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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):  
**SMITHERS-OASIS COMPANY, ET AL** [US/US];  
2020 Front Street, Suite 301, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221 (US).
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **WALTON, Charles F.** [US/US]; 2140 East Streetsboro Road, Hudson, Ohio 44236 (US). **MALEK, Jeffrey C.** [US/US]; 7960 Boneta

Road, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281 (US). **BAKULA, Roxanne E.** [US/US]; 2004 Lehmann Street, Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701 (US). **STRINE, Tom L.** [US/US]; 15770 West High Street, Middlefield, Ohio 44062 (US).

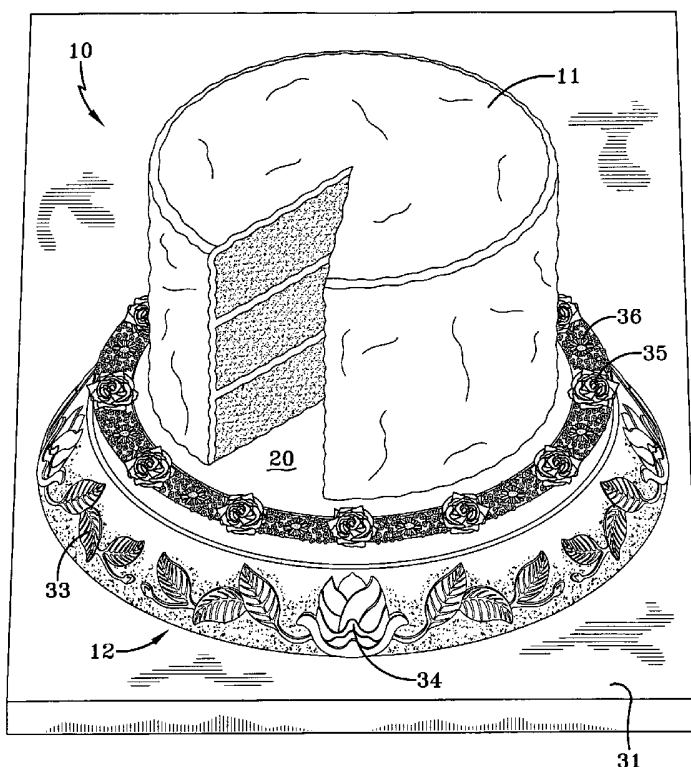
(74) Agents: **BOBAK, Donald J.** et al.; Renner, Kenner, Greive, Bobak, Taylor & Weber, First National Tower, 4th Floor, Akron, Ohio 44308 (US).

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(54) Title: PLATE AND DECORATIVE ARRAY FOR DISPLAYING ARTICLES AND RELATED METHOD



(57) Abstract: A plate and decorative array (10) for displaying articles (11) comprises a plate member (12) having a base (14), the base having a continuous sidewall (15); a shelf (25) engaging the outer surface of the continuous sidewall; a skirt member (26) carried at the external edge of the shelf; and a disk (20) adapted to engage with the upper end of the base. A plate and decorative array (50) for displaying articles (11) comprises at least first and second devices, wherein the second device is adapted to rest upon the first device. A plate and decorative array (80), for displaying articles (11) further comprises means for elevating (101) the second device over the first device. Another plate and decorative array (80) further comprises a fountain assembly (110), located between the first and second devices. A method for holding and displaying articles utilizes a plate and decorative array (10). Another method is also provided for holding and displaying articles utilizing first (10) and second plate and decorative arrays (51, 81).

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**PLATE AND DECORATIVE ARRAY FOR DISPLAYING ARTICLES AND  
RELATED METHOD**

**CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS**

5           This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Ser. No. 11/026,831,  
filed December 30, 2004.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

10           The present invention pertains to devices for displaying various articles  
where people are gathered such as weddings and other ceremonies. More  
particularly, the invention provides a device that holds a cake and allows for  
decorative adornment of the cake with live cut flowers. It has become standard  
practice to display large cakes for special events, such as weddings, graduations,  
anniversaries and other commemorative occasions with live cut flowers, encircling  
15           the base of the cake. Historically, bakers and cake decorators have had to  
coordinate with florists in order to arrange for flowers to be used on the table  
and/or on the cake. This is especially troublesome when florists schedule multiple  
weddings and events on the same day. The baker needs to arrive prior to the  
florist, and the potential for conflicts in schedule are great.

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**BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

          In general, the present invention provides a plate and decorative array  
for displaying articles comprising a plate member having a base, the base having  
a continuous sidewall; a shelf engaging the outer surface of the continuous  
25           sidewall; a skirt member carried at the external edge of the shelf; and a disk  
adapted to engage with the upper end of the base.

          The present invention also provides a plate and decorative array for  
displaying articles comprising at least first and second devices, each device  
providing a plate member, one of the devices having a first diameter and the other  
30           of the devices having a second diameter, less than the first diameter, wherein the  
second device is adapted to rest upon the first device.

The present invention also provides a plate and decorative array for displaying articles comprising at least two devices, each device providing a plate member, one of the devices having a first diameter and the other of the devices having a second diameter, less than the first diameter; and means for elevating the second device over the first device, the first and second devices being joined together in a tiered fashion by the means for elevating.

The present invention also provides a plate and decorative array comprising at least two devices, each device providing a plate member, one of the devices having a first diameter and the other of the devices having a second diameter, less than the first diameter; means for elevating the second device over the first device, the first and second devices being joined together in a tiered fashion by the means for elevating; and a fountain assembly, located between the first and second devices.

The present invention also provides a method for holding and displaying articles utilizing a plate and decorative array, the device providing a plate member having a base, the base having a continuous sidewall; a shelf engaging the outer surface of the continuous sidewall; a skirt member carried at the external edge of the shelf; and a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of the base; the method comprising placing an article on the disk; and separately decorating the shelf with at least one material selected to enhance the appearance of the displayed article.

The present invention also provides a method for holding and displaying articles utilizing first and second plate and decorative arrays, each device having a plate member, the plate providing a base, the base having a continuous sidewall; a shelf engaging the outer surface of the continuous sidewall; a skirt member carried at the external edge of the shelf; and a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of the base; the method comprising placing the second device on the first device; placing an article on the disk of the second device; and separately decorating the shelves with at least one material selected to enhance the appearance of the displayed article.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an isometric view depicting the plate and decorative array for displaying cakes and the like according to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is an exploded isometric view of the plate and decorative array of the present invention;

Fig. 3 is an exploded isometric view, depicting the plate component of the device, shown upside down;

Fig. 4 is a side elevation of the plate;

Fig. 5 is an exploded cross-section, taken substantially along the line 5-5 of Fig. 4;

Fig. 6 is an isometric view, partially in cross-section, depicting the stacking of two plate and decorative arrays and a layered cake resting thereon;

Fig. 7 is an isometric view of a further embodiment of the present invention, depicting the tiered stacking of two plate and decorative arrays;

Fig. 8 is an exploded isometric view, partially in cross-section, of the embodiment of Fig. 7, depicting the use of columns for the tiered stacking of two plate and decorative arrays;

Fig. 9 is an exploded side elevation, partially in cross-section, taken substantially along the line 9-9 of Fig. 7 and depicting a manner of employing columns between upper and lower plate and decorative arrays;

Fig. 10 is an exploded side elevation, partially in cross-section, similar to Fig. 9, depicting an alternative structure for the upper plate and decorative array; and

Fig. 11 is an isometric view of a further embodiment of the present invention, depicting the tiered stacking of two plate and decorative arrays with a fountain.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

With reference to Fig. 1, one embodiment of the plate and decorative array device according to the present invention, is depicted generally by the numeral 10. It is shown in use, displaying a cake 11 in decorative fashion, where the cake has been placed on a raised plate and a built-in shelf optionally carries a

segment of floral foam to hold and hydrate flowers. With reference to Figs. 2, 4 and 5, the device 10 comprises a plate, indicated generally by the numeral 12 and optionally, a foam member 13. The plate 12 includes a base 14, having a continuous sidewall 15. The plate is open at the top as well as at the bottom, although along the top an internal annular flange 16 is provided a short distance from the top edge, so as to provide an outermost rim 18. A removable disk 20 is provided, which fits within the rim 18 to rest upon the flange 16 and close the upper end of base 14. It is the disk 20, which provides a flat, smooth surface upon which the cake 11 rests, as shown in Fig. 1. The disk 20 can be made in a variety of dimensions although diameters of 10 inches and 16 inches (25.4 cm and 40 cm) are typical and will accommodate most standard sizes of cakes.

The base further includes a shelf 25, which engages the outer surface of the sidewall 15, extending outwardly therefrom. A skirt member 26 extends outwardly and downwardly from the external edge of the shelf 25. The upper end of the skirt 26 juts slightly above the shelf 25 to form an external rim 28. The lower end of the skirt 26 is not coplanar with the bottom of base 14 by design so that a space, indicated generally by the numeral 30 is created beneath the skirt 26 and the table 31 upon which the device 10 rests. The space is adequate to allow fingers to be positioned underneath the skirt to aid in the movement of the device after the cake has been placed thereon.

The skirt 26 can be provided with an embossed decorative motif, such as leaves 33 and flowers 34, or other ornamental design, for the purpose of increasing the decorative presentation of the device 10.

Although the base depicted in the drawings is cylindrical, it is to be appreciated that other geometries *e.g.*, polygons, squares, rectangles, ellipses, or even irregular shapes could be employed. The base can be manufactured from a moldable plastic and thus, a large variety of cross-sectional configurations are possible. Of the various components, at least the disk 20 should comprise an FDA approved, food grade plastic such as polyethylene or carry a coating suitable for direct contact with food products. Nevertheless, the use of a disposable liner, such as paper which may be decorative in nature, *e.g.*, doilies, is also permissible.

The device 10 also optionally includes the foam member 13, which rests upon the shelf 25. As depicted most clearly in Fig. 6, it has a width sufficient to fit within the lateral space bounded between the outer surface of sidewall 15 and the external rim 28. The foam member can be an open cell foam such as phenol-formaldehyde, which can hold water. One such foam suitable is available as OASIS® brand foam, from the assignee of record herein. The foam also has sufficient integrity and rigidity to allow it to receive the stems of flowers 35 and plant forms 36, as depicted in Fig. 1 and allow the member to be handled without breaking. Although the foam is able to hydrate cut flowers, it can likewise support all forms of artificial flowers, as well as other decorative items of a non-floral nature which can be suitably mounted in or carried by the foam. If plant hydration is not important, then the foam medium is not limited to open cell types.

With reference to Fig. 2, it is seen that the foam member 13 can be segmented *e.g.*, into quadrants, 13A-13D, for an embodiment having a cylindrical configuration. By segmenting the members *e.g.*, 13A, they can be placed on the shelf 25 laterally, rather than vertically, a useful consideration when a cake 11 has already been placed on the plate 12.

Recognizing that large cakes can be displayed and that these have an appreciable mass, the disk 20 can be fitted with a plurality of support struts 40, appended from the underside. With reference to Figs. 3 and 5, the struts are tubular and snap into a like plurality of projections 41, frictionally engaging therewith to facilitate their assembly when required. The struts have a height that corresponds with that of the base 14 so that the end 42 of each strut 40 rests on the table surface 31 and prevents any sagging or downward deflection of the disk 20. The disk 20 carries at least one finger hole 43, which is provided to facilitate the removal of disk 20 from the base 14.

As can now be described, completing the decorative array is greatly simplified by the use of the device 10. Using the device, the baker or decorator can place the cake 11 on the disk 20 and attend to the decoration thereof, which is normally elaborate and time-consuming. Meanwhile, the florist can work offsite or at least in advance of cake's arrival, inserting fresh flowers 35 and leaves 36 into the foam member 13. While this can also be a time-consuming operation, it is not

necessary for the florist to wait until after the baker has concluded his or her work. The floral arrangement can be constructed and readily inserted over the cake or against it, in segments, in a matter of moments and, it can even be completed by other personnel, if the florist were unable to remain and conclude the assembly.

5           Alternatively, where the optional foam member is not desired, the upper surface of the base 14, which extends above the shelf 25 can be provided with a decorative embossing, as depicted schematically by the numeral 44. All of the exposed surfaces of the device, can be plated with a metallic finish to enhance the appearance. Further still, flowers and plants, ornaments or other decorative  
10 materials can be placed directly on the shelf 25. When fresh plant materials, such as flowers, are desired, the advantage afforded by the foam member 13 is that live flowers 35 and plants 36 will remain hydrated and fresh for a much greater time.

A second embodiment of a plate and decorative array is depicted in Fig. 6 and is indicated generally by the numeral 50. It employs a device 10 as a  
15 foundation for receipt of a second device, generally 51. The device 10 is essentially the same as described hereinabove. The device 51 comprises a plate 52, and optionally a foam member 53. As noted hereinabove, the devices 10 or 51 can be provided in varying diameters and for this embodiment a smaller diameter *e.g.* 10  
20 inch (25.4 cm), array can be placed onto a 16 inch (40 cm) array. Accordingly, the device 50 can be used separately as devices 10 and 51 or, the two can be stacked together for a grand visual effect.

The plate 52 includes a base 54, having a continuous sidewall 55. The plate is open at the bottom as well as at the top, although along the top an internal annular flange 56 is provided as well as an outermost rim 58. A disk 60 is  
25 provided, which fits within the rim 58 to rest upon the flange 56 and close the upper end of base 54. It is the disk 60, which provides a flat, smooth surface upon which the cake 11 rests, as shown in Fig. 6.

The base 54 further includes a shelf 65, which engages the outer surface of the sidewall 55, extending outwardly therefrom. A skirt member 66 extends  
30 outwardly and downwardly from the external edge of the shelf 65. The upper end of the skirt 66 juts slightly above the shelf 65 to form an external rim 68. The lower



end of the skirt 66 is essentially coplanar with the bottom of base 54 by design so that both ends rest directly on the underlying disk 20.

To provide a pleasing decorative effect, the outermost diameter of the skirt 66 is approximately the same as the diameter of the disk 20, although other configurations resulting in a layered structure are within the scope of the present invention. Also, as noted hereinabove for the device 10, the device 50 is not limited to cylindrical designs, notwithstanding the reference to diameters herein. The skirt 66 can also be provided with an embossed decorative motif, such as depicted on the skirt 26 for the purpose of increasing the decorative presentation of the device 51.

Once again, while the base 54 depicted in the drawing is cylindrical, other geometries *e.g.*, polygons, squares, rectangles, ellipses, or even irregular shapes could be employed. The base 54 can be manufactured from the same moldable plastic as the base 14 and thus, a large variety of cross-sectional configurations are possible. The disk 60 should comprise an FDA approved, food grade plastic, suitable for direct contact with food products. Nevertheless, the use of a disposable liner, such as paper which may be decorative in nature, *e.g.*, doilies, is also permissible.

The device 51 also optionally includes the foam member 53, which rests upon the shelf 65. As depicted most clearly in Fig. 6, it has a width sufficient to fit within the lateral space bounded between the outer surface of sidewall 55 and the external rim 68. The foam member can be an open cell foam such as phenol-formaldehyde, which can hold water. One such foam suitable is available as OASIS® brand foam, noted hereinabove. Again, the foam also has sufficient integrity and rigidity to allow it to receive the stems of flowers and plant forms, or other decorative items and allow the member to be handled without breaking as discussed hereinabove.

Although not shown, the foam member 53 can also be segmented *e.g.*, into quadrants, or other sections, to aid placement onto the shelf 65, as discussed hereinabove. The device 51 can also optionally employ a plurality of support struts 72, appended from the underside of disk 60. The struts 72 are tubular and snap into a like plurality of projections 73, frictionally engaging therewith to facilitate

their assembly when required. The struts have a height that corresponds with that of the base 54 so that the end of each strut 72 rests on the disk 20 to strengthen the disk 60. Use of the device 50 is similar to the description of the device 10 and thus, once the devices 10 and 51 have been assembled, the cake 11 can be  
5 emplaced and the decorative foam arrays 13 and 53 can be added.

Alternatively, although not shown in Fig. 6, the support struts 72 could extend through apertures in the lower disk 20 and extend onto the table or other support surface. Such an embodiment is depicted in Figs. 8 and 9, which will be described subsequently.

10 A third embodiment of a plate and decorative array is depicted in Figs. 7-10 and is indicated generally by the numeral 80. The array 80 provides a tiered arrangement of at least two devices, one of which, device 10, serves as a foundation and a second, elevated device, generally 81. The first device 10 is essentially the same as described hereinabove. The device 81 comprises a plate,  
15 indicated generally by the numeral 82 and optionally a foam member 83. As noted hereinabove, the devices 10 or 81 can be provided in varying diameters and for this embodiment a smaller diameter *e.g.* 10 inch (25.4 cm), array can be tiered onto a 16 inch (40 cm) array.

The plate 82 includes a base 84, having a continuous sidewall 85. The  
20 plate is open at the top as well as at the bottom, although along the top an internal annular channel 86 is provided a short distance from the top edge so as to provide an outermost rim 18. The channel is formed by an annular flange which is wider than the flange 16 of the lower device 10 and it can either terminate at its inner edge or by an downwardly extending lip 88. An outermost rim 89 is provided at  
25 the top of sidewall 85. A disk 90 fits within the rim 88 to rest upon the channel 86 and provides a flat, smooth surface. The disk 90 carries at least one finger hole 91, which is provided to facilitate the removal of disk 90 from the base 84.

Once again, while the base 84 depicted in the drawing is cylindrical, other geometries *e.g.*, polygons, squares, rectangles, ellipses, or even irregular  
30 shapes could be employed. The base 84 can be manufactured from the same moldable plastic as the base 14 and thus, a large variety of cross-sectional configurations are possible. The disk 90 should comprise an FDA approved, food

grade plastic, suitable for direct contact with food products. Nevertheless, the use of a disposable liner, such as paper which may be decorative in nature, *e.g.*, doilies, is also permissible.

5 The base 84 further includes a shelf 95, which engages the outer surface of the sidewall 85, encompassing the latter. A skirt member 96 extends outwardly and downwardly from the external edge of the shelf 95. The upper end of the skirt 96 juts slightly above the shelf 95 to form an external rim 98. A recess 99 is provided in the lower end of the skirt 96 to accommodate the floor member 88 so that both rest on the underlying disk 20A.

10 The disk 20A is similar to the disk 20, carrying at least one finger hole 43, to facilitate the removal of disk from the base 84. However, unlike the disk 20, the disk 20A also has a plurality of apertures 100 which allow columns 101 to pass therethrough. While two of four such holes and column members are depicted, a greater or lesser number could be employed, depending upon the design of the array 80. The columns 101 can be hollow or solid and are provided to elevate the device 81 over the device 10, giving the device 80 a tiered structure. The upper end 102 of each column extends to the underside of channel 86 so that the columns support the device 81 in an elevated position, as depicted in Fig. 9. The columns 101 are inserted into the floor member and then passed through the apertures 100  
15 to rest on the table 31 or other flat surface. As will be appreciated, the columns 101 could also mate with lugs or sockets (not shown), extending from the channel 86 for assembling the columns between devices.

20 As noted hereinabove for the device 10, the device 81 is not limited to cylindrical designs, notwithstanding the reference to diameters herein. The skirt 96 can also be provided with an embossed decorative motif, as depicted in Fig. 7, or as provided on the skirt 26 of device 10 for the purpose of increasing the decorative presentation of the device 51.

25 The device 81 also optionally includes the foam member 83, which rests upon the shelf 95. As depicted most clearly in Fig. 9, it has a width sufficient to fit within the lateral space bounded between the outer surface of sidewall 85 and the external rim 98. The foam member can be an open cell foam such as phenol-formaldehyde, which can hold water. One such foam suitable is available as  
30

OASIS®, from the assignee of record herein. The foam also has sufficient integrity and rigidity to allow it to receive the stems of flowers and plant forms, as depicted in Fig. 1 and allow the member to be handled without breaking. Although not shown, the foam member 83 can also be segmented *e.g.*, into quadrants, or other sections, to aid placement onto the shelf 95, as discussed hereinabove. If the optional foam member 83 is not provided, the upper portion of the base 84 can be embossed, as depicted schematically by the numeral 103, to provide a decorative effect.

In Fig. 10, an adaptation from Figs. 7-10 is depicted for the array 80. Basically the two devices 10 and 81 are employed as described, the difference being in the upper disk 90A. As a means of anchoring a cake to the disk, the disk 90A provides a plurality of narrow projections 105, which will pierce the bottom face of the cake as it is placed upon the disk. Of course, if that feature is not required, the disk 90A can readily be inverted to present the smooth flat surface of the disk 90. In similar fashion, although not shown, the disks described in the previous embodiments can be provided with projections for the same purpose.

While the array 80 depicts two devices in a tiered arrangement, practice of the present invention does not preclude the addition of one or more further tiered devices, resting upon the second or upper device of 80. In like manner, tiers can be created with less than or more than four column members.

Another adaptation of the array 80 is to utilize a complete device 10, as described herein and a modified second device 81, which does not provide the external shelf and skirt members or optional foam member, resting on the shelf. While such an embodiment has not been depicted, the array 80 includes such a construction. Similarly, another adaptation of the array 80 is to utilize a modified device 10, which does not provide the external shelf and skirt members or optional foam member, resting on the shelf, with a complete second device 81, as described herein. While this embodiment has also not been depicted, the array 80 includes such a construction.

A further adaptation of the array 80 is the provision of a water fountain, which is depicted in Fig. 11. For ease of discussion, the array 80 described with reference to Figs. 7-10 is presented which includes a tiered arrangement of at least

two devices, device 10, which serves as a foundation and a second device 81, which is elevated over the device 10. To the extent that many of the previous components comprising the two devices are the same as described before, like reference numerals have been employed in Fig. 11. The principal difference is the length of columns 101, which are sufficiently longer, as shown in Fig. 11, in order to provide for the fountain assembly, indicated generally by the numeral 110.

Fountain assembly 110 comprises a circular reservoir 111, a pump housing and basin 112, a hollow central column 113, through which water or other suitable liquid 114 is circulated and a series of elevated trays 115-117, optionally provided for a waterfall effect. The trays are of decreasing diameter, with the lowermost tray 115 being the greatest, followed by tray 116, immediately above, which has a lesser diameter and finally tray 117, immediately above tray 116, which has a lesser diameter. While three such trays have been depicted, it should be appreciated that the invention need not be so limited, as more or less than three trays, or even no tray, can be employed to provide the desired fountain and/or fountain and waterfall effect.

In order to accommodate the fountain assembly 110, the disc 20A is substituted with a disc 20B the latter providing a large aperture 118, of sufficient diameter to allow the lower sidewall 119 of reservoir 111 to rest therein and allow the upper sidewall 120 to extend above the disc, thereby to show the liquid 114. The reservoir 111 and basin 112 are made of a suitable material such as a thermoplastic and it may be desirable for at least the reservoir to be clear. Generally, the reservoir can be any shape that fits within the device 10 and it will have a greater diameter, or other external dimensions, than the lowermost tray 117, where such trays are employed. The base 121 of reservoir 111 carries a centrally located boss 122, through which the column 113 passes, to rest on the bottom 123 of basin 112. As is known, a submersible pump 124 is carried within basin 112. The power cord 125, passes through a sealed aperture in base 123 and though an aperture 126 in the base 14 of device 10, where it can be connected to an outlet in a suitable manner, not shown. The pump 124 is also a component of said fountain assembly 110.

The basin 112 is affixed to or carried by the reservoir 111, as depicted in Fig. 11. The design is not critical to the fountain assembly 110, the goal being to provide a basin dimensioned sufficiently to house the pump and accumulate a quantity of fluid for pumping and yet still fit within the device 10, so as to be out  
5 of view in use. Accordingly, the union between the basin 112 and the reservoir 111 should be fluid-tight, to prevent any external leakage, but allowing communication between the two, the objective being to provide a source for fluid to be collected and pumped from the basin 112, through the column 113 and out the top, eventually to return first to the reservoir and then into the basin for continuous re-  
10 circulation. This can be accomplished with a series of holes or other passageways in the bottom of reservoir 111, through which fluid can drain into the basin 112.

The pump 124, is provided with inlets and outlets, the latter communicating directly into the hollow column 113, so that the liquid 114 is pumped to the uppermost tray 117. The column 113 passes through the base of  
15 each of the trays 115-117, as depicted in Fig. 11, and the upper end of column 113 is open, at 128, to allow the liquid to escape, where it first fills tray 117. In one embodiment, holes are provided in the bottom of tray 117, around the circumference, allowing the liquid to drain in a plurality of columns into the underlying tray 116. In similar fashion, holes are also provided in the bottom of  
20 tray 116, around the circumference, allowing the liquid to drain in a plurality of columns into the underlying tray 115 and holes, provided in the bottom of tray 115, around the circumference, allow the liquid to drain in a final plurality of columns into the reservoir 111.

In another embodiment (not shown) there are no holes in the trays and  
25 the liquid exiting column 13 fills the first tray 117 until it exceeds the capacity of tray 117 and flows over and around the outermost edge and falls into the tray 116. Likewise, when tray 116 is full, the liquid flows over and around the outermost edge and falls into the tray 115, which in turn, overflows allowing the liquid to return to the reservoir 111.

30 In either instance, a fountain and waterfall effect is provided beneath the upper device 10, which carries a cake, or other article 11. It is to be appreciated that the fountain assembly 110 can utilize no trays and a shorter central column

113 (not shown) so that the circulating liquid merely bubbles out of the top of column 113 and into the reservoir.

It is to be appreciated that while the fountain assembly 110, has been described in conjunction with the device 80, variations are within the scope of the present invention as necessary to achieve other fountain arrays, the assembly 110 being depicted as one of many known fountain and waterfall mechanisms. The advantage of the present invention, is that the pump mechanism and power cord can be effectively removed from view by employing a suitably dimensioned base device 10.

It should now be appreciated that the arrays described herein are not necessarily limited to usage of the components specifically depicted in the drawings. In other words, the devices 10 and 51 need not be used together, but can be employed separately and the same is true for the devices 10 and 81. Similarly, the supporting struts for the array 50, and the columns for the array 80, can be assembled in various manners as would be evident from the foregoing disclosure as well as from means understood by those of ordinary skill in the art.

Thus, it should be evident that the arrays and method of the present invention are effective in providing a decorative setting for holding and displaying cakes. Nevertheless, it is to be appreciated that the arrays 10, 50 and 80 can also be employed for holding and displaying other articles, not necessarily limited to food products. Also, while the arrays have been depicted in a cylindrical configuration, the invention is not necessarily limited thereto. And, a variety of decorative materials can be positioned on the shelf or shelves of the devices. Finally, as noted above, a plurality of fountain arrays can be incorporated into the plate and decorative array of the present invention.

While the arrays can optionally carry a foam member to assist with the placement of decorative materials, use of a foam member is not limited to open cell polymer materials. Such materials can be employed where the decorative materials include live plant matter, which desirably require hydration. Where hydration is not necessary or important, closed cell foams and other media can be employed to assist with carrying decorative materials.

Based upon the foregoing disclosure, it should now be apparent that the use of the arrays described herein will meet the aspects set forth hereinabove. It is, therefore, to be understood that any variations evident fall within the scope of the claimed invention and thus, the selection of specific component elements can be determined without departing from the spirit of the invention herein disclosed and described. Thus, the scope of the invention shall include all modifications and variations that may fall within the scope of the attached claims.



**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A plate and decorative array for displaying articles comprising:  
2 a plate member having  
3 a base, having a continuous sidewall;  
4 a shelf engaging the outer surface of said continuous sidewall;  
5 a skirt member carried at the external edge of said shelf; and  
6 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
  
- 1 2. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 1, wherein said disk is  
2 provided with a plurality of projections from the underside and said device  
3 further includes a plurality of struts, each said strut being engageable with a  
4 projection.
  
- 1 3. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 2, wherein said struts are  
2 coplanar with said bottom of said base.
  
- 1 4. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 1, wherein said disk is  
2 provided with a plurality of projections from the upperside, engageable with  
3 the article placed on said disk.
  
- 1 5. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 1, further comprising  
2 a foam member configured to rest on said shelf, said foam member  
3 having sufficient integrity to hold at least one material selected to enhance  
4 the appearance of the displayed article.
  
- 1 6. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 5, wherein said at least one  
2 material comprises cut flowers.
  
- 1 7. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 5, wherein said foam  
2 member comprises an open cell polymeric foam.  
3

- 4 8. A plate and decorative array for displaying articles comprising:  
5 at least first and second devices, each said device providing a plate  
6 member, one of said devices having a first diameter and the other of said  
7 devices having a second diameter, less than said first diameter, wherein said  
8 second device is adapted to rest upon said first device.
- 1 9. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 8, wherein each said first  
2 and second devices comprise  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base, having a continuous sidewall;  
5 a shelf engaging the outer surface of said continuous sidewall;  
6 a skirt member carried at the external edge of said shelf; and  
7 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
- 1 10. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 9, wherein said each disk  
2 is provided with a plurality of projections from the underside and said each  
3 device further includes a plurality of struts, each said strut of said first device  
4 being engageable with a projection from said disk of said first device and each  
5 said strut of said second device being engageable with a projection from said  
6 disk of said second device.
- 1 11. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 9, wherein said second disk  
2 is provided with a plurality of projections from the upperside, engageable  
3 with the article placed on said disk.
- 1 12. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 9, further comprising a  
2 foam member configured to rest on each said shelf, said foam member having  
3 sufficient integrity to hold at least one material selected to enhance the  
4 appearance of the displayed article.
- 1 13. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 12, wherein said at least  
2 one material comprises cut flowers.

- 1 14. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 12, wherein said foam  
2 member comprises an open cell polymeric foam.
- 1 15. A plate and decorative array for displaying articles comprising:  
2 at least two devices, each said device providing a plate member, one of  
3 said devices having a first diameter and the other of said devices having a  
4 second diameter, less than said first diameter; and  
5 means for elevating said second device over said first device, said first  
6 and second devices being joined together in a tiered fashion by said means for  
7 elevating.
- 1 16. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 15, wherein said first device  
2 comprises  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base, having a continuous sidewall;  
5 a shelf engaging the outer surface of said continuous sidewall;  
6 a skirt member carried at the external edge of said shelf; and  
7 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
- 1 17. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 16, wherein said disk is  
2 provided with a plurality of apertures.
- 1 18. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 16, further comprising a  
2 foam member configured to rest on said shelf, said foam member having  
3 sufficient integrity to hold at least one material selected to enhance the  
4 appearance of the displayed article.
- 1 19. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 18, wherein said at least  
2 one material comprises cut flowers.

- 1 20. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 18, wherein said foam  
2 member comprises an open cell polymeric foam.
- 1 21. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 15, wherein said second  
2 device comprises  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base having a continuous sidewall;  
5 a shelf engaging the outer surface of said continuous sidewall;  
6 a skirt member carried at the external edge of said shelf; and  
7 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
- 1 22. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 21, wherein the upper end  
2 of said base provides an annular channel and said means for elevating device  
3 includes a plurality of columns, each said column providing vertical support  
4 for said annular channel.
- 1 23. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 22, wherein said columns  
2 pass through said apertures and are essentially coplanar with the bottom of  
3 said base.
- 1 24. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 21, wherein said disc of said  
2 second device is provided with a plurality of projections from the upperside,  
3 engageable with the article placed on said disk.
- 1 25. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 21, further comprising a  
2 foam member configured to rest on said shelf, said foam member having  
3 sufficient integrity to hold at least one material selected to enhance the  
4 appearance of the displayed article.  
5
- 6 26. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 25, wherein said at least  
7 one material comprises cut flowers.

- 1 27. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 25, wherein said foam  
2 member comprises an open cell polymeric foam.
- 1 28. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 15, wherein said first device  
2 comprises  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base, having a continuous sidewall;  
5 a shelf engaging the outer surface of said continuous sidewall;  
6 a skirt member carried at the external edge of said shelf; and  
7 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
- 1 29. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 28, wherein said disk is  
2 provided with a plurality of apertures.
- 1 30. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 29, wherein said second  
2 device comprises  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base, having a continuous sidewall; and  
5 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
- 1 31. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 30, wherein the upper end  
2 of said base provides an annular channel and said means for elevating device  
3 includes a plurality of columns, each said column providing vertical support  
4 for said annular channel.
- 1 32. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 31, wherein said columns  
2 pass through said apertures and are essentially coplanar with the bottom of  
3 said base.
- 4 33. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 30, wherein said disc of said  
5 second device is provided with a plurality of projections from the upperside,  
6 engageable with the article placed on said disk.

- 1 34. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 15, wherein said first device  
2 comprises  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base, having a continuous sidewall; and  
5 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
- 1 35. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 34, wherein said disk is  
2 provided with a plurality of apertures.
- 1 36. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 35, wherein said second  
2 device comprises  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base having a continuous sidewall;  
5 a shelf engaging the outer surface of said continuous sidewall;  
6 a skirt member carried at the external edge of said shelf; and  
7 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base.
- 1 37. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 36, wherein the upper end  
2 of said base provides an annular channel and said means for elevating device  
3 includes a plurality of columns, each said column providing vertical support  
4 for said annular channel.
- 1 38. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 37, wherein said columns  
2 pass through said apertures and are essentially coplanar with the bottom of  
3 said base.
- 1 39. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 36, wherein said disc of said  
2 second device is provided with a plurality of projections from the upperside,  
3 engageable with the article placed on said disk..

- 1 40. A plate and decorative array comprising:  
2 at least two devices, each said device providing a plate member, one of  
3 said devices having a first diameter and the other of said devices having a  
4 second diameter, less than said first diameter;  
5 means for elevating said second device over said first device, said first  
6 and second devices being joined together in a tiered fashion by said means for  
7 elevating; and  
8 a fountain assembly, located between said first and second devices.
- 1 41. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 40, wherein said fountain  
2 assembly comprises  
3 a reservoir for liquid;  
4 a pump housing and basin;  
5 a hollow central column through which a suitable liquid is pumped, said  
6 column being open at its upper end allowing said liquid to exist therefrom;  
7 and  
8 a submersible pump, carried in said basin.
- 1 42. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 41, wherein said first device  
2 comprises  
3 a plate member having  
4 a base, providing a continuous sidewall; and  
5 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base, said disc  
6 having a central aperture for receipt of a portion of said reservoir.
- 1 43. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 42, wherein said basin and  
2 said reservoir are connected together, said basin being carried beneath said  
3 reservoir, permitting fluid to drain from said reservoir into said basin.
- 1 44. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 43, wherein said column  
2 extends downwardly through said reservoir and into said basin and said

3 pump moves said liquid into said column from said basin and through said  
4 column to exit above said reservoir.

1 45. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 41, said fountain assembly  
2 further comprising

3 at least one tray, having a diameter less than the diameter of said  
4 reservoir, supported by and encompassing said column, said column  
5 extending above said tray so that liquid exiting said column flows into said  
6 tray.

1 46. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 45, further comprising  
2 a second tray, having a diameter less than the diameter of said first tray,  
3 supported by and encompassing said column, said column extending above  
4 said second tray so that liquid exiting said column flows into said second tray  
5 and upon overflowing, flows into said first tray.

1 47. A plate and decorative array, as set forth in claim 46, further comprising  
2 a third tray, having a diameter less than the diameter of said second  
3 tray, supported by and encompassing said column, said column extending  
4 above said third tray so that liquid exiting said column flows into said third  
5 tray and upon overflowing, flows into said second tray.

1 48. A method for holding and displaying articles utilizing a plate and decorative  
2 array, having

3 a plate member having

4 a base, having a continuous sidewall;

5 a shelf engaging the outer surface of said continuous sidewall;

6 a skirt member carried at the external edge of said shelf; and

7 a disk adapted to engage with the upper end of said base; said

8 method comprising:

9 placing an article on said disk; and



10                   separately decorating said shelf with at least one material selected to  
11                   enhance the appearance of said displayed article.

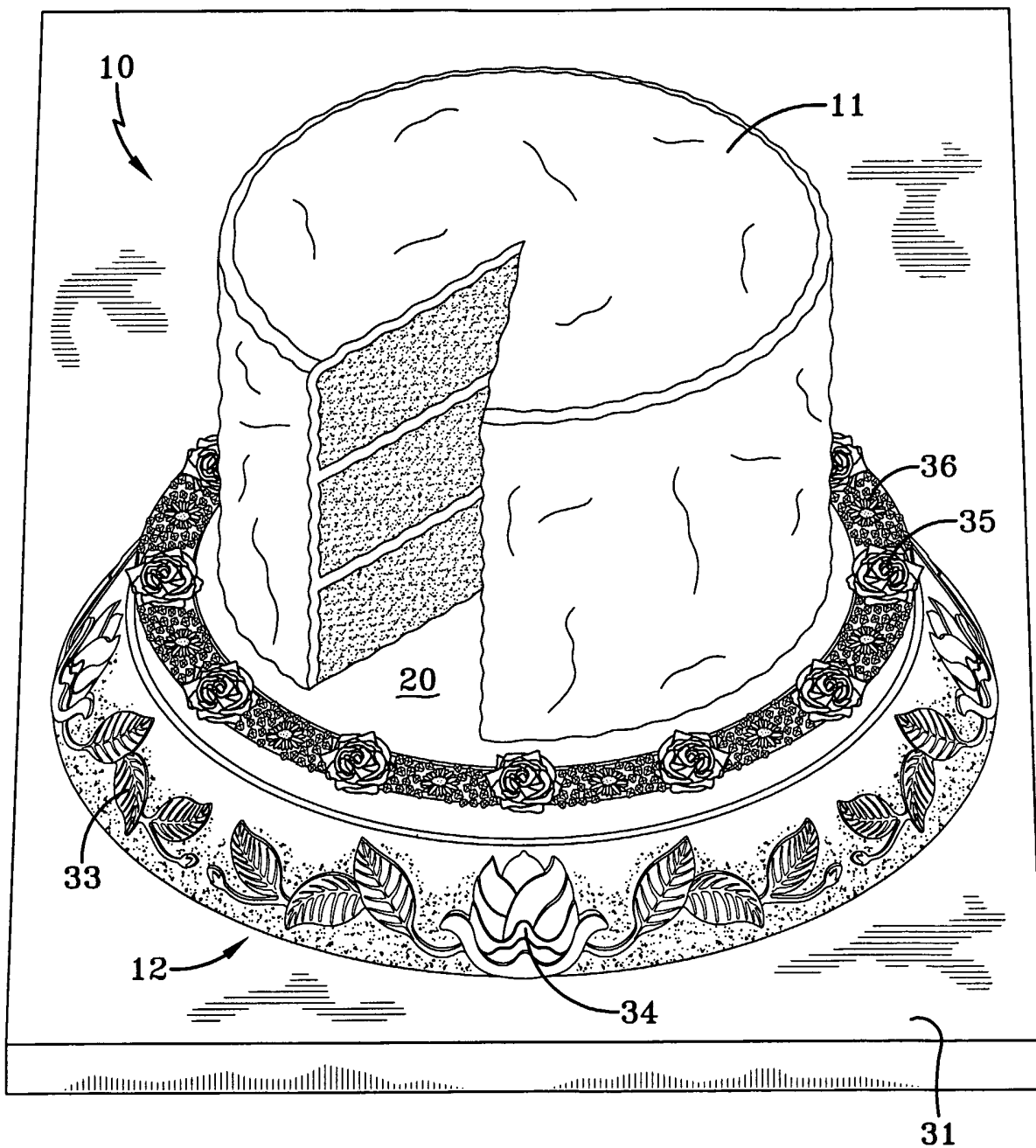


FIG-1

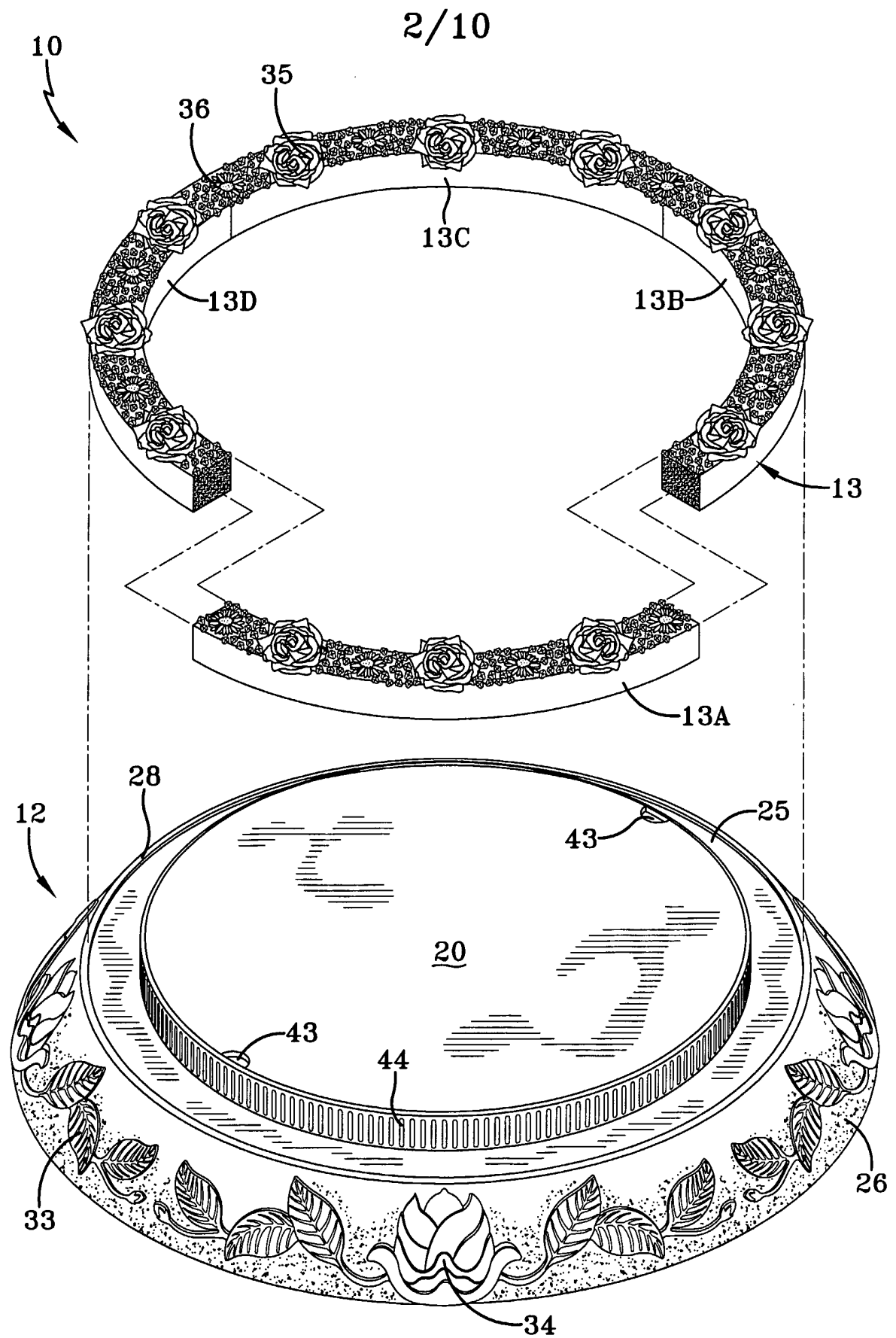


FIG-2

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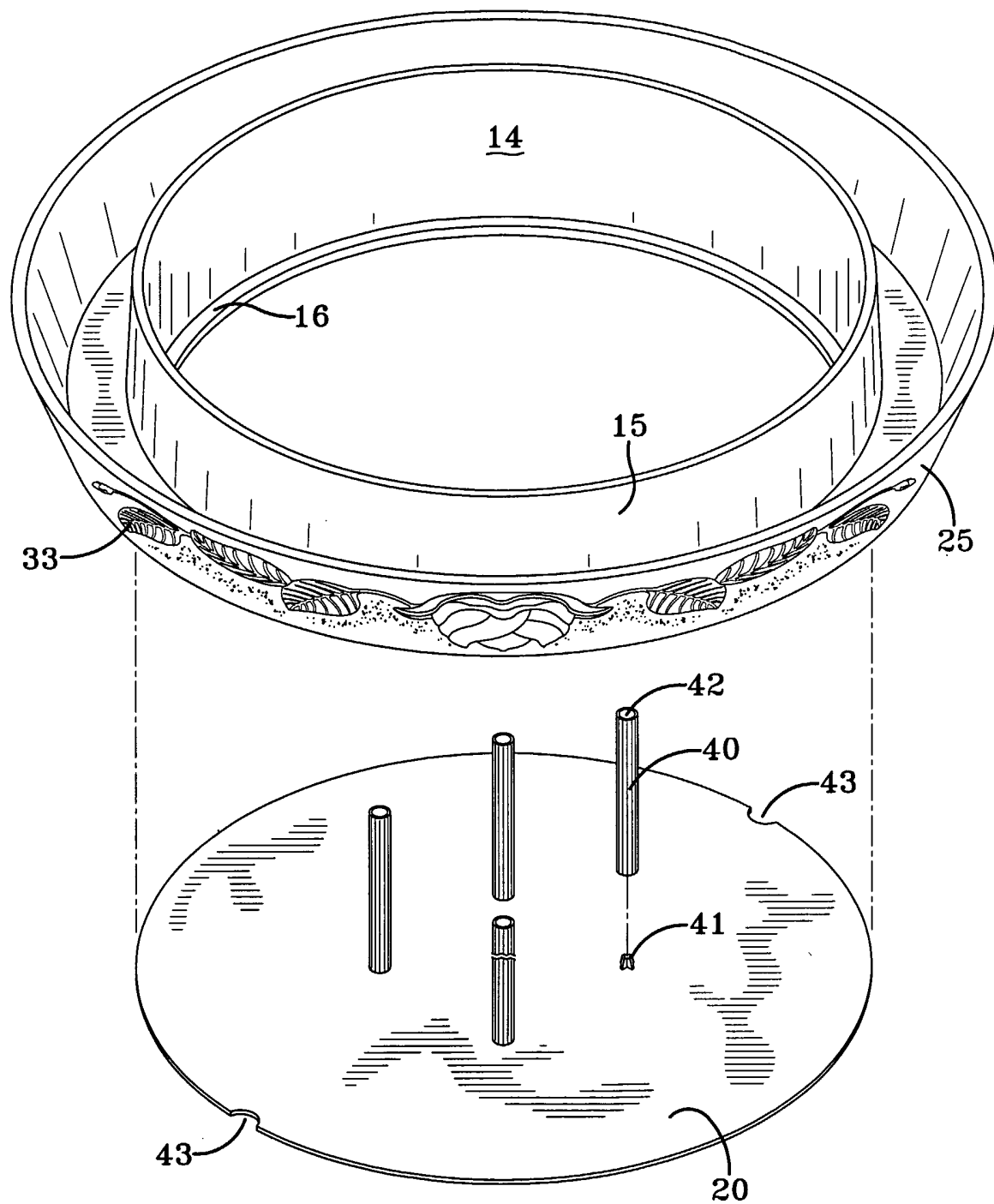


FIG-3

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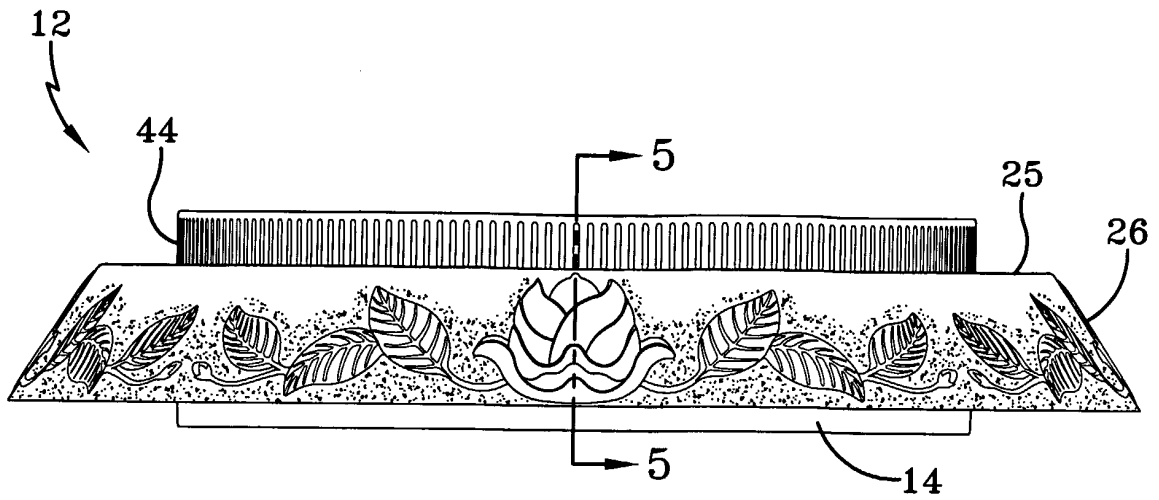


FIG-4

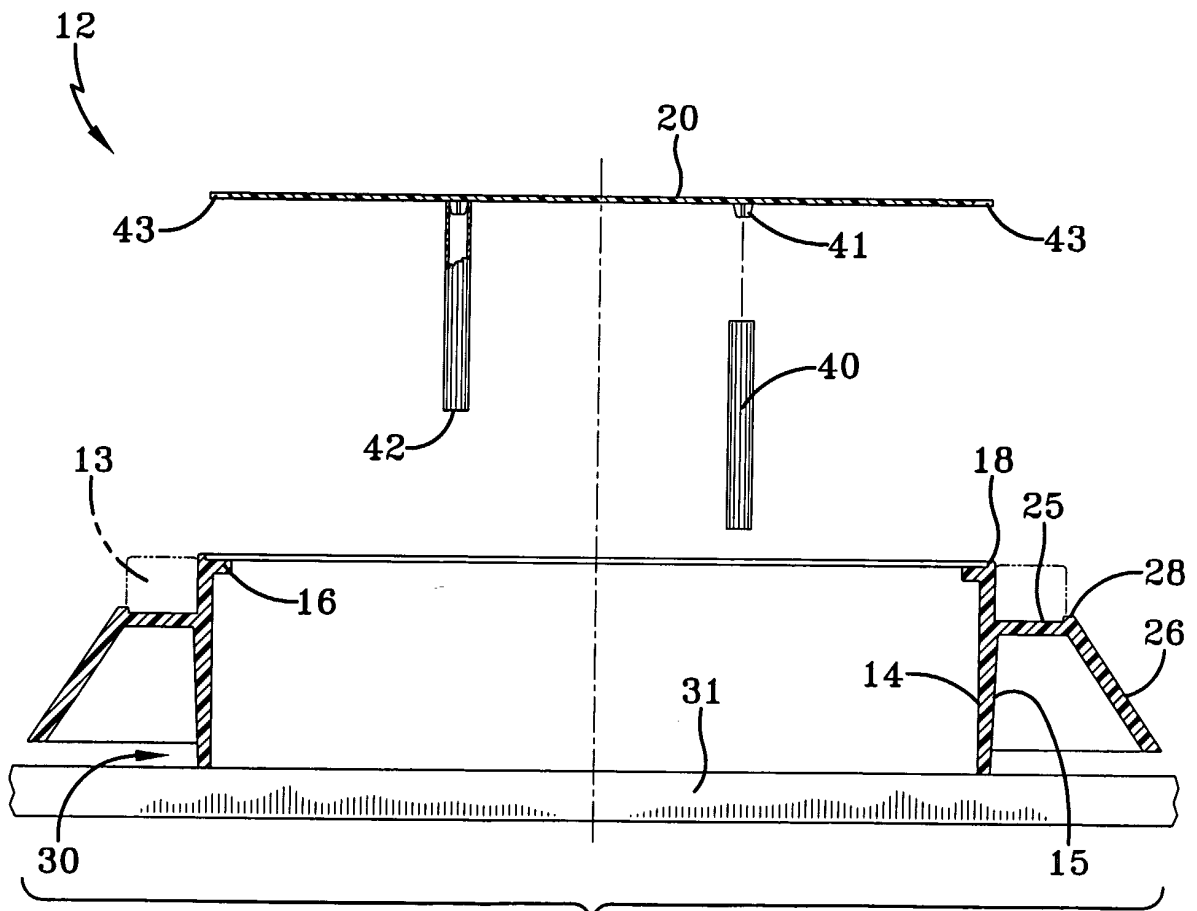


FIG-5

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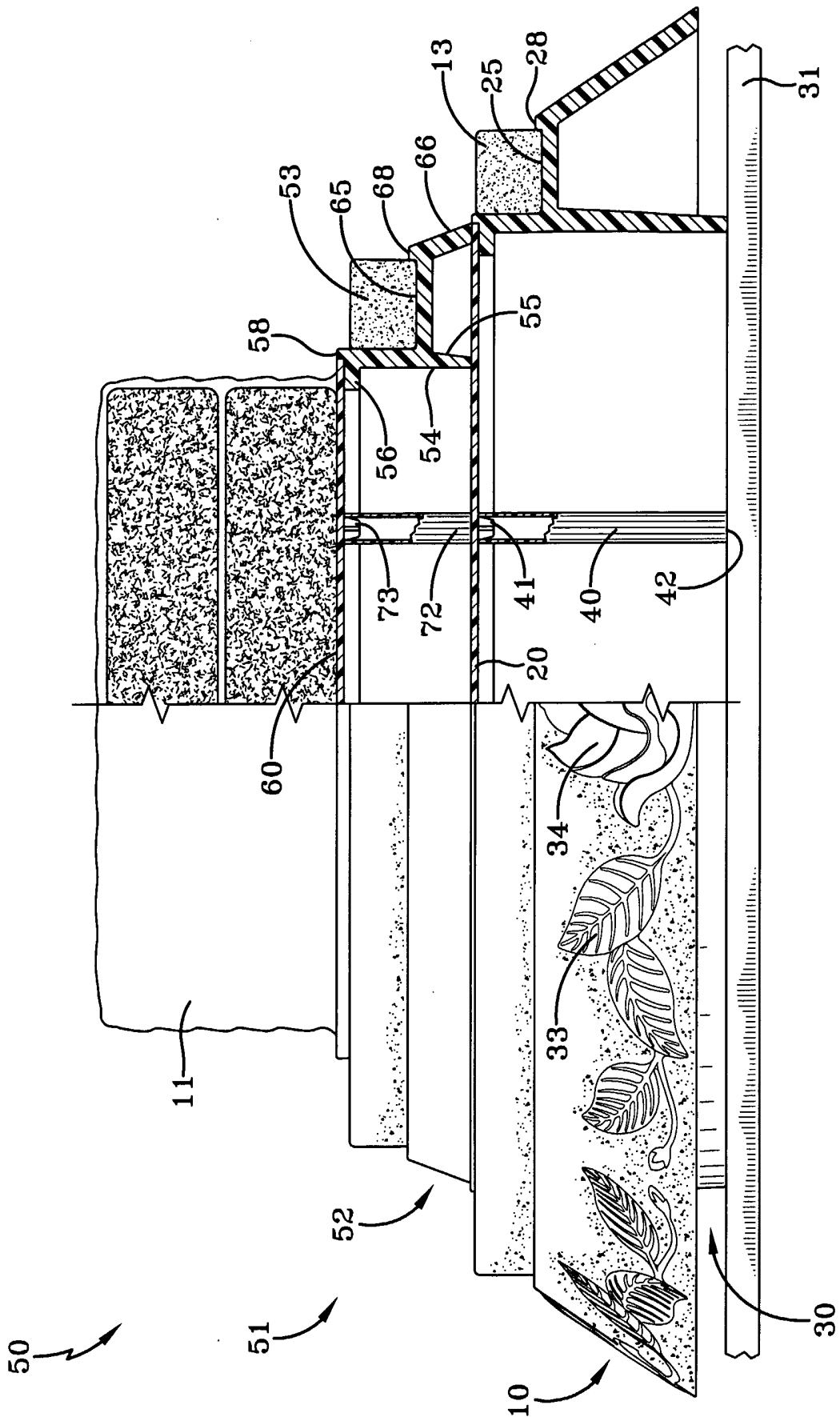


FIG-6

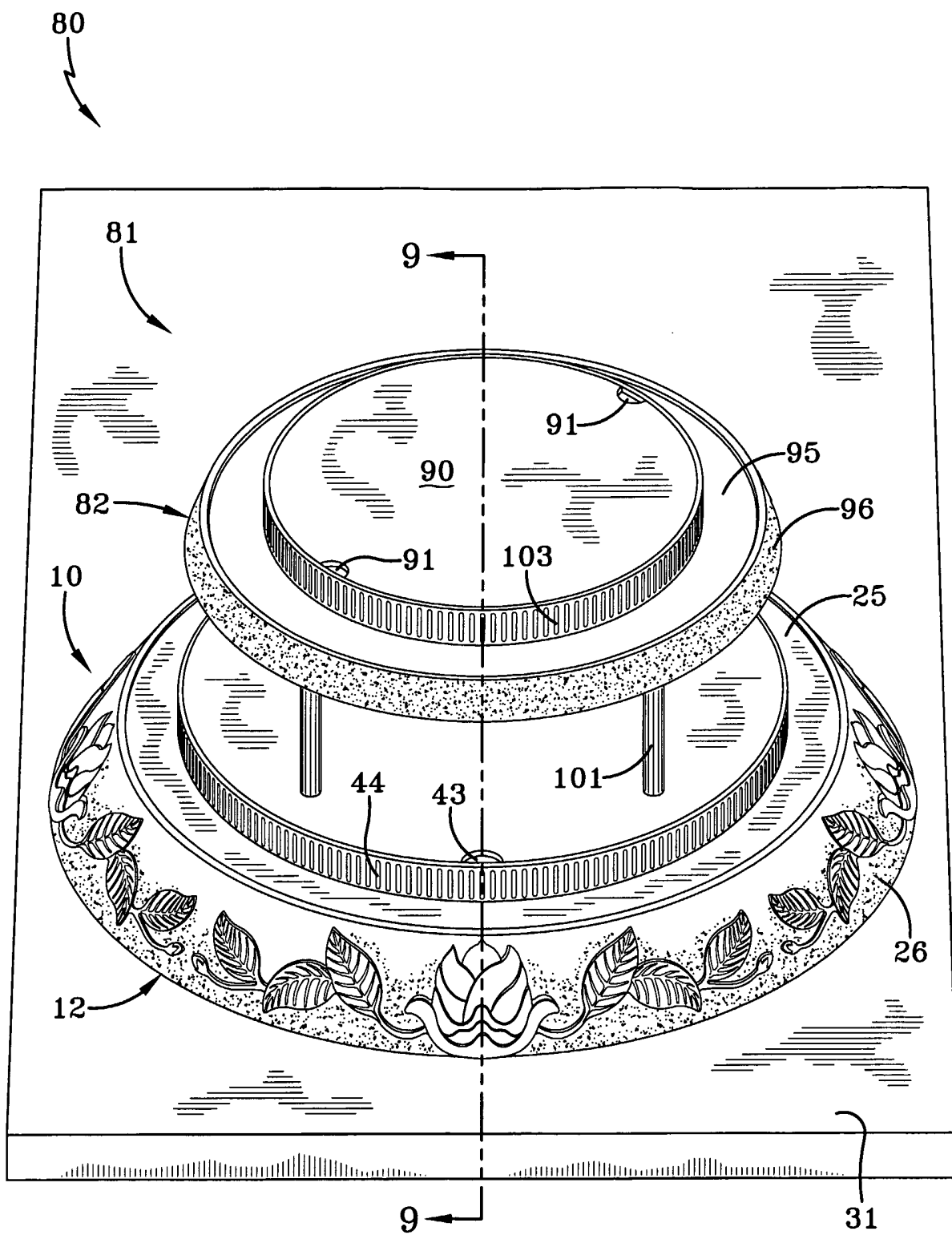


FIG-7

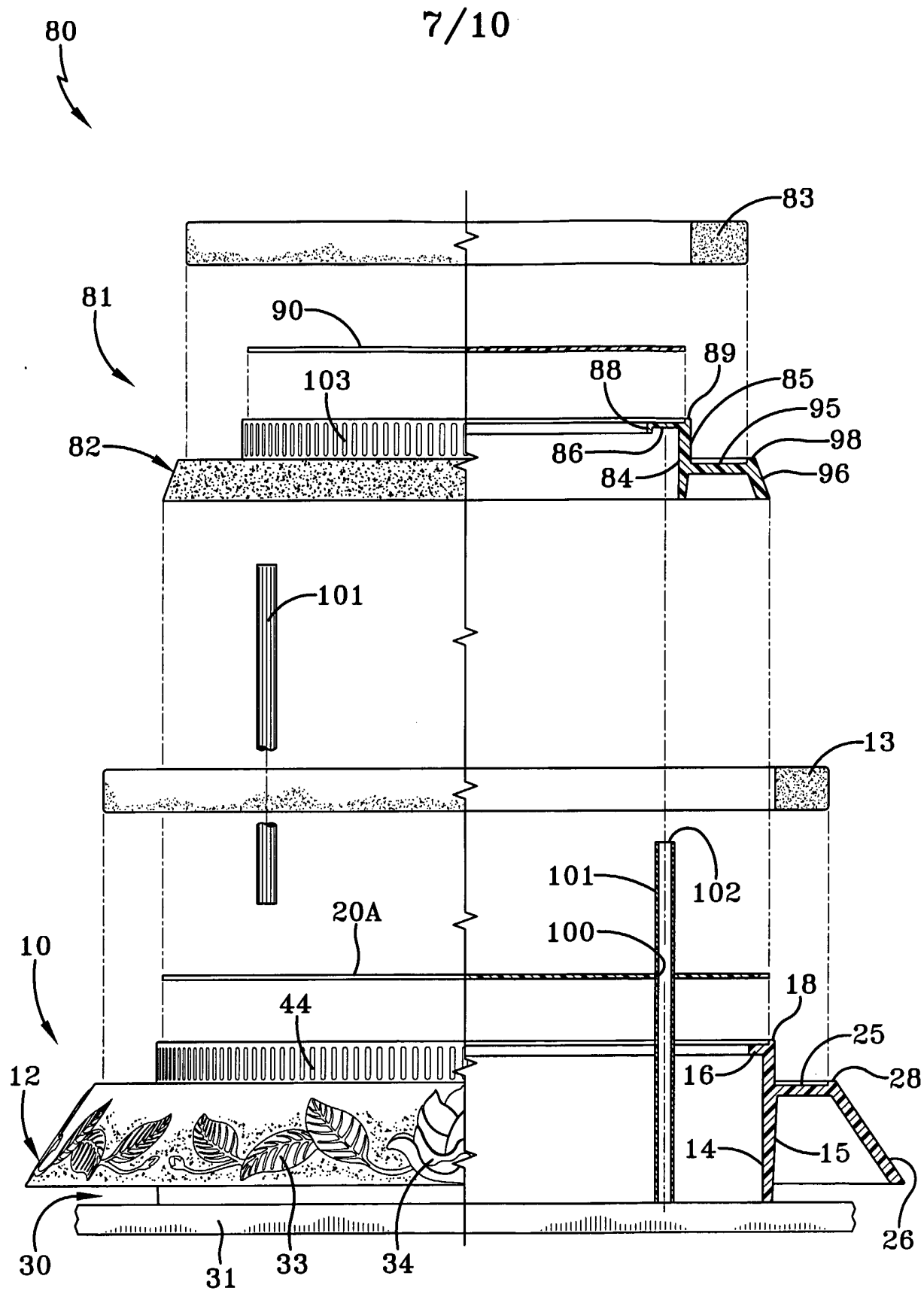


FIG-8



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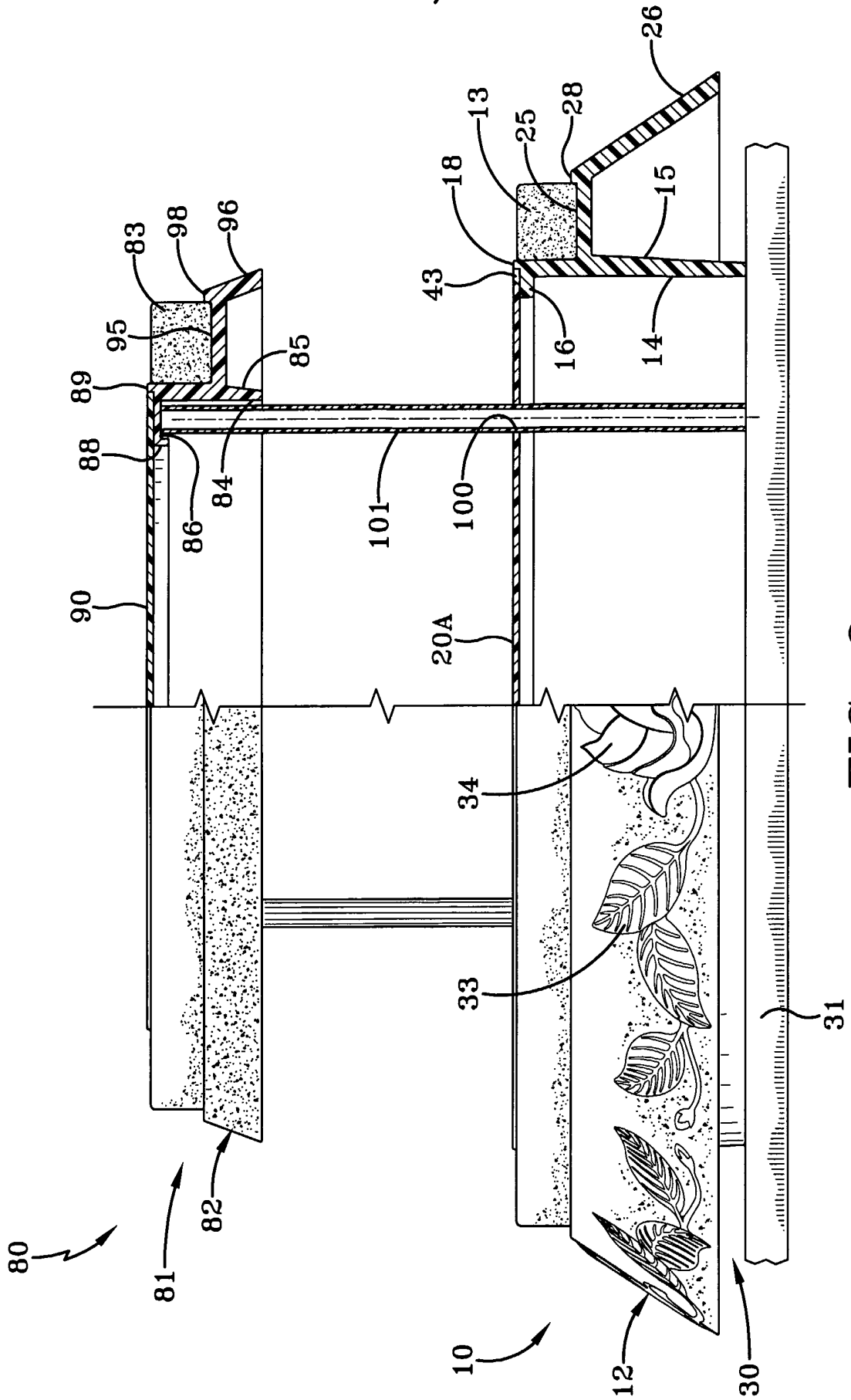


FIG-9

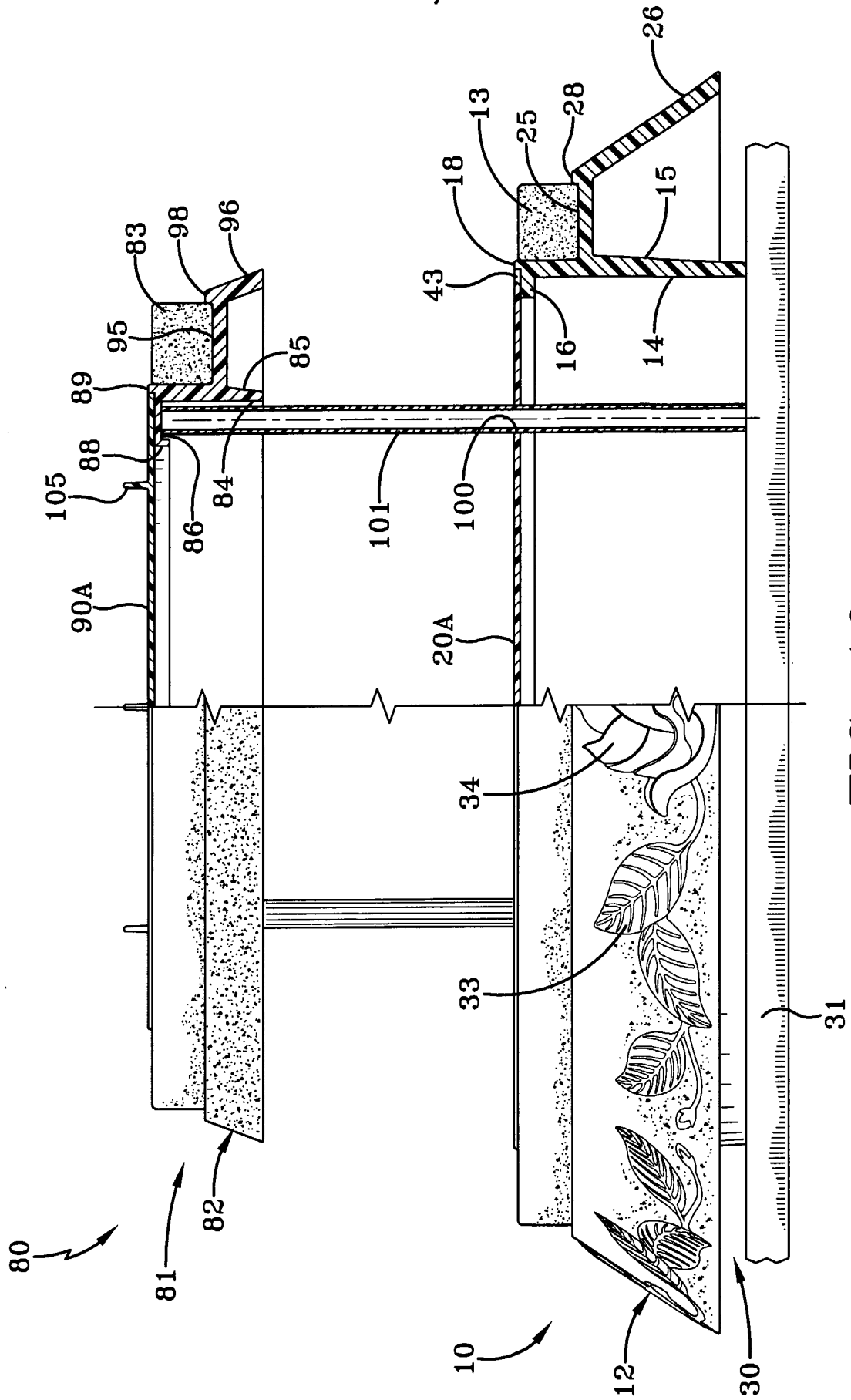


FIG-10

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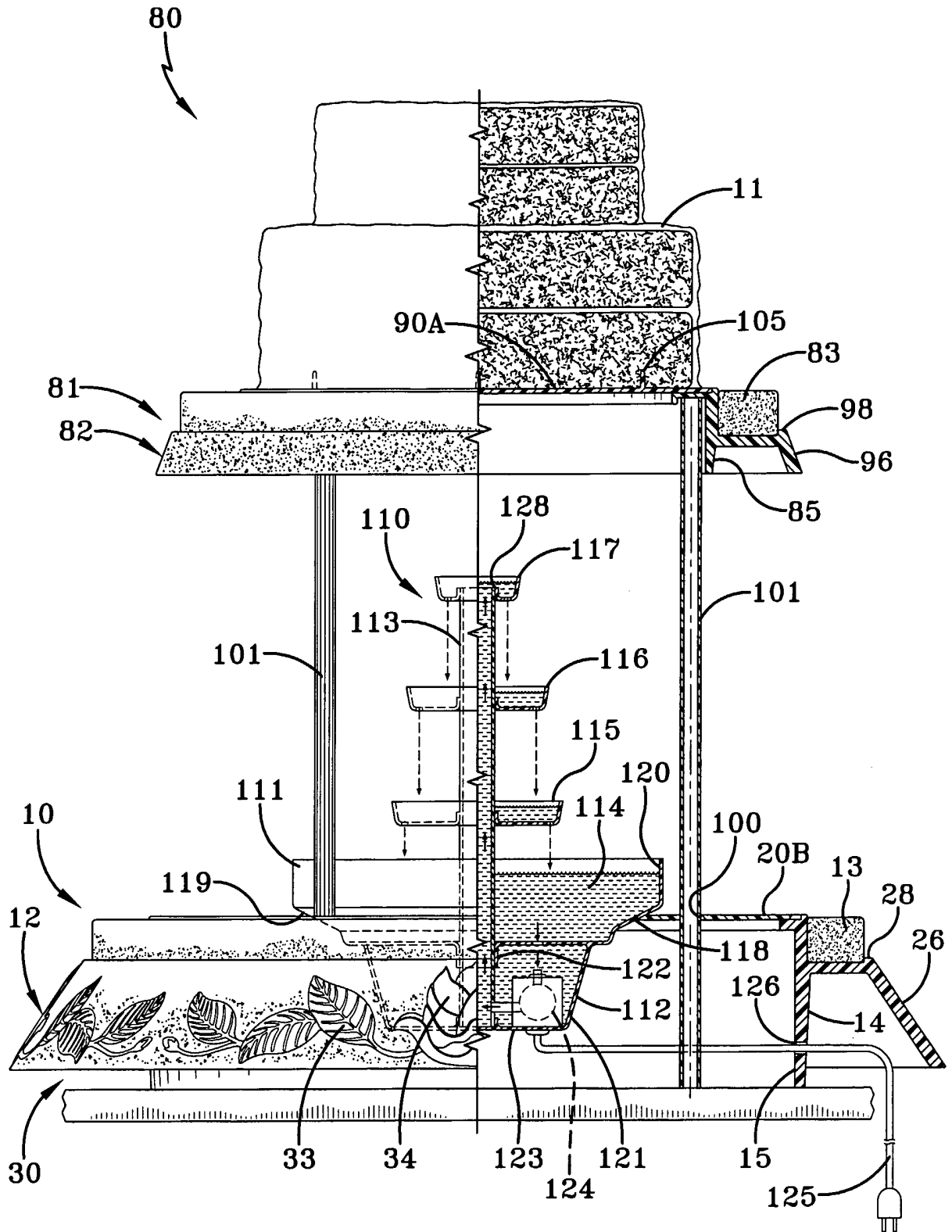


FIG-11