



(11) **EP 1 787 558 A2**

(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(43) Date of publication:  
**23.05.2007 Bulletin 2007/21**

(51) Int Cl.:  
**A47K 13/00 (2006.01)**

(21) Application number: **05257395.3**

(22) Date of filing: **01.12.2005**

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
**AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR  
HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC NL PL PT RO SE SI  
SK TR**  
Designated Extension States:  
**AL BA HR MK YU**

(72) Inventor: **Lalicata, Joseph  
Staten Island NY 10314 (US)**

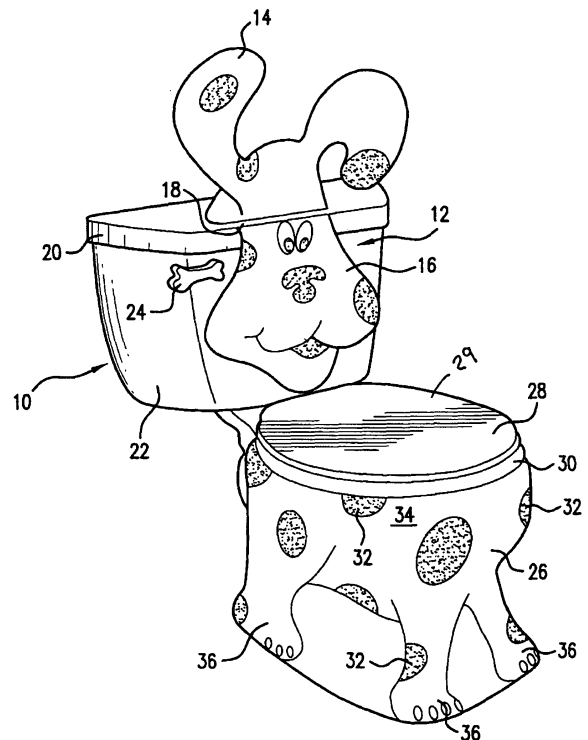
(74) Representative: **Brown, James Douglas  
Murgitroyd & Company,  
Scotland House,  
165-169 Scotland Street  
Glasgow G5 8PL (GB)**

(30) Priority: **18.11.2005 US 282949**

(71) Applicant: **Lalicata, Joseph  
Staten Island NY 10314 (US)**

(54) **Toilet bowl attachment**

(57) A toilet training system is installed upon a conventional toilet. The system includes a decorative form containing a cartoon figure or a design, and a related painting on the underside of the lid of the toilet. The decorative form comprises upstanding ears, and a depending face, with a notch or shoulder defined therebetween. The decorative form is seated upon the upper surface of the toilet tank, and secured thereto, so that the ears project upwardly above the toilet tank, and the face of the character depends downwardly over the front face of the toilet tank. When the lid on the toilet is closed, the full extent of the form is visible. However, when the lid is pivoted to its open position, the depending face on the toilet tank is obscured, but the painting on the underside of the lid is identical to the depending part of the form. Consequently, visual continuity with the decorative form is maintained at all times, and the toddler being trained focuses on the decorative form and responds more readily to toilet training instructions. The base of the toilet bowl may be decorated in a manner related to, or consistent with, the decorative form positioned, or secured, to the toilet tank.



**FIG. 1**

## Description

**[0001]** The instant invention pertains to a decorative form for attachment to a toilet, such form facilitating the toilet training of toddlers.

**[0002]** Diverse techniques have been employed, over the years, to toilet train toddlers, with modest success, at best. Also, a technique that works well with one child, may prove to be a failure with another child, further complicating an already difficult assignment.

**[0003]** One technique has relied upon potty chairs, with bells, whistles, and special sound effects, to capture the toddler's attention and retain the child on the potty chair until the desired body function i.e., waste elimination, has occurred. Examples of such potty chairs are shown in U.S. Patent 5,652,975, granted August 5, 1997, to Glory S. Hoskin, and in U.S. Patent 6,038,711, granted March 21, 2000 to William A. Clarke.

**[0004]** Hoskin discloses an automatic talking potty apparatus including a receptacle support assembly 12 and a receptacle 14 supported by the receptacle support assembly. A seating surface 16 is positioned over the receptacle, and a seated-child sensor assembly 24 senses when a child has been seated on the seating surface. A control assembly (timer 20) is connected to the seated-child assembly, and a gender-selection switch 22 is connected to the control assembly. As the timer runs through its cycle, chip 25 or chip 26 provides a gender appropriate message over amplifier 27 to the toddler using the potty.

**[0005]** Clarke discloses a potty chair 20 resembling a miniature toilet, with a handle 26 for producing a simulated flushing sound to attract a toddler. A dual phase reward system including a displayable trophy 42 and a storage cubby hole 32 for prizes, such as candy, stickers, and toys encourage the child to use the device and accelerate the mastery of toilet training. A decal may be applied to the underside of the lid, and the back member may be made of clear plastic so that the contents of the tank can be observed, as shown in FIG. 2. Potty chairs are cumbersome and difficult to store. Also, potty chairs must be cleaned after each usage.

**[0006]** Another technique which may be used in combination with potty chairs, or in lieu thereof, relies upon decoration for, and attachments to, conventional toilets. The attachments are aesthetically pleasing and focus the child's attention upon the toilet, and the training related thereto. A decorative toilet is shown in U.S. Design Patent 438,940, granted March 13, 2001, to Eyon N. Christmas, while an attachment for a toilet is shown in U.S. Patent 6,037,871, granted March 14, 2000, to Stephen K. Babylon.

**[0007]** Christmas depicts a toilet comprising a water tank, a toilet bowl, and a toilet seat with a pivotally mounted lid. FIG. 1 shows a painting or decal, representing an upper row of teeth on the underside of the lid, and a painting, or decal, representing the lower row of teeth. FIG. 2 shows eyes on the front of the water tank, and ears on opposite sides thereof. When the toilet lid is pivoted up-

wardly to expose the toilet bowl, the lid obscures the eyes on the tank.

**[0008]** Babylon discloses a bathroom hygiene training system including a toilet 12, 14, 15, 18. A toilet sensing housing 20 is removably coupled to the tank; the housing is shaped like a monkey to provide a pleasing character that the child being trained will appreciate. A toilet sound playback assembly 28 (see FIG. 3) is retained within the toilet sensing housing. A seat sensor 34 is coupled to the toilet sensing housing, and a handle sensor 36 is coupled to the toilet sending housing.

**[0009]** The foregoing toilet training devices suffer from one, or more, of the following shortcomings. In some devices, such as shown by Christmas, the known toilet tanks must be re-configured, as by the addition of ears protruding laterally from the opposite sides of the tank. In other devices, such as Babylon, a unique housing, shaped like a monkey, retains electronic components therein, such as a sound playback assembly, a digital play back controller, etc. Such components are energized by several sensors disposed about the toilet seat, toilet handle, step stool, etc. in the vicinity of the toilet. Consequently, the need for a simple, yet effective, toilet training system or device, compatible with conventional toilets and requiring minimal effort for installation and, ultimately, removal, remains unsatisfied.

**[0010]** It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a toilet training system, including a decorative form, that is simple to install upon the tank of a conventional toilet, and may be easily removed when toilet training is successfully completed.

**[0011]** It is another object of the present invention to secure a decorative form displaying a cartoon character, a design, or some combination thereof, to the top and front of the tank of a toilet, so that the toddler undergoing toilet training will view the toilet in front of him, or her, as a friendly "target."

**[0012]** It is yet another object of the present invention to employ identical or matching caricatures, or designs, on the underside of the lid of the toilet and the depending part of the decorative form part extending down the front face of the tank of the toilet. The caricatures on the underside of the lid, and the front of the toilet tank, are visually coordinated with the cartoon character presented on the upper part of the decorative form secured to the top of the tank.

**[0013]** It is yet another object to decorate, as by painting or by a decal, the base of the toilet, to represent the lower portion of the cartoon character, or design, on the decorative form secured to the toilet tank.

**[0014]** Other objects and advantages achieved by the present invention will become readily apparent, when the appended drawings are construed in harmony with the ensuing specification.

**[0015]** According to the present invention there is provided a toilet training system which includes a decorative form. The form comprises an upwardly extending first part, such as a head with ears, and a depending second

part, such as a face. The first part of the form is positioned upon the tank of a toilet, so that the two parts of the form define a complementary image. The second part contacts the front face of the tank. The toilet tank is operatively associated with a toilet bowl. A lid is secured to the toilet bowl for pivotal movement relative to the toilet tank. The underside of the lid is decorated with an image that conforms to the image appearing on the depending part of the form. Consequently, when the lid is pivoted to a position obscuring the image on the depending portion of the form, the image on the underside of the lid replaces same and maintains visual continuity.

**[0016]** Furthermore, the first part of the form may be positioned upon, and/or secured to, the toilet tank. The first part of the form may assume the shape of the head of a dog with projecting ears, while the second part may assume the face of a dog with eyes, nose and a mouth. The first part of the form may be molded of plastic to present a three dimensional image or printed upon rigid cardboard to present a two dimensional image *wi*, and the second part may be a decal, or a painting, applied to the face of the toilet tank. The image on the underside of the lid may be a decal, or a painting, that corresponds to the second part of the decorative form.

**[0017]** Lastly, the toilet bowl may be decorated in a manner consistent with the image shown on the decorative form. Thus, the toilet bowl may be painted, or otherwise decorated, to suggest the body of a dog. Spots on the body of the dog, and paws, may be depicted on the exterior of the toilet bowl to increase the success of the toilet training exercises.

**[0018]** An embodiment of the present invention will now be described by way of example only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of applicant's decorative form secured to a conventional toilet, the lid of the toilet being shown in its closed, or lowered, position;

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view similar to FIGURE 1, but showing the lid in its opened, or raised, position; and

FIGURE 3 is a front elevational view of an alternative embodiment of applicant's decorative form, the lid of the toilet being shown in its closed, or lowered, position;

FIGURE 4 is a front view of another alternative embodiment of the toilet training device secured to a toilet, the toilet seat lid of the toilet being shown in its closed, or lowered, position; and

FIGURE 5 is a front view of the alternative embodiment of FIG. 4 with the toilet seat lid of the toilet being shown in its open, or raised, position..

**[0019]** FIGS. 1 and 2 show a toilet training device or system of this invention. The toilet training device is indicated, generally, by reference numeral 10, and includes a decorative form 12 with a cartoon character defined thereon; the character may be a friendly animal, such as a dog or cat, or may be a character from a child's story or nursery rhyme, or may be a design, or may be an athlete.

**[0020]** Form 12 comprises two separate, visually complementary parts. The form 12 comprises a first part which comprises an upstanding portion 14 which may be, for example, ears and a separate part 16, integrally related to the first part 14. In the example shown here, the total presentation is that of a cartoon face. The second part 16 may be embellished with eyes 17, a nose 19, and a mouth 21, arranged in a pleasing manner. The first part 14 may be separated from the second part 16 by a small interval 18 or by the side 19 of the cover 20 of the toilet tank 22.

**[0021]** Handle 24 controls the flow of water from tank 22 through 23 of the toilet tank 26; the handle 24 may be conventional or shaped to match the cartoon character. Here, where the cartoon character is a dog, the handle 24 may be shaped to approximate a dog bone. A toilet seat lid 28, as is well known in the art, is shown in a downward position, exposing an upper face 29, in FIG. 1, so as to overlap and cover the toilet seat 30. Valves, such as a ball-float valve, and a flapper valve (not shown) are located with the interior of toilet tank 22 and function to control the passage of water through the toilet in response to depression of handle 24, as is well known.

**[0022]** Toilet bowl 26 may be decorated with spots 32 which may disposed in a pattern that matches the pattern of spots of head 14 and face 16 of the cartoon form 12; similarly, decorations approximating or referencing the body 34 of the cartoon dog, which may include paws 36, may be applied to toilet bowl 26. The decorations may be painted or may be applied by pressure sensitive decals to the bowl 26.

**[0023]** The lid 28 is pivotally secured to the bowl 26 by a hinge 38 at the rear of seat 30 (FIG. 2), as well known in the art. When the lid 28 is raised to its upward or raised position, the upper face 29 of the lid 28 rests against the face of toilet tank 22 and covers character face 16. Opening 40 in toilet bowl 26 is exposed by the pivotal movement of lid 28 as is well known.

**[0024]** The underside surface 31 of lid 28 reveals a painting, decal, or the like 42 that corresponds to the face 16 of the decorative form 12 that is covered by the upraised lid 28. The configuration of the form 42 on the underside surface 31 generally conforms to the image 16 and thus is coordinated with first part 14 and other features of form 12. The form 42 thus maintains the continuity and visual integrity of the coordinated figures of the decorative form 12, and focuses the toddler's attention upon opening 40 in toilet bowl 26. When the toilet training exercise, or lesson, is completed, lid 28 is pivoted about axis 38 upon and close the seat 30 and again permit

the original second part 16 of the form 12 to appear.

**[0025]** FIG. 3 shows another embodiment of the invention; the prefix "100" has been used to identify components comparable to the components identified previously in the description of the first embodiment. The system 110 comprises a decorative form 112 is a cartoon character, while decorative form 12 represents a friendly canine. However, while the toilet bowl 26 is decorated in a manner complementary to decorative form 12 in the first embodiment, toilet bowl 126 is conventional in construction, and is undecorated, in the embodiment of FIG. 3. Decorative form 112 comprises a first part 114, which assumes the form of a head which, in this design has extending bows, and a second part 116, which assumes the form of a design which may be adhered to the tank 122 as by painting or a decal. Further, the tank cover 120 downwardly extending edge 121 does not have any design extending there across. Rather, the character's connection may be inferred from the proximity the two parts 114 and 116.

**[0026]** FIGS. 4 and 5 disclose yet another embodiment of this invention in which the designation of the prefix "200" is used to identify components comparable to the components identified previously in the description of the other embodiments. The system 210 comprises a decorative form 212 of another cartoon character. However, while the toilet bowl 226 is decorated in a manner complementary to the decorative forms 12 and 112 in the above embodiments, toilet bowl 226 is decorated with symbolic references to the character 233. Thus, in the example presented, the cartoon character 212 may be a cow. The bowl 226 may decorated with items bearing a symbolic reference to the cartoon character 212. Thus, in this in example, there may be provided a cartoon drawing of a cowbell and a partial view of a rope 235 which is representative one typically disposed about the neck of a cow and, accordingly, is located centrally just below the front of the cartoon cow's face. There may also be provided a few typical cow spot patterns 237, and on the exposed toilet bowl base 239, symbolic cartoon references to a cow's hooves 241. Similar symbolic references to the face of the selected cartoon character may likewise be selected in other versions of the invention. Decorative form 212 comprises a first part 114, which assumes the form of an upstanding head portion, this time with extending horns, in keeping with the character, and a second part 216, which assumes the form of a design which may be adhered as by painting or a decal or the like of a face. A typical flush handle 124 may be employed as well.

**[0027]** In this embodiment the character's face 212 (FIG.5) does not extend to the marginal edge 229 of the underside 231 of the cover 228. Rather, there may be an undecorated border 243. The connection between the face 212' on the and head 214 is suggested by the alignment and similarity to the face 212 on the tank face 222. Also, the eyes 245 are open (FIG. 4) when the lid 228 is closed and closed (FIG. 5) when the toilet seat lid 228 is

raised. The eyes 245 are opening, signifying to the toddler a welcome and closed, signifying privacy.

**[0028]** The first part 14, 114, 214 may be seated upright upon the upper surface 23, 223 (not visible in FIG. 3) of the cover 20, 120, 220 of the toilet tank 22, 122, 222. The first part 14, 114, 214 may be secured to the top surface 23, 223 as by Velcro, adhesive (not shown), or similar means or mounted by means of a clip or other support for added stability. The first part 14, 114, 214 may be a two dimensional image or molded or formed into a base relief or three dimensional portion of the character.

**[0029]** In use, when the toilet seat lid 28 (FIGS. 1, 2), 128 (FIG. 3), and 228 (FIGS. 4-5) is closed or downwardly positioned, the character's face 12, 112, 212 and head 14, 114, 214 are aligned presenting the toddler with a welcoming and attractive cartoon or similar face. When the lid 28, 128, 228 is raised, the same face 12, 112, 212 is aligned with the head 14, 114, 214. With the character still visible, the toilet seat is welcoming to the toddler. Further, when the eyes 245 are open and welcoming when the lid 228 is lowered, and then closed 245 when the lid 228 is raised, it is believed that this systemic connection imparts a sense of privacy to the toddler.

**[0030]** Numerous modifications and revisions to applicant's invention may occur to the skilled artisan, after reviewing the foregoing specification. For example, heads 14, 114 of decorative forms 12 and 112 may be constructed of a rigid paper or cardboard, appropriately decorated, or may be a molded plastic object. A decal or appliqué may be used in lieu of, or in combination with, painting 42. The images on decorative forms 12, 112 may be geometric shapes, designs, story book or cartoon characters, etc. Consequently, the appended claims should be liberally construed, and should not be restricted to their literal terms.

## Claims

1. A toilet training system for use with a toilet of the type having a toilet bowl, a toilet seat, a toilet seat lid, a tank, and a tank cover, comprising:
  - a) a form comprising an upwardly extending first part and a depending second part;
  - b) said first and second parts of said form forming a single or substantially single image;
  - c) said first part of said form being positioned on the top of the tank of the toilet;
  - d) said second part being located on the front face of the tank; and
  - e) a third form secured to the underside of the toilet seat lid comprising an image that conforms to said image of said depending second part of said form, whereby, when the lid is pivoted to a position obscuring said second part of said form, said image on the underside of the lid replaces said second part and maintains visual continuity

with said first part.

2. A toilet training system as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said first part of said form is positioned upon the top of said of the tank and is separated from said second part of said form. 5
  
3. A toilet training system as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said image comprises a cartoon character or caricature; said first part of said form represents at least a part of the head of said cartoon character or caricature and said image on said second part of said form represents said cartoon character or caricature face coordinated with said head. 10  
15
  
4. A toilet training system as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said first part of said form is comprised of a two dimensional rigid member positioned upon the top surface of the tank cover. 20
  
5. A toilet training system as claimed in Claim 4 wherein said two dimensional rigid member presents a complementary image to said second part, said second part being secured to the front face of the toilet tank. 25
  
6. A toilet training system as claimed in Claim 3 wherein said face of said form disposed on said toilet tank comprises an image of a face having its eyes open and said image on the underside of the toilet seat lid having a substantially similar face but having its eyes closed. 30
  
7. A toilet training system as claimed in Claim 6 wherein said face of said form disposed on said toilet tank having its eyes open and said image on the underside of the toilet seat lid having its eyes closed. 35
  
8. A toilet training system as claimed in Claim 3 wherein said first part of said form is comprised of an upright base relief positioned upon the top surface of the tank cover. 40
  
9. A toilet training system as claimed in Claim 8, wherein said base relief comprises said the first part and compliments said second part so as, together, define a single image, said second part being secured to the front face of the toilet tank. 45
  
10. A toilet training system as defined in Claim 3, wherein said first part of said form is comprised of an upright rigid member with a two dimensional representation positioned upon the top surface of the tank cover. 50

55

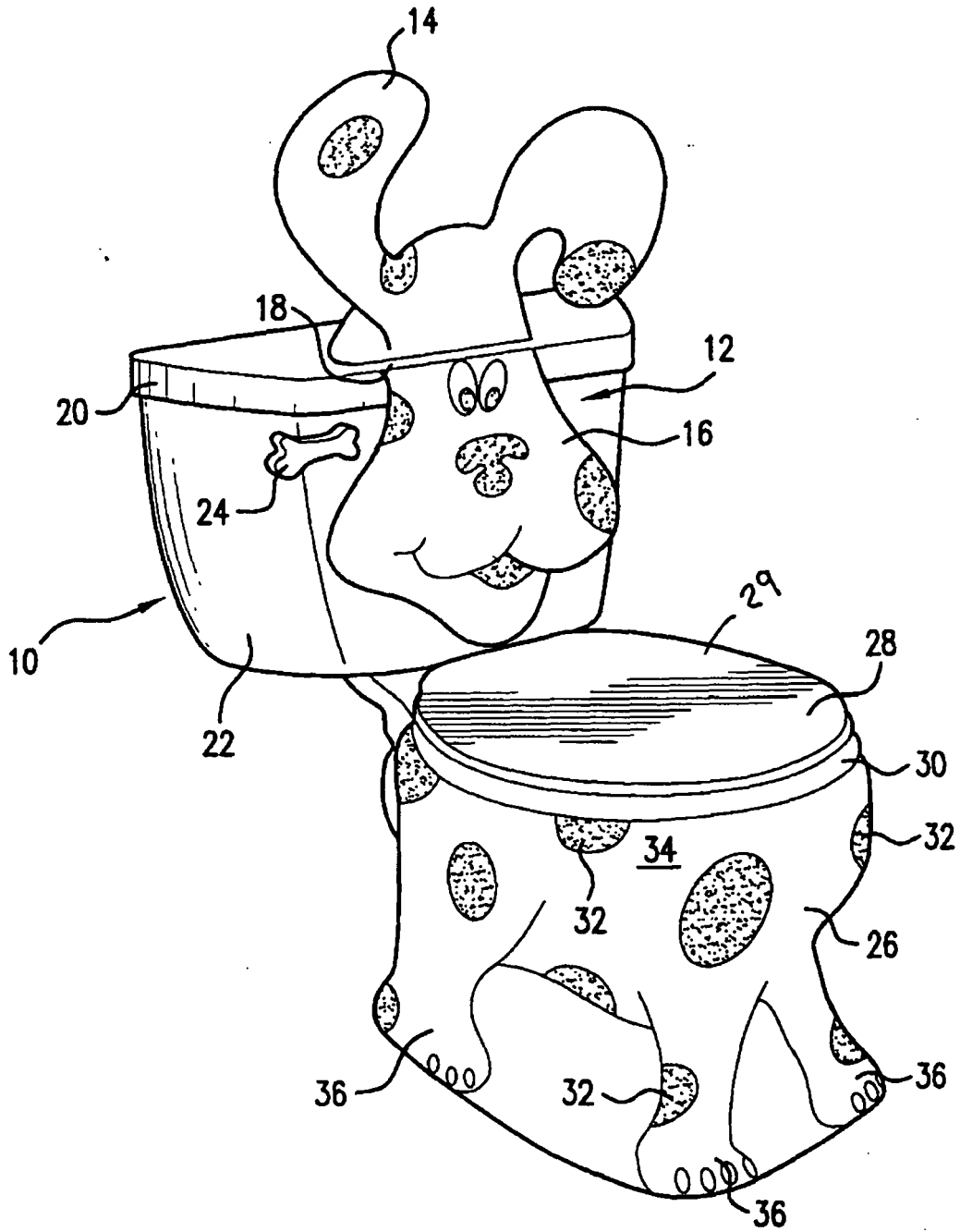


FIG. 1

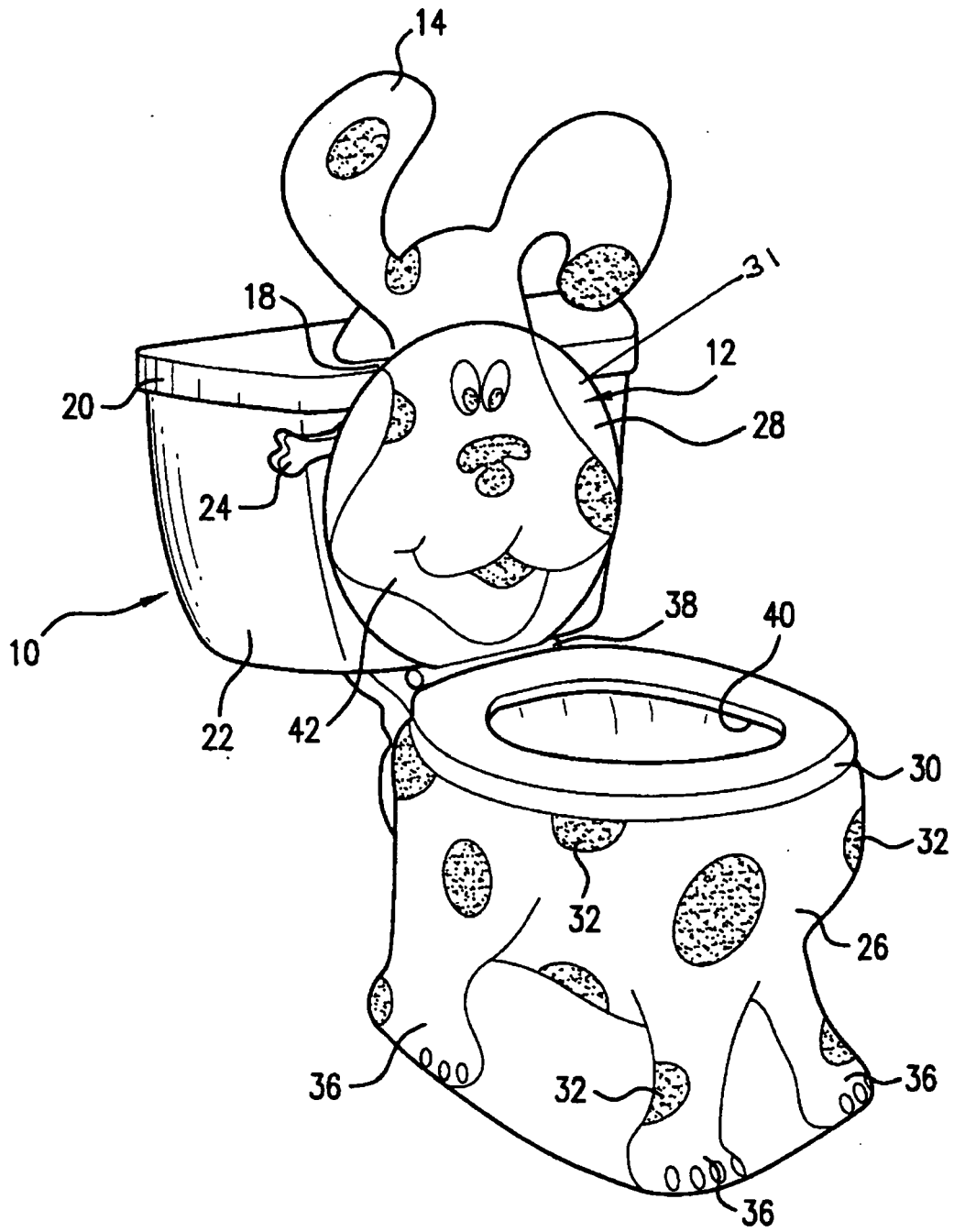


FIG. 2

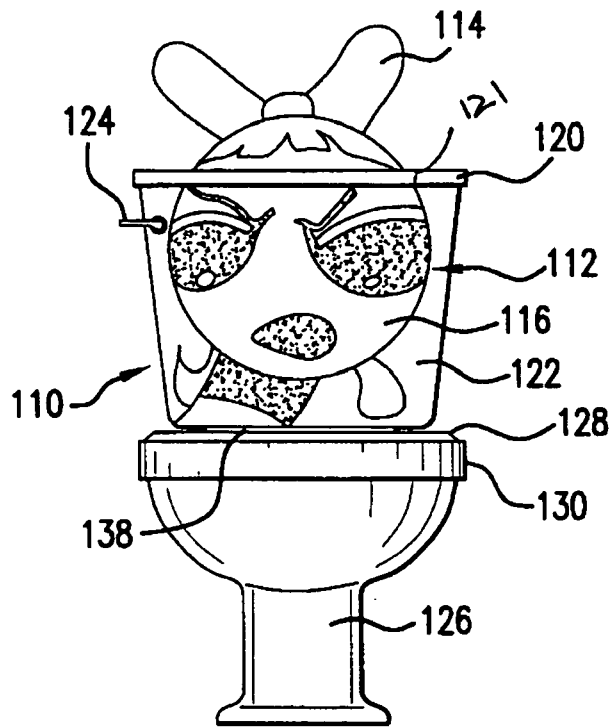


FIG. 3

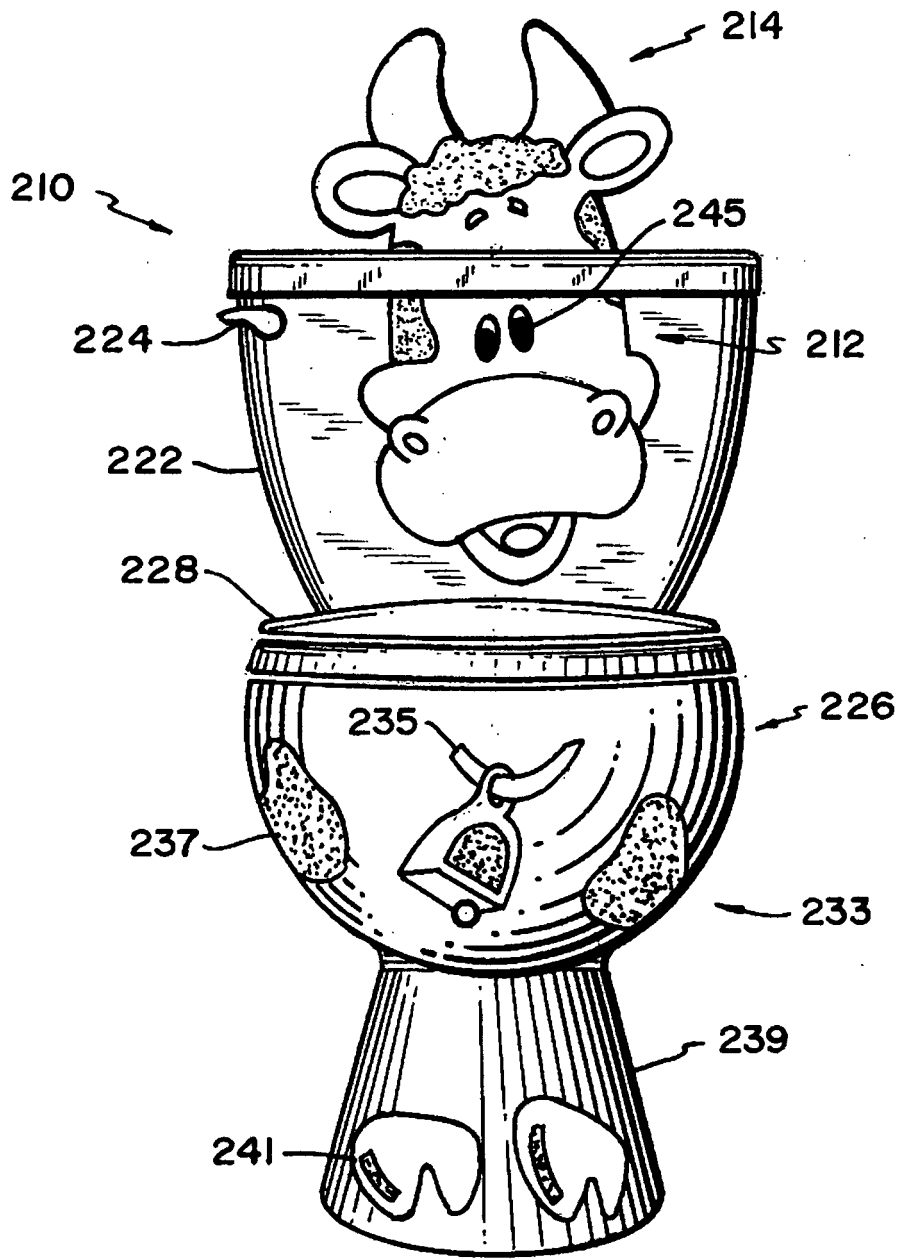


FIG. 4

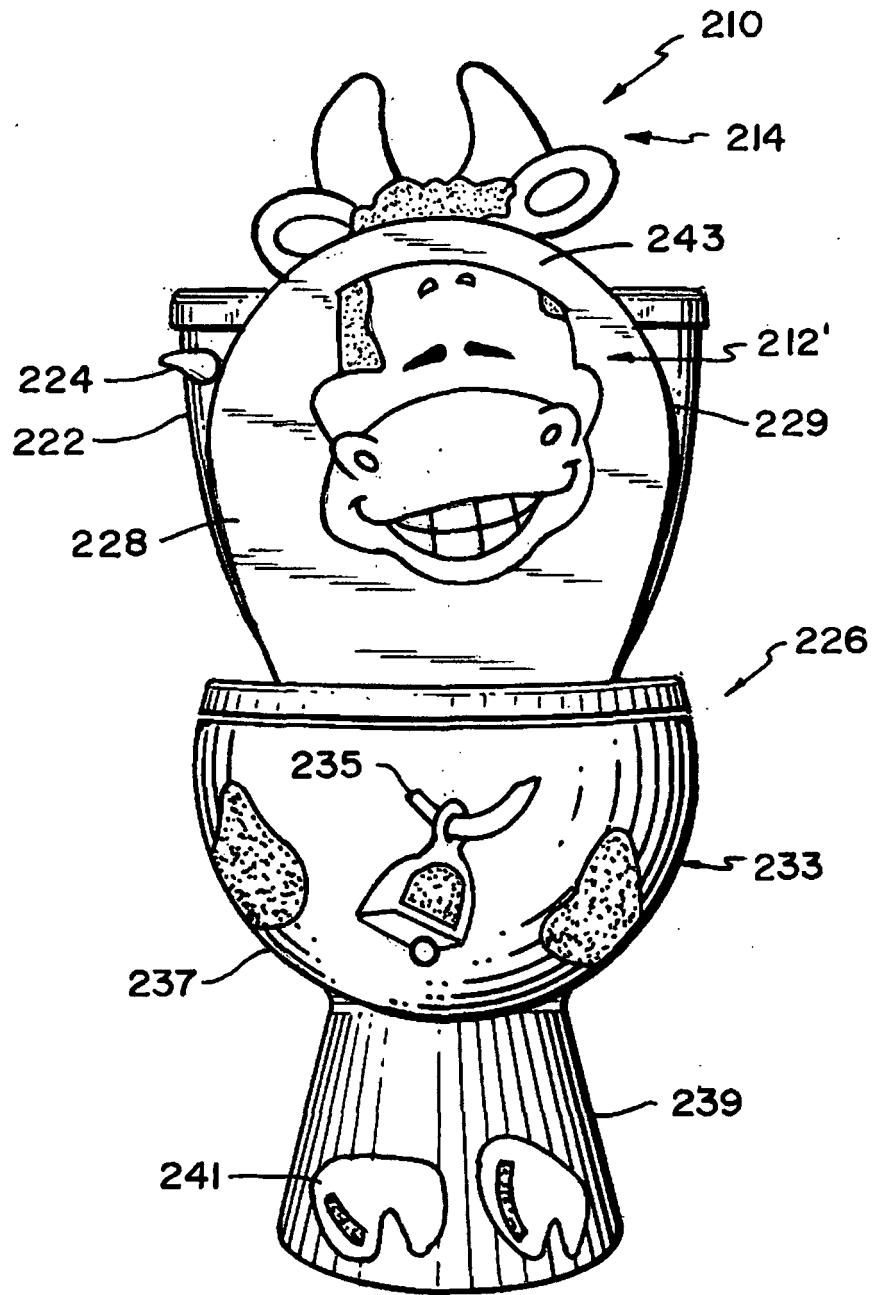


FIG.5

**REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION**

*This list of references cited by the applicant is for the reader's convenience only. It does not form part of the European patent document. Even though great care has been taken in compiling the references, errors or omissions cannot be excluded and the EPO disclaims all liability in this regard.*

**Patent documents cited in the description**

- US 5652975 A, Glory S. Hoskin **[0003]**
- US 6038711 A, William A. Clarke **[0003]**
- US 438940 A, Eyon N. Christmas **[0006]**
- US 6037871 A, Stephen K. Babylon. **[0006]**