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McKenzie

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[54] **PAPER CATCHER DEVICE**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **271/219**

[51] **Int. Cl.²** **B65H 5/16**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 271/64, 219, 207, 213; 214/6 H

[56] **References Cited**

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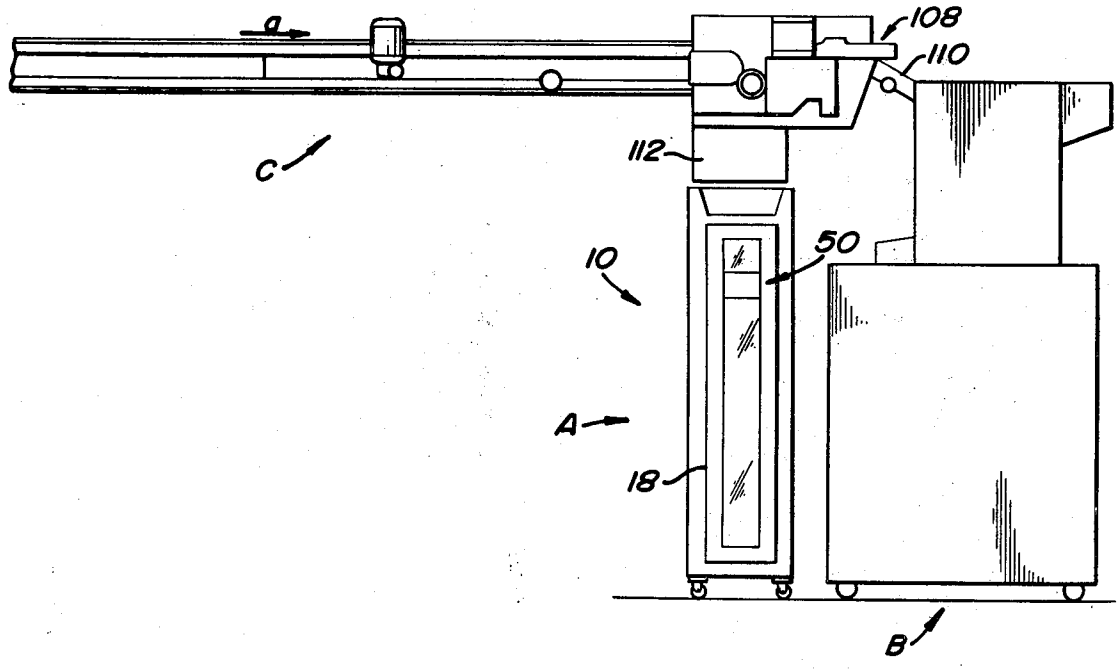
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Primary Examiner—James B. Marbert
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Fay & Sharpe

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A portable auxiliary paper catcher or stacker device for particular use in newspaper printing lines of the type where the printed newspapers are continuously moved at high speed from the printing press area to conventional counter-stacker apparatus by means of a conventional conveyor system. The new paper catcher or stacker comprises a vertically elongated cabinet type arrangement positionable close to the conveyor system adjacent the counter-stacker apparatus. A paper receiving basket or platen is disposed within the cabinet to be selectively movable from a normal position disposed adjacent the cabinet top end to a second position spaced toward the cabinet bottom end. Spring biasing means are employed to continuously urge the platen toward the normal position with the urging force of the biasing means being overcome by the weight of papers received on the platen. During line operation, should the counter-stacker apparatus become temporarily jammed or otherwise inoperative, the flow of papers may be temporarily diverted to the new paper catcher for temporary stacking and storage until the entire printing line may be shut down. This avoids the waste which has previously been experienced when papers moving toward the jammed counter-stacker have been manually removed from the line and thrown onto the floor or any other area available, until such time as the presses could be shut down.

18 Claims, 5 Drawing Figures



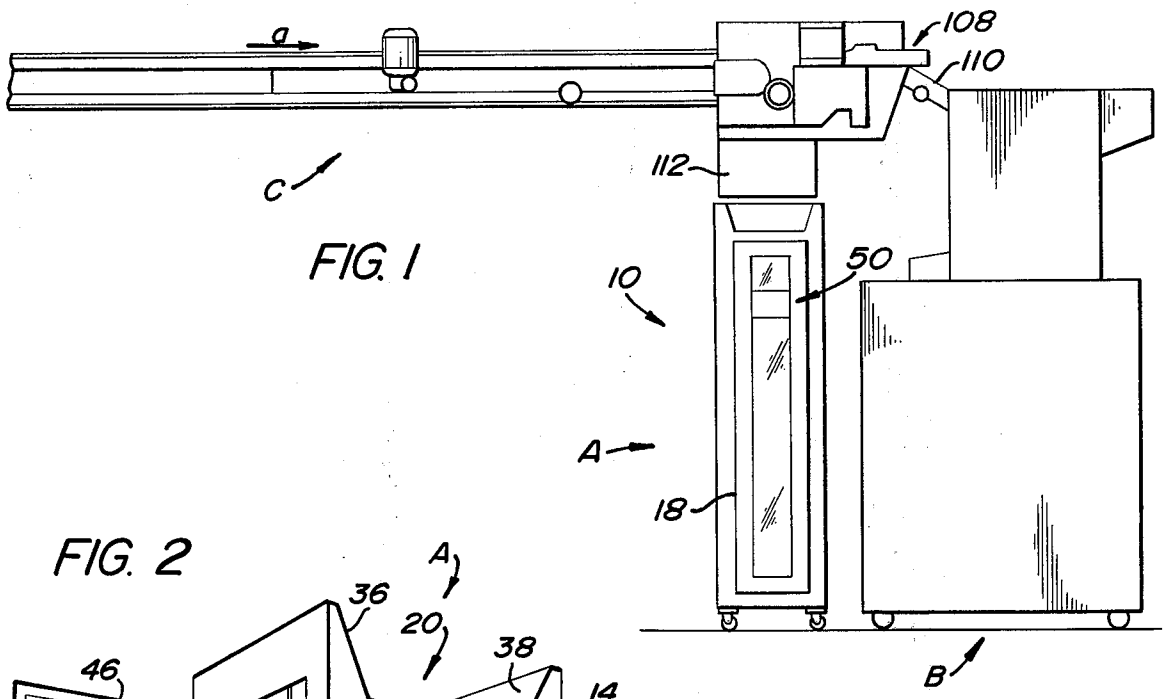
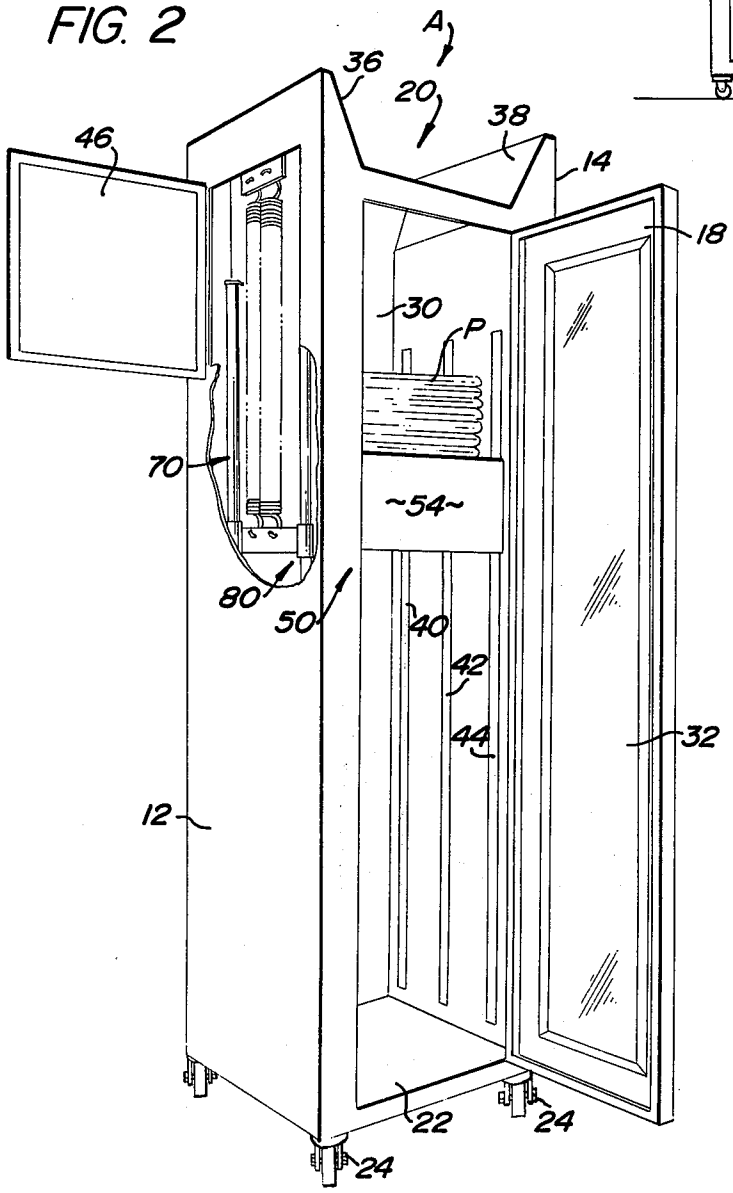

a
C
108
110
112
50
10
A
18
B

FIG. 1

FIG. 2


A
36
20
38
46
14
18
30
P
70
~54~
80
50
40
42
44
32
12
22
24
24

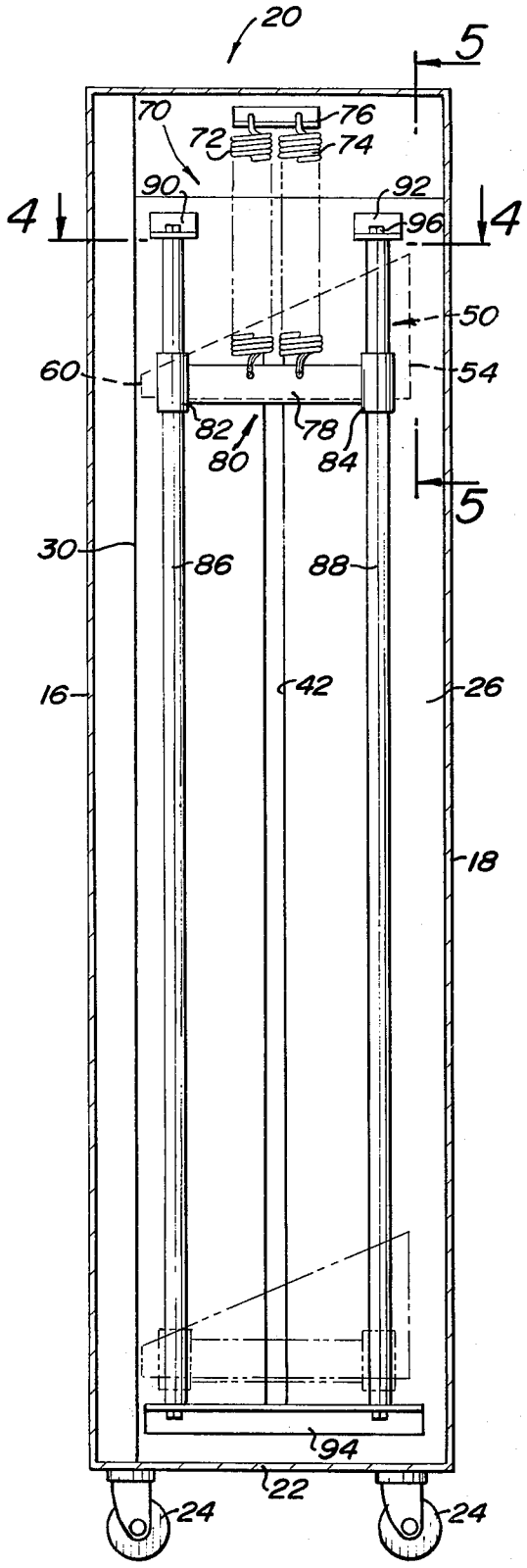


FIG. 3

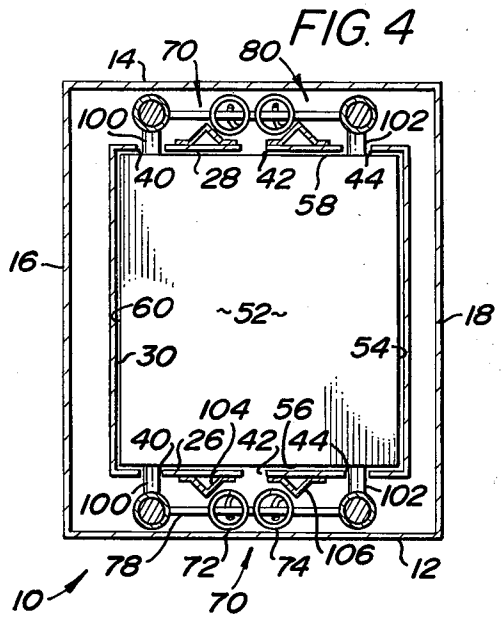


FIG. 4

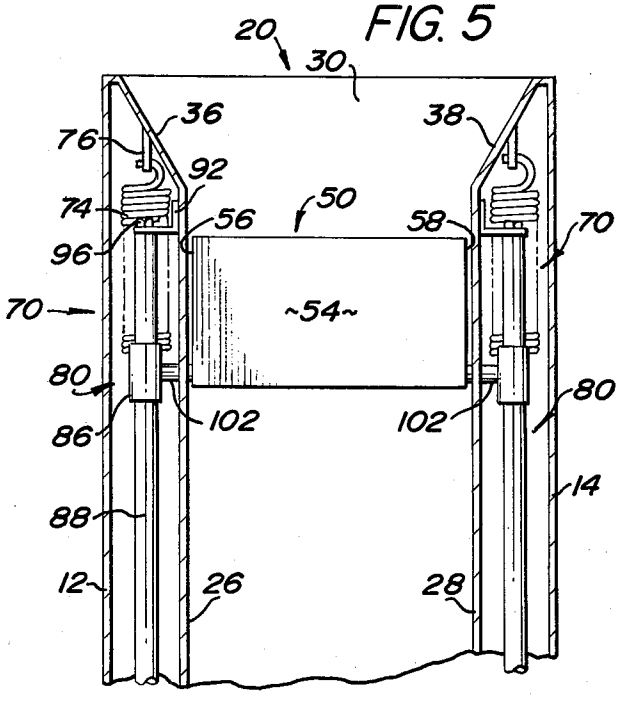


FIG. 5

PAPER CATCHER DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention pertains to the art of material handling and more particularly to the handling of printed paper documents in a printing line.

The invention is particularly applicable to use in newspaper printing lines and will be described with particular reference thereto; however, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the invention has much broader applications and may be used in any number of environments where, for example, printed materials are continuously moved from a press or other supply source toward other processing equipment for eventual paper distribution. As used hereinafter, the term "papers" refers to any type of printed or non-printed materials and is not deemed to refer exclusively to what is commonly known as newspapers.

In the newspaper printing industry, sophisticated printing and processing machinery is now employed in order to meet the circulation demands and to print papers in an economical fashion. Generally, this machinery is substantially automated from the stage of feeding paper to the printing presses through the stages of cutting, folding and stacking for subsequent distribution. Accordingly, the printing lines are able to operate at high speed to put forth a continuous supply of newspapers at the output end of the line. In conventional processing lines, the newspapers are passed along a conveyor system in a continuous "lapped" fashion to a paper counter-stacker for bundling. The papers are then moved for distribution to customers. In this lapped condition, each newspaper rides over a portion of the adjacent newspaper for ease of handling and conveying.

At the end of the final conveyor system, and with the newspapers in the final printed, cut and folded condition, they pass into a sophisticated piece of equipment for counting and stacking. Oftentimes, because of the nature of the newspapers, this apparatus becomes jammed, blocked or otherwise inoperative. This condition requires specific attention by an operator or maintenance employee. When the counter-stacker apparatus becomes inoperative, the supply conveyor, printing presses and other supporting equipment, normally continue to function for an interval of time, and produce additional newspapers until the lines can be shut down. Since newspaper printing lines run at high speed, the number of individual newspapers printed during the period prior to shut down can be rather substantial. The large number of papers which "pile up" once the counter-stacker becomes inoperative have heretofore merely been removed from the line by hand and thrown onto the floor or elsewhere, and thus become scrapped. Obviously, this reduces the overall efficiency and profitability of the operation, and produces as well undesirable housekeeping and safety problems.

The present invention contemplates a new and improved apparatus which overcomes problems of the type described and which provides means adaptable for use in conjunction with printing lines which is simple, economical, reduces scrap during a printing operation, aids in reducing down time for printing lines and which is readily adaptable for use in a number of other environments.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided an improvement for a paper printing line of the type including a conveyor system for continuously moving printed papers from a printing press toward paper processing equipment disposed adjacent the end of the line. The improvement comprises a paper catcher or stacker disposed along the line adjacent the paper processing equipment for selective alternate use in temporarily receiving and stacking papers if the paper processing equipment should become inoperative. Means are also included for selectively diverting the flow of papers along the conveyor system from the processing equipment to the paper catcher or stacker.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, the paper catcher or stacker is adapted to receive and stack a plurality of individual papers in a generally vertically disposed face to face condition. The device comprises a stacker frame having spaced apart side walls and a rear wall extending between the side walls to define an elongated paper receiving area having at least an open top end and a bottom end. Disposed within the receiving area is a paper supporting basket or platen which is selectively movable between a first normal position disposed adjacent the frame top end and a second position spaced from the first position toward the frame bottom end. Biasing means continuously urge the platen toward the first position and are designed such that the weight of papers received on the platen overcomes the force of the biasing means to move the platen from the first position toward the second position. Means are also included to automatically stack papers on the platen in a desired consecutive face to face condition.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, the platen has an upper paper supporting surface which provides automatic stacking means. In this respect, the upper surface is angularly disposed downwardly from the front of the receiving area toward the rear wall of the catcher frame so that papers received on the supporting surface are biased toward the rear wall to effect proper stacking.

In accordance with still another aspect of the present invention, the biasing means comprises elongated compression springs operatively mounted between the platen and catcher frame. These springs are in a compressed condition when the platen is in the first position and in an increasing expanded condition as the platen is moved toward the second position.

In accordance with yet another aspect of the present invention, the catcher frame further includes a front wall spaced apart from the rear wall and adapted to extend between the side walls. This front wall is selectively movable between a first opened condition providing access to the receiving area and a second closed condition enclosing the receiving area.

The principal object of the present invention is the provision of a new and improved paper catcher or stacker device for use in a paper processing line.

Another object of the present invention is the provision of a new and improved paper catcher or stacker device which is simple in design.

Another object of the present invention is the provision of a new and improved paper catcher or stacker device which is reliable in operation.

Another object of the present invention is the provision of a new and improved paper catcher or stacker device which reduces scrap and housekeeping problems with a paper processing line during periods of paper processing apparatus inoperativeness.

Still another object of the present invention is the provision of a new and improved paper catcher or stacker device which is readily adaptable for use in a plurality of printing processing line environments.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

The invention may take physical form in certain parts and arrangements of parts, a preferred embodiment of which will be described in detail in the specification and illustrated in the accompanying drawings which form a part hereof and wherein:

FIG. 1 is a view of the subject paper catcher device positioned for use in its principally intended environment;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the new paper catcher device;

FIG. 3 is a side view of a paper catcher with the side wall of the catcher frame removed for ease of illustration;

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view of the catcher taken along lines 4—4 of FIG. 3; and,

FIG. 5 is a partial cross-sectional view of the catcher taken along lines 5—5 of FIG. 3.

Referring now to the drawings wherein the showings are for purposes of illustrating the preferred embodiment of the invention only and not for purposes of limiting same, FIG. 1 shows paper catcher A disposed adjacent paper processing apparatus comprising a conventional paper counter-stacker apparatus B along a conventional conveyor system C.

More specifically, and with reference to the other FIGURES, paper catcher A is comprised of a vertically elongated catcher frame generally designated **10.** Frame **10** is comprised of a pair of spaced apart side walls **12, 14,** a rear wall **16** and a front wall **18** so as to have an open top end **20** and a closed bottom end **22.** Conventional casters **24** are disposed at the corners of the bottom end **22** to provide means of movement of the paper catcher for reasons which will become more readily apparent hereinafter. Positioned within the catcher frame and spaced from side walls **12, 14** and rear wall **16** are inner side walls **26, 28** and inner rear wall **30** which define an elongated cavity area utilized for purposes which will become more apparent hereinafter. It should be noted that the spacing between these inner walls is such that they will fairly closely receive the paper materials desired to be stacked within the catcher itself. Thus, the spacing may be varied for use in different environments although in the newspaper printing industry the cavity size will be fairly standard.

Front wall **18** comprises a door or removable wall assembly which, in the preferred embodiment, is conventionally hinged along the side thereof adjacent side wall **14** in order that it may be selectively moved between opened and closed positions. This front wall further includes an elongated vertical opening for the purpose of allowing operators to view the stacking operation within the catcher as it proceeds and a plexiglass window generally designated **32** is conveniently received in the opening to provide selective total enclosure for the catcher. The door arrangement may also include a conventional latch arrangement (not shown) opposite from the side which is hinged to the stacker frame for locking the door in a closed position.

Adjacent open top end **20,** inner side walls **26, 28** diverge outwardly from each other as at beveled side walls **36, 38** respectively. Each of inner side walls **26,** 28 also includes elongated longitudinally extending through-slots **40, 42** and **44** for association with the paper supporting basket or platen for guiding and stabilizing purposes as will hereinafter be more fully described. Side walls **12, 14** each includes an access door disposed adjacent the upper end of the catcher frame with the access door in side wall **12** being generally designated **46.** This door may be conveniently hinged along one side thereof to be opened and closed as desired to gain access to the inner workings of the paper catcher itself. A similar door in side wall **14** is not shown.

In the preferred embodiment of the invention, the catcher frame hereinabove described is primarily constructed from **16** gage sheet metal with angle iron supports and base frame components where necessary or desired to facilitate ease of frame construction. Obviously, other materials and gages may be employed without departing from the intent and scope of the present invention.

Closely received in the elongated vertical cavity defined by inner side walls **26, 28,** inner rear wall **30** and front wall **18** is a paper supporting basket or platen generally designated **50.** In the preferred embodiment of the invention here under discussion, this basket or platen is preferably constructed from aluminum although other materials are deemed suitable. Platen **50** is comprised of an upper paper supporting surface **52,** a front wall **54,** side walls **56, 58** and a rear wall **60.** As will be particularly noted from viewing FIG. 3 where the platen is shown in dashed lines, upper paper supporting surface **52** is angularly disposed relative to the horizontal from front wall **54** to rear wall **60.** This particular design provides an automatic stacking device to assure proper paper stacking as individual papers are continuously fed into the paper catcher as will hereinafter be more fully described. Although the particular angular disposition of the upper paper supporting surface may vary, an angle ranging from **20** to **25°** has been found to be particularly suitable when the subject invention is employed in the newspaper printing industry. Platen side walls **56, 58** each includes a pair of guide pin receiving areas (not shown) for receiving combination support and guide pins. These receiving means may take any of a number of configurations, but in the preferred embodiment, it is contemplated that the receiving means will take the configuration of tubular shaped releasable pin receivers to permit ease of removal if necessary for maintenance or replacement purposes.

Platen biasing means generally designated **70** are positioned in the area defined between side walls **12, 14** and their respective inner side walls **26, 28** and which may best be seen in FIGS. **3, 4** and **5.** It is intended that these biasing means will supply a constant upward biasing force to paper supporting basket or platen **50** so that the basket or platen has its first, normal position located adjacent the uppermost end of the paper catcher frame. In this regard, detailed description of the pressure means will be made with reference to one side of the paper catcher device, it being understood

that the means provided on the other side is substantially identical thereto.

Accordingly, biasing means **70** located between walls **12** and **14** comprises a pair of elongated compression springs **72, 74** having one end conveniently mounted to frame mouting bracket **76** positioned on the catcher frame at beveled side wall **36** and the other end affixed to a platen mounting bracket **78** interconnected with platen **50.** In a normal unweighted condition, springs **72, 74** are fully compressed to draw platen **50** to the position shown in dotted lines in FIG. **3** adjacent open top end **26** of the paper catcher frame. In a weighted condition, the springs are stretched under the weight of the papers received on the platen at upper platen supporting surface **52** toward the position shown in phantom in FIG. **3** adjacent bottom end **22.** The specifics of this operation will be more fully described hereinafter; however, it should be noted that the spring tension is such that the platen continuously moves downward with its receipt and support of additional newspapers so that the uppermost level of the newspapers remains substantially constant at a position adjacent open top end **20** of the catcher frame. It will be appreciated that other biasing means could be employed in practicing the concepts of the present invention without departing from the scope and intent thereof. For example, elongated, self contained hydraulic, pneumatic or mechanical cylinders could conceivably be employed. Although such an arrangement would add cost to catcher device A, there may be applications where such addition is justified.

Located adjacent to and associated with the platen biasing means are guide means generally designated **80.** As with the platen biasing means, one of these guide means assemblies is associated with the side of the catcher frame and description will again be made with reference to just one of these means, it being understood that the other is substantially identical thereto. Specifically, the guide means comprises a pair of ball type bushings **82, 84** mounted to the outermost ends of the platen mounting bracket **78.** These bushings are closely slidably received over elongated polished rods **86, 88** extending in a substantially vertical direction from adjacent open top end **20** to adjacent bottom end **22.** The rods themselves are maintained in position at the top end by separate upper mounting brackets **90,** 92 affixed to inner side walls **26** and at the lower end by a common lower mounting bracket **94** also affixed to inner side wall **26.** For positive retention of the rods in the position, the ends are drilled and tapped to receive conventional bolts which pass through brackets **90, 92** and **94.** As will be seen, bracket **78** is slidably received, through means of bushings **82, 84,** on polished rod **86, 88** so that it may freely travel between the upper and bottom ends of the frame but for the continuous upward urging exerted thereon by spring biasing means **72, 74.**

To retain basket or platen **50** in position within the frame cavity, mounting and stabilizing pins **100, 102** extend outwardly from bushings **82, 84** on each side of the frame through slots **40, 44,** respectively and into side walls **56, 58** of the paper receiving basket or platen itself. As disclosed above, these pins are releasably received in the platen side walls by conventional means for ease of removal should it become necessary for maintenance or replacement purposes. With the above described structure, the basket or platen is retained in a particular desired orientation so that the only movement permitted is in the vertical direction between the top and bottom ends of the catcher frame itself. To assist in retaining compression springs **72, 74** in position and for guiding them during periods of expansion and contraction, generally V or U-shaped spring guides **104, 106** are disposed longitudinally along the outwardly facing surfaces of both inner side walls **26, 28.**

In utilizing the above described paper catcher device in the newspaper printing industry, attention is particularly directed to FIGS. **1, 2** and **3.** FIG. **1** shows a typical use of the paper catcher in a conventional paper printing line. In such a line, newspapers are continually passed in the direction of arrow a along conveyor system C in an overlapped or lapped condition toward conveyor end **108.** At end **108,** under normal operation conditions, the newspapers continuously pass through chute or smaller conveyor **110** into the conventional counter-stacker apparatus B. Such apparatus is known in the art and as it does not form a part of the present invention, it is not described in detail herein. It should be noted, however, that such counter-stacker apparatus is employed to first count and stack a predetermined number of newspapers in a face to face condition and then to bundle that stack together by convenient means as, for example, wire, twine or the like. The bundles are then moved from the counter-stacker apparatus to be transported to a loading dock for distribution.

Inasmuch as the newspapers are in a flat face to face condition as they enter the stacker and since the printing line operates at a high rate of speed, oftentimes there are malfunctions at the counter-stacker apparatus. At such occurances, it is necessary to stop the entire line as soon as possible. Because of the time lag in detecting the malfunction and shut down of the line, a substantial number of newspapers back or pile up on the final leg of conveyor system C. These papers necessarily have to be removed from the line before it can once again be made operative. To this end, backed or piled up newspapers on the last leg of the conveyor system have in the past been merely pulled from the conveyor by hand and deposited onto the floor or any other convenient location. This, of course, creates an unsightly condition as well as unnecessary and undesirable scrap papers. This occurs since, in the usual course, those papers thrown on the floor require more labor to restack and place back on a conveyor than is cost-justified. Moreover, those papers on the floor and elsewhere are usually damaged from operating personnel stepping on and walking over them. The scrapped papers amount to a substantial loss when considered in terms of the number of times the problem is encountered and the volume of papers printed on a daily basis.

The above described problems, however, are substantially eliminated when using the subject paper catcher where, with reference to FIG. **1,** it is located immediately adjacent counterstacker apparatus B along conveyor system C. In the preferred embodiment here under discussion, the stacker is disposed in an operative relationship with an auxiliary chute or conveyor **112** at the conveyor end **108** so that the flow of papers may be diverted by a "dump gate" from toward counter-stacker apparatus B to paper catcher A. Operation of the "dump gate" may conveniently be made to be automatic as, for example, through the use of limit switches and so on. These conventional devices may be

easily installed in conjunction with the counter-stacker apparatus to immediately detect the apparatus malfunction. In the alternative, the dump gate may be manually operable by one of the printing line operators.

In any event, and assuming that a malfunction has occurred in the counter-stacking apparatus and that the "dump gate" is diverting papers toward chute or conveyor **112** until the entire line can be shut down, description will now be made of paper catcher A in operation. Papers P issuing from the outermost end of chute or conveyor **112** pass into open top end **20** of catcher frame **10.** From the outermost portion of top end **20,** beveled side walls **36, 38** act to guide the paper toward paper supporting basket or platen **50.** Under normal operating conditions, the papers pass along conveyor system C with the top or bottom edge leading so that when they are diverted toward catcher A, a side edge of each paper engages inner rear wall **30.** The papers, of course, drop onto the platen in a consecutive face to face condition so as to stack upwardly toward the open top end. Since the upper paper supporting surface **52** is angularly disposed downwardly from front wall **54** toward rear wall **60,** the papers will be biased toward inner rear wall **30** of the catcher frame. This arrangement thus assures that the papers will be stacked in a neat fashion for later removal and subsequent bundling and since the flow of papers is quite fast, this automatic stacking means is even more desirable.

As papers are received on the platen, they add weight to the overall platen structure. This weight results in forcing the platen downwardly from adjacent open top end **20** toward bottom end **22** in order that additional papers may be received. Because each platen biasing means **70** comprises elongated compression springs **72,** 74, a continuous upward biasing force is placed against the platen and the spring characteristics are such that the uppermost level of the stacked papers is disposed adjacent open top end **20** of the catcher frame. Plexiglass window **32** in front wall **18** provides easy viewing of the stacking operation within the paper catcher structure. It should be noted that the subject paper catcher is particularly designed for use as an interim measure to reduce paper scrap in the press room until the printing line operation can be completely shut down. Again, because of the complexity of the printing operation, there is normally a lag time between the discovery or sensing of a malfunction at or adjacent apparatus B and line shut down.

Once the line has been shut down, counter-stacker apparatus B repaired and the line again operating in a normal manner, paper catcher A may be easily removed from the line by means of casters **24** and, for example, replaced with another, identical catcher to act as an auxiliary measure should there again be a malfunction. Papers P stacked in the original catcher may then be easily removed from the inside catcher frame by simply opening front wall **18** and lifting the papers out. Of course, as some of papers P are removed from the platen, the platen will again be urged toward its uppermost or first position. As will be appreciated, the subject invention permits reductions of undesired scrap heretofore encountered to press rooms of conventional newspaper printing facilities.

The invention has been described with reference to the preferred embodiment. Obviously, modifications and alterations will occur to others upon the reading and understanding of this specification. It is my intention to include all such modifications and alterations insofar as they come within the scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof.

Having thus described my invention, I now claim:

1. A paper catcher device adapted to receive and stack a plurality of individual papers in a generally vertically disposed face to face condition, said device comprising:

a catcher frame having spaced apart side walls and a rear wall extending between said side walls to define a paper receiving cavity having at least an open top end and a bottom end;

a paper supporting platen disposed within said cavity for selective movement between a first normal position adjacent said top end and a second position spaced from said first position toward said bottom end;

operative means disposed between said platen and at least one of said walls for locating said platen in said receiving cavity, said locating means guiding said platen between said first and second positions;

biasing means for continuously urging said platen toward said first position with the weight of said papers being received on said platen being sufficient to overcome the urging of said biasing means to move said platen from said first position toward said second position; and,

means for automatically stacking said papers on said platen in a consecutive face to face condition.

2. The device as defined in claim **1** wherein said automatic stacking means comprises a portion of said platen and said top end of said catcher frame further includes means for guiding said papers into said receiving cavity, said guiding means comprising at least said frame side walls tapering inwardly toward each other from said top end to adjacent said first position, the width of said frame at said top end being greater than the width of the papers to be stacked.

3. The device as defined in claim **2** further including a front wall for said stacker frame spaced apart from said rear wall and adapted to extend between said side walls, said front wall being selectively movable between a first opened position providing access to said receiving cavity and a second closed position enclosing said receiving cavity.

4. The device as defined in claim **3** wherein said front wall is hinged to one of said side walls for pivotal movement between said first and second positions.

5. The device as defined in claim **2** wherein said platen has an upper paper supporting surface which includes said stacking means, said stacking means comprising said upper supporting surface being angularly disposed downwardly toward said rear wall from the front of said receiving cavity whereby papers received on said supporting surface are biased by gravity toward engagement with said rear wall to effect desired paper stacking.

6. The device as defined in claim **5** wherein said biasing means comprises compression springs operably mounted between said platen and said frame, said springs being in a substantially compressed condition when said plated is in said first position and in an increasingly expanded condition as said platen is moved toward said second position.

7. The device as defined in claim **6** wherein a pair of said springs are disposed outboard of each side wall in an operative mechanical association with said platen,

said locating means comprising generally rigid members extending between said frame top and bottom ends and slidably interconnected with said platen, said side walls including elongated slot means for receiving the interconnection between said rigid members and said platen with the uppermost ends of said slot means defining said first position and the lowermost ends of said slot means defining said second position.

8. The device as defined in claim **5** further including a front wall for said catcher frame spaced apart from said rear wall and adapted to extend between said side walls, said front wall being selectively movable between a first opened position providing access to said receiving cavity and a second closed position enclosing said receiving cavity.

9. The device as defined in claim **8** wherein said front wall is hinged to one of said side walls for pivotal movement between said first and second conditions.

10. In a paper processing line of the type including a conveying system for continuously moving papers from initial processing apparatus toward final processing apparatus, the improvement comprising:

a paper catching device disposed in communication with said line along said conveyor system for selected use with said line in receiving and stacking said papers when said final processing apparatus becomes temporarily inoperative, said catcher device comprising a catcher frame having spaced apart side walls and a rear wall extending between said side walls to define a paper receiving cavity having at least an open top end and a bottom end; a paper supporting platen disposed within said receiving cavity for selective movement between a first normal position adjacent said top end and a second position spaced from said first position toward said bottom end; operative means disposed between said platen and at least one of said walls for locating said platen in said receiving cavity, said locating means guiding said platen between said first and second positions; biasing means for continuously urging said platen toward said first position with the weight of said papers received on said platen being sufficient to overcome the urging of said biasing means to move said platen from said first position toward said second position; means for automatically stacking said papers on said platen in a consecutive face to face condition; and, means in said line for selectively diverting the flow of said papers from toward said final processing apparatus to said paper catcher.

11. The improvement as defined in claim **10** wherein said automatic stacking means comprises a portion of said platen and said top end of said catcher further includes means for guiding said paper into said receiving cavity, said guiding means comprising at least said frame side walls tapering inwardly toward each other from said top end to adjacent said first position, the width of said frame at said top end being greater that the width of the papers to be stacked.

12. The improvement as defined in claim **11** wherein said platen has an upper paper supporting surface which includes said stacking means, said stacking means comprising said upper surface being angularly disposed downwardly toward said rear wall from the front of said receiving cavity whereby papers received on said supporting surface are biased by gravity toward engagement with said rear wall to effect desired paper stacking.

13. The improvement as defined in claim **12** wherein said diverting means comprises a dump gate disposed along said conveyor system for selectively diverting said papers to said paper catcher, said line further including means for selectively actuating said gate.

14. The improvement as defined in claim **13** wherein said biasing means comprises compression springs operably mounted between said platen and said frame, said springs being in a substantially compressed condition when said platen is in said first position and in an increasingly expanded condition as said platen is moved toward said second position.

15. The improvement as defined in claim **14** wherein a pair of said springs are disposed outboard of each side wall in an operative mechanical association with said platen, said locating means comprising generally rigid members extending between said frame top and bottom ends and slidably interconnected with said platen, said side walls including elongated slot means for receiving the interconnection between said rigid members and said platen with the uppermost ends of said slot means defining said first position and the lowermost ends of said slot means defining said second position.

16. The improvement as defined in claim **12** further including a front wall for said catcher frame spaced apart from said rear wall and adapted to extend said side walls, said front wall being selectively movable between a first opened position providing access to said receiving cavity and a second closed position enclosing said receiving cavity.

17. The improvement as defined in claim **16** wherein said front wall is hinged to one of said side walls for pivotal movement between said first and second positions.

18. In a paper catcher device adapted to receive a plurality of individual papers on a paper receiving platen wherein said catcher device includes a catcher frame having side walls and at least a rear wall defining a paper receiving cavity with said platen received in said cavity and adapted for generally vertical movement therein such that the uppermost level of said papers remains substantially constant relative to said device, the improvement comprising:

said platen having a paper supporting surface which includes automatic stacking means for stacking said papers in a desired face to face condition as they are received on said supporting surface. said stacking means comprising said supporting surface being angularly disposed downwardly toward said rear wall from the front of said cavity whereby papers received on said supporting surface are biased by gravity toward engagement with said rear wall to effect desired paper stacking.

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