Dec. 27, 1966 D. D. MATHEWS 3,294,424

BALLOT OR THE LIKE

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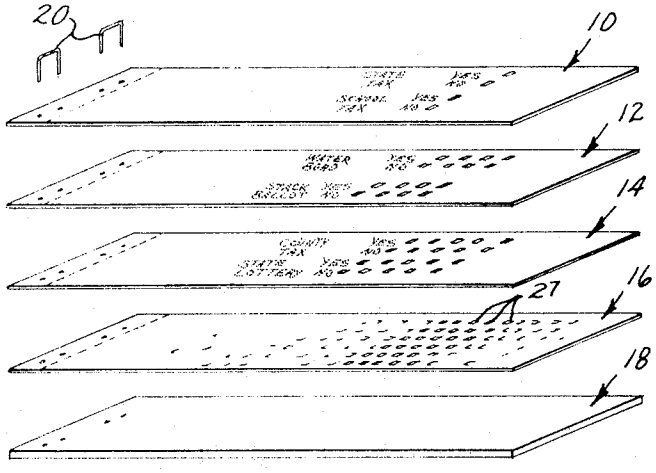


FIG. 1

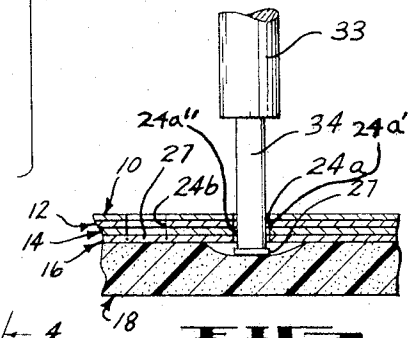


FIG. 4

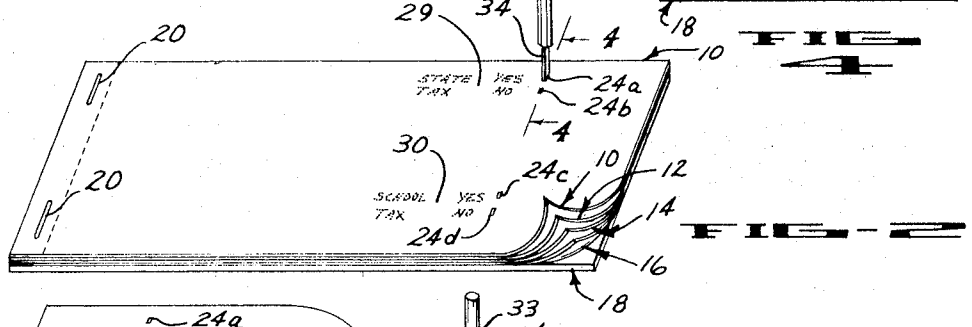


FIG. 2

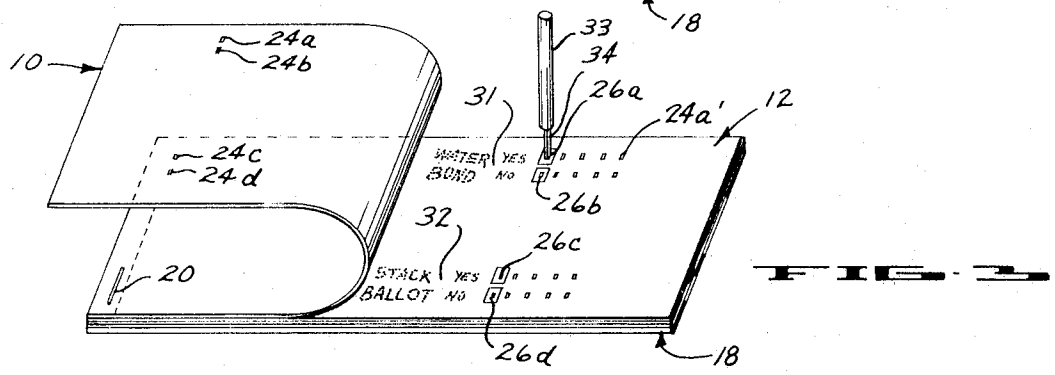


FIG. 3

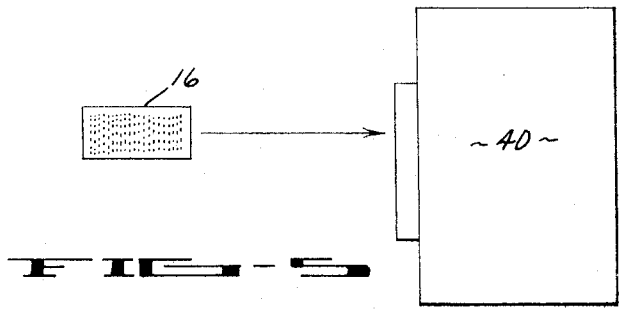


FIG. 5

INVENTOR.
DAVID D. MATHEWS

BY Fulwider, Patton, Lieber, Lee & Utecht

ATTORNEYS

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BALLOT OR THE LIKE

David D. Mathews, 98 Ford Road,
Carmel Valley, Calif. 93924

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The present invention relates to a new and novel ballot or the like usable with an electronic computer.

It is a major object of the present invention to provide a ballot or other choice-selection tallying device which may be utilized with a conventional electronic computer to rapidly and accurately tally the user's choices.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a device of the aforedescribed nature which permits the choice tally to be effected in an extremely economical manner.

A more particular object of the present invention is to provide a device of the aforedescribed nature that utilizes a plurality of vertically stacked cards fastened together along a common side, with such cards being formed with the plurality of stylus-receiving perforations that are vertically aligned when the cards are flat. The cards are imprinted with choice-offering indicia adjacent each of the perforations. A tally sheet is disposed on the bottom of the cards, such tally sheet being formed with a plurality of choice-selection indicating elements arranged below the perforations and with each of the choice selection indicating elements being keyed to a single one of the choice-offering indicia whereby a stylus or the like may be inserted through the perforations into engagement with the choice-selection indicating elements to indicate the user's choices. Thereafter, the tally sheet is processed by a conventional electronic computer so as to rapidly and accurately tally the choices selected by the user.

These and other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment of said invention, when taken in conjunction with the appended drawings, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a vertically exploded perspective view of an election ballot embodying the present invention;

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view showing the manner whereby the voter selects a choice on the top card of said ballot;

FIGURE 3 is a view similar to FIGURE 2 showing the manner whereby a voter makes a choice selection of the second card of said ballot;

FIGURE 4 is a broken vertical sectional view taken in enlarged scale along line 4—4 of FIGURE 2; and

FIGURE 5 is a diagrammatic view showing the completed ballot being directed towards an electronic computer.

Referring to the drawings and particularly FIGURE 1 thereof, a preferred form of ballot or like choice-selection document is illustrated in vertically exploded form. The ballot includes a plurality of vertically stacked cards designated **10**, **12** and **14**. A tally sheet **16** is disposed below the lowermost card **14**. A backing pad **18** is in turn disposed below the tally sheet **16**. The cards **10**, **12** and **14**, the sheet **16** and the backing pad **18** are fastened together along a common side as by means of staples **20**. The cards **10**, **12** and **14** are formed with a plurality of perforations **24**, with such perforations being vertically aligned when the cards are flat. It is not essential that each of the cards be formed with the same number of perforations, instead as indicated in FIGURE 2, the upper card **10** may be formed with perforations **24***a*, **24***b*, **24***c* and **24***d*. The next lower card **12** may be formed with perforations **26***a*, **26***b*, **26***c* and **26***d*, together

with additional perforations which do not bear reference numerals in the drawings.

The upper surface of the cards **10**, **12** and **14** are imprinted with choice-offering indicia, as indicated particularly at **29** and **30** in FIGURE 2, and by **31** and **32** in FIGURE 3. By way of example, the topmost card **10** is shown imprinted at **29** with the language "State Tax" to the right of which language appears the word "Yes" adjacent perforation **24***a* and the word "No" adjacent perforation **24***b*. Similarly, at **30** the language "School Tax" is imprinted, while to the right of this language the word "Yes" appears adjacent perforation **24***c* and the word "No" appears adjacent perforation **24***d*. On card **12** at **31** there appears the language "Water Bond," and to the right of which language is imprinted the word "Yes" adjacent perforation **26***a* and the word "No" adjacent perforation **26***b*. At **32**, card **12** is imprinted with the language "Stack Ballot" to the right of which appears the word "Yes" adjacent perforation **26***c* and the word "No" adjacent perforation **26***d*. The tally sheet **16** is formed with a plurality of choice selection-indicating elements arranged below each of the perforations formed in the cards **10**, **12** and **14**. These choice-selection indicating elements may take the form of a pre-perforated punched blank designated **27** in FIGURE 4. The tally sheet **16** itself will preferably take the form of a conventional I.B.M. card or the like usable with a conventional I.B.M. electronic computer or other similar device. Also, the elements **27** could be merely blank spaces.

The backing pad **18** is preferably formed of a yieldable material such as a plastic foam.

In the use of the aforedescribed device the voter or user is provided with a conventional stylus **33**, or other like pointed instrument. The stylus **33** is preferably formed at its lower portion with an insertion point **34** having a rectangular cross-section generally corresponding to, but slightly smaller than, the dimensions of the perforations in cards **10**, **12** and **14** and the prepunched blank **27** of tally sheet **16**.

Referring now to FIGURE 2, assuming that the user's choice in connection with the indicia at **29** was "Yes," he would insert the stylus **33** downwardly through the perforation **24***a*. The lower portion of the stylus would pass downwardly through the perforations **24***a'* and **24***a''* formed in cards **12** and **14** respectively, until the stylus insertion point **34** engaged the prepunched blank **27** of the tally sheet **16** disposed below the aforementioned perforations. Continued downward movement of the stylus **33** would tear the blank **27** loose from the tally sheet **16**, as indicated in FIGURE 4. During this process the backing pad **18** serves to permit accurate alignment registration as the stylus **33** effects such removal of the blank **27** from the tally sheet **16**. The stylus **33** would then be lifted upwardly and could be used again in making the choice indicated at the indicia **30** on top card **10**.

When all of the choices indicated on the top card **10** have been selected, the top card **10** is folded upwardly, as indicated in FIGURE 3. Thereafter, the stylus **33** would be used to make the selections appearing on card **12**. Card **12** is then lifted upwardly and the same procedure would be repeated with respect to the bottom card **14**. After all the selections have been made the tally card **16** is removed from the ballot and as indicated in FIGURE 5 processed by a conventional electronic computer **40**.

The aforedescribed election ballot offers important advantages over conventional balloting arrangements. A ballot embodying the present invention permits rapid and accurate tallying of the voter's selections without requiring special voting machines. Instead, a ballot embodying the present invention may be utilized with conventional

electronic computers. It will be apparent that such computers are not usable solely with ballots embodying the present invention, but instead may be used in conjunction with standard electronic computing procedures. Thus, it is not necessary to purchase an expensive voting machine usable only for tallying ballots at election times. A further advantage of a ballot embodying the present invention is that it may be utilized as an absentee ballot, thereby permitting absentee ballots to be processed in the same manner as regular ballots. A ballot embodying the present invention also permits elimination of the conventional sample ballot. Such sample ballots are now mailed out prior to election day so that the voter can review the ballot in detail and make his selections in his own home rather than in the limited time allowed in a voting booth. It would be feasible to use the actual ballot embodying the present invention in the same manner as a sample ballot, i.e., the ballot embodying the present invention could be mailed out prior to the election day whereby the voter could study such ballot. The voter would then bring his ballot to the polling place and punch it in the voting booth.

It should be particularly noted that although there has been shown and described hereinbefore as a representative embodiment of the present invention an election ballot, such invention could also be embodied in other types of choice-selection tallying means, e.g., a selective choice examination paper. It should also be noted that while three cards **10**, **12** and **14** are shown in the representative embodiment of the invention described hereinbefore, more cards could be employed without departing from the spirit of the present invention. Further, it is possible to provide the lower end of the stylus with marking means where the choice-selecting elements **27** are merely blank spaces on the tally sheet **16**.

Various other modifications and changes may be made with respect to the foregoing detailed description, without departing from the spirit of the invention or the scope of the following claims.

I claim:

1. A ballot or the like usable with a stylus and a computer to tally choices, comprising:

a plurality of vertically stacked cards that are fastened together along a common side;

a plurality of stylus-receiving perforations formed in said cards, said perforations being vertically aligned when said cards are flat;

choice-offering indicia printed on the upper surfaces of said cards adjacent each of said perforations;

a tally sheet on the bottom of said cards and fastened thereto;

and a plurality of choice selection-indicating elements on said tally sheet arranged below said perforations with each of said choice selection-indicating elements being keyed to a single one of said choice-offering indicia whereby said stylus is insertable through said perforations into engagement with said choice selection-indicating elements to indicate choices whereafter said tally sheet is processed by said computer to tally said choices.

2. A ballot or the like as set forth in claim **1** wherein said choice selection-indicating elements are pre-perforated punch-out blanks.

3. A ballot or the like as set forth in claim **1** wherein a backing pad is disposed below said tally sheet.

4. A ballot or the like as set forth in claim **2** wherein a backing pad is disposed below said tally sheet.

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LAWRENCE CHARLES, *Primary Examiner.*