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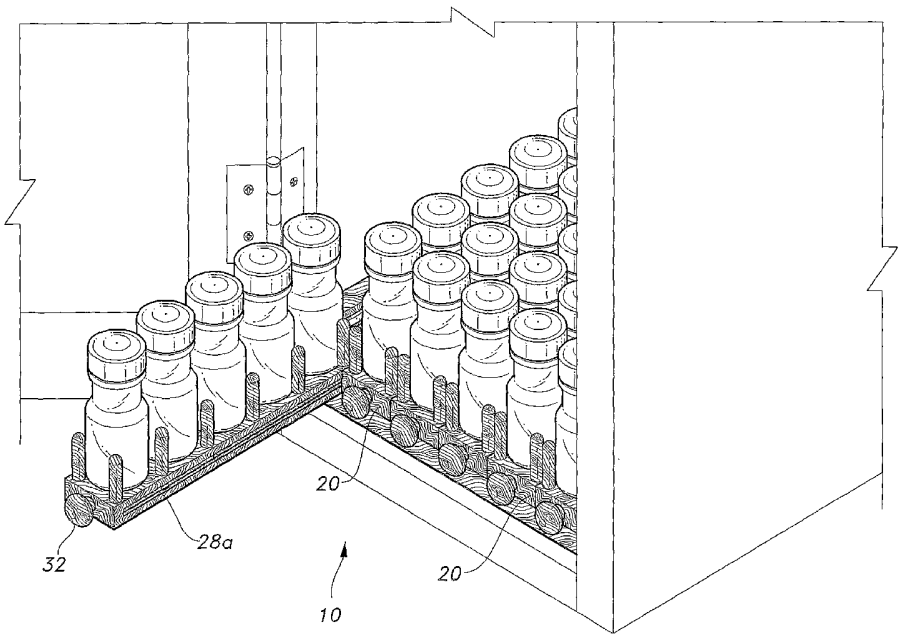
(54) Title: SPICE RACK



(57) **Abstract:** A spice rack (10) including an array of sliding drawers (20) positioned on a base. The assembly (10) will be placed on an existing kitchen cabinet shelf. It should be noted however, that the assembly may be made to replace the existing shelf if desired. The assembly (10) is designed to store spice containers in a relative small space, which containers may be easily identified and retrieved. Each drawer (20) includes a planar, horizontal bottom surface having a knob (32) secured to the front end. Plural dowels are positioned along each side of the planar surface to define an enclosed area for the spice containers.

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SPICE RACK

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention generally relates to kitchen accessories. More specifically, the present invention is drawn to a spice rack.

BACKGROUND ART

"I can't find the sage!!" That, and similar laments are uttered daily as food preparers search through cluttered cabinets seeking the necessary spices that will make the meal a success. Aside from delaying and sometimes ruining the food preparation process, the search efforts can cause immeasurable frustration. What a boon it would be if all the spices were located in one convenient place in an ordered, easily retrievable array.

There are many devices that address the organization of the spice pantry. Exemplary ones of these devices are cited in the IDS. Some of the cited devices are merely drawn to ornamental designs. Others require structural modification of a kitchen cabinet for installation. Still others do not display the spice containers in a manner to be readily identified when desired.

None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to disclose an array of sliding spice drawers for mounting on a kitchen cabinet shelf or the like as will be subsequently described and claimed in the instant invention.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

This disclosure is directed to a spice storage assembly. The assembly includes a base. The base has an upper surface, a front end, a rear end, a length and a width. A stop member is attached to the base at the rear end. The stop member extends across the rear end and is coextensive with the width of the base. The assembly also has a series of slide members. Each respective slide member is disposed on the base, extends from the front end to the rear end and is coextensive with the length of the base. An array of drawers is disposed on the base member. Each drawer of the array is in sliding engagement with a respective slide member. Each drawer of the array has a planar upper surface. At least two dowels extend upwardly from the planar upper surface.

Also part of the disclosure is a spice storage assembly. The assembly includes a base having an upper surface, a front end, a rear end, a length and a width. A stop member is attached to the base at the rear end. The stop member extends across the rear end and is coextensive with the width of the base. The assembly has a series of key members. Each key member is attached to the base, extends from the front end to the rear end, and is coextensive with the length of the base. The key members are spaced apart in parallel relationship. An array of drawers is disposed on the base member. Each drawer of the array is in sliding engagement with a pair of key members. Each drawer has a length, a first side and a second side parallel to the first side. The first side and the second side are coextensive with the length of the drawer.

Also disclosed is a spice storage assembly. The assembly includes a base. The base has an upper surface, a front end, a rear end, a length and a width. A stop member is attached to

the base at the rear end. The stop member extends across the rear end and is coextensive with the width of the base. A stop member is also attached to the base at the front end. The stop member extends across the front end and is coextensive with the width of the base. A series of grooves is formed in the base. Each groove extends from the front end to the rear end and is coextensive with the length of the base. The assembly includes an array of drawers. Each drawer of the array has an undersurface disposed on the base. A slide engagement member is attached to each undersurface for sliding engagement in a respective groove.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an environmental, perspective view of a spice storage assembly according to the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a perspective rear view of a spice storage assembly according to the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a side view of a sliding drawer a spice storage assembly according to the present invention.

Fig. 4 is a rear view of a sliding drawer a spice storage assembly according to the present invention.

Fig. 5 is a side view of a second embodiment of a sliding drawer a spice storage assembly according to the present invention.

Fig. 6 is a partial end view of a second embodiment of a sliding drawer a spice storage assembly according to the present invention.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

BEST MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

The instant invention is an assembly comprising an array of sliding drawers positioned on a base. As contemplated, the assembly will be placed on an existing kitchen cabinet shelf. It should be noted however, that the assembly may be made to replace the existing shelf if desired. The assembly is designed to store spice containers in a relative small space, which containers may be easily identified and retrieved. Each drawer includes a planar, horizontal bottom surface having a knob secured to the front end. Plural dowels are positioned along the sides of the planar surface to define an enclosed space for the spice containers.

The drawers are self-supporting and include a groove on each side. Each groove engages a key, which key is attached to the. The drawers may be disengaged from the keys by simply pulling the drawer all the way out. The drawers are two inches (5 cm) wide; thus, the assembly is easily adapted to six, eight, ten, twelve or fourteen inch (15, 20, 25, 30, or 36 cm) cabinets. The base, drawers, dowels, knobs and keys can be fabricated from any suitable materials or combinations thereof (wood, metal, plastic). Although designated as a spice rack, it is obvious that the assembly could be utilized as a solution for other storage problems.

Accordingly, the assembly offers a solution for organizing an array of containers or the like for easy identification and retrieval. The dimensions are such that the assembly is easily adaptable to conventional, standard-size cabinets.

Attention is first directed to Figs. 1 and 2 wherein the spice storage assembly of the present invention is generally indicated at **10**. Assembly **10** comprises a base **12** preferably of rectangular configuration. Base **12** has a length of at least ten and one-fourth inches (26 cm) to accommodate the sliding

drawers described below. Base **12** will be made in various widths to fit conventional cabinet widths as stated above. A stop member **14** is attached to the rear upper surface of base **12** and is coextensive with the width of base **12**. A series of key members **16** extend from the rear end to the front end of base **12**, which key members are perpendicular to stop member **14**. As contemplated, base **12** will be positioned on the bottom shelf of a cabinet. However, the base could replace the bottom shelf of the cabinet if desired.

An array of drawers **20** is adapted to be slidably supported on base **12**. As best seen in Figs. 3 and 4, each drawer **20** comprises a rectangularly configured body having an upper surface **22**, front end **24**, rear end **26** and sides **28**. Each drawer has a length of approximately ten and one-fourth inches (26 cm) and a width of approximately two inches (5 cm). Each side **28** has a groove **28a** formed therein, which groove is dimensioned to receive a key member **16** therein. A plurality of dowels **30** is positioned along each side of each drawer **20** and extends vertically from the upper surface **22**. Each dowel has a length of approximately two inches (5 cm) and an outside diameter of approximately three-eighths of an inch (1 cm). The dowels are placed on surface **22** to enclose an area for supporting spice containers or the like. The dowels will prevent the containers from toppling. The open structure of the drawer permits a user to easily identify a particular spice container when the drawer is extended as in Fig. 1. A knob **32** is attached to the front end **24** to enhance drawer manipulation. Although the spice containers are of like size as illustrated, it should be noted that containers of different sizes and configurations may be easily accommodated.

An alternative arrangement is shown in Figs. 5 and 6 wherein a series of dovetail grooves **40** are formed in the upper surface of base member **12**. Grooves **40** extend the length of the

base member **12**. Respective slide engagement members **42** have distal ends **44** threaded into the bottom surface of each drawer. The proximate end of each member is a tapered washer, which washer is dimensioned to fit and slide in a respective groove **40**. Stop members **46** and **48** extend across the front and rear of base **12** to prevent the drawer from being disengaged from the base.

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A spice storage assembly, comprising:

a base, said base having an upper surface, a front end, a rear end, a length and a width;

a stop member attached to said base at said rear end, said stop member extending across said rear end and coextensive with said width of said base;

a series of slide members, each respective slide member disposed on said base and extending from said front end to said rear end and coextensive with the length of said base; and

an array of drawers disposed on said base member, each drawer of the array being in sliding engagement with a respective slide member, wherein each drawer of the array has a planar upper surface and wherein a plurality of dowels extends upwardly from said planar upper surface.

2. The spice storage assembly according to claim 1, wherein said slide members are key members attached to said base.

3. The spice rack assembly according to claim 1, wherein said slide members are grooves formed in said base.

4. The spice storage assembly according to claim 1, wherein each drawer of the array has a front end and wherein a knob is attached to each said front end.

5. A spice storage assembly, comprising:

a base, said base having an upper surface, a front end, a rear end, a length and a width;

a stop member attached to said base at said rear end, said stop member extending across said rear end and coextensive with said width of said base;

a series of key members, each key member attached to said base and extending from said front end to said rear end and coextensive with the length of said base said key members being spaced apart in parallel relationship; and

an array of drawers disposed on said base member, each drawer of the array being in sliding engagement with a pair of key members, wherein each drawer has a length, a first side and a second side parallel to said first side, said first side and said second side being coextensive with the length of the drawer.

6. The spice storage assembly according to claim 5, including a groove in each said first side and said second side, wherein said each groove is in sliding engagement with a respective key of said pair of keys.

7. The spice storage assembly according to claim 5, wherein each drawer of the array has a front end and wherein a knob is attached to each said front end.

8. The spice storage assembly according to claim 5, wherein each drawer of the array has a planar upper surface and wherein a plurality of dowels extends upwardly from said planar upper surface.

9. The spice storage assembly according to claim 8, wherein said plurality of dowels are positioned said along said first side and said second side of each drawer.

10. A spice storage assembly, comprising:

a base, said base having an upper surface, a front end, a rear end, a length and a width;

a stop member attached to said base at said rear end, said stop member extending across said rear end and coextensive with said width of said base;

a stop member attached to said base at said front end, said stop member extending across said front end and coextensive with said width of said base;

a series of grooves formed in said base, each groove extending from said front end to said rear end and coextensive with the length of said base;

an array of drawers, wherein each drawer of said array has an undersurface disposed on said base; and

a slide engagement member attached to each said undersurface for sliding engagement in a respective groove.

11. The spice storage assembly according to claim 10, wherein said slide engagement member is a tapered washer.

12. The spice storage assembly according to claim 10, wherein each drawer of the array has a front end and wherein a knob is attached to each said front end.

13. The spice storage assembly according to claim 10, wherein said slide engagement member is a tapered washer and wherein each drawer has a length, a first side and a second side parallel to said first side, said first side and said second side being coextensive with the length of the drawer.

14. The spice storage assembly according to claim 13, wherein each drawer of the array has a planar upper surface and wherein a plurality of dowels extends upwardly from said planar upper surface.

15. The spice storage assembly according to claim 14, wherein said plurality of dowels are positioned said along said first side and said second side of each drawer.

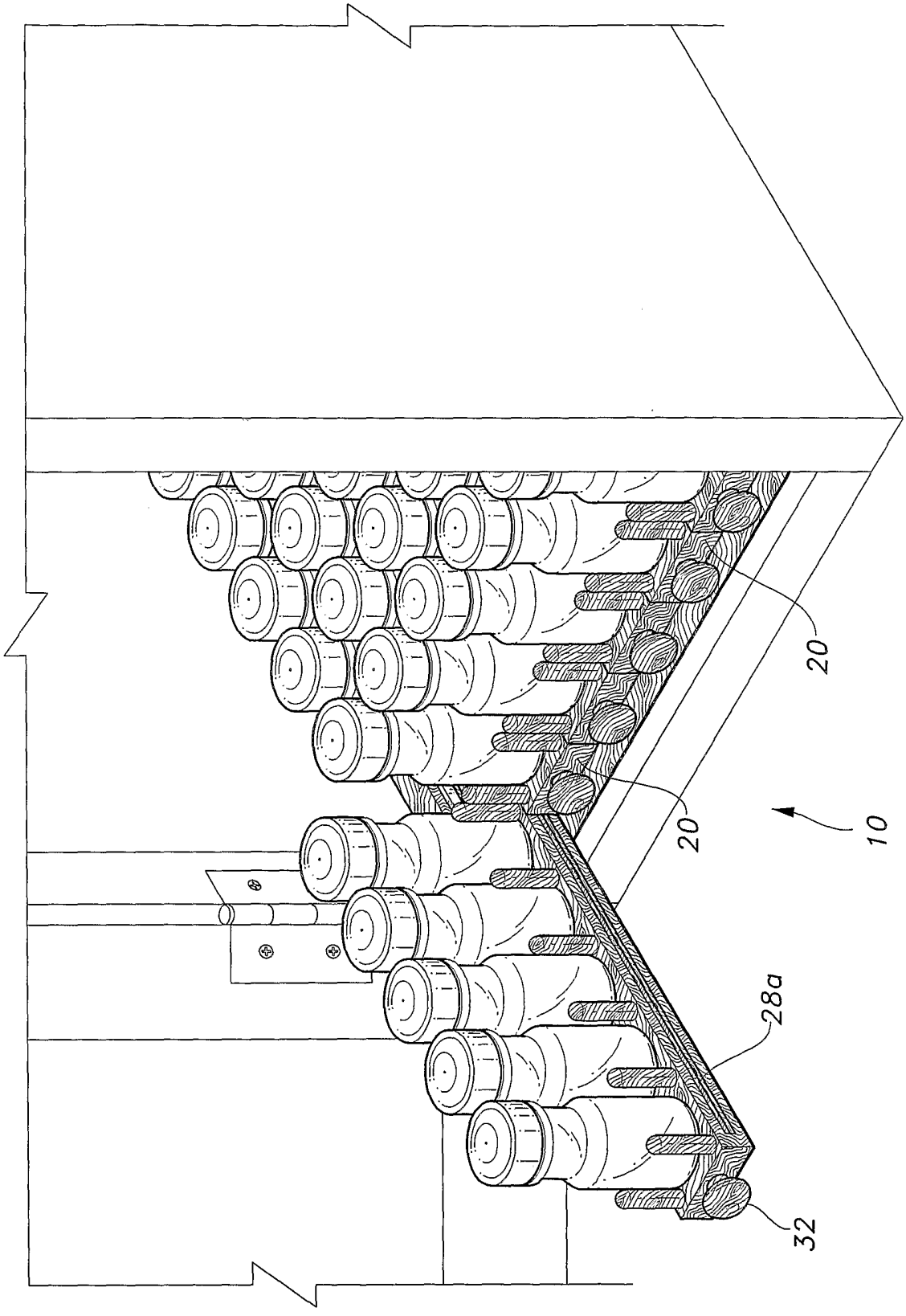

Fig. 1

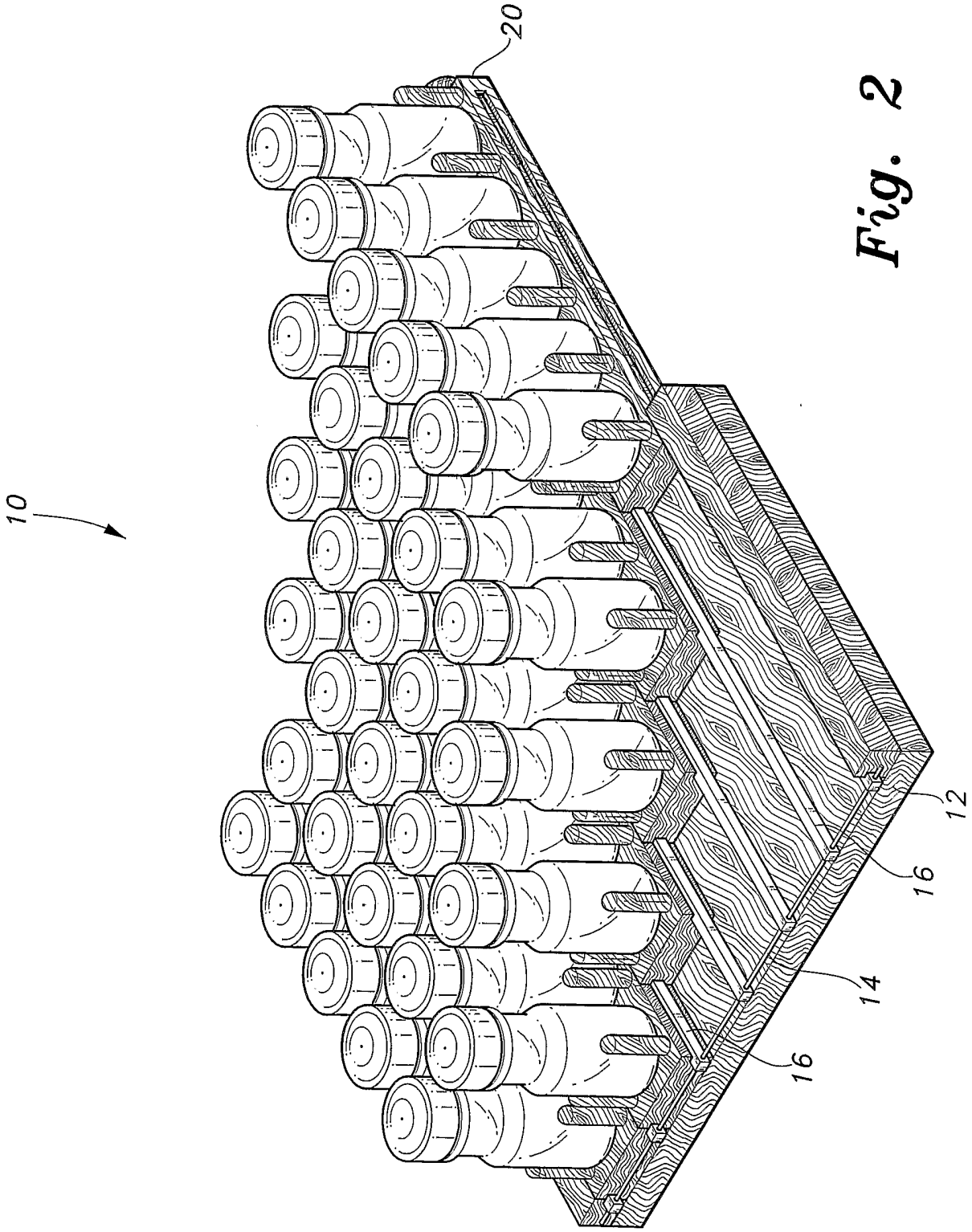

Fig. 2

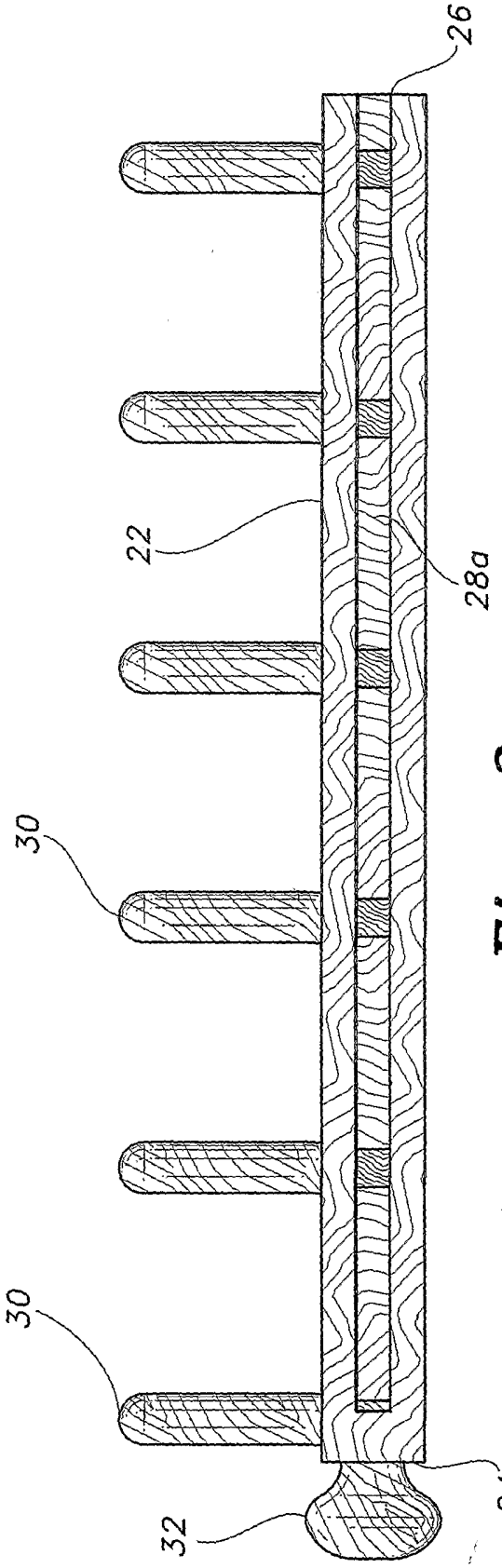

Fig. 3

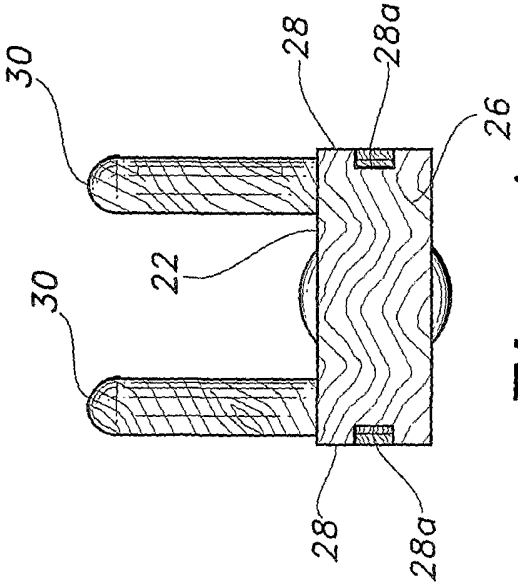

Fig. 4

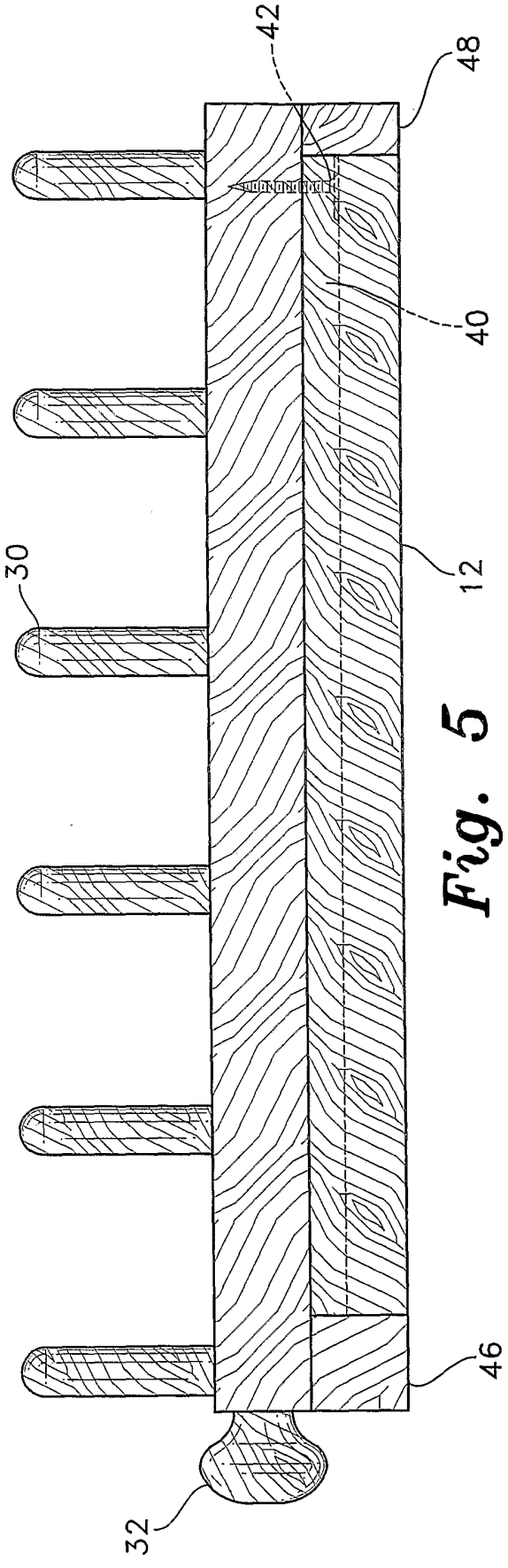

Fig. 5

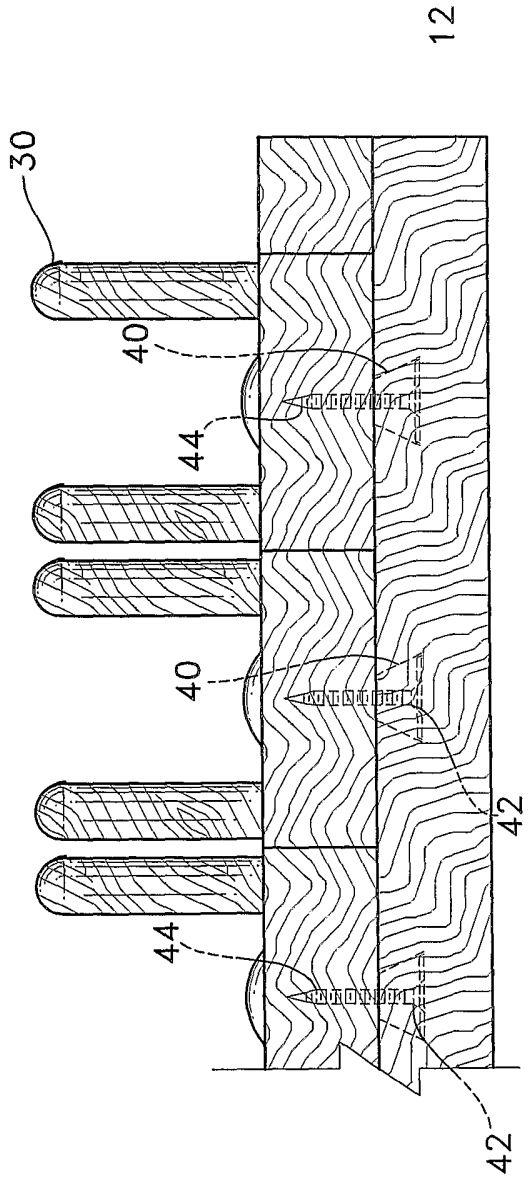

Fig. 6