



US 20090173703A1

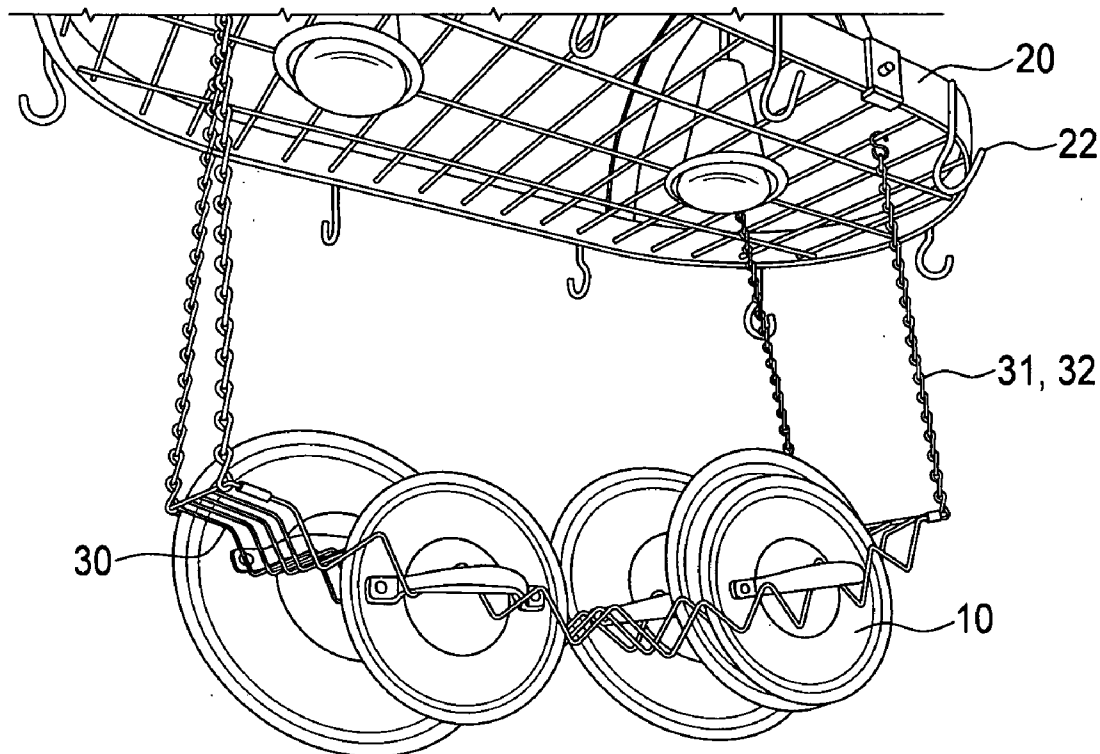
(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Einbinder et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2009/0173703 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jul. 9, 2009**(54) **HANGING RACK FOR STORAGE
CONTAINER LIDS**(22) Filed: **Dec. 4, 2008****Related U.S. Application Data**

(60) Provisional application No. 61/010,266, filed on Jan. 7, 2008.

(76) Inventors: **Karen Einbinder**, Temecula, CA
(US); **Brian Matanane**, Temecula,
CA (US)**Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47F 7/00 (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.** **211/41.11**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A rack for storing pot or pan lids from a standard overhead pot and pan rack and method of use. The lid rack is suspended under the overhead pot and pan rack for easy access. The tines of the lid rack can be adapted to interfere with the handles of the lids to keep them securely in the lid rack.

Correspondence Address:
PHILIP H. HAYMOND
7545 IRVINE CENTER DRIVE, SUITE 200
IRVINE, CA 92618-2933 (US)

(21) Appl. No.: **12/315,709**

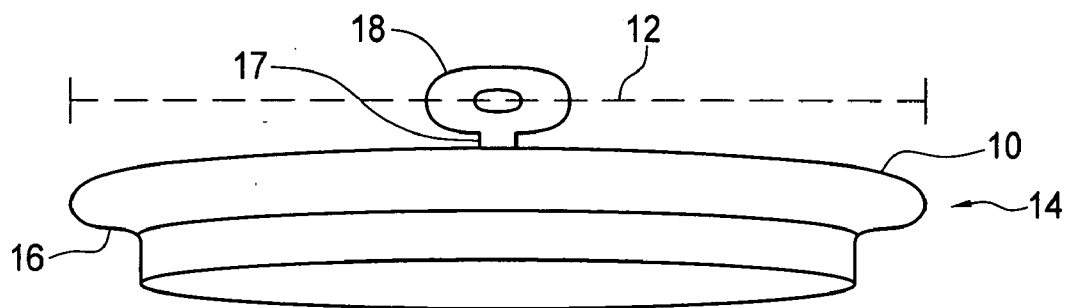


FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART)

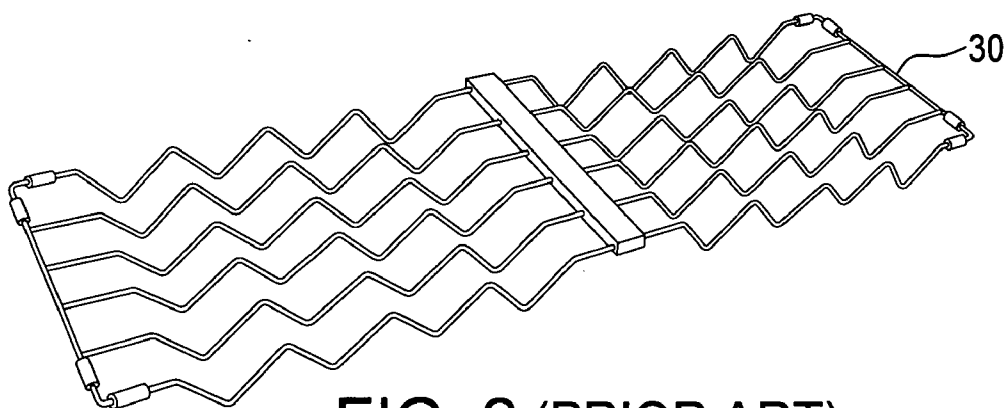


FIG. 2 (PRIOR ART)

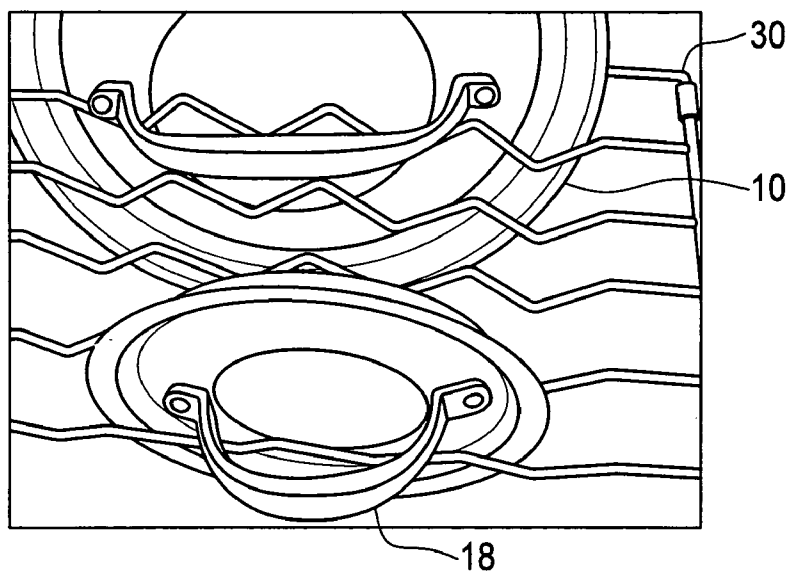


FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART)

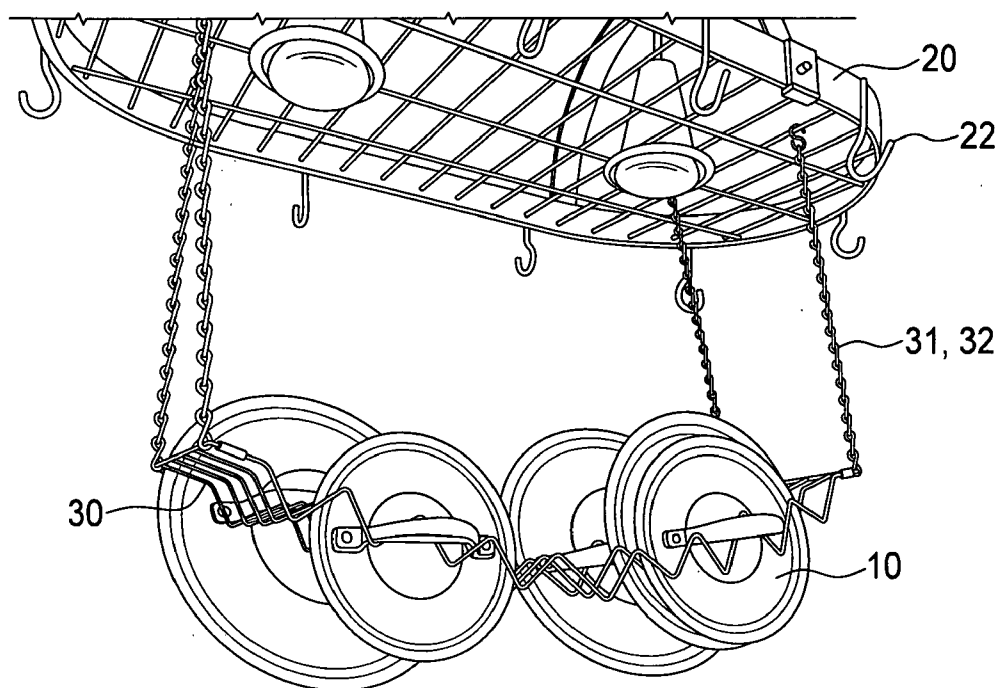


FIG. 4

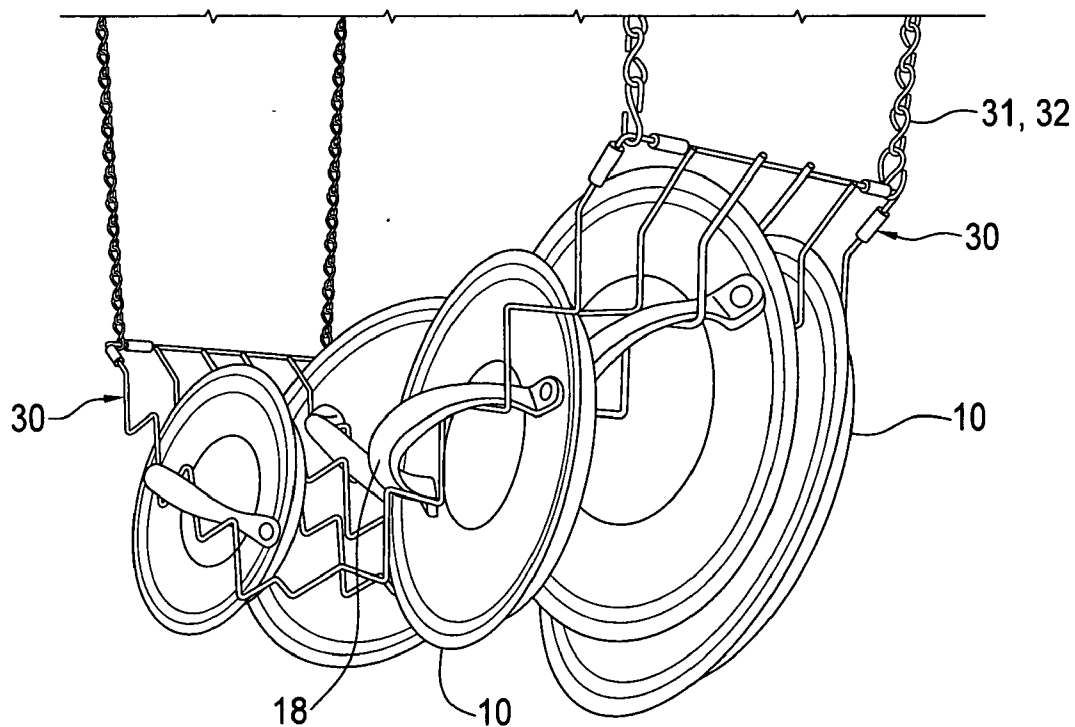


FIG. 5

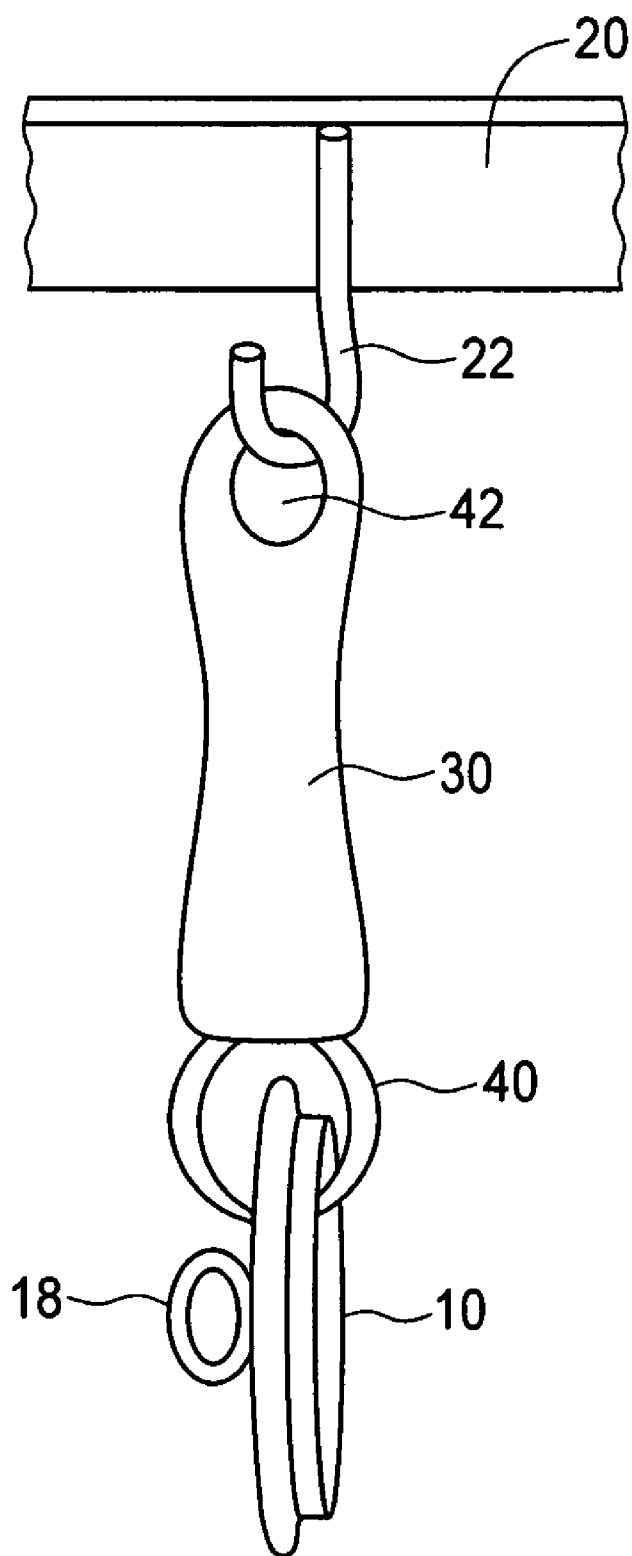


FIG. 6

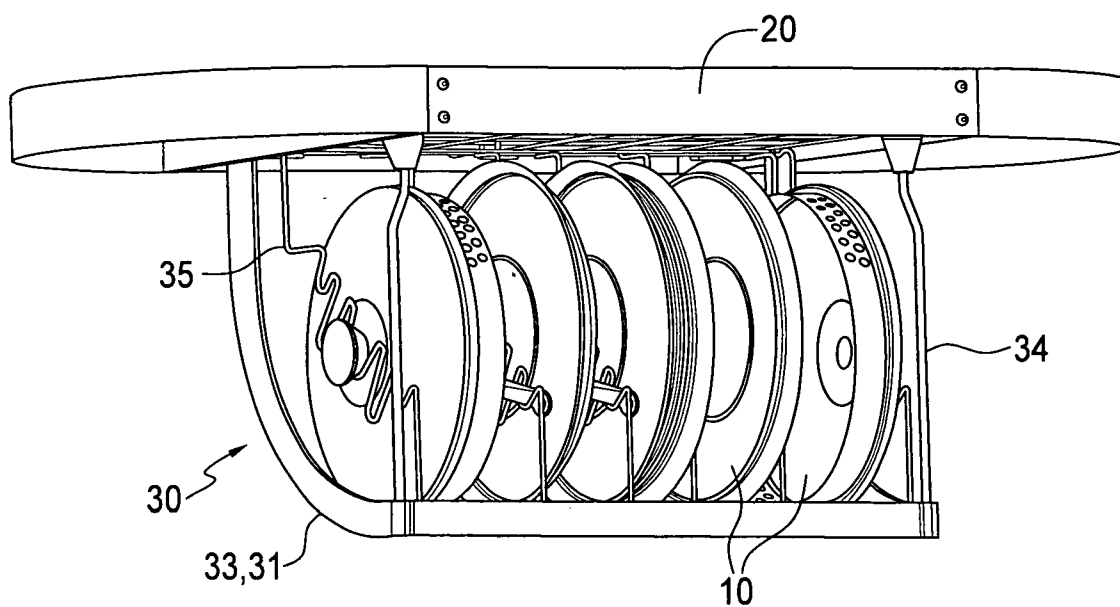


FIG. 7

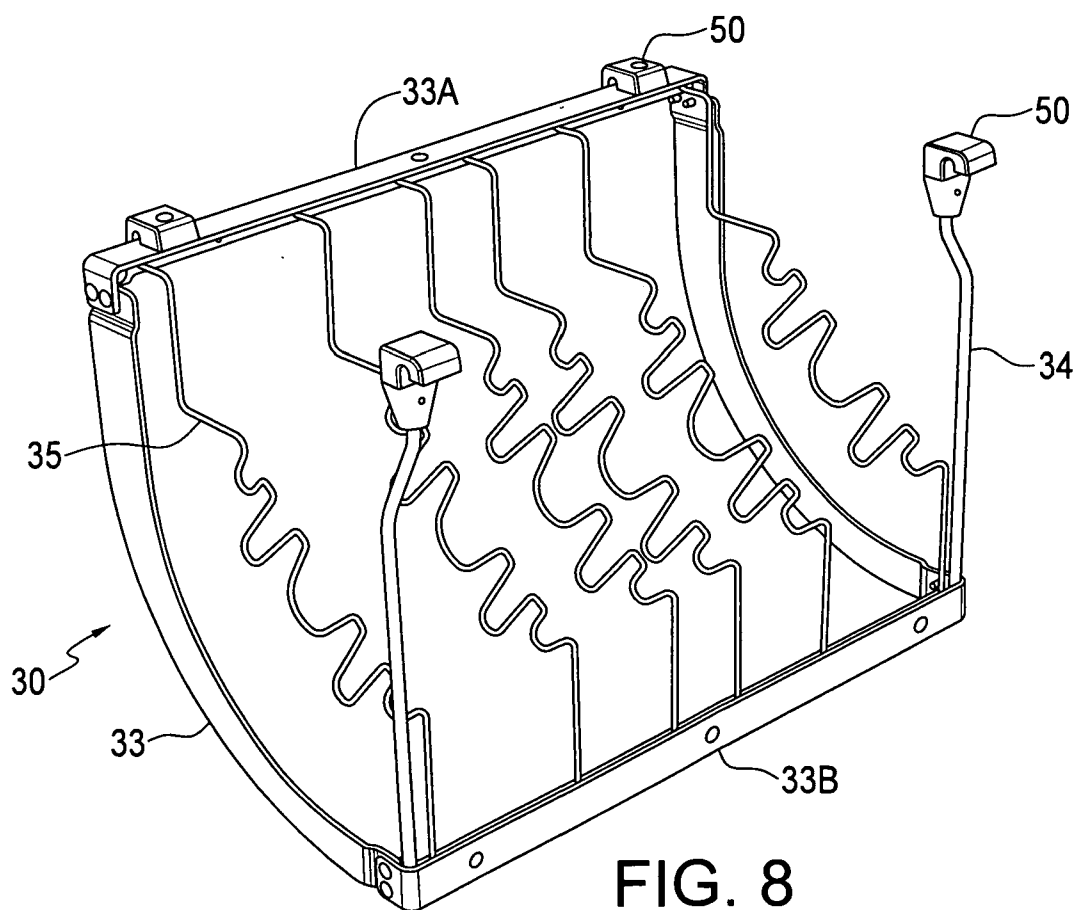


FIG. 8

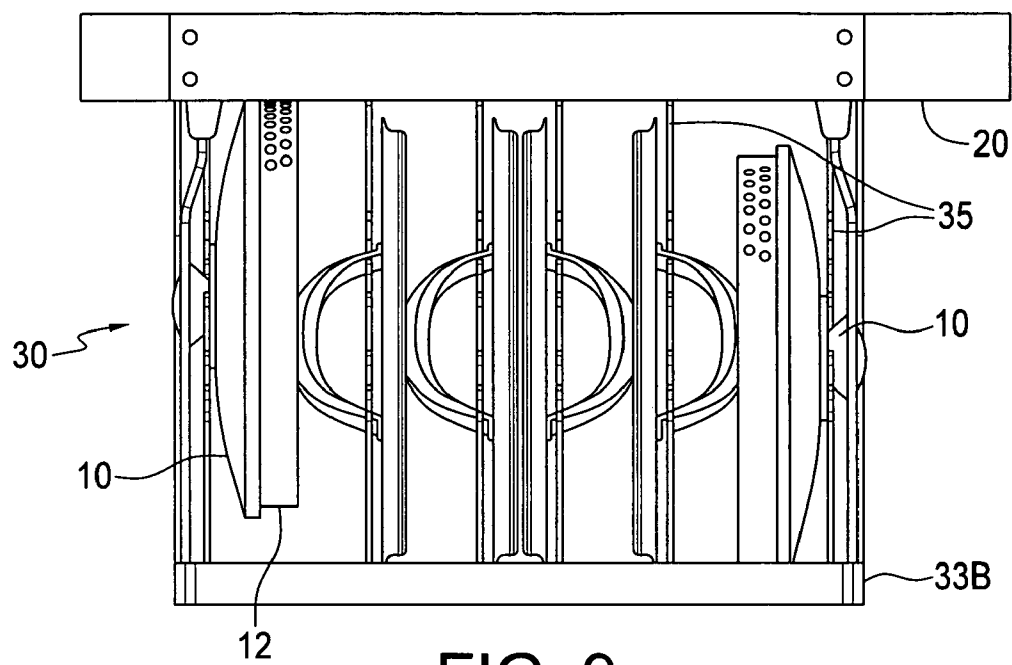


FIG. 9

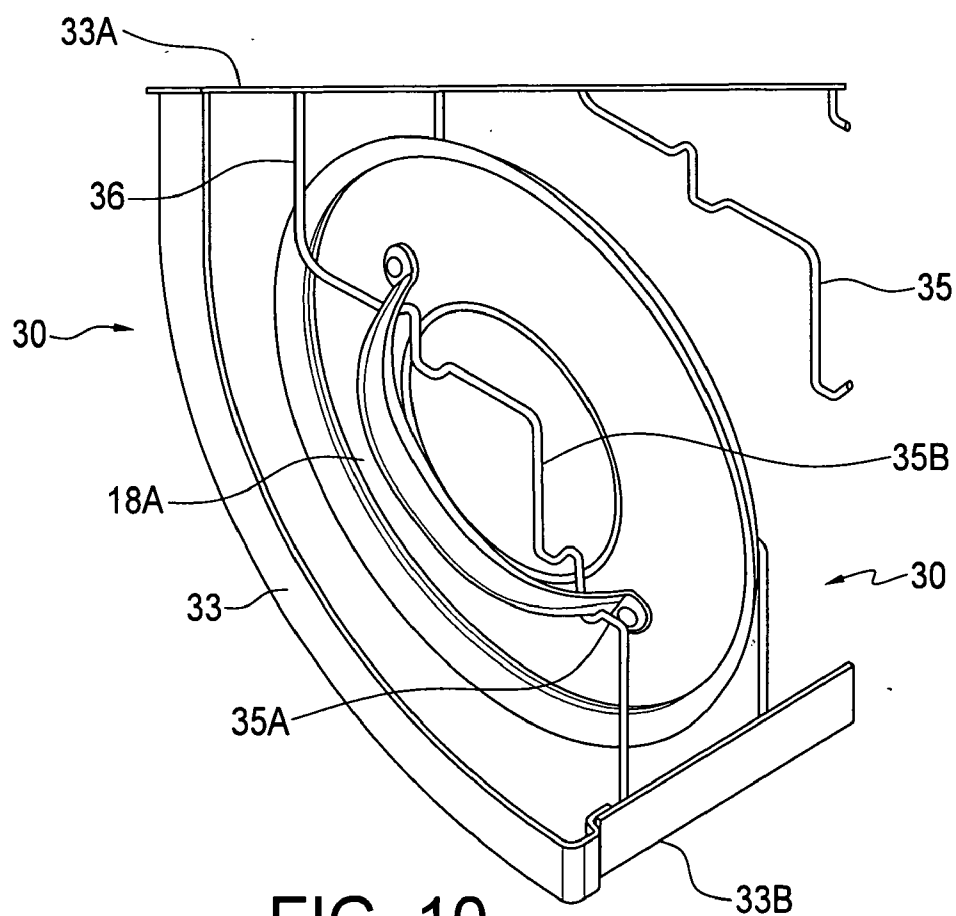


FIG. 10

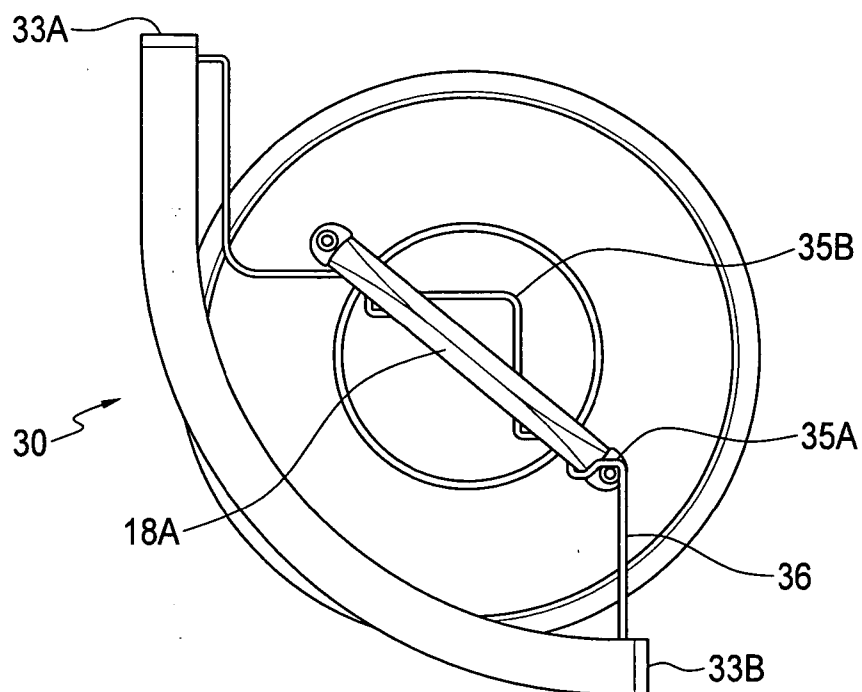


FIG. 11

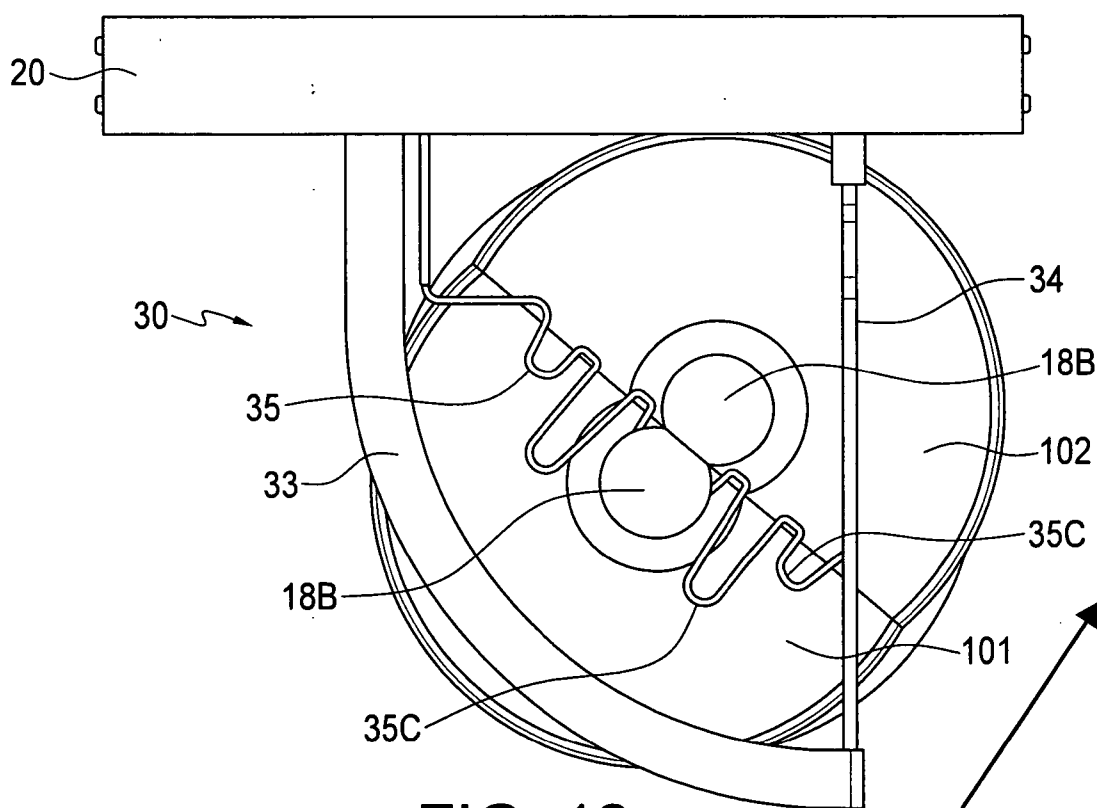


FIG. 12

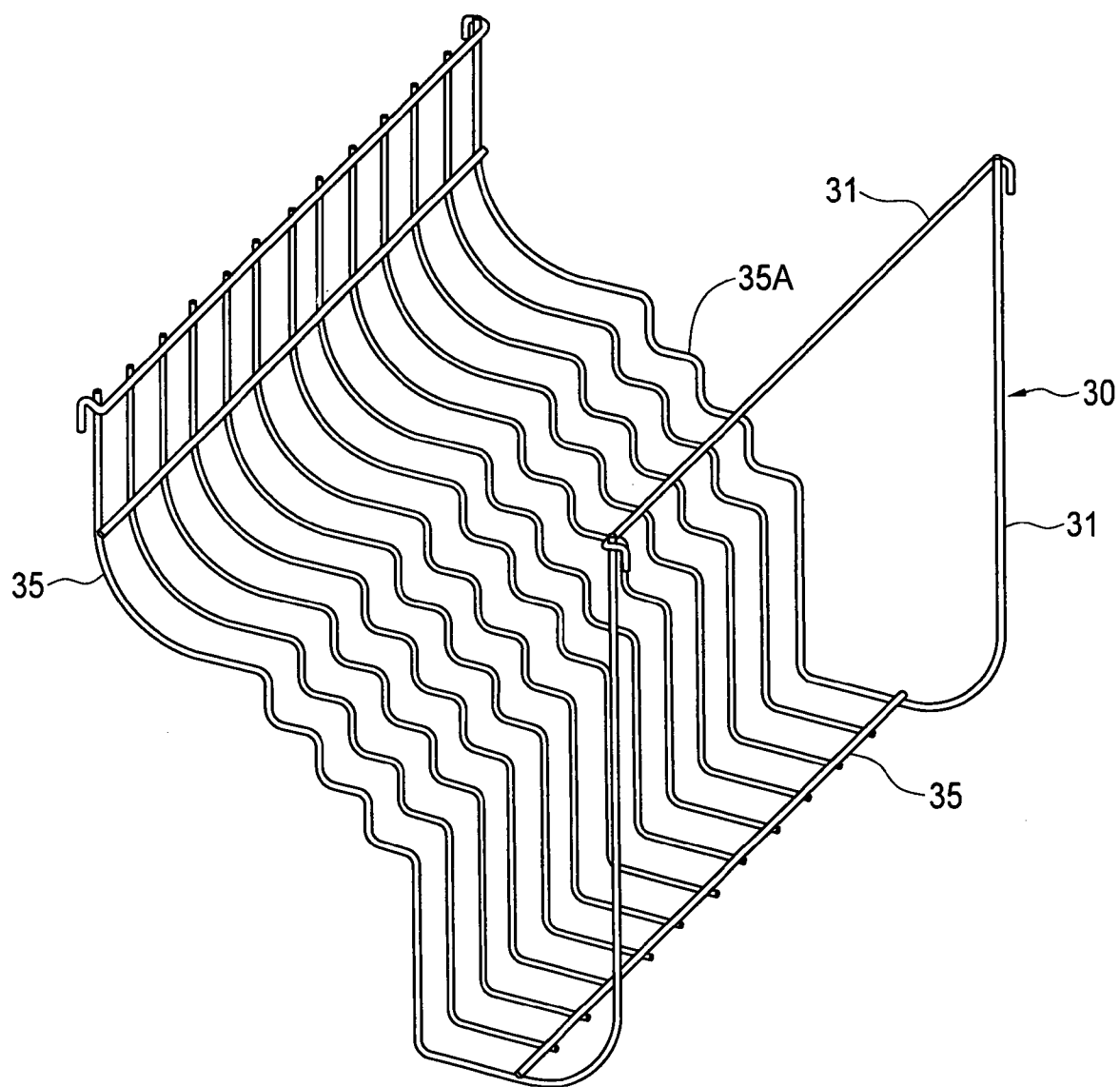


FIG. 13

HANGING RACK FOR STORAGE CONTAINER LIDS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/010,266, filed Jan. 7, 2008 entitled HANGING RACK FOR STORAGE CONTAINER LIDS, Einbinder et al. which application is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] This invention relates to kitchen storage accessories and more particularly to an apparatus for storing pot and pan lids in connection with overhead racks for hanging pots and pans.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] There are many ways to store pots and pans in a kitchen and many racks available for this purpose. Pots and pans can, for example, be simply stacked and stored in cabinet shelves or drawers, placed on racks within those shelves or drawers, or hung from overhead racks.

[0004] Overhead storage racks for hanging pots and pans are widely available, they are rigid or semi-rigid structures made of wood, metal and other material that include hooks on their underside from which to hang pots and pans. Hanging overhead storage racks are themselves be hung from the ceiling, from one or more chains for example, or as freestanding structure having hooks to hang pots or pans, a freestanding kitchen island including an overhead rack may include such a design for example. A common configuration is to use such an overhead rack in conjunction with a kitchen island. When working at a kitchen island the user simply need reach up and take a pot or pan of their choosing from the hanging storage rack.

[0005] Overhead storage racks for hanging pots and pans can also be configured as shelves affixed to walls, perhaps with the hooks on their underside.

[0006] Pots and pans are hung from the hooks of hanging storage racks from either a hole or ring affixed to the handles of the pans or pots. In this way the handle and pot or pan dangle downwards to take up a minimum of horizontal space, so many of them can be stored adjacent one another.

[0007] There are a more limited number of racks to store the lids for these pots and pans however. Pan lids are plate-shaped having a major axis and an edge. Lids are generally not amenable to being hung from the hooks of these racks because they are usually not equipped with holes or rings to hang them from hooks. If lids do have a ring type of handle it is usually centrally located on a plate-shaped lid and, when hung, takes up a relatively great amount of horizontal space, making it too inefficient to hang many lids from a hanging storage rack.

[0008] Unless they are stacked, pot or pan lids generally require some support across their major axis to be stored on their edges. Lids can also be stacked without support in cabinets or on shelves but, if used with a hanging pot and pan rack, a user must then separately retrieve a lid from the shelf or cabinet for a particular pot or pan.

[0009] Several types of racks are available for storing pot and pan lids. For example the Cooking.com company of Santa Monica, Calif. for sells a freestanding "Anolon Nou-

velle Lid Rack" and "Cookware Lid Rack" products, both of which provide support for lid along its major axis. The "Cookware Lid Rack" product also includes a narrow sliding rack designed to be stored on a cabinet shelf; the Rubbermaid® company makes a similar product "Slide Out Lid & Pan Organizer" product.

[0010] In addition to these freestanding lid racks for storing lids, other lid racks are available that may be affixed to vertical surfaces such as walls and doors. U.S. Pat. No. 6,997,329 Ohanian, for example discloses a rack for holding lids that can be either freestanding or affixed to a vertical surface. The Organize-It company of Rochester Hills, Mich. sells a lid storage rack that hangs from a door.

[0011] While the lid storage devices of the prior art have been adequate, they typically require a user to move to another area of the kitchen to retrieve an appropriate lid or pan lid for a pot or pan. This is particularly the case when they are used with an overhead type of storage rack for pots and pans, with the lids stored separately from the pots and pans. More typically pot and pan lids are stored piled in drawers or cabinets, making it difficult, time-consuming and unpleasant for a user to hunt through the pile of lids to fish out the appropriate lid.

[0012] What is needed then is a lid rack that can be used in conjunction with an overhead rack for hanging pots and pans type of storage rack, allowing the same convenience of access to pot and pan lids that these racks afford for the pots and pans themselves.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] A solution to the above problem has been devised, a rack suitable for storing lids is suspended from an overhead rack for hanging pots and pans, allowing the same ease of storage and access to lids that an overhead storage rack for pots and pans allows for the pots and pans themselves.

[0014] A pot and pan lid rack adapted to receive a pot or pan lid is suspended beneath an overhead pot and pan rack with one or more connecting members attached to (or incorporated into) the lid rack. The lid rack is affixed to the overhead pot and pan rack at one end of the members and to the pot and pan lid rack at the opposite ends. In this manner pot and pan lids can be stored for ready access when and where needed while cooking.

[0015] In its simplest embodiment the present invention includes a simple connecting member adapted to be affixed by a hook for example to the pot and pan rack on one end and to affix the pan lid to the other end. For example the lid could be removably affixed to the connecting member with a clamp, magnet, screw or with another hook.

[0016] In another embodiment the rack can be affixed to the underside of a standard pot and pan rack with flexible strands such as chains, ropes or cable. In this instance it is preferable to use a rack made of rigid material to maintain the integrity of the rack for retaining the pan lids.

[0017] Pot and pan lids usually have handles fashioned as rings or knobs centrally located on the exterior side of the lid. The pan lid rack is typically made of a series of tines and these tines can be adapted to retain pot or pan lids securely in a fixed position by interfering with the lid handles. In one embodiment, where the lid handle is a ring, the lid rack tines are notched to support the ring at one or more points on the ring.

[0018] A ring handle can also be retained by a lid rack tine by fashioning a tine to extend through the ring when the lid is placed in the lid rack.

[0019] With respect to lid handles that are knobs, the tines of the lid rack can be formed as a concavity to receive a neck of the knob, whereby the lid must be lifted from the concavity to remove the lid from the lid rack.

[0020] In the preferred embodiment the lid includes a more massive rigid bracket supporting the pot and pan lid rack on one side and two supporting rods on the opposite side, allowing easy for access to the lids on the opposite side. The lid rack includes a series of tines spaced to receive the edge side of pot and pan lids and the tines are adapted to support and/or interfere with the lid handles to retain them in a fixed position within the lid rack, in the manner described above to retain ring or knob types of handles and optimally to retain both types of lid handles in the above-described manners.

[0021] The method of the present inventions is straightforward. A lid rack as described herein is connected to a standard overhead pot and pan rack, suspending it from the pot and pan rack. One or more pot or pan lids are placed within the rack and may be removed as needed by a user in a much more convenient manner than pot and pan lid storage methods afforded in the past.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0022] FIG. 1 is a sectional diagram of a typical prior art pot or pan lid.

[0023] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a generic rack that can be adapted to support pot or pan lids.

[0024] FIG. 3 is a top view of lids stored in the lid rack of FIG. 2.

[0025] FIG. 4 is an embodiment of the present invention, the lid rack of FIG. 2 suspended from an overhead pot and pan rack, with lids stored in the lid rack.

[0026] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the lid rack of FIG. 4.

[0027] FIG. 6 is a side view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention.

[0028] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the invention, a lid rack affixed to an existing standard pot and pan rack.

[0029] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the lid rack of FIG. 7.

[0030] FIG. 9 is a side view of lids placed in the lid rack of FIG. 7.

[0031] FIG. 10 is a detail perspective view of the lid rack of FIG. 7, having tines adapted to receive a pan lid with a ring handle.

[0032] FIG. 11 is a detail side view of the lid rack of FIG. 7 having tines adapted to receive a pan lid with a ring handle.

[0033] FIG. 12 is a side view of an embodiment of the rack of the present invention having tines adapted to receive a pan lid having a knob handle.

[0034] FIG. 13 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION AND EMBODIMENTS

[0035] The following description, and the figures to which it refers, are provided for the purpose of describing examples and specific embodiments of the invention only and are not intended to exhaustively describe all possible examples and embodiments of the invention.

[0036] Referring now to FIG. 1 a cross-sectional diagram of a pot or pan lid 10 of the prior art is shown. A typical lid has a major axis 12 (shown along dotted lines) and an edge 14. The edge 14 is usually adapted to be received by the opening

of a pot or pan and may curve inwardly, at 16, to form a complementary fit to a pot or pan. A typical lid 10 usually includes a lid handle such as a ring or knob 18 having a neck 17 that is centrally located on the major axis 12 of the lid to allow a user to grasp the lid.

[0037] FIGS. 2 and 3 depict a generic rack adapted to store pot or pan lids to illustrate the invention.

[0038] FIGS. 4 and 5 depict a first embodiment of the present invention, using the rack of FIGS. 2 and 3. A hanging storage rack for pots and pans, a standard overhead pot rack frame, 20 is shown, having hooks 22 to hold pots and pans. One of the variety of racks 30 commercially available is shown, suspended from a standard overhead pot rack frame by a connecting member 31, here flexible strands, chains 32 from the hanging storage rack 20. Suspending the lid rack 30 from the pot and pan rack 20 efficiently uses this space as storage and, when pan lids 10 are placed in the lid rack 30, they are as conveniently available to a user as are their complementary pots or pans.

[0039] Referring additionally to FIG. 6, FIG. 6 shows a simpler embodiment of the lid rack 30. Instead of a rack that lids rest in, fasteners 40, such as clips, hooks or magnets are used to hang grasp lids 10. The fastener 40 is affixed to lid rack 30, that is in turn affixed to the pot and pan rack 20. In this embodiment the rack 30 may be centrally hung from the pot and pan rack 20 or can be hung from a pot and pan rack hook 22 on the periphery of a pot and pan rack 20, if such is available, as shown in FIG. 4, from a ring or hook 42 formed at the end of rack 30.

[0040] In this manner pot and pan lids are as easily and conveniently stored and retrieved from an overhead storage rack 20 as the pots and pans themselves are, eliminating the need for a user to retrieve a lid from a separate storage area.

[0041] Referring now FIGS. 7 and 8 a pot and pan lid rack 30 of the preferred embodiment is shown. FIG. 7 shows the pot and pan lid rack 30 affixed to a standard overhead pot rack frame 20. FIG. 8 shows the lid rack 30 separately. Pot and pan lid rack 30 has more massive rigid brackets 33 as connecting members on one side, supporting the majority of the weight of the rack and pan lids, including upper cross member 33A and lower cross member 33B further allowing larger lids to rest on the lower cross member 33B end of the bracket. The bracket 33, in this example an arcuate bracket, extends beneath from of the lid rack 30 to the other. Bracket 33 affixes at one end to a standard overhead pot and pan rack 20, in this example fasteners 50 are used to hang the lid rack 30 from the frame of a typical pot and pan rack. The opposite end of bracket 33 is affixed to supporting rods 34 that are also affixed to the pot and pan rack 20. By supporting the majority of the weight with the more massive bracket 33 this asymmetrical design allows for minimal interference with pot or pan lids being inserted or removed on the side of the lid rack 30 having the supporting rods 34. FIG. 9 is a side view of the rack of FIGS. 7 and 8, showing lids 10 being held in the rack 30. The lid rack tines 35 are spaced to receive the edge side 14 of a pot or pan lid.

[0042] Pot and pan lids usually have handles fashioned as rings or knobs. The pan lid rack itself is typically made of a series of 35 tines and these tines can be adapted to retain pot and pan lids securely in a fixed position by interfering with the handles.

[0043] Referring to FIGS. 10 and 11, where the lid handle 18 is a ring 18A and the tines are fashioned accordingly 36, the lid rack tines 35 are notched (shown at 35A) to support the

ring at one or more points on the ring. A ring type of handle **18** can also be retained by a lid rack tine by fashioning a tine **35** to extend through the ring (shown at **35B**) when the lid is placed in the lid rack.

[0044] With respect to lid handles **18** that are knobs **18B**, the tines **35** of the lid rack shown in FIG. **12** can be formed as a concavity (shown at **35C**) to receive the knob, whereby the lid must be lifted from the concavity to remove the lid from the lid rack (indicated by arrow), from first position **101** past position **102**.

[0045] In practice the tines **35** of the lid rack are adapted to receive and retain both ring and knob types of handles **18B**, as well as several different sizes of rings in the manner as described above, to retain ring or knob types of handles and optimally to retain both in the above-described manner.

[0046] Referring now to FIG. **13**, in yet another embodiment of the invention the pot and pan lid rack **30** can be fabricated from a single material, where the tine **35** material also forms the connecting members **31** of the other embodiments. The pot and pan lid rack **30** is thereby adapted to receive a pot or pan lid and is suspended beneath an overhead pot and pan rack with the one or more connecting members **31**, here incorporated into the lid rack **30**. In this example the tines **35** are notched at **35A** to interfere with a lid handle **18** (not shown).

[0047] The method of the present invention is straightforward, the steps of affixing a lid rack **30** to a prior art pot and pan rack **20**, described above, then lids **10** are then placed in the lid rack **30**.

[0048] It will be appreciated that the invention has been described hereabove with reference to certain examples or preferred embodiments as shown in the drawings. Various additions, deletions, changes and alterations may be made to the above-described embodiments and examples without departing from the intended spirit and scope of this invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack, comprising:

a pot and pan lid rack adapted to receive a pot or pan lid that is suspended beneath an overhead pot and pan rack from one or more connecting members attached to or incorporated into the lid rack, where the connecting members are attached to the overhead pot and pan rack at one end and incorporated into or attached to the pot and pan lid rack at the opposite end.

2. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **1**, where the connecting member is adapted to be attached hook to the pot or pan rack on one end and removably attached to a pan lid to the other end.

3. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **1**, where the one or more connecting members are flexible strands.

4. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **1**, where is the lid rack further comprises one or more tines and the tines are adapted to interfere with a lid handle, whereby the lid is held in a fixed position within the lid rack.

5. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **4**, where the lid handle is a ring and the lid rack tines are adapted to support the ring at one or more points on the ring.

6. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **5**, where a lid rack tine further extends through the ring when the lid is placed in the lid rack.

7. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **4**, where the lid handle is a knob and a lid rack tine include a concavity sized to receive the knob, whereby the lid must be lifted from the concavity to remove the lid from the lid rack.

8. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **1**, where the one or more connecting members include rigid brackets supporting the pot and pan lid rack affixed to the overhead rack for pots and pans on one end and extending under the width of the lid rack, further affixed to supporting rods on the opposite end that are also affixed to the overhead pot and pan rack.

9. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **8** where the pot and pan lid rack includes one or more tines and the tines are adapted to interfere with a lid handle, whereby the lid is held in a fixed position within the lid rack.

10. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **9** where the tines are adapted to interfere with a lid handle by adaptations selected from one or more of: supporting a handle comprising a ring by supporting the ring on one or more points on the ring; supporting a handle comprising a ring with a tine extending through the ring, and supporting lid handle comprising a knob by supporting the knob in a concavity.

11. A method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack, comprising the steps of:

suspending a pot and pan lid rack adapted to receive a pot or pan lid that is suspended beneath an overhead pot and pan rack from one or more connecting members attached to or incorporated into the lid rack, where the connecting members are attached to the overhead pot and pan rack at one end and incorporated into or attached to the pot and pan lid rack at the opposite end, and

placing one or more pot or pan lids in the lid rack.

12. The method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **11**, where the connecting member is adapted to be affixed by a hook on the pot and pan rack on one end and to removably affix a pan lid to the other end.

13. The method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **11**, where the one or more connecting members are flexible strands.

14. The method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **11**, where is the lid rack further comprises one or more tines and the tines are adapted to interfere with a lid handle, whereby the lid is held in a fixed position within the lid rack.

15. The method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **14**, where the lid handle is a ring and the lid rack tines are adapted to support the ring at one or more points on the ring.

16. The method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **15**, where a lid rack tine further extends through the ring when the lid is placed in the lid rack.

17. The method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **14**, where the lid handle is a knob and a lid rack tine include a concavity sized to receive the knob, whereby the lid must be lifted from the concavity to remove the lid from the lid rack.

18. The method for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **11**, where the one or more

connecting members include rigid brackets supporting the pot and pan lid rack affixed to the overhead rack for pots and pans on one end and extending under the width of the lid rack, further affixed to supporting rods on the opposite end that are also affixed to the overhead pot and pan rack.

19. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **18** where the pot and pan lid rack includes one or more tines and the tines are adapted to interfere with a lid handle, whereby the lid is held in a fixed position within the lid rack.

20. The rack for storing pot and pan lids from an overhead pot and pan rack of claim **19** where the tines are adapted to interfere with a lid handle by adaptations selected from one or more of: supporting a handle comprising a ring by supporting the ring on one or more points on the ring; supporting a handle comprising a ring with a tine extending through the ring, and supporting lid handle comprising a knob by supporting the knob in a concavity.

* * * * *