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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Boggs(10) **Pub. No.: US 2010/0053991 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Mar. 4, 2010**(54) **ILLUMINATED ARTIFICIAL CHRISTMAS TREE****Publication Classification**(76) Inventor: **Marsha K. Boggs**, Annapolis, MD
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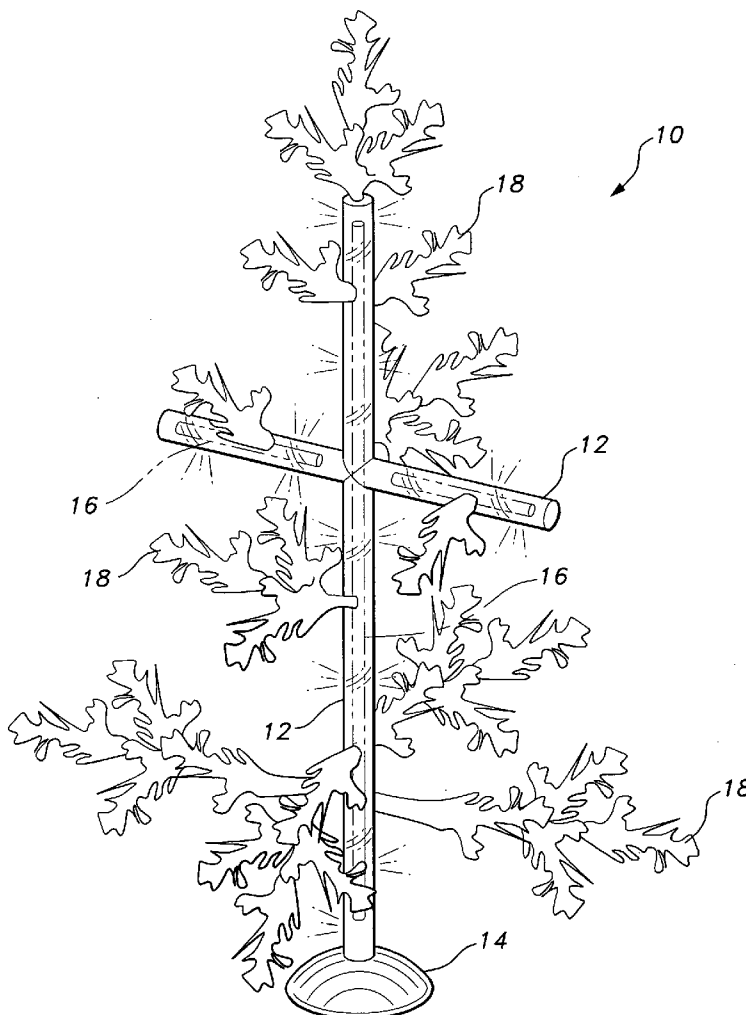
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ARLINGTON, VA 22215-0035 (US)**(51) **Int. Cl.****A47G 35/00** (2006.01)**A47G 33/06** (2006.01)**A47G 33/08** (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl. 362/565; 428/7; 428/8**(57) **ABSTRACT**

The artificial Christmas tree has a trunk configured in the form of popular or religious inspired figures, which may include a Christian cross, Santa Claus, an angel, Jesus, holiday signage and a reindeer. The artificial tree is provided with a base to support the trunk and with artificial branches and/or materials that simulate the shape of a Christmas tree. The branches and base are removably attached to the trunk to allow for dismantling and storage. The trunk is fabricated from plastic and/or other material that may be translucent to light. A source of light can be disposed inside the trunk to illuminate the trunk. The branches are of different lengths and configurations so that the assembled artificial tree will assume the shape of a Christmas tree as much as possible.

(21) Appl. No.: **12/591,013**(22) Filed: **Nov. 4, 2009****Related U.S. Application Data**

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 12/450,676, filed as application No. PCT/US2008/010975 on Sep. 22, 2008.

(60) Provisional application No. 60/960,245, filed on Sep. 21, 2007.



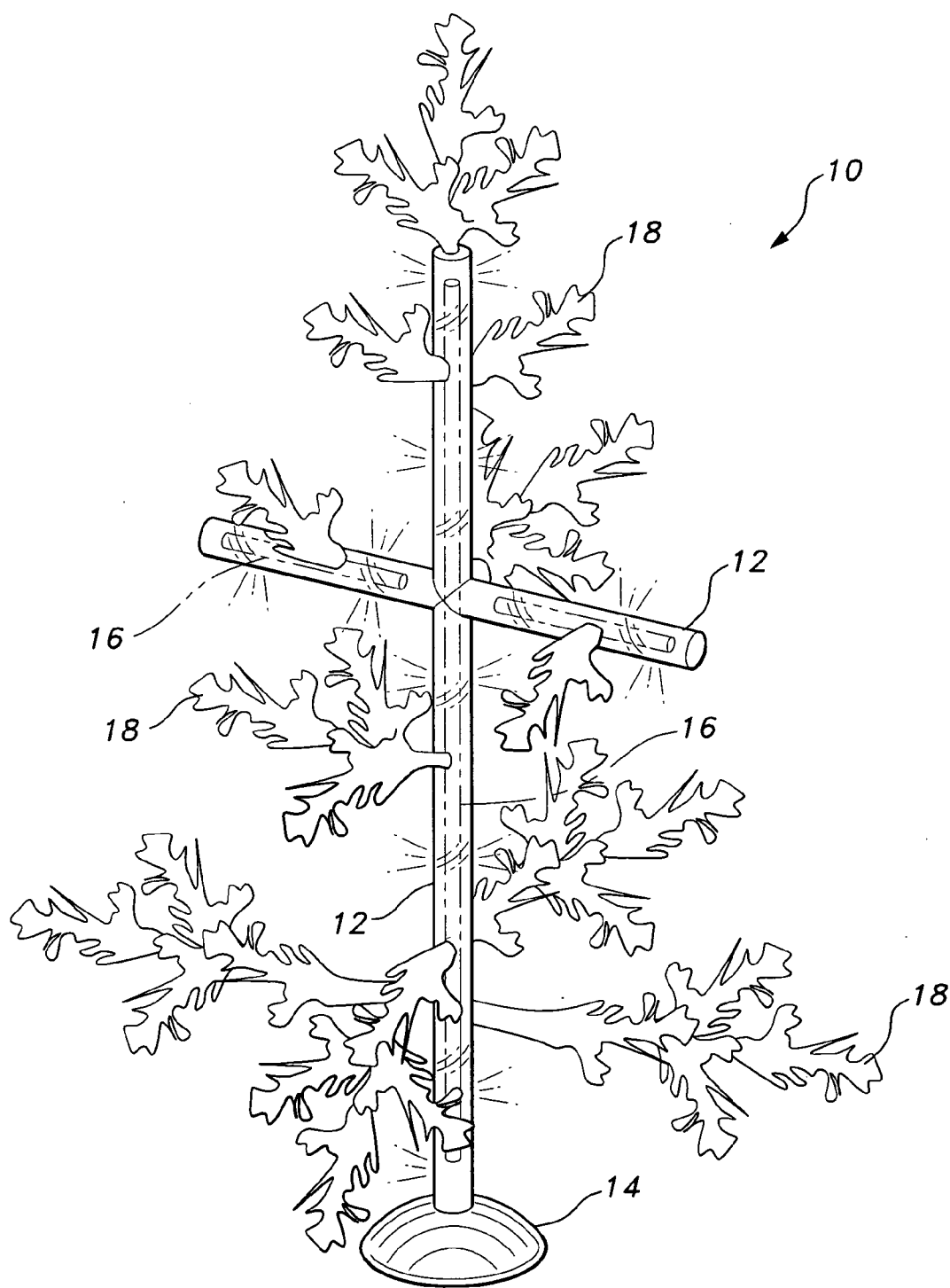


FIG. 1

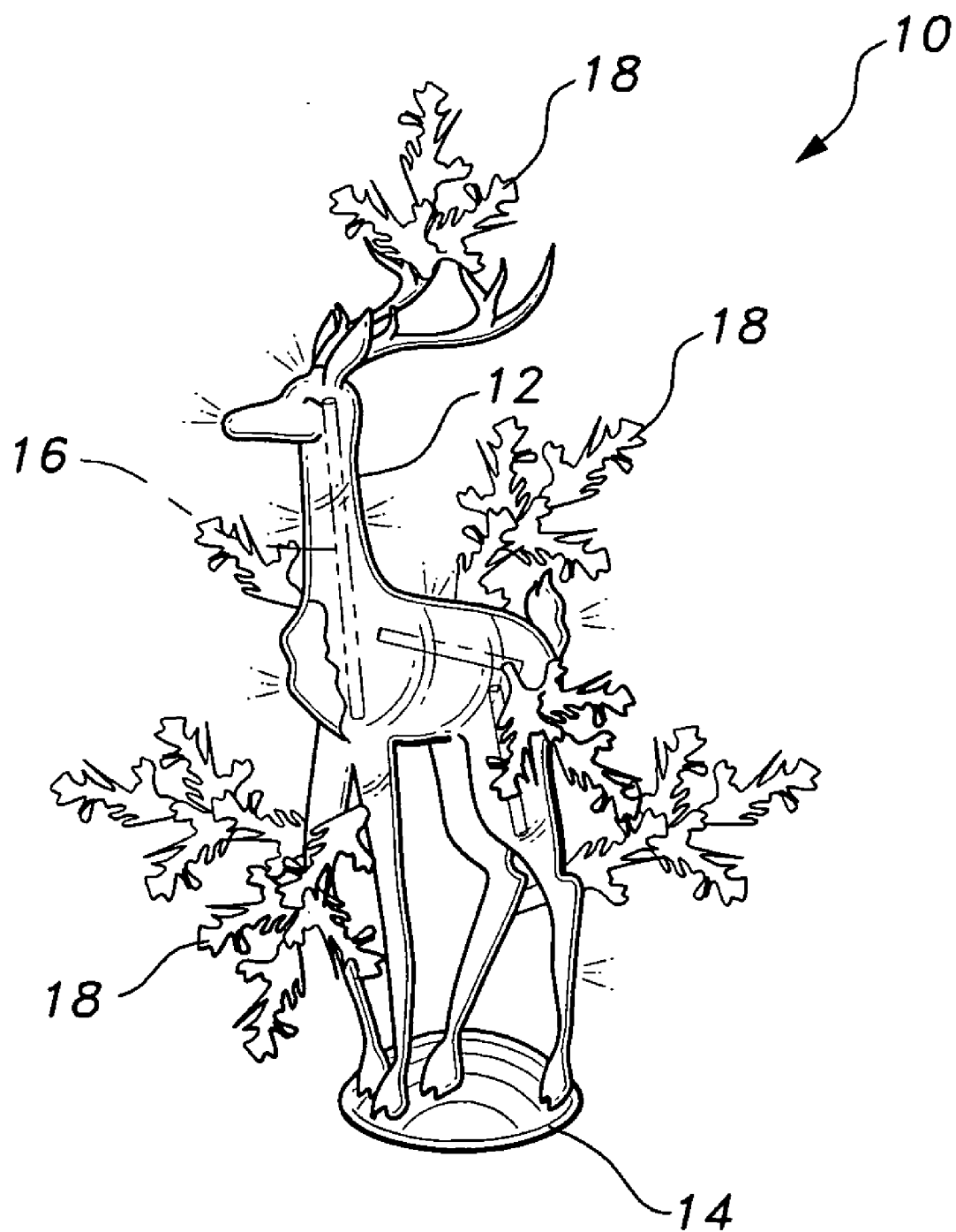


FIG. 2

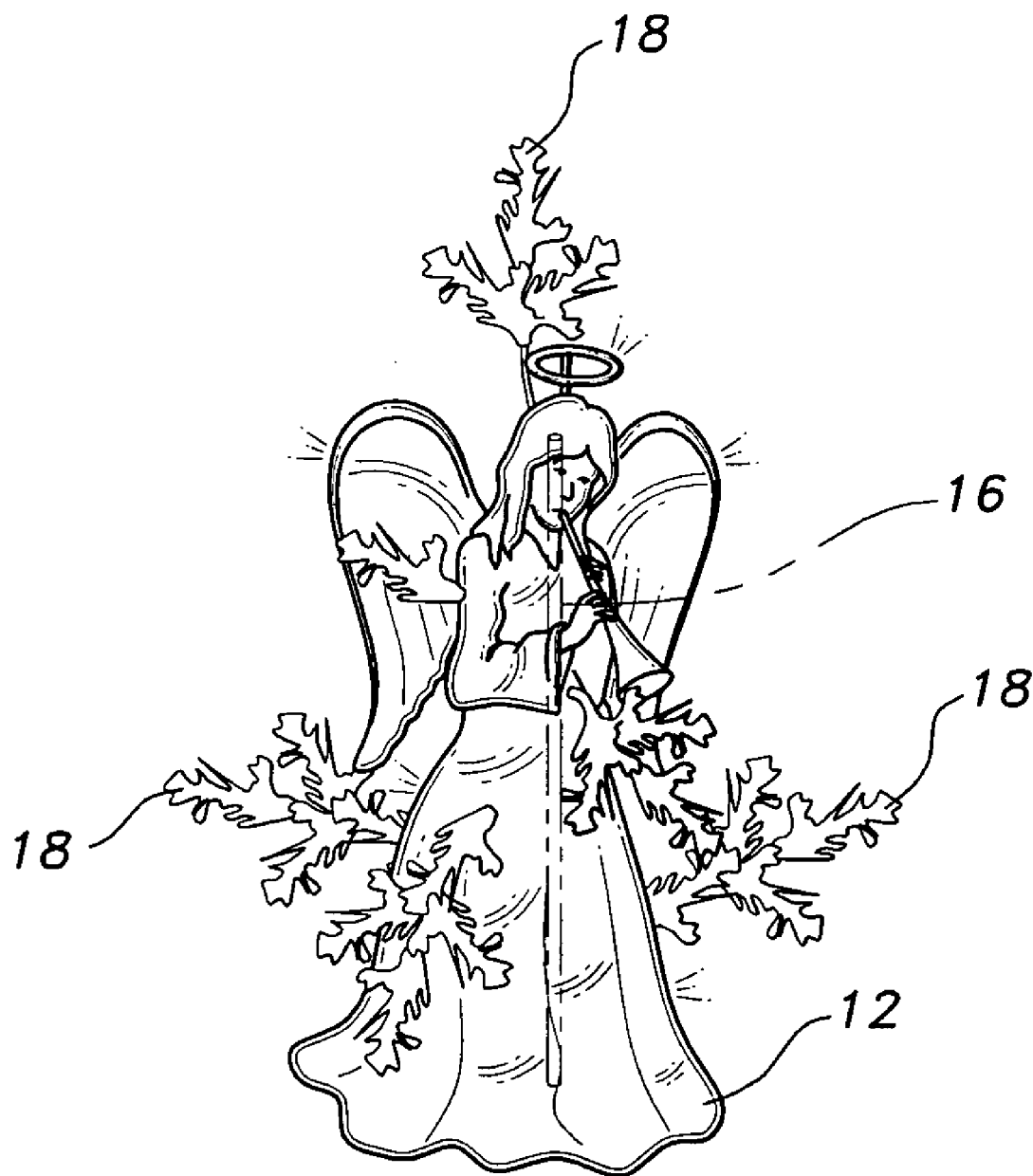


FIG. 3

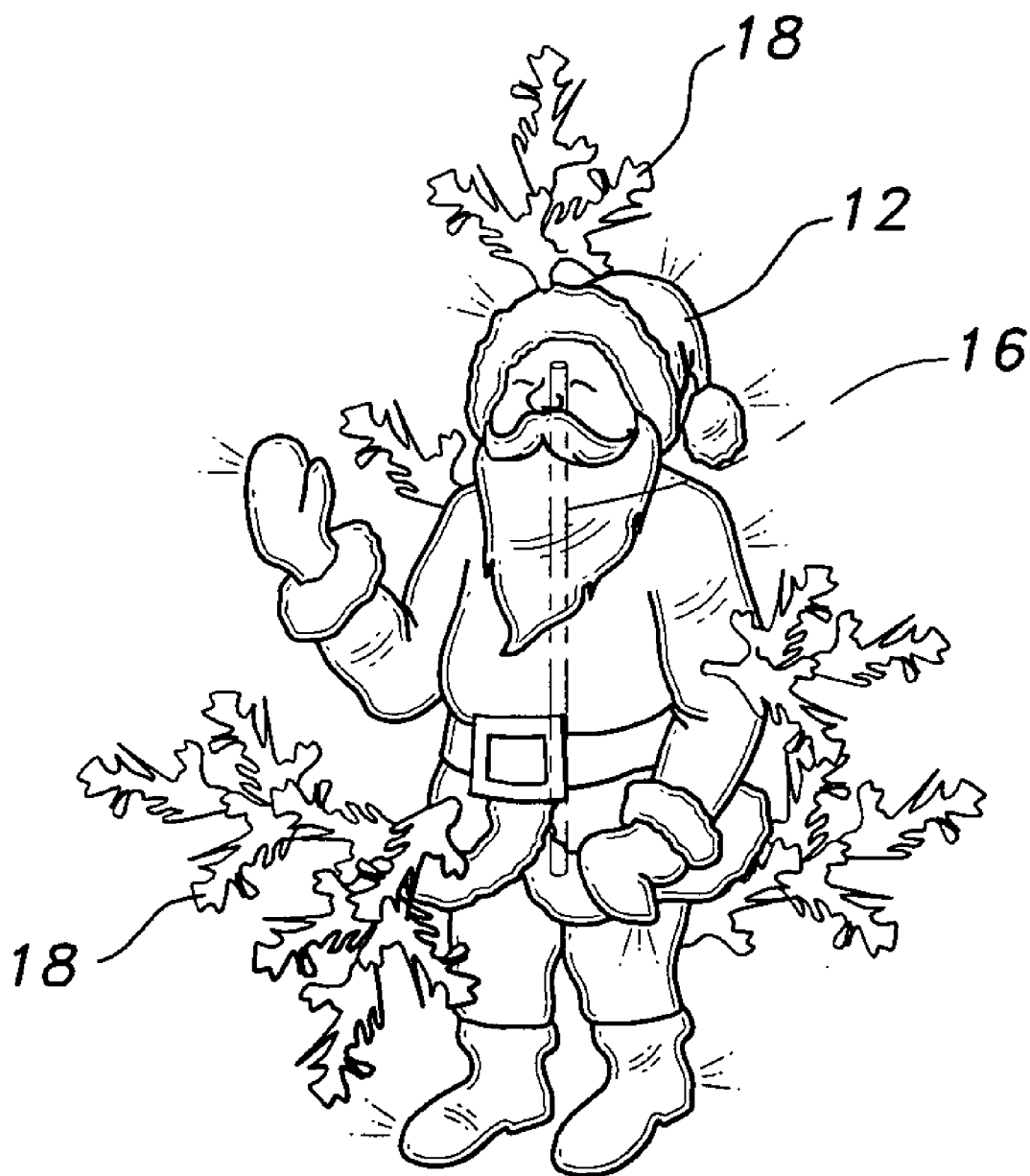


FIG. 4

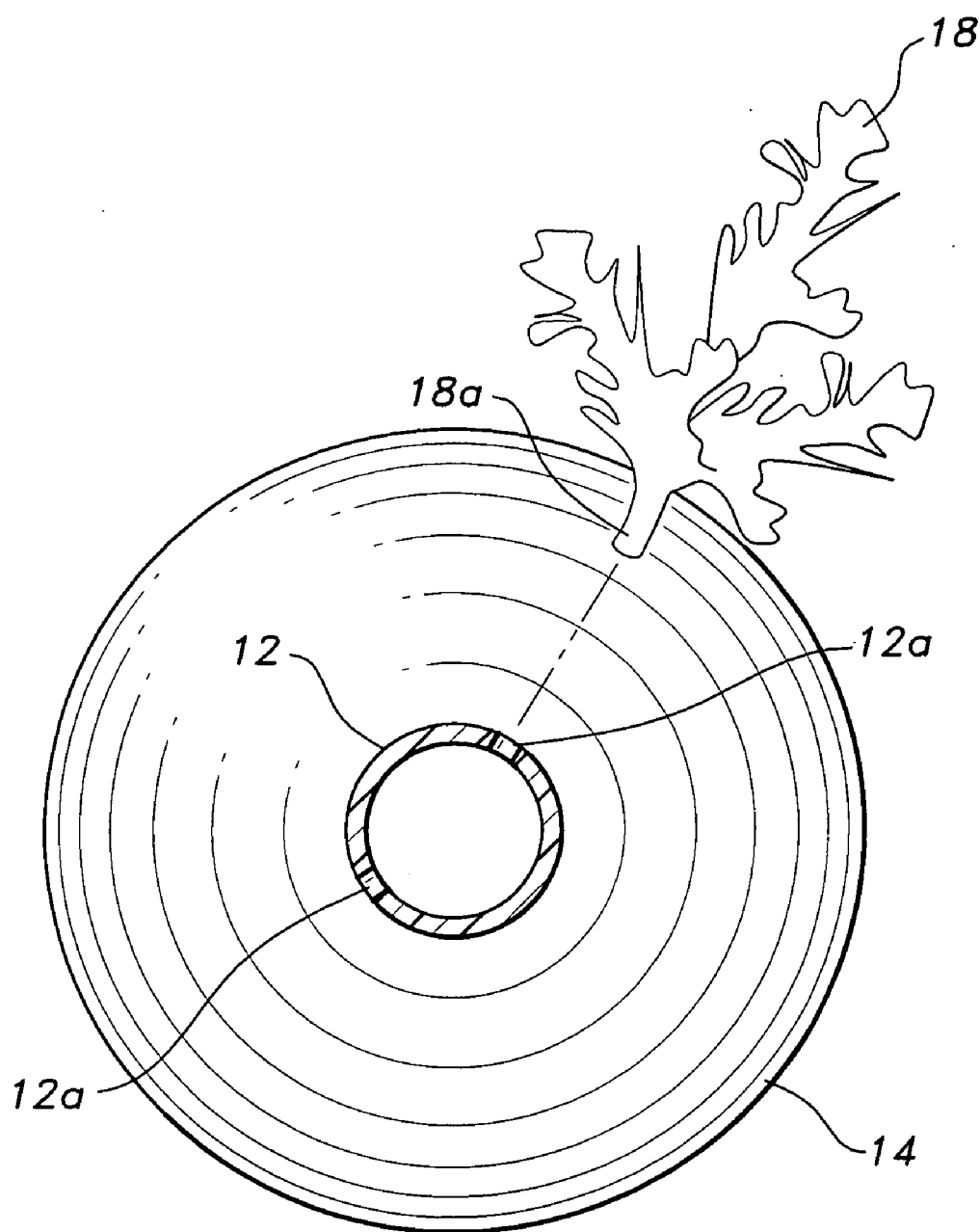


FIG. 5

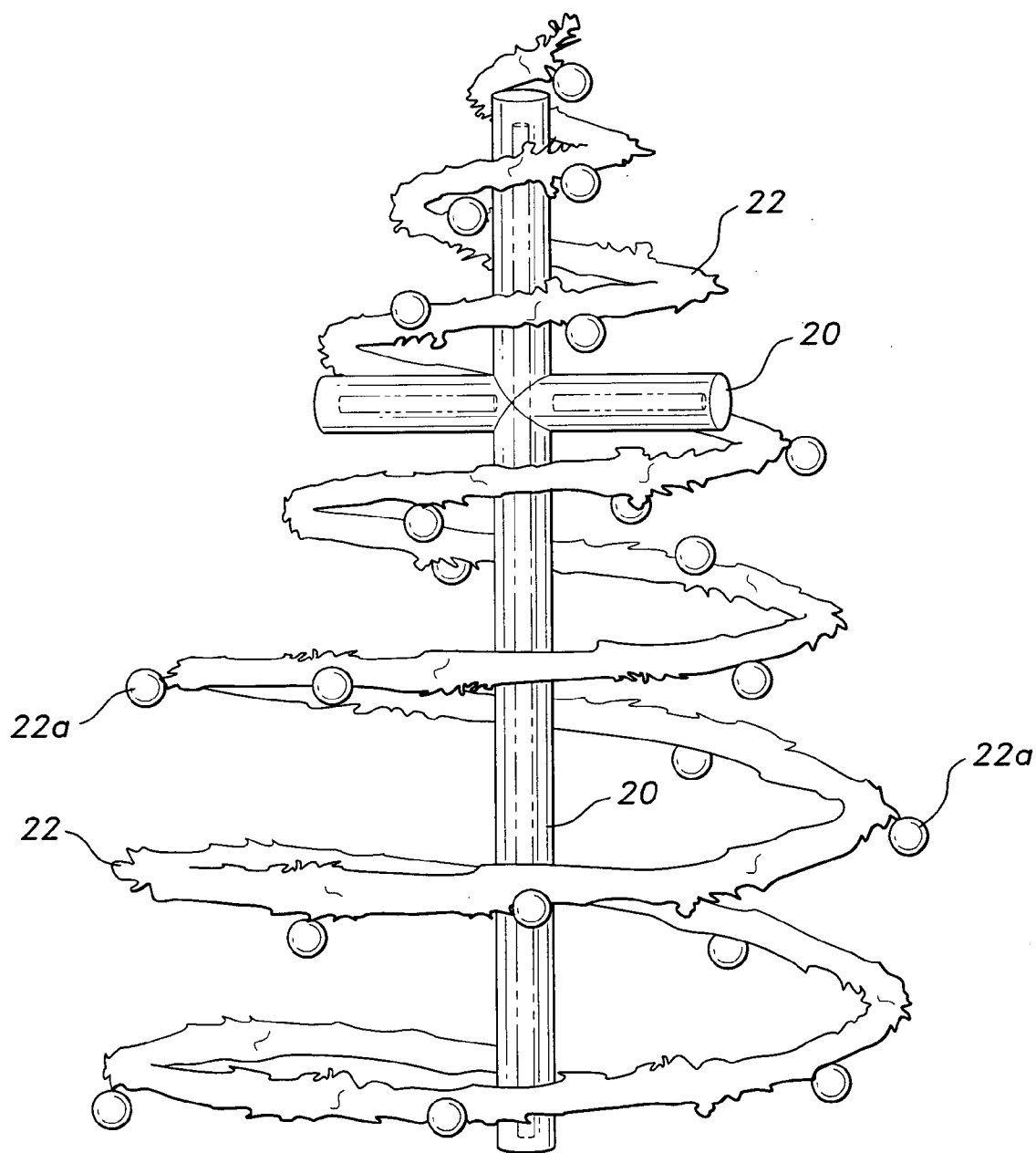


Fig. 6

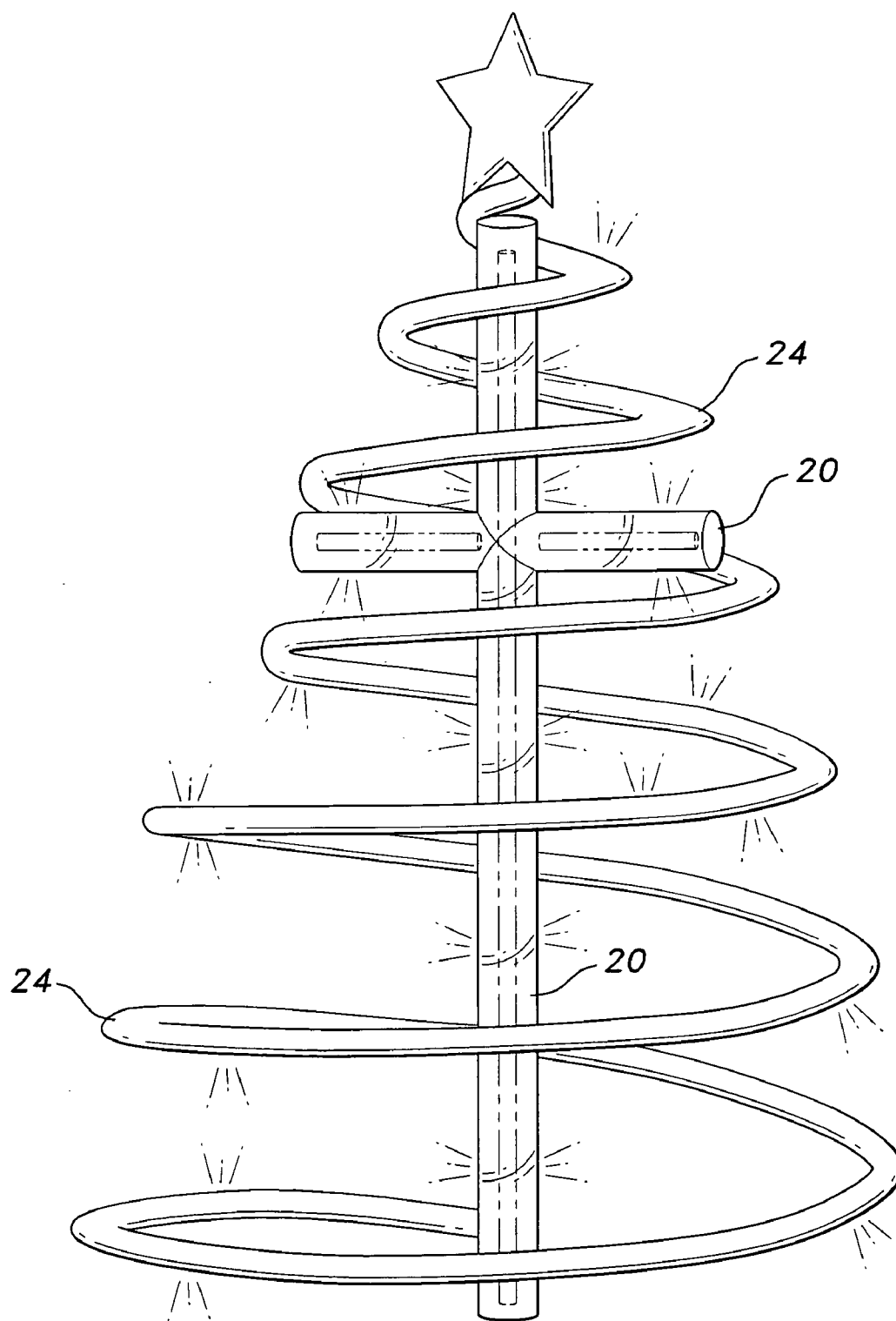


Fig. 7

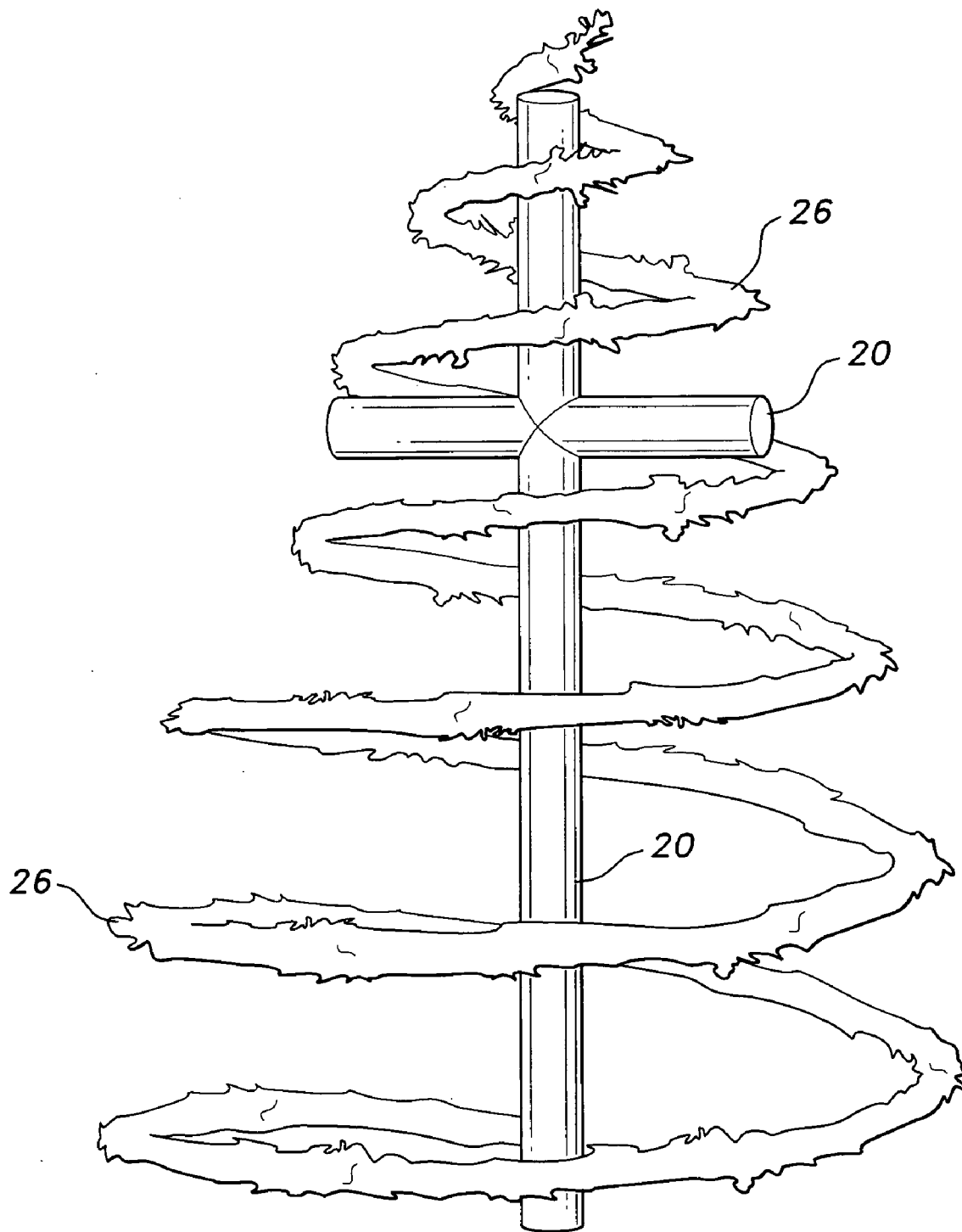


Fig. 8

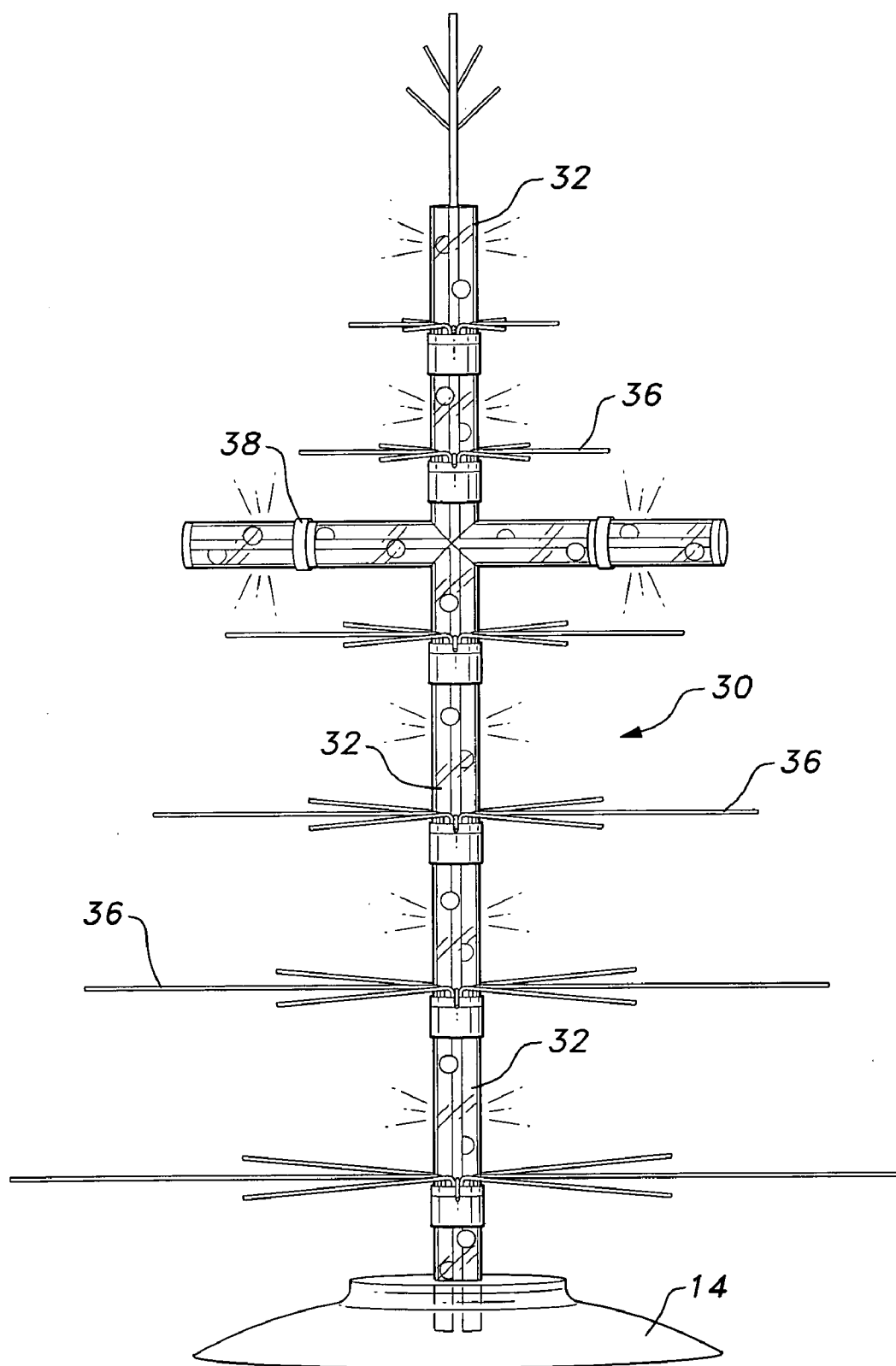


Fig. 9

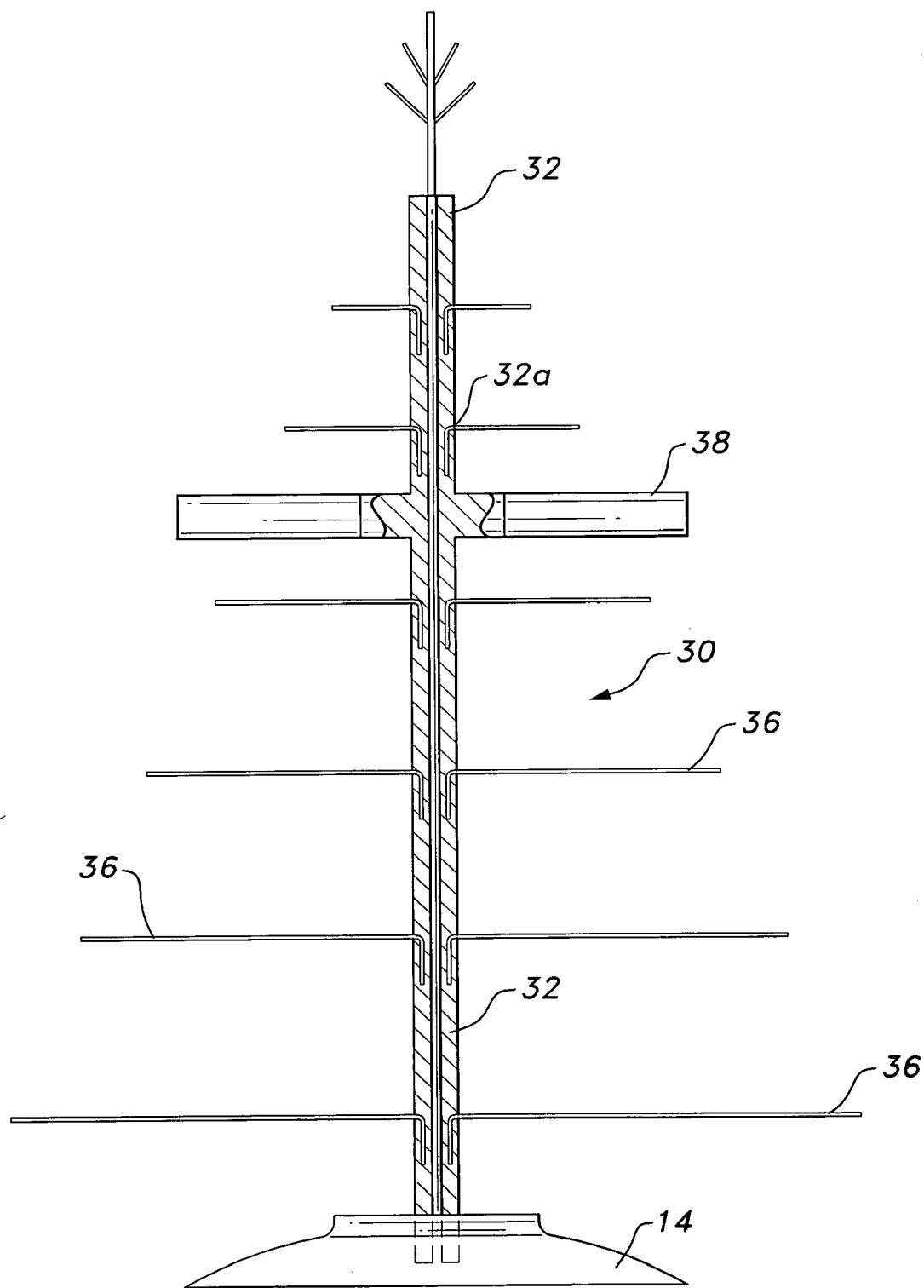


Fig. 10

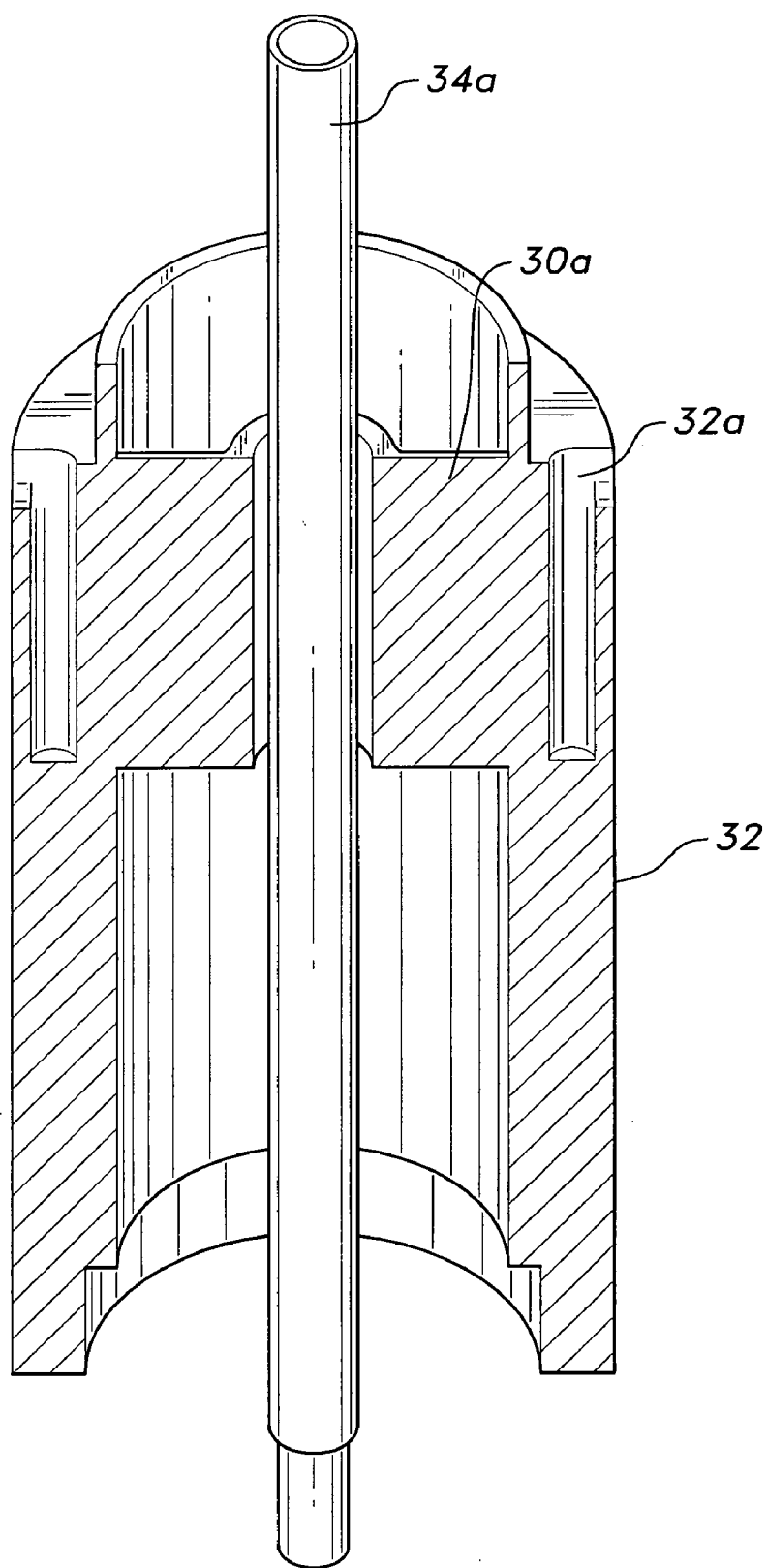


Fig. 11

ILLUMINATED ARTIFICIAL CHRISTMAS TREE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/450,676, filed Oct. 6, 2009, and International Patent No. PCT/US2008/010975, filed Sep. 22, 2008, which claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/960,245, filed on Sep. 21, 2007.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention generally relates to decorative objects. More specifically, the present invention relates to an artificial Christmas tree that is designed in the shape of popular or religious-inspired figures.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Decorating the house and/or yard for Christmas is traditional in most Christian households in the western world. In fact, since the Christmas holiday has been embraced by most retail establishments, the display of holiday inspired decorations is practiced in many non-Christian households. The central decorative theme of Christmas has always been the Christmas tree. Because of various constraints (shedding, the need to water, size, annual monetary expenditure, etc.) live or harvested trees are not always prudent for display in the home or commercial establishment. In recent years, the artificial Christmas tree has been utilized as a solution to this problem. Heretofore the artificial tree has been fabricated to resemble a "real" tree as much as possible. However, many consumers desire new and varied options instead of the same traditional "tree look". For example, many people would prefer a decorative tree that would embrace a religious theme. Others, however, might want to emphasize a secular approach. Thus, an artificial Christmas tree solving the aforementioned problems is desired.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The artificial Christmas tree has a trunk configured in the form of popular or religious-inspired figures, which may include, but are not limited to, a Christian cross, Santa Claus, an angel and a reindeer. The artificial tree is provided with a base to support the trunk and with artificial branches or materials that simulate the shape of a "real" Christmas tree. The branch design, base and trunk are removably attached to allow for dismantling and storage. As contemplated, in some embodiments the trunk is fabricated from plastic material that is translucent to light. A source of light is disposed inside the trunk whereby to illuminate the trunk. In other embodiments, the light may be emitted from an external source, or there may be no lighting at all. The branches are of different lengths and configurations so that the assembled artificial tree will assume the shape of a Christmas tree as much as possible. The tree may be designed for adjustability. Decorative ornaments may be hung from the branches as is customary.

[0007] Accordingly, the artificial Christmas tree presents a choice of decorative themes. The invention provides for improved elements thereof in an arrangement for the purposes described that are inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing their intended purposes.

[0008] A clear understanding of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is an environmental, perspective view of a first embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0010] FIG. 2 is an environmental, perspective view of a second embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0011] FIG. 3 is an environmental, perspective view of a third embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0012] FIG. 4 is an environmental, perspective view of a fourth embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0013] FIG. 5 is a partial view of the branch insert structure of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0014] FIG. 6 is an environmental, perspective view of a fifth embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0015] FIG. 7 is an environmental, perspective view of a sixth embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0016] FIG. 8 is an environmental, perspective view of a seventh embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0017] FIG. 9 is an environmental, perspective view of an eighth embodiment of an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0018] FIG. 10 is a front view of support tubing for an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention, shown broken away and partially in section.

[0019] FIG. 11 is a partial perspective view in section of support tubing for an artificial Christmas tree according to the present invention.

[0020] Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0021] Referring to FIG. 1, a first embodiment of the artificial Christmas tree is generally indicated at 10. The trunk 12 of the tree is configured as a Christian cross and is removably mounted on a base 14. Trunk 12 is preferably fabricated from a suitable plastic material that is translucent to light. Trunk 12 has an interior that houses light emitting devices 16. Devices 16 can be adapted for operation by either AC or DC (battery) or other suitable power sources. Artificial branches 18, which simulate the branches of a Christmas tree, are removably attached to the trunk. Branches 18 are of different lengths and shapes so that when assembled on the trunk, the artificial tree will assume the shape of a conventional Christmas tree.

[0022] The artificial trees of FIGS. 2-5 each have trunks 12 that are respectively configured as a popular Christmas figure, a reindeer, an angel and Santa Claus. As in FIG. 1, each trunk 12 is fabricated from translucent plastic material and houses light emitting devices 16. Each trunk is also provided with removable, simulated branches 18. As noted above, the trunk can be designed to assume other configurations if desired.

[0023] FIG. 5 illustrates a partial view of trunk 12 sectioned to show openings 12a therein. Each opening 12a is sized to receive the stem 18a of a respective branch 18. The number and orientation of openings 12a as well as the length, shape, number and type of branches and/or materials 18 will be pre-determined based on design considerations.

[0024] FIGS. 6-8 illustrate artificial trees that employ the Christian cross 20 as trunks, similar to that discussed above. However, the embodiments of FIGS. 6 through 8 utilize spirally configured decorative structures 22, 24 and 26 in lieu of faux branches. The crosses may be illuminated as discussed above, or may employ other forms of illumination (indirect LED lights, bubble lights, etc.) that are installed for example, in the base 14 of the tree. The spiral structure 22 includes decorative lighting 22a thereon. Structure 22 is designed to resemble Christmas wreath material. Spiral structure 24 is a continuous neon light and can be adapted to change colors during operation. Spiral structure 26 is also constructed to resemble Christmas wreath material. However, the spiral structure 26 is devoid of internal lighting means. All of the spiral structures can be removably attached to the crosses by any convenient method (pins, tape, hook and loop fasteners, etc.) The trees can be made to rotate in the base, as is conventional in the art. Although the spiral configuration is preferred, it should be noted that other geometric configurations (rings, hexagons, squares, etc.) could be utilized, if desired.

[0025] As best seen in FIGS. 9-11, the artificial Christmas tree includes an embodiment wherein a vertical trunk 30 can be disassembled for storage. Trunk 30 comprises separable, tongue-and-groove tubing segments 32 that are locked end to end to form the hollow trunk 30. A rod 34 is disposed in the trunk and is frictionally retained therein via a collar 30a at the top of the trunk 30. A similar collar (not shown) is disposed at the bottom of the trunk 30. The rod 34 enhances the rigidity and stability of the trunk 30 and is designed in separable segments 34a for easy disassembly.

[0026] L-shaped openings 32a are strategically arranged through each tubing segment 32. Openings 32a are adapted to receive artificial branches 36 therein. Although illustrated in a circular configuration, it should be noted that the trunk 30 may be fabricated in other shapes (rectangular, octagonal, hexagonal, etc.), if desired. Horizontal cross member 38 is also made of separable segments and can be attached to the vertical trunk 30 in any convenient manner.

I claim:

1. An artificial Christmas tree comprising:
a trunk configured as a Christian cross; and
decorative structure attached to the trunk, the decorative structure having a spiral configuration and encompassing the trunk.

2. The artificial Christmas tree according to claim 1, wherein said decorative structure is fabricated from artificial, simulated Christmas wreath material.

3. The artificial Christmas tree according to claim 1, wherein said decorative structure is fabricated from artificial, simulated Christmas wreath material, the artificial Christmas tree further comprising decorative lighting disposed on said artificial, simulated Christmas wreath material.

4. The artificial Christmas tree according to claim 1, wherein said decorative structure comprises continuous neon light tubing.

5. An artificial Christmas tree, comprising:

- a trunk configured as a Christian cross having a vertical component and a horizontal component, the vertical component having a hollow interior, an upper end, and a lower end, the vertical component having a plurality of openings defined therein;

- a rod disposed in the hollow interior of the vertical component and extending from the lower end to the upper end; and

- a plurality of artificial, simulated tree branches disposed in the plurality of openings.

6. The artificial Christmas tree according to claim 5, wherein said rod is frictionally secured in the hollow interior of said vertical component at the upper end and the lower end of said vertical component.

7. The artificial Christmas tree according to claim 5, wherein said trunk is fabricated of separable tubing segments.

8. The artificial Christmas tree according to claim 5, wherein said rod is fabricated of separable segments.

9. An artificial Christmas tree, comprising:

- a trunk configured as a Christian cross having a vertical component and a horizontal component, the vertical component having a hollow interior, an upper end, and a lower end, the vertical component having a plurality of openings defined therein;

- a rod disposed in the hollow interior of the vertical component, the rod extending from the lower end to the upper end;

- a collar member disposed in the hollow interior, the collar member frictionally engaging the rod; and

- a plurality of artificial, simulated tree branches disposed in the plural of openings.

10. The artificial Christmas tree according to claim 9, wherein said trunk and said rod are fabricated of separable segments.

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