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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR STORING WRITTEN PRAYERS FOR LATER RETRIEVAL**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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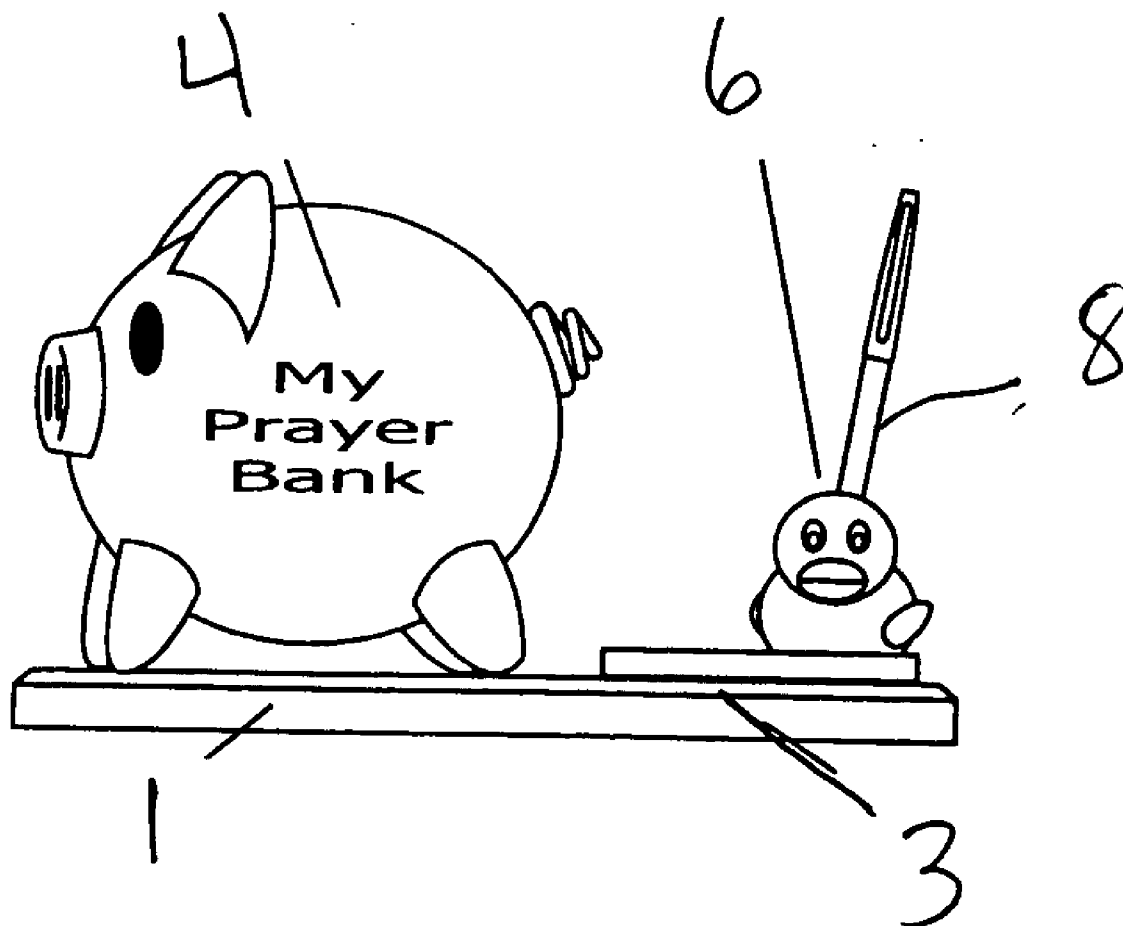
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Related U.S. Application Data

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A prayer bank includes a tray having an upper surface and a peripheral ledge. Positioned on the upper surface is a hollow storage vault configured to resemble an entertaining, decorative or inspirational figure, i.e., a pig. On an upper portion of the vault is a slot in communication with an interior storage chamber. Adjacent to the vault is a pen holder likewise configured to resemble an inspirational or entertaining figure. A notepad with removable sheets is positioned proximal the pen holder. Accordingly, a visitor may inscribe a desired prayer onto one of the sheets and deposit the sheet into the vault's storage chamber. The patient may later retrieve the stored prayers and read them aloud for inspiration.



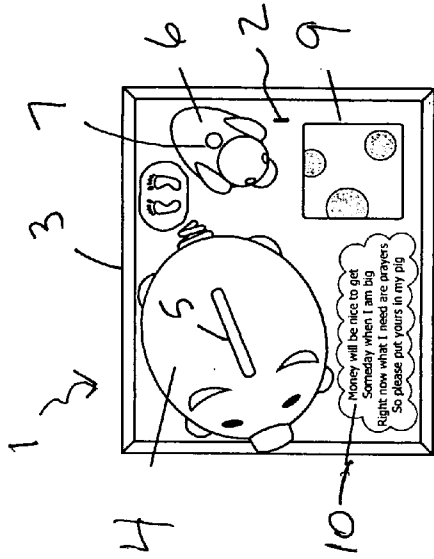


Fig. 1

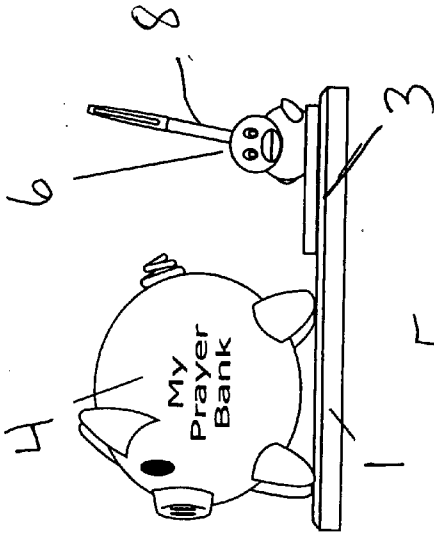


Fig. 2

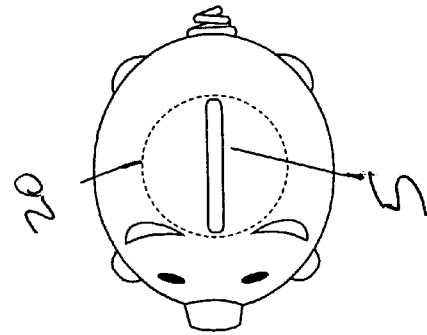


Fig. 3

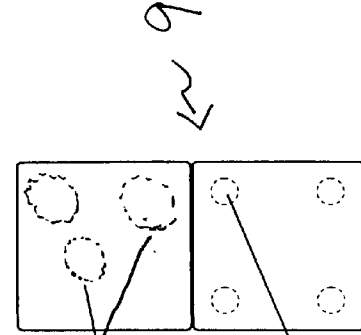


Fig. 4

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR STORING WRITTEN PRAYERS FOR LATER RETRIEVAL

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to a uniquely-designed bank for storing written prayers for later review.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

[0002] Customarily, a patient's visitors will pray, particularly if the patient is a child. However, because the prayers are typically silent, the patient does not enjoy the inspirational benefits that he or she might if the visitor prayed aloud. Accordingly, there is currently a need for a device that allows a patient to enjoy the inspirational benefits of silent prayers proffered on the patient's behalf. The present invention addresses this need by providing a prayer bank with an accompanying notepad that allows well-wishers to inscribe a prayer onto a sheet and deposit it into a storage vault for later retrieval.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention relates to a prayer bank comprising a tray having an upper surface and a peripheral ledge. Positioned on the upper surface is a hollow storage vault configured to resemble an entertaining, decorative or inspirational figure, i.e., a pig. On an upper portion of the vault is a slot in communication with an interior storage chamber. Adjacent to the vault is a pen holder likewise configured to resemble an inspirational or entertaining figure. A notepad with removable sheets is positioned proximal the pen holder. Accordingly, a visitor may inscribe a desired prayer onto one of the sheets and deposit the sheet into the vault's storage chamber. The patient may later retrieve the sheets and read the prayers aloud for inspiration.

[0004] It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a prayer bank that inspires a patient.

[0005] It is another object of the present invention to provide a prayer bank that allows well-wishers to memorialize silent prayers for later retrieval.

[0006] Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become readily apparent from the following detailed description of the preferred embodiment when considered with the attached drawings and the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] FIG. 1 is a front, plan view of the apparatus configured according to one embodiment of the present invention.

[0008] FIG. 2 is a top view of the apparatus.

[0009] FIG. 3 is a top, isolated view of the vault.

[0010] FIG. 4 is a top view of the notepad.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0011] The present invention relates to a prayer bank comprising a tray 1 having an upper surface 2 and a peripheral ledge 3. Positioned on the upper surface is a hollow storage vault 4 configured to resemble an entertaining, decorative or inspirational figure, i.e., a pig. On an upper portion of the vault is a slot 5 in communication with an interior storage chamber. Preferably, the vault includes hook-and-loop fasteners on a lower portion for mating engagement with similar fasteners on the tray. For example, if the vault is configured to resemble a pig, the fasteners could be affixed to the lower end of the pig's feet. Therefore, the vault can be separated from

the tray to expose a removable port 20 thereby providing access to the interior chamber and its contents. Imprinted on the upper surface of the tray, in a location that is readily visible to those nearby, is an inspirational poem or message 10.

[0012] Adjacent to the vault is a pen holder 6 likewise configured to resemble an inspirational or entertaining figure, i.e., a duck. The holder includes at least one receptacle 7 for receiving a pen 8 or other writing instrument. A notepad 9 with removable sheets is positioned proximal the pen holder. Preferably, an uppermost sheet includes colored dots 11 on an upper surface while all sheets include patches of repositionable adhesive 12 on a lower surface to secure each sheet to an underlying sheet.

[0013] Accordingly, a visitor may inscribe a desired prayer onto one of the sheets and deposit the sheet into the vault's storage chamber. The patient or the patient's relatives may later retrieve the stored notes and read the written prayers aloud for inspiration.

[0014] The above-described device is not limited to the exact details of construction and enumeration of parts provided herein. Furthermore, the size, shape and materials of construction of the various components can be varied.

[0015] Although there has been shown and described the preferred embodiment of the present invention, it will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art that modifications may be made thereto which do not exceed the scope of the appended claims. Therefore, the scope of the invention is only to be limited by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for storing written prayers for later retrieval comprising:

- a tray having an upper surface and a peripheral ledge;
- a hollow storage vault attached to the upper surface of said tray, said vault configured to resemble an entertaining figure, said vault having a slot in communication with an interior storage chamber;
- a pen holder adjacent to said vault, said pen holder configured to resemble an entertaining figure, said holder having at least one receptacle for receiving a writing instrument;
- a notepad attached to said tray, said notepad formed of a plurality of removable sheets whereby a visitor may inscribe a desired prayer onto one of the sheets and deposit the said one of the sheets into said storage chamber allowing a patient to later retrieve the one of the sheets and read said prayer aloud for inspiration.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1 further comprising an inspirational, instructional message positioned on the upper surface of said tray for instructing the visitor to place a written prayer into said vault.

3. The apparatus according to claim 2 wherein said vault includes a removable port that allows contents of said interior chamber to be removed.

4. The apparatus according to claim 3 wherein said vault is removably attached to said tray.

5. A method of storing inspirational messages for later retrieval comprising the steps of:

- placing a storage vault near a patient;
- placing a plurality of detachable notepad sheets and a writing instrument adjacent to said vault;
- writing a desired prayer on one of said sheets;
- placing said sheet into said vault;
- later retrieving said sheet;
- reading said desired prayer aloud to said patient to provide inspiration thereto.