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(54) **BARRIER DEVICE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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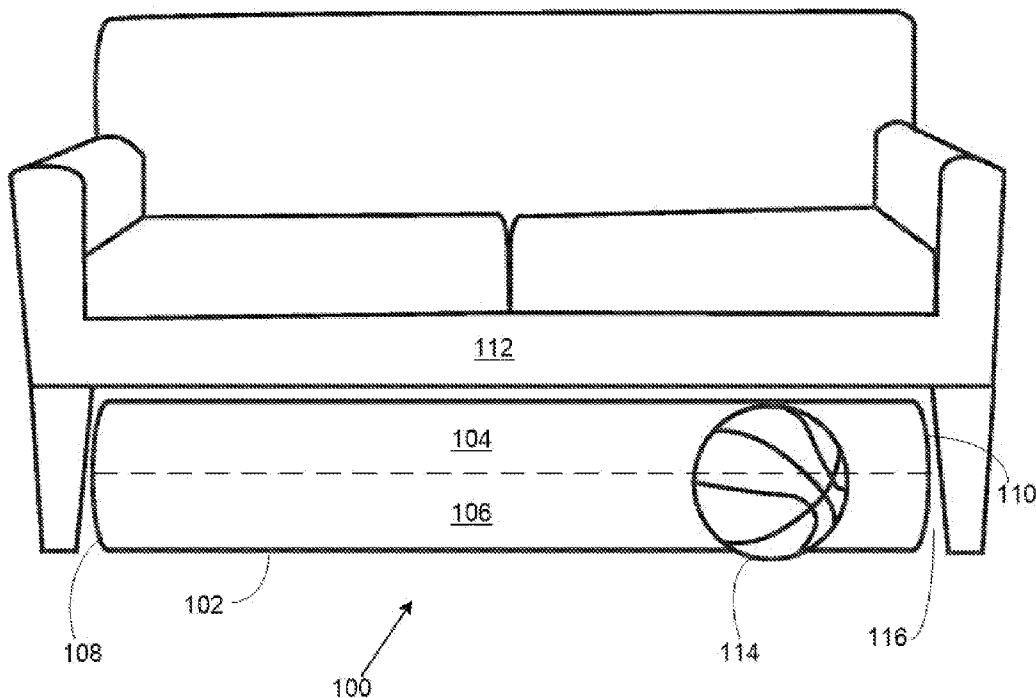
A barrier device forms an inflatable barrier that restricts an object from passing through an opening at the periphery of a support structure, such that a substantial portion of the opening is blocked. The support structure may include furniture. A bladder is inflated with a gas to conform to the size of the opening. The bladder has a first region and a second region that fold over each other to conform to the size of the opening for providing a more substantial barrier. A first end and a second end have an inlet for enabling passage of the gas to and from an interior region of the bladder. In this manner, the size of the bladder can be adjusted. A handle on either end facilitates mobility of the device.

Related U.S. Application Data

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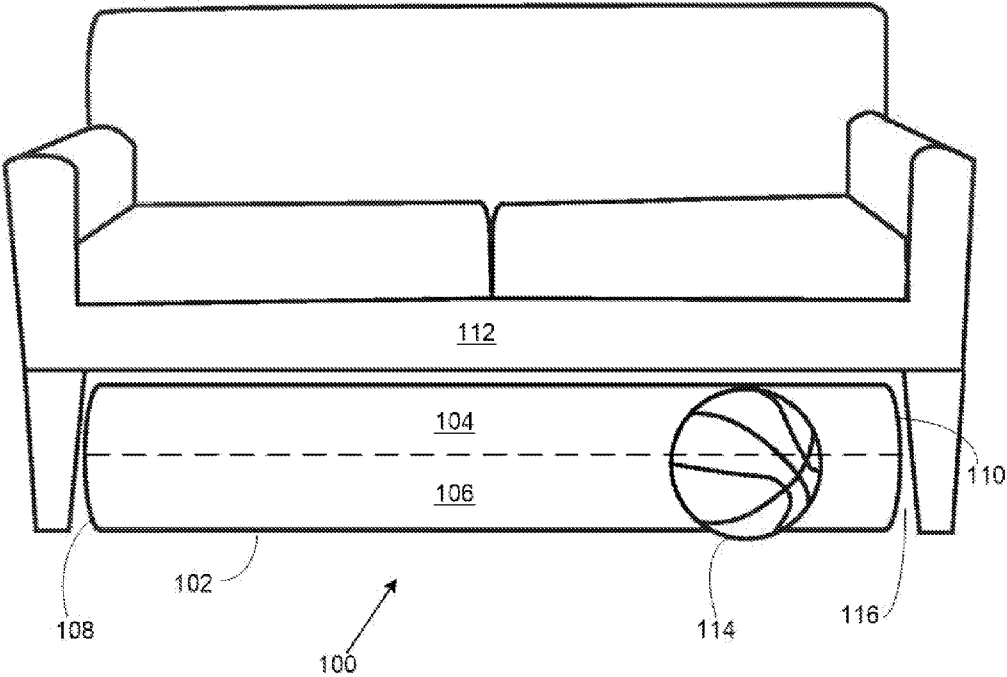
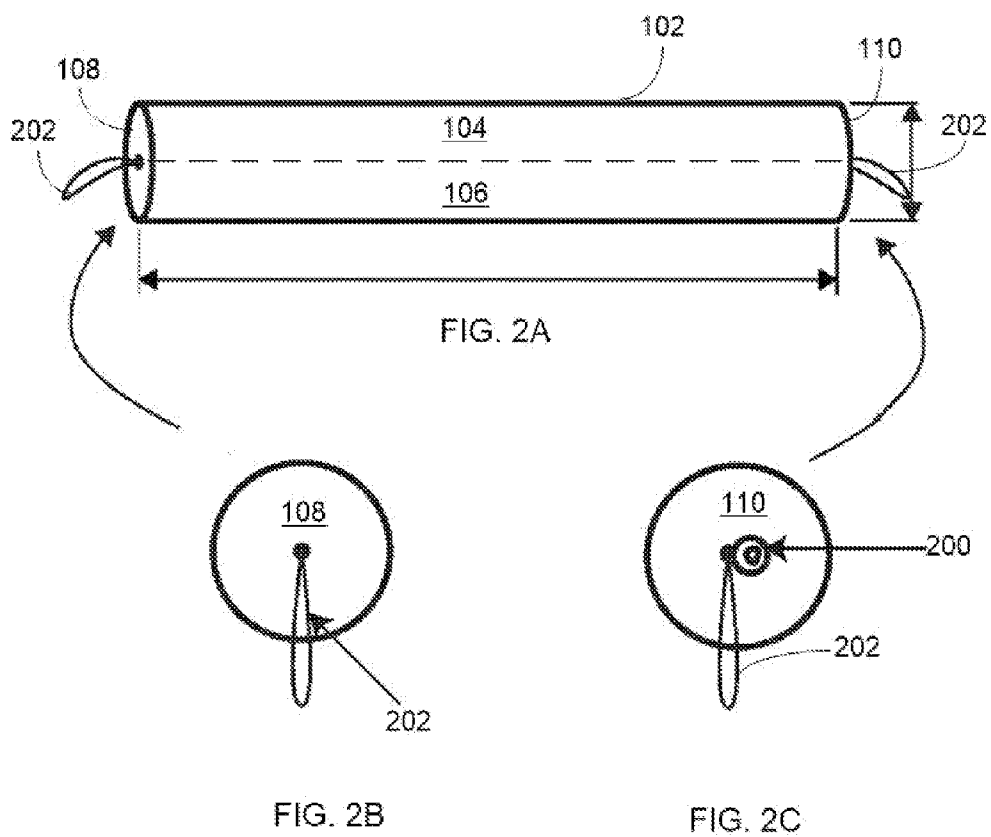


FIG. 1



BARRIER DEVICE

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The present Utility patent application claims priority benefit of the [U.S. provisional application for patent Ser. No. 62/062,337 entitled “Teddy’s Ballie Bumper”, filed on 10 Oct. 2014, under 35 U.S.C. 119(e). The contents of this related provisional application are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes to the extent that such subject matter is not inconsistent herewith or limiting hereof.

FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not applicable.

REFERENCE TO SEQUENCE LISTING, A TABLE, OR A COMPUTER LISTING APPENDIX

[0003] Not applicable.

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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0005] One or more embodiments of the invention generally relate to a barrier device. More particularly, the invention relates to an inflatable barrier that restricts an object from passing through an opening at the periphery of a support structure.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The following background information may present examples of specific aspects of the prior art (e.g., without limitation, approaches, facts, or common wisdom) that, while expected to be helpful to further educate the reader as to additional aspects of the prior art, is not to be construed as limiting the present invention, or any embodiments thereof, to anything stated or implied therein or inferred thereupon.

[0007] The following is an example of a specific aspect in the prior art that, while expected to be helpful to further educate the reader as to additional aspects of the prior art, is not to be construed as limiting the present invention, or any embodiments thereof, to anything stated or implied therein or inferred thereupon. By way of educational background, another aspect of the prior art generally useful to be aware of is that furniture includes movable objects intended to support various human activities such as seating (e.g., chairs, stools and sofas) and sleeping (e.g., beds). Furniture is also used to hold objects at a convenient height for work (as horizontal surfaces above the ground, such as tables and desks), or to store things (e.g., cupboards and shelves). Furniture can be a product of design and is considered a form of decorative art.

[0008] Typically, furniture is supported by legs that elevate the base of the furniture above a surface. Also, the furniture can be spaced from a wall to avoid bumping and scratching the wall. This often leaves a gap or crevice through which

various objects can inadvertently pass through. In many instances, owners of pets and caretakers of small children often find themselves in the position of needing to bend over and retrieve small items that inadvertently roll underneath the furniture or otherwise become misplaced. Unfortunately, such misplaced items are usually difficult to retrieve.

[0009] In many cases, the retrieving individual must bend over and stretch limbs in uncomfortable positions to recover items. In more extreme circumstances, recovery of items may necessitate the moving of heavy furniture by the individual. Such physical actions can be very uncomfortable, especially if the individual has a history of chiropractic/spinal problems or other musculoskeletal issues.

[0010] In view of the foregoing, it is clear that these traditional techniques are not perfect and leave room for more optimal approaches.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] The present invention is illustrated by way of example, and not by way of limitation, in the figures of the accompanying drawings and in which like reference numerals refer to similar elements and in which:

[0012] FIG. 1 illustrates a frontal view of an exemplary barrier device at least partially blocking an opening under an exemplary support structure, in accordance with an embodiment of the present embodiment; and

[0013] FIGS. 2A, 2B, and 2C illustrate elevated side views of an exemplary barrier device, where FIG. 2A illustrates an exemplary first region and an exemplary second region of an exemplary inflated bladder, FIG. 2B illustrates an exemplary first end having an exemplary handle, and FIG. 2C illustrates an exemplary second end having an exemplary inlet, in accordance with an embodiment of the present embodiment.

[0014] Unless otherwise indicated illustrations in the figures are not necessarily drawn to scale.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF SOME EMBODIMENTS

[0015] The present invention is best understood by reference to the detailed figures and description set forth herein.

[0016] Embodiments of the invention are discussed below with reference to the Figures. However, those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that the detailed description given herein with respect to these figures is for explanatory purposes as the invention extends beyond these limited embodiments. For example, it should be appreciated that those skilled in the art will, in light of the teachings of the present invention, recognize a multiplicity of alternate and suitable approaches, depending upon the needs of the particular application, to implement the functionality of any given detail described herein, beyond the particular implementation choices in the following embodiments described and shown. That is, there are numerous modifications and variations of the invention that are too numerous to be listed but that all fit within the scope of the invention. Also, singular words should be read as plural and vice versa and masculine as feminine and vice versa, where appropriate, and alternative embodiments do not necessarily imply that the two are mutually exclusive.

[0017] It is to be further understood that the present invention is not limited to the particular methodology, compounds, materials, manufacturing techniques, uses, and applications, described herein, as these may vary. It is also to be understood

that the terminology used herein is used for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only, and is not intended to limit the scope of the present invention. It must be noted that as used herein and in the appended claims, the singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” include the plural reference unless the context clearly dictates otherwise. Thus, for example, a reference to “an element” is a reference to one or more elements and includes equivalents thereof known to those skilled in the art. Similarly, for another example, a reference to “a step” or “a means” is a reference to one or more steps or means and may include sub-steps and subservient means. All conjunctions used are to be understood in the most inclusive sense possible. Thus, the word “or” should be understood as having the definition of a logical “or” rather than that of a logical “exclusive or” unless the context clearly necessitates otherwise. Structures described herein are to be understood also to refer to functional equivalents of such structures. Language that may be construed to express approximation should be so understood unless the context clearly dictates otherwise.

[0018] Unless defined otherwise, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meanings as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this invention belongs. Preferred methods, techniques, devices, and materials are described, although any methods, techniques, devices, or materials similar or equivalent to those described herein may be used in the practice or testing of the present invention. Structures described herein are to be understood also to refer to functional equivalents of such structures. The present invention will now be described in detail with reference to embodiments thereof as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

[0019] From reading the present disclosure, other variations and modifications will be apparent to persons skilled in the art. Such variations and modifications may involve equivalent and other features which are already known in the art, and which may be used instead of or in addition to features already described herein.

[0020] Although Claims have been formulated in this Application to particular combinations of features, it should be understood that the scope of the disclosure of the present invention also includes any novel feature or any novel combination of features disclosed herein either explicitly or implicitly or any generalization thereof, whether or not it relates to the same invention as presently claimed in any Claim and whether or not it mitigates any or all of the same technical problems as does the present invention.

[0021] Features which are described in the context of separate embodiments may also be provided in combination in a single embodiment. Conversely, various features which are, for brevity, described in the context of a single embodiment, may also be provided separately or in any suitable subcombination. The Applicants hereby give notice that new Claims may be formulated to such features and/or combinations of such features during the prosecution of the present Application or of any further Application derived therefrom.

[0022] References to “one embodiment,” “an embodiment,” “example embodiment,” “various embodiments,” etc., may indicate that the embodiment(s) of the invention so described may include a particular feature, structure, or characteristic, but not every embodiment necessarily includes the particular feature, structure, or characteristic. Further, repeated use of the phrase “in one embodiment,” or “in an

exemplary embodiment,” do not necessarily refer to the same embodiment, although they may.

[0023] Headings provided herein are for convenience and are not to be taken as limiting the disclosure in any way.

[0024] The enumerated listing of objects does not imply that any or all of the objects are mutually exclusive, unless expressly specified otherwise.

[0025] The terms “a,” “an” and “the” mean “one or more”, unless expressly specified otherwise.

[0026] Devices or system modules that are in at least general communication with each other need not be in continuous communication with each other, unless expressly specified otherwise. In addition, devices or system modules that are in at least general communication with each other may communicate directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries.

[0027] A description of an embodiment with several components in communication with each other does not imply that all such components are required. On the contrary a variety of optional components are described to illustrate the wide variety of possible embodiments of the present invention.

[0028] As is well known to those skilled in the art many careful considerations and compromises typically must be made when designing for the optimal manufacture of a commercial implementation any system, and in particular, the embodiments of the present invention. A commercial implementation in accordance with the spirit and teachings of the present invention may be configured according to the needs of the particular application, whereby any aspect(s), feature(s), function(s), result(s), component(s), approach(es), or step(s) of the teachings related to any described embodiment of the present invention may be suitably omitted, included, adapted, mixed and matched, or improved and/or optimized by those skilled in the art, using their average skills and known techniques, to achieve the desired implementation that addresses the needs of the particular application.

[0029] The present invention will now be described in detail with reference to embodiments thereof as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

[0030] There are various types of a barrier device for restricting access to an object that passes beneath or behind furniture that may be provided by preferred embodiments of the present invention. In one embodiment, the barrier device may form an inflatable barrier that restricts an object from passing through an opening at the periphery of a support structure. In some embodiments, the device may conform to the opening at the periphery of the support structure, such that a substantial portion of the opening is blocked. In this manner, an object, such as a ball or pet, is restricted from passing through the opening, and consequently beneath or behind the support structure.

[0031] For example, without limitation, legs that support a sofa create a space between the ground surface and the sofa. The device serves to block this opening, such that the object is restricted from passing through. The support structure may include, without limitation, a sofa, a chair, a recliner, a stool, a bed, a table, a chair, a desk, a dresser, and a cupboard. The opening may include a crevice or space beneath the support structure.

[0032] The invention relates generally to an inflatable bladder-type barrier device that acts as a bumper for small objects. In one aspect, a user may insert the device in the opening under furniture. The opening may include a crevice under the

furniture. However in other embodiments, the support structure may have an opening along the lateral sides or above. In one embodiment, the device serves as a barricade and thus prevents objects such as balls and small toys from inadvertently rolling underneath. In this manner, the device mitigates the chances of such objects being placed in difficult-to-retrieve situations, and thus alleviates chiropractic/spinal issues potentially associated with bending over and retrieving such lost objects.

[0033] In some embodiments, the device may include a substantially elongated bladder having an interior region that is filled with a gas, such as air. Those skilled in the art will recognize that the air enables the bladder to compress, stretch, bend, and be shaped into a desired form so that it may fill a substantial amount of the opening. The capacity to contain air provides flexibility in sizing the bladder to conform to an eclectic assortment of furniture openings. Overall, the bladder is tubular in shape when inflated. When completely deflated it may be a generally flat rectangle, suitable for storage or portability.

[0034] The bladder may include a bifurcated configuration comprising a first region and a second region that extend along a longitudinal axis of the bladder. The first region and the second region of the bladder may have openings between their adjacent surface to inflate simultaneously, or in other embodiments, the regions may be sealed off from each other and thus, require independent inflation. In some embodiments, the first region and the second region may fold over each other to provide greater malleability to the bladder. The bladder may further comprise a first end and a second end. In some embodiments, the ends may have a generally circular cross section. Either end may include an inlet configured to enable passage of the gas. The inlet may have a valve to restrict passage of the gas in a first direction and a cap to block the inlet. A handle may join with either end to provide a surface for gripping and manipulating the device.

[0035] FIG. 1 illustrates a frontal view of an exemplary barrier device at least partially blocking an opening under an exemplary support structure, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In the present embodiment, a barrier device **100** may form an inflatable barrier that restricts an object **114** from passing through an opening **116** at the periphery of a support structure **112**. In some embodiments, the device may conform to the opening at the periphery of the support structure, such that a substantial portion of the opening is blocked. In this manner, an object, such as a shoe or a toy is at least partially restricted from passing through the opening, and consequently beneath or behind the support structure.

[0036] The support structure may include, without limitation, a sofa, a chair, a recliner, a stool, a bed, a table, a chair, a desk, a dresser, and a cupboard. The opening may include a crevice or space beneath the support structure. For example, without limitation, a space between the support structure and a wall that is left to restrict scratching or bumping the wall, or a crevice beneath the support structure from elevating the support structure above a surface with legs. The device serves to block this opening, such that the object is restricted from passing through. Those skilled in the art, in light of the present teachings, will recognize that objects may roll or inadvertently be kicked beneath furniture, and thus may be difficult to access without straining the back. Additionally, pets may hide beneath the furniture, and thus be difficult to retrieve. The barrier device helps prevent such undesirable situations.

[0037] In one aspect, a user may insert the device in the opening under furniture. The opening may include a crevice under the furniture. However in other embodiments, the support structure may have an opening along the lateral sides or above. In one embodiment, the device serves as a barricade and thus prevents objects from inadvertently rolling underneath. The object may include, without limitation, a ball, a toy, a pet, and a shoe. In this manner, the device mitigates the chances of such objects being placed in difficult-to-retrieve situations, and thus alleviates chiropractic/spinal issues potentially associated with bending over and retrieving such lost objects.

[0038] In some embodiments, the device may include a substantially elongated bladder **102** when it is filled with a gas, such as air. The bladder may be sized and dimensioned to conform to specific furniture. For example, without limitation, a device for sofas may be cylindrical and elongated, while a device for beds may be more rectangular in shape. When the gas is removed from the bladder, the bladder takes a flat, limp, generally rectangular shape. Suitable materials for the bladder may include, without limitation, leather, rubber, latex, polychloroprene, animal intestines, canvas, a nylon fabric, and a nonwoven material. The material may be sufficiently thick, so as to avoid inadvertent puncturing by cat claws, pins, and rough playing by children. In some embodiments, the bladder is colored black, to better blend into the shadows and be unobtrusive in appearance.

[0039] Those skilled in the art, in light of the present teachings, will recognize that a basic black color provides optimal color matching capacity for the bladder because variously colored furniture may be difficult to match with less basic colors, such as orange, red, and tan. The black color is also significant in that it blends into the shadow beneath the furniture. Additionally, animals have difficulty seeing the color black, which further enhances the functionality of the device as a barrier. While deflated, for either preferred embodiment, the bladder may weigh less than 0.25 pounds. In shipping, the invention should be in deflated form to conserve space.

[0040] Those skilled in the art will recognize that air enables the bladder to compress, stretch, bend, and be shaped into a desired form so that it may fill a substantial amount of the opening. Overall, the bladder is tubular in shape when inflated. When completely deflated it may be a generally flat rectangle, suitable for storage or portability. In one embodiment, a fully inflated bladder may have dimensions as follows: 3' or 6' length; 9.02" height.

[0041] The bladder may include a bifurcated configuration comprising a first region **104** and a second region **106** that extend along a longitudinal axis of the bladder. In some embodiments, the first region and the second region may fold over each other to provide greater malleability to the bladder. The first region and the second region of the bladder may have openings between their adjacent surface to inflate simultaneously, or in other embodiments, the regions may be sealed off from each other and thus, require independent inflation. The first and second regions may be joined together through airtight stitching, glued seams, or other airtight sealing methods. In the one embodiment, the bladder may further comprise a first end **108** and a second end **110** disposed at each terminal point of the regions. In some embodiments, the ends may have a generally circular cross section. In some practical embodiments, the ends have a diameter of about 5³/₄". The ends may have substantially the same material fabrication as the first and second region, which form the bladder. It is

significant to note that sectioning the device into a bladder, a first end, and a second end enables greater malleability to the device as a whole. For example, without limitation, the bladder may be able to bend around exposed corners to ensure that items such as balls and toys do not pass under the furniture.

[0042] FIGS. 2A, 2B, and 2C illustrate elevated side views of an exemplary barrier device, where FIG. 2A illustrates an exemplary first region and an exemplary second region of an exemplary inflated bladder, FIG. 2B illustrates an exemplary first end having an exemplary handle, and FIG. 2C illustrates an exemplary second end having an exemplary inlet, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In some embodiments, either the first and/or the second end may have an inlet **200** configured to enable passage of the gas to and from an interior region of the bladder. In this manner, the size of the bladder may be adjusted. The inlet may include a blow up nozzle. The nozzle may be affixed to the inlet in an airtight manner, usually with glue seals, although this is not the only method. The inlet is configured to be operable to receive air from the mouth. However in other embodiments, the inlet may enable passage of a gas from a manual air pump, an automatic air pump, and a water source.

[0043] The nozzle may have a valve to restrict passage of the gas in a first direction and a cap to block the inlet. The valve and the cap also serve to restrict passage of the gas in either the first direction into the bladder, or a second direction out of the bladder. The inlet may include a plastic nipple that allows inflation of the bladder. The inlet is placed on the second side of the bladder, in the center of the circular face. In operation, the user wedges the invention into the floor crevice of furniture, blocking access to the underside of the furniture in directions roughly perpendicular to its longitudinal direction. If the furniture's floor crevice is too low to accommodate the invention while the invention is fully inflated, the invention may be partially deflated to fit the available space and still function.

[0044] A handle **202** may join with either end to provide a surface for gripping and manipulating the device. The handle may include a nylon loop. However, in other embodiments, the handle may be formed from the same material as the bladder and be a slot that is configured to be operable to receive a hand. The handle serves chiefly to facilitate portability and manipulation of the bladder in the opening. In one embodiment, the invention takes the form of a black-colored, inflatable bladder with an inflation nozzle at the first end, and a handle at both the first end and the second end.

[0045] It will be further apparent to those skilled in the art that at least a portion of the novel method steps and/or system components of the present invention may be practiced and/or located in location(s) possibly outside the jurisdiction of the United States of America (USA), whereby it will be accordingly readily recognized that at least a subset of the novel method steps and/or system components in the foregoing embodiments must be practiced within the jurisdiction of the USA for the benefit of an entity therein or to achieve an object of the present invention. Thus, some alternate embodiments of the present invention may be configured to comprise a smaller subset of the foregoing means for and/or steps described that the applications designer will selectively decide, depending upon the practical considerations of the particular implementation, to carry out and/or locate within the jurisdiction of the USA. For example, any of the foregoing described method steps and/or system components which may be performed remotely over a network (e.g., without

limitation, a remotely located server) may be performed and/or located outside of the jurisdiction of the USA while the remaining method steps and/or system components (e.g., without limitation, a locally located client) of the foregoing embodiments are typically required to be located/performed in the USA for practical considerations. In client-server architectures, a remotely located server typically generates and transmits required information to a US based client, for use according to the teachings of the present invention. Depending upon the needs of the particular application, it will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art, in light of the teachings of the present invention, which aspects of the present invention can or should be located locally and which can or should be located remotely. Thus, for any claims construction of the following claim limitations that are construed under 35 USC §112 (6) it is intended that the corresponding means for and/or steps for carrying out the claimed function are the ones that are locally implemented within the jurisdiction of the USA, while the remaining aspect(s) performed or located remotely outside the USA are not intended to be construed under 35 USC §112 (6).

[0046] All the features disclosed in this specification, including any accompanying abstract and drawings, may be replaced by alternative features serving the same, equivalent or similar purpose, unless expressly stated otherwise. Thus, unless expressly stated otherwise, each feature disclosed is one example only of a generic series of equivalent or similar features.

[0047] It is noted that according to USA law 35 USC §112 (1), all claims must be supported by sufficient disclosure in the present patent specification, and any material known to those skilled in the art need not be explicitly disclosed. However, 35 USC §112 (6) requires that structures corresponding to functional limitations interpreted under 35 USC §112 (6) must be explicitly disclosed in the patent specification. Moreover, the USPTO's Examination policy of initially treating and searching prior art under the broadest interpretation of a "mean for" claim limitation implies that the broadest initial search on 112(6) functional limitation would have to be conducted to support a legally valid Examination on that USPTO policy for broadest interpretation of "mean for" claims. Accordingly, the USPTO will have discovered a multiplicity of prior art documents including disclosure of specific structures and elements which are suitable to act as corresponding structures to satisfy all functional limitations in the below claims that are interpreted under 35 USC §112 (6) when such corresponding structures are not explicitly disclosed in the foregoing patent specification. Therefore, for any invention element(s)/structure(s) corresponding to functional claim limitation(s), in the below claims interpreted under 35 USC §112 (6), which is/are not explicitly disclosed in the foregoing patent specification, yet do exist in the patent and/or non-patent documents found during the course of USPTO searching, Applicant(s) incorporate all such functionally corresponding structures and related enabling material herein by reference for the purpose of providing explicit structures that implement the functional means claimed. Applicant(s) request(s) that fact finders during any claims construction proceedings and/or examination of patent allowability properly identify and incorporate only the portions of each of these documents discovered during the broadest interpretation search of 35 USC §112 (6) limitation, which exist in at least one of the patent and/or non-patent documents found during the course of normal USPTO searching and or supplied to the

USPTO during prosecution. Applicant(s) also incorporate by reference the bibliographic citation information to identify all such documents comprising functionally corresponding structures and related enabling material as listed in any PTO Form-892 or likewise any information disclosure statements (IDS) entered into the present patent application by the USPTO or Applicant(s) or any 3rd parties. Applicant(s) also reserve its right to later amend the present application to explicitly include citations to such documents and/or explicitly include the functionally corresponding structures which were incorporate by reference above.

[0048] Thus, for any invention element(s)/structure(s) corresponding to functional claim limitation(s), in the below claims, that are interpreted under 35 USC §112 (6), which is/are not explicitly disclosed in the foregoing patent specification, Applicant(s) have explicitly prescribed which documents and material to include the otherwise missing disclosure, and have prescribed exactly which portions of such patent and/or non-patent documents should be incorporated by such reference for the purpose of satisfying the disclosure requirements of 35 USC §112 (6). Applicant(s) note that all the identified documents above which are incorporated by reference to satisfy 35 USC §112 (6) necessarily have a filing and/or publication date prior to that of the instant application, and thus are valid prior documents to incorporated by reference in the instant application.

[0049] Having fully described at least one embodiment of the present invention, other equivalent or alternative methods of implementing a barrier to restrict objects from passing through openings in support objects according to the present invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Various aspects of the invention have been described above by way of illustration, and the specific embodiments disclosed are not intended to limit the invention to the particular forms disclosed. The particular implementation of the barrier to restrict objects from passing through openings in support objects may vary depending upon the particular context or application. By way of example, and not limitation, the barrier to restrict objects from passing through openings in support objects described in the foregoing were principally directed to an inflatable barrier that blocks objects from rolling or being inadvertently moved beneath a sofa implementations; however, similar techniques may instead be applied to blocking objects from passing through crevices under factory machines, fryers, and desks in offices, which implementations of the present invention are contemplated as within the scope of the present invention. The invention is thus to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the following claims. It is to be further understood that not all of the disclosed embodiments in the foregoing specification will necessarily satisfy or achieve each of the objects, advantages, or improvements described in the foregoing specification.

[0050] Claim elements and steps herein may have been numbered and/or lettered solely as an aid in readability and understanding. Any such numbering and lettering in itself is not intended to and should not be taken to indicate the ordering of elements and/or steps in the claims.

[0051] The corresponding structures, materials, acts, and equivalents of all means or step plus function elements in the claims below are intended to include any structure, material, or act for performing the function in combination with other claimed elements as specifically claimed.

[0052] The Abstract is provided to comply with 37 C.F.R. Section 1.72(b) requiring an abstract that will allow the reader to ascertain the nature and gist of the technical disclosure. It is submitted with the understanding that it will not be used to limit or interpret the scope or meaning of the claims. The following claims are hereby incorporated into the detailed description, with each claim standing on its own as a separate embodiment.

What is claimed is:

1. A device comprising:
 - a bladder comprising an interior region, said interior region being configured to contain a gas, said bladder being configured to be suitably designed such that when inflated with the gas said bladder is operable to expand to at least partially cover an opening at the periphery of a support structure, thereby restricting an object from passing there through,
 - said bladder further comprising a first region and a second region disposed to extend along a longitudinal axis of said bladder, said first region and said second region being configured to at least partially fold at a junction for enabling said bladder to conform to a dimension of said opening,
 - said bladder further comprising a first end portion and a second end portion, said first end portion and/or said second end portion comprising an inlet, said inlet being configured to enable passage of said gas to and from said interior region.
2. The device of claim 1, in which said bladder comprises a substantially cylindrical shape when containing said gas.
3. The device of claim 2, in which said bladder comprises a generally flat, rectangular shape when not containing said gas.
4. The device of claim 3, in which said gas comprises air.
5. The device of claim 4, in which said bladder containing said gas has a length of about six feet, and a height of about five inches.
6. The device of claim 5, in which said first end portion and said second end portion have a diameter of about five and three-quarter inches.
7. The device of claim 6, in which said bladder comprises a black color.
8. The device of claim 7, in which said inlet comprises a nozzle being configured to be operable to receive air from a mouth.
9. The device of claim 8, in which said nozzle comprises a cap being configured to at least partially restrict passage of said gas through said inlet.
10. The device of claim 9, in which said first end portion and/or said second end portion comprises a handle.
11. The device of claim 10, in which said handle comprises a nylon strap.
12. The device of claim 11, in which said support structure is at least a portion of a furniture.
13. The device of claim 12, in which said furniture is a sofa and the opening is a peripheral space under the sofa.
14. A device comprising:
 - means for containing a gas, said gas containing means being able to at least partially cover an opening while containing said gas;
 - means for enabling said gas containing means to conform to a dimension of said opening;

means for enabling said dimension conforming means to at least partially block an item from passing through said opening; and

means for releasing said gas, said gas releasing means being able to at least partially enable storage.

15. The device of claim **14**, in which said gas containing means comprises a generally cylindrical shape.

16. The device of claim **15**, further containing means for folding to conform to said dimension of said opening.

17. The device of claim **16**, further containing means for gripping said gas containing means.

18. The device of claim **17**, further containing means for supporting said gas containing means.

19. The device of claim **18**, in which said gas containing means has a length of about six feet, and a height of about five inches.

20. A device consisting of:

a bladder comprising an interior region being configured to contain a gas, said bladder comprising a black color, said bladder being configured to at least partially cover an opening while containing said gas, said opening com-

prising a gap disposed at a periphery of a support structure, said bladder containing said gas has a length of about six feet, and a height of about five inches,

said bladder further comprising a first region and a second region disposed to extend along a longitudinal axis of said bladder, said first region and said second region being configured to at least partially fold at a junction for enabling said bladder to conform to a dimension of said opening,

said bladder further comprising a first end portion and a second end portion, said first end portion and/or said second end portion comprising an inlet configured to enable passage of said gas to and from said interior region, said inlet comprising a nozzle being configured to regulate passage of said gas to and from said interior region, said nozzle comprising a cap, said cap being configured to restrict passage of said gas, said first end portion and/or said second end portion further comprising a handle, said handle being configured to be gripped.

* * * * *