Dec. 3, 1957 F. A. HARTE, JR., ET AL 2,815,399

TRAY OR SUPPORT THEREFOR

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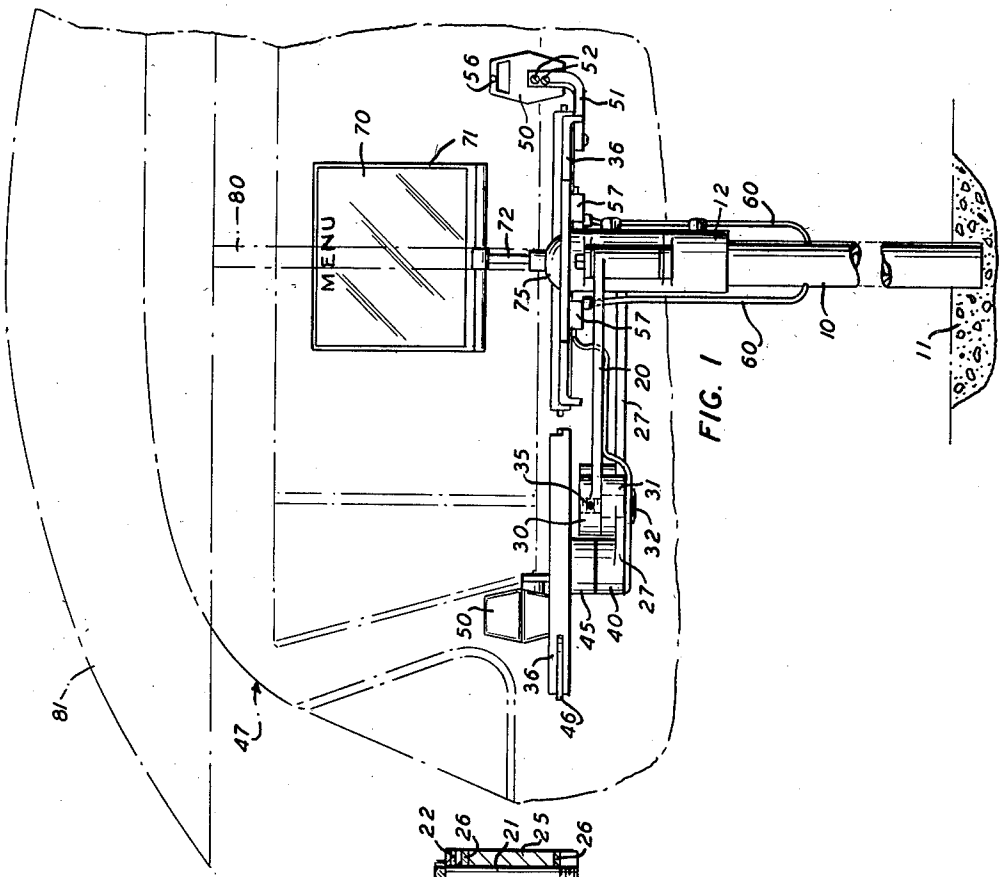


FIG. 1

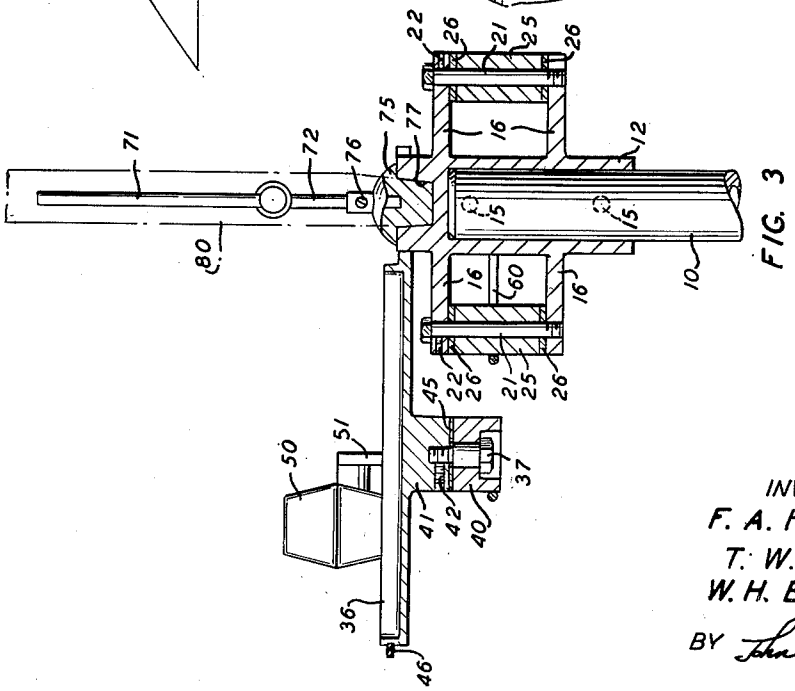


FIG. 3

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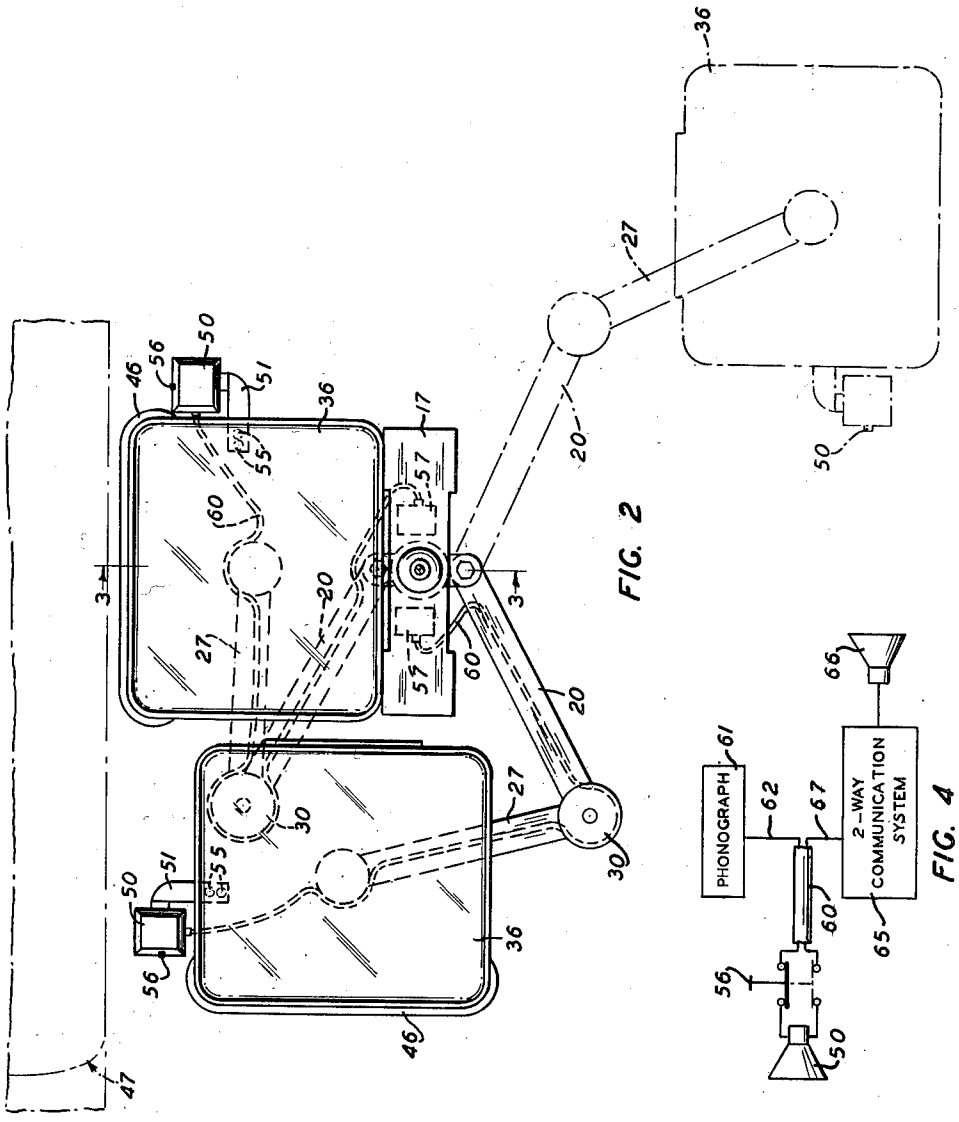


FIG. 2

FIG. 4

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TRAY OR SUPPORT THEREFOR

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3 Claims. (Cl. 179—1)

This invention relates to a tray or support therefor, and more particularly to trays or supports therefor designed to be located in the automobile parking area of a drive-in restaurant.

It is common today for drive-in restaurants to provide large parking areas for the automobiles of their customers. The customer parks in a suitable position and thereafter attempts to attract the attention of a waiter or waitress. In all such cases known, the attention of the restaurant employees is attracted by signaling with the headlights or the horn of the automobile. When the meal is ordered and eventually delivered to the automobile, it is on trays that are designed to be attached to the automobile.

There are obvious disadvantages to this procedure for obtaining a meal at such a restaurant. There are disadvantages to the public in attracting the attention of the often busy employees, and, when a meal is finally obtained after a considerable waiting period and consumed, in again attracting the attention of the employees in order to have the tray supporting the dishes, etc., detached from the automobile. Further, other disadvantages accrue to the proprietor of the restaurant since, depending upon the size thereof, a relatively large number of employees are needed to perform the function of serving customers in the above-described manner.

It is an object of this invention to provide a new and improved tray or support therefor.

Another object of the invention is to provide new and improved trays or supports therefor designed to be located in the automobile parking area of a drive-in restaurant.

A further object of the invention is to provide new and improved trays or supports therefor in which the convenience of the public is greatly enhanced and the overall expense to the owner of a drive-in restaurant is greatly reduced.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will appear from the following detailed description of apparatus forming a specific embodiment thereof, when read in conjunction with the appended drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a side elevation of apparatus forming one embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the apparatus shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is an enlarged, vertical, fragmentary section taken along line 3—3 of Fig. 2, and

Fig. 4 is a block diagram of a communications circuit embodying certain features of the invention.

Referring now in detail to the drawings, and more particularly to Figs. 1, 2 and 3, a tray or a tray support embodying the invention is shown therein. The tray includes a vertical post 10 which is embedded securely within the surface 11 of a parking area of a drive-in type restaurant. A sleeve 12 is secured fixedly to the upper end of the post 10 by a pair of bolts 15—15. A pair of projecting lugs 16—16 extend horizontally from

the sleeve 12 and a horizontal plate 17 is formed integrally with the sleeve 12 and the upper lugs 16—16.

A first pair of horizontal arms 20—20 are secured pivotally between the lugs 16—16 by bolts 21—21 which are secured against movement with respect to the lugs 16—16 by set screws 22—22. Pivotal movement of the arms 20—20 with respect to the lugs 16—16 is obtained by mounting sleeves 25—25, with which the arms 20—20 are integral, between the lugs 16—16 and loosely around the bolts 21—21. Suitable washers 26—26 are provided to afford free movement of the sleeves 26—26 with respect to the lugs 16—16. A second horizontal arm 27 is secured pivotally to each of the horizontal arms 20—20. In each case, such pivotal connection is obtained by mounting a bushing 30 associated with the arm 20 adjacent to a bushing 31 associated with the arm 27. The bushings 30 and 31 are mounted for movement relative to each other by a bolt 32 which is secured against movement with respect to the bushing 30 by a set screw 35.

A platform-shaped tray or tray support 36 is mounted for rotative movement at the end of each horizontal arm 27. The platform 36 may be of average tray size and may support dishes, glasses, etc., directly or it may support the common food tray or have attached thereto types of trays that are ordinarily attached to the doors of automobiles in drive-in type restaurants. Referring to Fig. 3, a bolt 37 passes through a bushing 40 formed at the end of each horizontal arm 27 and into a bushing 41 which is integral with the platform 36. The bolt 37 is secured fixedly with respect to the bushing 41 by a set screw 42. A washer 45 is provided between the bushing 40 and the bushing 41 to provide free rotative movement of the platform 36 with respect to the arm 27. Suitable stops (not shown) may be provided to limit the rotative movement of each platform 36 with respect to its corresponding arm 27.

A strip 46 of flexible material, such as cured rubber, is embedded securely within one side of each platform 36 and may extend a short distance around the adjacent sides thereof as shown in Fig. 1. As also shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the platforms 36—36 are mounted at substantially the height of the lower side of the window of an automobile, designated generally at 47. As is apparent from the drawings, an automobile can park adjacent to the vertical post 10 and one or both of the platforms 36—36 can be maneuvered adjacent to the window of the automobile. The strips 46—46 of flexible material prevent damage to the automobile if the automobile should come into contact with the platforms 36—36.

Secured fixedly to one of the shorter sides of each platform 36 is a combined microphone and speaker unit 50. Each unit 50 is secured to a corresponding platform 36 by a bracket 51, which is secured to the unit 50 by bolts 52—52 and to the platform 36 by bolts 55—55. A push button type switch 56 of suitable design is located on each unit 50. A pair of terminal boxes 57—57 are secured below the horizontal plate 17 and a cable 60 is connected to each unit 50 and extends into a corresponding one of the terminal boxes 57—57. The cables 60—60 extend from the terminal boxes 57—57 to the interior of the vertical post 10, and from there into a suitable place within the restaurant. The cables are shown schematically in Figs. 1 and 2 for the purposes of clarity and may be secured suitably to the arms 20 and 27 for movement therewith.

Fig. 4 shows a circuit that may be connected to each combined microphone and speaker unit 50. As shown therein, a phonograph 61 or some other suitable form of entertainment may be connected to the unit 50 through a conductor 62 within the cable 60. Also, a two-way communication system 65, including a suitable micro-

phone and speaker unit 66 may be connected to the unit 50 through a conductor 67. The switch 56 is normally in the position shown in Fig. 4, so that music or some other suitable form of entertainment is delivered to the speaker within the unit 50. When the switch 56 is depressed manually, the circuit of the conductor 62 is opened and the circuit of the conductor 67 is closed so that the microphone and speaker units 50 and 60 are connected together. The unit 66 is located, for example, in the restaurant kitchen and some suitable form of indicating means (not shown) may be provided to indicate which microphone-speaker unit 50 is being energized.

Any number of vertical posts, such as the vertical post 10, may be provided in the parking area of the restaurant with each post having a pair of platforms 36—36 secured thereto. When an automobile such as that shown at 47 parks adjacent to one of the vertical posts, one or both of the platforms 36—36 may be conveniently pulled adjacent to the automobile from the inside thereof. When the occupants of the automobile desire to order a meal, they simply depress the switch 56. When the switch 56 is depressed a suitable signaling device within the restaurant is energized and a designated employee requests information concerning the meal desired by the occupants of the automobile. When their order has been taken, the meal is prepared and delivered to the occupants of the automobile by placing the meal directly on the platforms 36—36 or by placing one or more portable trays on one or both of the platforms 36—36. As is best shown in Fig. 1, both platforms 36—36 associated with one of the vertical posts may be maneuvered adjacent to one window of the automobile so that large meals may be served at this one point.

When the meal has been consumed by the occupants of the automobile, the occupants, having paid for the meal when it was delivered to them, may leave at their convenience without waiting for a tray to be detached from the automobile as is the universal custom at the present time. Further, after the meal was ordered, the switch 56 had been released so that continuous entertainment was provided at the particular point adjacent to the window of the automobile while the occupants thereof were enjoying their meal.

Several other features of the invention are provided for the convenience of the customers. For example, a menu 70 may be mounted within a frame 71 which is secured by a vertical rod 72 to the sleeve 12. The vertical rod 72 is secured within a bushing 75 by a set screw 76 and the bushing 75 in turn may be press-fitted or secured by some other suitable means within a bore 77 formed in the upper end of the sleeve 12. With the press-fit between the bushing 75 and the sleeve 12, the menu 70, frame 71, rod 72 and the bushing 75 may be removed from the bore 77 within the sleeve 12. Then, an added convenience may be provided for the customers by securing a pole 80 within the bore 77, with an umbrella 81 provided at the upper end of the pole 80 to shade the occupant of the automobile from the sun.

It will be manifest that this invention is not limited to the specific details described in connection with the above embodiment of the invention. Various modifications may be made within the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A tray or support therefor which comprises a vertical post secured fixedly against movement, a horizontal arm mounted pivotally to the vertical post near the upper end thereof, a platform mounted pivotally to the horizontal arm, a communication system including a pair of sending and receiving means, one of the last-mentioned means secured fixedly to the platform and the second located in a position remote therefrom, and switching means associated with the sending and receiving means which is secured to the platform for connecting such means with the second sending and receiving means.

2. A tray or support therefor which comprises a vertical post, a pair of horizontal arms secured pivotally at one end thereof to the vertical post, a second pair of horizontal arms, one of the second pair of horizontal arms secured pivotally at one end thereof to the distal end with respect to the end secured pivotally to the vertical post of a corresponding one of the first pair of horizontal arms, a pair of platforms, one of the platforms mounted pivotally to a corresponding one of the second horizontal arms at the distal end thereof with respect to the end secured pivotally to the first horizontal arm, a plurality of combined microphone and speaker units, one of such units secured fixedly to a corresponding one of the platforms, a two-way communication system including one of the microphone and speaker units located at a point remote from the units secured to the platforms, a cable system for connecting each of the microphone and speaker units associated with the platforms to the two-way communication system, and switching means mounted within each unit secured to the platforms for connecting such units to the remote unit.

3. A tray or support therefor to be located in the automobile parking area of a drive-in type restaurant, which comprises a vertical post secured fixedly in the parking area, a first pair of horizontal arms mounted pivotally to the vertical post near the upper end thereof, a second pair of horizontal arms, one of the second horizontal arms mounted pivotally to a corresponding one of the first horizontal arms, a pair of platforms, one of the platforms mounted for pivotal movement to a corresponding one of the second horizontal arms, a pair of combined microphone and speaker units, one of the microphone and speaker units secured fixedly to a corresponding one of the platforms, a two-way communication system located within the restaurant, a plurality of cable systems connecting the microphone and speaker units with the two-way communication system, and switching means associated with each microphone and speaker unit and in a corresponding cable system for connecting the two-way communication system selectively to the microphone and speaker units.

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