a colored material), such as white, to reflect illumination out of front face **15**. Furthermore, edges **16, 17, 18, 20** and/or back face **22** can then subsequently be colored a dark color (e.g., through painting, staining, or the use of a colored material), such as black to enhance the effect. The black color also prevents light from radiating from anywhere but the front face **15**, thereby maintaining a focused direction of light and allowing the back portion of the assembly to remain more dark (e.g., within a car wherein a dark environment may be preferred except at the front portion of the writing surface).

[0033] **FIG. 2** demonstrates a cutaway portion of edge **20** of one embodiment, featuring layers of transparent or translucent material **35**, a colored layer **36**, such as a white paint, and a second colored layer **38**, such as black paint. In one embodiment, the entire portion of edges **16, 17, 18, 20** and back face **22** are first painted white, then painted black to thereby reflect illumination out of front face **15**. In addition, cap **14** may comprise a black material, such as black vacuum formed PVC plastic.

[0034] Front face **15** is left unpainted so as to reflect illumination thereout. Therefore, in one embodiment, the white paint is visible through the remaining clear face **15** and the black paint is visible from the edges and back face covering the white paint on the outside.

[0035] Referring to **FIG. 4**, and as explained above, writing assembly **10** comprises a cap, which houses an electric circuit comprising a switch **24** and one or more light sources **32**. The switch is made accessible to a user by aperture **25**. In one embodiment, switch **24** is a three way switch (e.g., green/off/red). The switch **24** selectively enables the power source to thereby provide power to the light source.

[0036] Also, in the illustrated embodiment, apertures **31***a* and **31***b* are provided in top edge **17** to respectively house light sources **32***a* and **32***b*. Apertures **31***a-b* may be drilled through edge **17**, so that the one or more light sources **32** (e.g., bulbs and/or light emitting diodes) can be placed into respective apertures **31***a-b*. Light source **32***a* may be a green emitting bulb and/or diode, for example, while light source **32***b* may be a red emitting bulb and/or diode, for example. In one embodiment, apertures **31***a-b* are drilled after edge **17** is painted such that there is no remaining paint in apertures **31** which might block illumination. The light sources may be electrically coupled to a switch **24** that is electrically coupled to a power source. Thus, when actuated, light emits out from the front face **15** of the writing surface. In one embodiment, painted edges **16, 17, 18, 20** and face **22** do not allow substantially any light to emit outwards. In one embodiment, the light sources may only require a small amount of power, such as 12 volts, for example.

[0037] Cap **14** may selectively slide down over the top of the writing surface **12** (e.g., approximately ½ to approxi-

mately 1¼ inch, for example) with the switch housed therein. Cap **14** may serve to cover the light sources, wires, and switch, and to create a finished appearance to writing assembly **10**. Cap **14** may be constructed of a soft or hard elastomeric material. In one embodiment, cap **14** is constructed of a soft polyvinyl material. In another embodiment, cap **14** is constructed of a hardened plastic material. In another embodiment, cap **14** is constructed of an elastomeric material, such as rubber.

[**0038**] As provided above, writing assembly **10** comprises a switch **24** that selectively enables the power source to provide power to one or more light sources **32**. In the illustrated embodiment of **FIG. 1**, switch **24** is electrically coupled to a power source in the form of an electrical cord **29** having an adapter **30** (e.g. a vehicle cigarette lighter adapter) electrically coupled thereto, the electrical cord **29** and adaptor **30** collectively serving as an example of a means for providing electrical power to the one or more light sources **32***a-b*. Other power sources may include one or more portable batteries and/or an electrical cord configured to be coupled to an electric socket, each of which are also examples of means for providing electrical power to the one or more light sources **32***a-b*.

[**0039**] Optionally, a writing instrument may be coupled (e.g., removably coupled) to the writing assembly **10** by a connector such as a two-part connector, e.g, a VELCRO connector comprising (i) a first VELCRO tab **26***a*, which is mounted on writing surface **12**; and (ii) a second corresponding VELCRO tab **26***b*, which is mounted on a writing instrument, such as an erasable marker pen **27**.

[**0040**] As mentioned, the plurality of light sources **32** are electrically coupled to the power source through switch **24**, which can be a variety of different switches such as a toggle switch, a sliding switch, an electric switch, etc. When a user actuates switch **24**, the electrical circuit is closed to cause one or more of the plurality of light sources **32** to emit illumination inside of container **11**. In one embodiment, the illumination is colored. Therefore, by way of example, when switch **24** is triggered to a first position, one of the light sources **32** (e.g. light source **32***a*) is actuated to emit a first colored illumination within container **11**, such as a green illumination. When the switch **24** is subsequently triggered to a second position, both light sources **32** are deactuated so that no illumination is emitted by the light sources **32** in container **11**. When switch **24** is triggered to a third position, another of the second light sources **32** (e.g. light source **32***b*) is actuated to emit a second colored illumination, such as a red illumination. When one or more of the light sources emit illumination, the illumination fills transparent or translucent writing surface **12** and is emitted from writing surface **16** to provide a lighting and thus enable a user to view the writing on writing surface **16**.

[**0041**] One of the various colors of light sources **32** (e.g. green and/or red) may be preferred by the user to view the writing on writing surface **12**, especially due to the color of the writing on writing surface **16**. In other words, one illumination color may cause the writing on writing surface **16** to be more visible than another illumination color.

[**0042**] Switch **24** is an example of a means for selectively enabling the power source to illuminate the light source. Furthermore, cap **14** is utilized as a cover over light sources **32** to prevent light from being shown directly into the face of the user from one or more of the light sources **32**. For example, in one embodiment, cap **14** covers over the writing surface **12** until reaching the dotted reference line **34** shown in **FIG. 4** to thereby prevent light from being emitted laterally out of face **15** above the dotted line **34**.

[**0043**] While the illustrated embodiment provides two light sources **32***a* and **32***b*, those skilled in the art will appreciate that one light source or more than two light sources may be used. Also, the light sources may be placed in a variety of different locations. Furthermore, illumination colors other that red and green, such as white, etc., may be used.

[**0044**] While FIGS. **1-4** and the corresponding disclosure provide an embodiment of the present invention, illustrated as writing assembly **10**, a variety of embodiments of illuminated writing assemblies having the features of the present invention are available. By way of example, embodiments of the present invention embrace different sizes, thickness, light combinations and power sources, and different ways to mount the assembly **10**.

[**0045**] An alternative embodiment of the writing assembly of the present invention is depicted in FIGS. **5-8**. **FIG. 5** depicts a writing assembly **100** mounted to the dashboard **110** of a vehicle. Writing assembly **100** is mounted so as to facilitate easy reach of the writing pen **27**. As shown in **FIG. 5**, writing assembly **100** is mounted upright. Alternatively, writing assembly **100** may be mounted so as to be more ergonomically aligned with the user by mounting the writing assembly horizontally. Writing assembly **100** is mounted to the dash of a vehicle via a bracket **112**. Bracket **112** has a mounting surface **113**. Mounting surface **113** is attached to dashboard **110** by a set of screw bolts **114**. However, it will be appreciated that bracket **112** may be attached to dashboard **110** by a variety of structures such as adhesive, VELCRO, rivets, welding, and the like. Writing assembly **100** includes a power source comprising (i) electrical cord **29***a* and (ii) adaptor **116**. In one embodiment, adaptor **116** (e.g. vehicle cigarette lighter adapter) allows the light source to be in electrical communication with the battery of the vehicle.

[**0046**] Turning now to **FIG. 6**, writing assembly **100** is shown having a writing surface **118** and a cap **120**. Cap **120** is another example of a housing of the present invention. Writing surface **118** comprises a transparent or semi-transparent material, such as plexi-glass, glass, plastic, or other materials. With reference to **FIG. 7**, writing surface **118** comprises a front face **122**, a bottom edge **124**, a top edge **126**, a first side edge **128**, a second side edge **130**, and a back face **132**. As discussed above, in one embodiment, edges **124**, **126**, **128**, **130** and/or back face **132** are first colored a light color (e.g., through painting, staining, or the use of a colored material), such as white, to reflect illumination out of front face **122**. Furthermore, edges **124**, **126**, **128**, **130** and/or back face **132** can then subsequently be colored a dark color (e.g., through painting, staining, or the use of a colored material), such as black to enhance the effect.

[**0047**] Referring to **FIG. 7**, writing surface **118** has an aperture **134** disposed through side **130**. Aperture **134** is shown extending partially through writing surface **118**. Alternatively, aperture **134** may extend completely through writing surface **118**. Furthermore, it will be appreciated that more than one aperture may be formed in writing surface

**118** or that the apertures may be formed in any surface of the writing surface **118**. Aperture **134** is configured to receive a light source **136**. As discussed above, light source **136** may be a variety of suitable structures such as a small light bulb or a light emitting diode. In one embodiment, light source **136** is electrically coupled to a switch **138** which is also electrically coupled to cord **29***a*. Switch **138** may be a two-way switch or, alternatively, a three way switch (e.g., green/off/red). Thus, when the power source is actuated via switch **138**, light emits out from the front face **122** of the writing surface **118**. In one embodiment, painted edges **124**, **126**, **128**, **130** and/or back face **132** do not allow substantially any light to emit therethrough, forcing the light to be reflected through front face **122**.

[**0048**] Cap **120**, is configured to receive a portion of writing surface **118** therein. Thus, cap **120** may selectively slide down over the top of the writing surface **118** (e.g., approximately ½ to approximately 1 ¼ inch, for example) with the aperture **134** and light source **136** housed therein. As shown in **FIG. 5** and **6**, cap **120** acts to substantially conceal aperture **134** and light source **136**. Advantageously, cap **120** is utilized as a cover over light source **136** to prevent light from being shown directly into the face of the user. Cap **14** thus serves to create a finished appearance to writing assembly **100**. In one embodiment, cap **120** comprises an elastomeric material such as a soft or hard plastic or rubber. In one embodiment, cap **120** is constructed of a soft polyvinyl. In another embodiment, cap **120** is constructed of a harder plastic.

[**0049**] As shown in **FIG. 6, a** writing instrument may be coupled (e.g., removably) to the writing assembly by a connector, such as a two-part connector, e.g. a VELCRO connector comprising (i) a first VELCRO tab **26***a*, which is mounted on writing surface **12**; and (ii) a second corresponding VELCRO tab **26***b*, which is mounted on a writing instrument, such as an erasable marker pen **27**.

[**0050**] In one embodiment, the illumination provided by light source **136** is colored. For example, actuation of switch **134** may produce a green illumination. In one embodiment, green illumination is preferred because it is similar to the color of the lights found on a typical dashboard **110**. Thus, a green illumination reduces distractions as a user is driving or, for example, when a police officer is policing his route in the evening. When one or more of the light sources emit illumination, the illumination fills transparent or translucent writing surface **118** and is emitted through front face **122** to provide a lighting and thus enable a user to view the writing on writing surface **118**.

[**0051**] In one embodiment, writing assembly **100** is removably attached to bracket **112**, e.g., through two-part connector, so that the writing assembly **100** can be used in the car or removed and carried with the user. In **FIG. 7, a** VELCRO tab **140** is attached to back face **132** of writing assembly **100** and a corresponding VELCRO tab **142** is attached to the front of bracket **112**. Thus, writing assembly **100** can be easily attached and removed from bracket **112**. It will be appreciated that other ways may be employed to attach writing assembly **100** to bracket **112** such as magnets, adhesive, welding, and the like.

[**0052**] Referring to **FIGS. 8A and 8B**, cap **120***a* may include a clip **150** such that a sheet **156** (e.g., a sheet of paper) is secured to writing assembly **100**. As shown in **FIG. 8**A, the user may desire to place a sheet **156** of paper on the writing surface **118** to use the writing surface as a hard surface. For example, the user may want to place a map on the writing surface to make notations or simply to be able to secure the map while the user is driving.

[**0053**] **FIG. 8A** shows that sheet **156** is secured under clip **150**. **FIG. 8B** shows clip **150** in additional detail. Clip **150** may has a first end **152** and a second end **154**. As shown in **FIG. 8**B, first end **152** of clip **150** is formed integrally with the body portion **121** of cap **120***a*. Body portion **121** mounts onto sheet **118**. Optionally, the housing of the present invention comprises a clip that is mechanically coupled to the cap body. In one embodiment, as shown in **FIG. 8**B, clip **150** is resilient such that the clip **150** is biased toward the body **221** of cap **120***a* and rests closely against the body **221** of cap **120***a*. Thus, when a thin sheet **156** is placed between the clip **150** and cap body **221**, the thin sheet is held in frictional engagement. Thin sheet **156** may be opaque or transparent. As shown in **FIG. 8**A, VELCRO tab **26***a* may be located on clip **50** to keep the writing surface **118** free from obstructions. In another embodiment, clip **150** is a standard metal clip which is attached to a cap such as cap **120** of **FIG. 5** through adhesive, riveting, or other mechanical devices. Cap **120***a* is thus another example of a housing of the present invention.

[**0054**] **FIGS. 9A and 9B** depict an alternative power source and an alternative housing which allow the user to have an interchangeable writing surface. As shown in **FIGS. 9A and 9B**, writing assembly **200** has a writing surface **202** and a housing **204** that is selectively mounted onto writing surface **202**. Writing surface **202** is configured similar to that discussed above with respect to writing assemblies **10** and **100**. Thus, one or more side of the writing surface may have a light-colored layer and a subsequent dark-colored layer. As shown in **FIG. 9**B, an aperture **206** is formed in a top edge **208** of writing surface **202**. A light source **210** can be disposed within aperture **206**. Light source **210** is connected by wires to a battery **212**. Battery **212** is electrically coupled via wires to the light source **210** and a switch **213**.

[**0055**] As shown in **FIGS. 9A and 9B**, housing **204** selectively houses writing surface **202**. Housing **204** has a front surface **214**, a back surface **216**, a top edge **218**, a bottom edge **220**, a first side edge **222**, and a second side edge **224**. Housing **204** comprises an aperture **224** formed in front surface **214** which is configured to receive writing surface **202** therethrough. Housing **204** also houses battery **212** and switch **213**. Preferably, access to the battery is provided through a door **226** on the back surface **216** or top edge **218** of housing **204**.

[**0056**] Referring to **FIG. 9**B, writing surface **202** can be selectively inserted and removed from housing **204**. Such insertion and removal is depicted in the phantom lines of **FIG. 9B**. In one embodiment, at least the bottom portion of housing **204** is constructed from a soft elastomeric material (e.g., rubber or plastic) to facilitate removal or insertion of writing surface **202** therefrom. For example, the bottom portion of housing **204** could be constructed of a polyvinyl material. The top portion of housing **204** can be made from a hardened elastomeric materials (e.g., rubber or plastic) so as to house the battery **212**. Advantageously, when light source **210** needs to be replaced, writing surface **202** can be easily removed, displacing light source **210** from aperture

**206**. Similarly, battery **212** (e.g., a AAA battery) can be easily replaced through door **226**. It will be appreciated that such a configuration allows the user to transport writing assembly **200** easily. Writing assembly **200** may also be mounted to a bracket for placement in the car or in a residence.

[**0057**] Thus, the present invention relates to a writing surface that may be selectively illuminated by a user. More specifically, the present invention is directed to a writing assembly having a smooth surface for writing thereon and at least one light source that may be selectively actuated by a user to provide lighting, with respect to the smooth surface, to cause the writing on the surface to be visible. The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

What is claimed and desired to be secured by United States Letters Patent is:

**1**. An illuminated writing assembly, comprising:

(a) a writing surface comprised of a material selected from the group consisting of a transparent and a translucent material;

(b) means mounted within the writing surface for providing illumination; and

(c) means for providing power to the means for providing illumination.

**2**. An assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein the means for providing illumination comprises a light source, and the means for providing power to the means for providing illumination is selected from the group consisting of (i) a battery and (ii) an electrical cord configured to be coupled to a source of electrical power.

**3**. An assembly as recited in claim 2, wherein the means for providing power to the means for providing illumination comprises (i) an electrical cord; and (ii) an adaptor electrically coupled to the electrical cord such that it the adaptor can be coupled to a car battery.

**4**. A writing assembly as recited in claim 2, wherein the writing surface comprises an aperture in at least one edge thereof to receive at least a portion of the light source.

**5**. A writing assembly as recited in claim 2, wherein the light source comprises one of: (i) a bulb and (ii) a light emitting diode..

**6**. A writing assembly as recited in claim 2, further comprising a housing mounted on the writing surface, wherein the light source is mounted between the housing and the writing surface.

**7**. A writing assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein at least one of the sides of the writing surface is painted.

**8**. A writing assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein at least one of the sides of the writing surface has a light color.

**9**. A writing assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein at least one of the sides of the writing surface has a dark color.

**10**. An assembly as recited in claim 1, further comprising means for selectively enabling the means for providing power to provide power to the means for providing illumination.

**11**. An illuminated writing assembly, comprising:

(a) a sheet comprising a transparent or translucent material;

(b) a light source coupled to the sheet;

(c) means for providing power to the light source; and

(d) a housing mounted on the sheet such that light from the light source illuminates the sheet, wherein light emanates from at least one face of the sheet.

**12**. An illuminated writing assembly as recited in claim 11, wherein the transparent or translucent sheet is plexiglass.

**13**. An illuminated writing assembly as recited in claim 11, further comprising a switch configured to selectively actuate the means for providing power.

**14**. An assembly as recited in claim 11, wherein the light source is enclosed within the sheet such that when actuated the light source emits illumination as a light to the sheet to cause writing on the sheet to be visible in a darkened environment.

**15**. An assembly as recited in claim 11, wherein the housing comprises a cap.

**16**. A writing assembly adapted to be illuminated, the writing assembly comprising:

a sheet having a plurality of surfaces, wherein at least one aperture is formed in at least one of the surfaces, the writing surface being comprised of a material selected from the group consisting of a transparent and a translucent material;

a housing mounted on the sheet and adapted to conceal the at least one aperture;

a light source configured to be disposed within the at least one aperture;

means for providing electrical power to the light source; and

a switch configured to selectively actuate the means for providing power.

**17**. The writing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the housing comprises a clip for securing a sheet in frictional engagement with the housing.

**18**. The writing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein at least two apertures are formed in the sheet.

**19**. The writing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the light source comprises a light bulb having a color selected from the group consisting of red, green and yellow colors.

**20**. The assembly as recited in claim 16, wherein the writing surface comprises a front surface and a back surface, wherein the back surface comprises a layer of light color and a subsequent layer of dark color such that the dark color is on the exterior of the writing surface.

**21**. The assembly as recited in claim 16, wherein the writing surface comprises a plurality of sides, wherein all but the front side comprises a layer of light color and a subsequent layer of dark color such that the dark color is on the exterior of the writing surface.

**22**. An assembly for providing an illuminated writing surface, the assembly comprising:

a writing surface comprising at least one aperture disposed therethrough;

a housing configured to couple with the writing surface such that the writing surface is selectively removable from the housing;

a light source configured to be disposed within the at least one aperture; and

a power source coupled to the light source, the power source being selectively actuated by a switch.

**23**. An assembly as recited in claim 22, further comprising a writing instrument.

**24**. An assembly as recited in claim 22, wherein the illumination is a colored illumination.

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