

[54] BOARD GAME APPARATUS

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[58] Field of Search ..... **273/1, 130, 131, 134, 136, 273/139**

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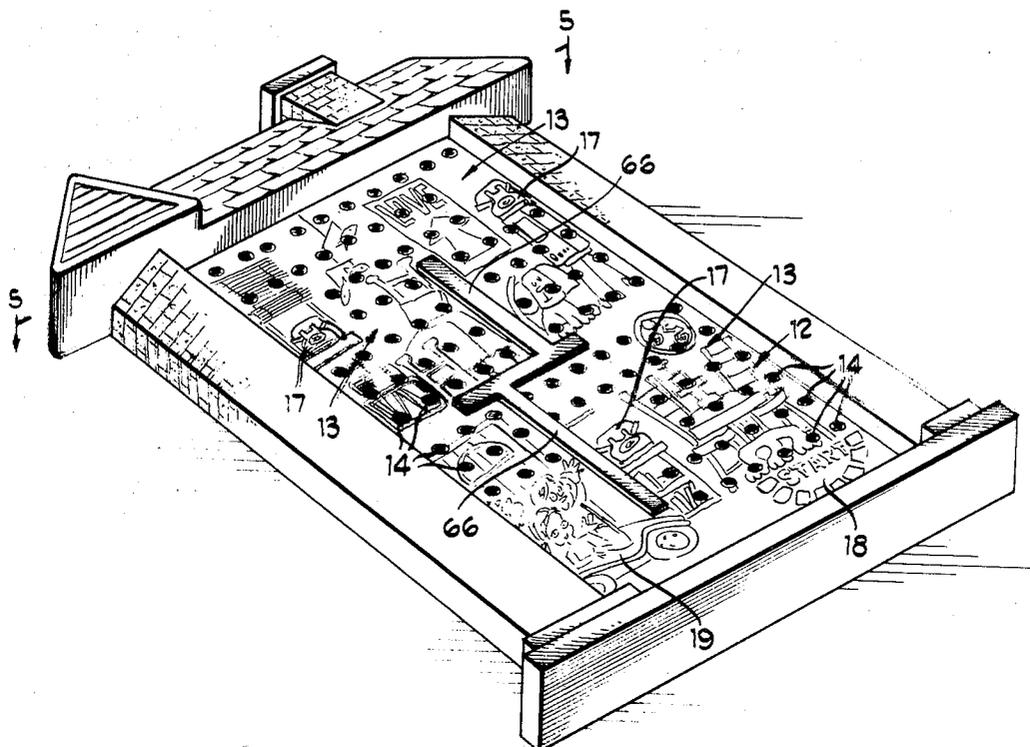
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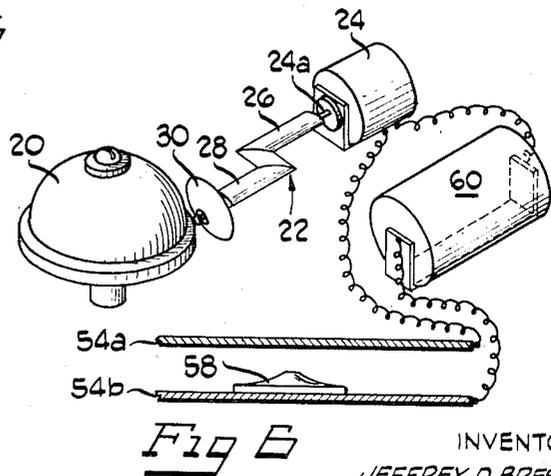
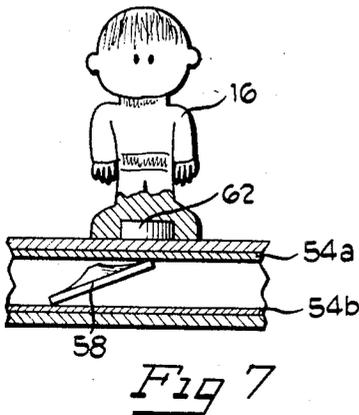
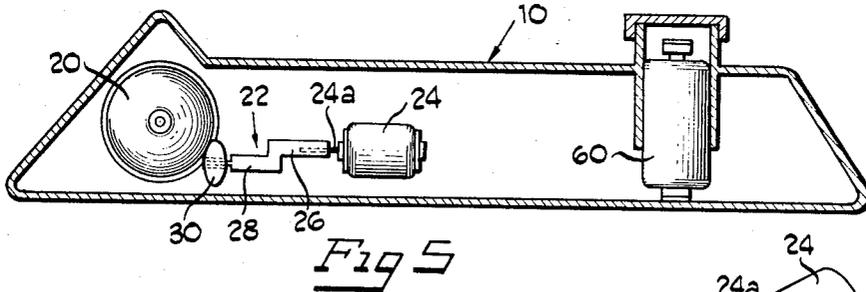
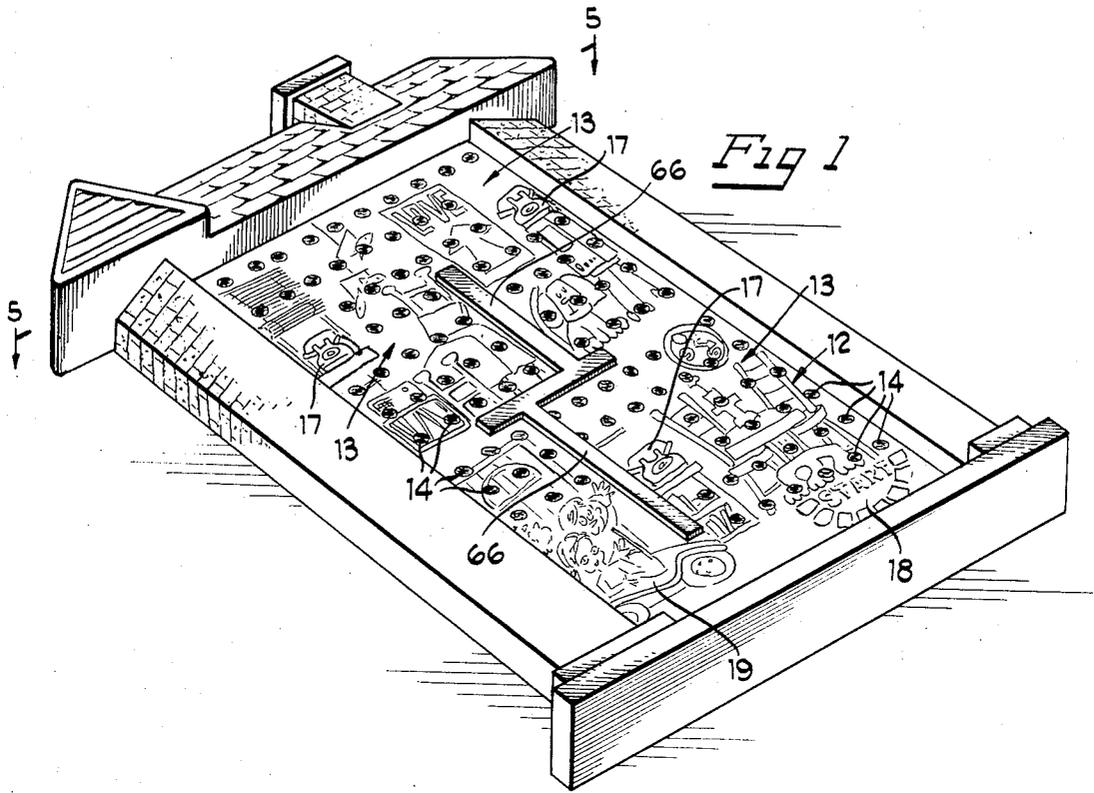
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

An amusement device wherein a generally flat base is provided defining a playing area having a plurality of playing positions arranged in a desired pattern and over which playing pieces are manipulated arbitrarily from position to position. The base preferably has the configuration of a house with rooms defined thereon and with the playing positions arranged over the rooms so that a player attempts to proceed from room to room through the house. A mechanism is provided which will produce a ringing sound in response to a playing piece being placed at certain conditioned ones of the playing positions. Those playing positions which will effect the ringing sound in response to the playing piece being placed thereon are randomly conditioned and preferably unknown to the players of the game. A simulated phone is defined in each room whereby a player who has effected the ringing sound by placing his playing piece in a room must move to the phone to stop the ringing sound, either losing or gaining ground in his attempt to proceed through the house. A sub-base is provided below the base and the top of the sub-base and the underside of the base are provided with electrically conductive material. Freely movable disc-like contact members which effect said random conditioning are held between the base and sub-base and complete a circuit when attracted by a magnet contained in a playing piece. The areas between the base and sub-base are partitioned into sub-areas generally corresponding to the rooms defined on the base. Different playing positions in each of the rooms defined on the base may be activated by shaking the amusement device to position the contacts below different playing positions.

**2 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures**

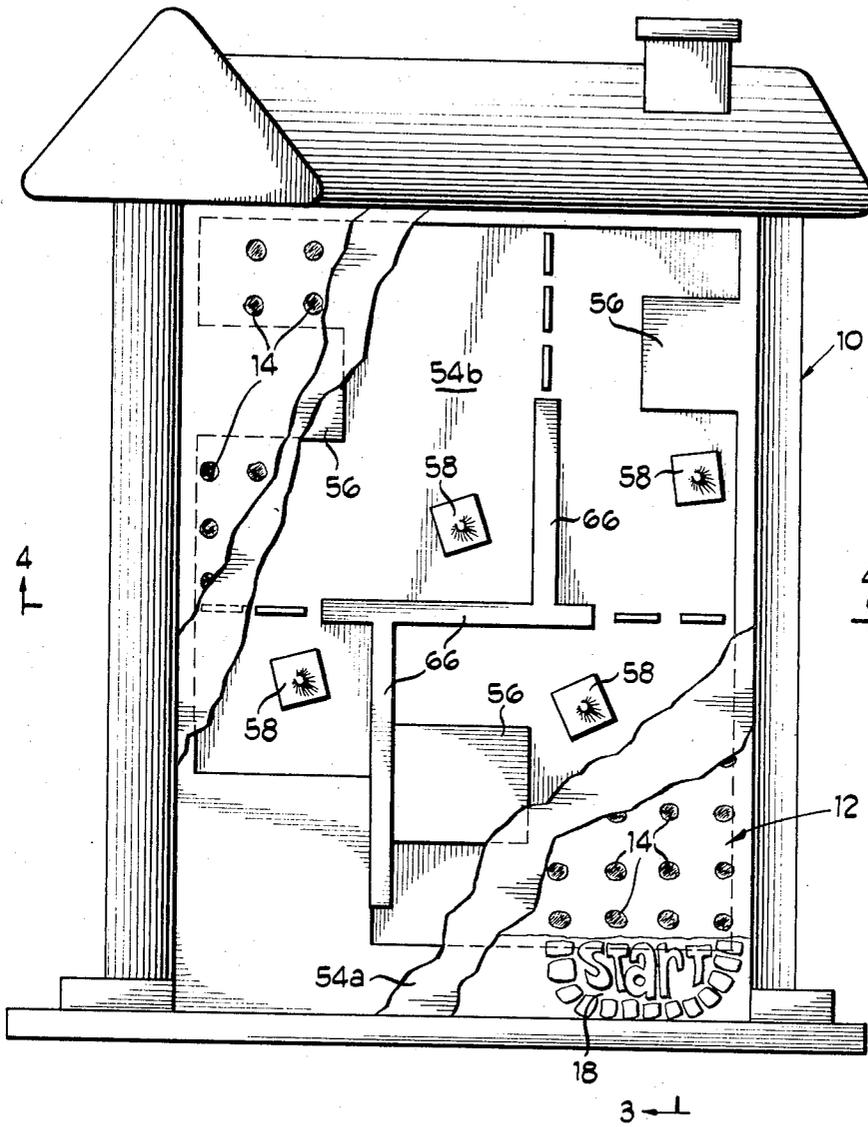




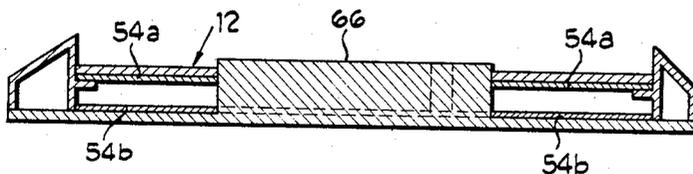
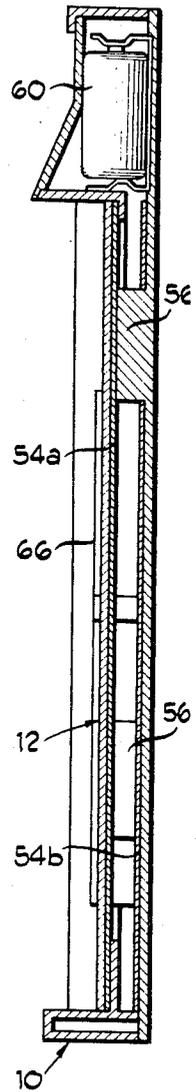
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*Fig 2*

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*Fig 3*



*Fig 4*

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## BOARD GAME APPARATUS

## BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to amusement devices or games and more particularly relates to devices which visually or audibly report the performance of an act, either desired or undesired.

The present invention is directed to an amusement device, particularly a game of the type having a playing area defined by a plurality of playing positions which are numbered or arranged in certain sequences defining a path or pattern over which playing pieces may be manipulated by the players of the game, normally from a "start" position to a "home" position. With most such prior devices of this type, the player's moves along the path may be determined by shaking dice, spinning an arrow, or other suitable means which determines how far a player may move his playing piece along the path or pattern for each turn. Most such games may become quite monotonous to use.

The present invention contemplates providing a sound producing apparatus, preferably for producing a ringing sound simulating a phone ring, the apparatus being adapted to produce the ringing sound in response to a playing piece being placed onto certain conditioned ones of the playing positions. Those playing positions which are conditioned to effect the ringing sound when a playing piece is positioned thereon preferably are randomly spaced in the path or pattern over which the playing pieces may be manipulated.

In the exemplary embodiment of the invention, the game takes the form of a simulated house with rooms. The path or pattern of playing positions runs from room to room as well as within each room. Simulated phones are disposed at predetermined positions in at least some of the rooms. The object of the game is for each player, taking his turn, to proceed through the house, room-to-room, before the other players. The game may be designed to have the players move arbitrarily from playing position to playing position or in a predetermined path. When a player reaches one of said conditioned playing positions in any one room and causes the phone to ring in that room, he must then move to the phone to stop the ringing sound. In moving to the phone, he may either lose or gain ground in his attempt to move through the house. After the player moves to the phone, the other players take their turn.

In the preferred embodiment of the invention, each playing piece has magnetic means in the base thereof, and movable switch means are provided beneath the playing area for movement to positions under certain ones of the playing positions to condition the same, whereby the magnetic means in the base of the playing pieces will close the switch means beneath the conditioned playing positions when the playing pieces are placed thereon.

In addition, means are provided for changing randomly those playing positions which are conditioned by the movable switch means to produce the ringing sound so that a player will not be able to memorize those positions which will effect the sound once a round of the game has been played.

Other features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the amusement device or game of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a top plan view of the game shown in FIG. 1, with portions of the top thereof broken away to illustrate the interior components;

FIG. 3 is a vertical section taken generally along the line 3—3 of FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is a vertical section taken generally along the line 4—4 of FIG. 2;

FIG. 5 is a horizontal section taken generally along the line 5—5 of FIG. 1;

FIG. 6 is a schematic view showing the electrical connections between the switch means, motor and battery of the present invention; and

FIG. 7 is a partial vertical section showing the switch means which is actuated by a magnet embedded in the base of a playing piece.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to the drawings in greater detail, the amusement device of the present invention is shown in the form of a game which has a base, generally designated 10, which, in the form shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, is fabricated to resemble a house. The top of the base 10 defines a playing area, generally designated 12, having rooms, generally designated 13, and a plurality of playing positions 14 which define a path or pattern over the playing area and along which playing pieces 16 (FIG. 7) are manipulated from room to room in the house. A simulated phone 17 is disposed at predetermined positions in each room 13. To this extent, the game is played similar to many games of this type presently on the market. The usual object of the game is to have the playing pieces 16 to proceed from start positions, for instance as at 18 in FIG. 1, and move along the path or pattern defined by the playing positions 14 to a goal or end position, for instance the exit 19 (FIG. 1) of the house. Preferably, a player during his turn may move arbitrarily from playing position to adjacent playing position until he actuates the phone ringing sound producing means described above and to be described in greater detail hereinafter. Alternatively, the playing positions 14 may be numbered sequentially, colored in various series of colors, formed with different objects, or the like, to provide a predetermined path whereby dice may be rolled, "arrow spinners" may be rotated, or other suitable means may be employed to determine the moves of a player along the path for each turn.

Before continuing with further details of the invention, a brief general discussion is warranted. The base 10 is generally hollow and houses a sound producing apparatus, to be described in greater detail hereinafter, which is actuated when a playing piece 16 is positioned onto particular conditioned ones of the playing positions 14. Means are provided for randomly selecting or conditioning the playing positions 14 which will effect the production of a particular sound or audible message and which playing positions have been randomly selected or conditioned is unknown to the players of the game, as will be described in greater detail hereinafter. The audible message may be used simply for humorous, instructional, insulting, or like purposes. Preferably, the sound is worked into the

scheme of the game, for instance, by producing a message or a representative sound which states or indicates that the player who manipulated his playing piece onto a particular conditioned playing position 14 must go back a particular number of positions, must go 5 all the way back to the start position, or may go forward one or more positions or to a particular position.

As best seen in FIGS. 5 and 6, the sound producing apparatus of the present invention includes a bell 20 which is actuated by a rotating arm or hammer, 10 generally designated 22. The arm 22 is rotated by means of an electric motor 24 having a drive shaft 24a secured to the arm. The arm has a portion 26 concentric with the motor drive shaft 24a and an offset portion 28 so that rotation of the arm will cause a hammer portion 30 on the end thereof to intermittently strike the bell 20 and effect a ringing sound, simulating a phone.

The switch means for actuating the motor 24, and thus the bell 20, in response to a playing piece 16 being placed on particular ones of the playing positions 14, is best shown in FIGS. 3, 4, 6 and 7. Beneath the portion of the base 10 which defines the playing area 12 are mounted generally flat upper and lower conductive plates 54a and 54b. The conductive plates 54a, 54b are maintained in a spaced relation by frame portions 56, 15 as best seen in FIG. 3. Between the conductive plates 54a, 54b are positioned a plurality of freely movable, conductive contact discs or squares 58 which normally rest on the lower conductive plate 54b. By contact discs, it is meant herein to mean any form of freely movable contact member capable of performing the function of members 58. As seen in FIG. 6, the spaced conductive plates 54a, 54b are connected electrically 20 to the motor 24 through an electrical power source in the form of battery means 60. Thus, it will be understood that if contact is made between the upper and lower conductive plates, the motor 24 will be actuated through the power supplied by the battery power source 60. The conductive contact discs 58 comprise 25 the means for making contact between the spaced conductive plates and this contact is accomplished by means of a magnet 62 (FIG. 7) embedded in the base or bottom of each of the playing pieces 16. Thus, as a playing piece 16 is moved and placed onto a playing position 14 in the playing area 12, and a conductive contact disc 58 happens to be disposed under that particular playing position, the magnet will draw one side of the conductive disc upwardly into contact with the upper conductive plate 54a while the opposite side of 30 the contact disc 58 remains in contact with the lower conductive plate 54b, as best seen in FIG. 7. Contact having been made, the motor 24 will be actuated and a sound will be reproduced by the sound reproducing apparatus described above.

It can be seen that by providing the contact discs 58 with free movement to various positions beneath the playing area 12, and between the upper and lower contact plates 54a, 54b, respectively, a random selection and electrical conditioning of certain ones of the playing positions 14 (to effect an audible reproduction) is provided simply by manually shaking the base 10. The particular electrically conditioned playing positions will be totally unknown to the players of the game, as long as that portion of the base 10 which defines the playing area 12 is opaque or does not permit visual observation of the positions of the contact discs.

In the preferred embodiment of the invention, as best seen in FIG. 2, the frame portions 56 cooperate with room divider strips 66 to define confined areas which limit the movement of each of the contact discs 58, while permitting the disc to move freely within its own confined area. This arrangement is preferred so that all of the contact discs cannot be disposed beneath a limited part of the playing area 12, for instance all of the discs beneath one room of the house.

In the playing the game, the device is grasped bodily 10 by a player and manually shook to cause the contact discs 58 to move about within the confined areas defined by the frame portions 56 and strips 66. The device then should be positioned on a generally flat surface, such as a table or the like, and each of the contact discs 58 will be positioned beneath one of the playing positions 14, the particular playing positions being totally unknown to the players of the game. As the playing pieces 16 are moved or jumped from one playing position 14 to another, the players will not know 15 when the positioning of a playing piece 16 onto a particular playing position 14 will actuate the sound reproducing apparatus. In the exemplary embodiment, the player must move to the phone in the particular room where he effects the ringing sound, breaking the switch to the motor 24, and either gaining or losing ground in proceeding through the house. Once an entire game has been played and one player moves 20 through the house, the device again may be manually shaken to reorient the positioning of the contact discs 58.

It should be understood that various known switching devices may be employed for conditioning selected or random ones of the playing positions. In addition, a phonograph means, for instance, may be employed for actuation by the motor 24 to reproduce a message instructing the players on various movements over the playing area.

The foregoing detailed description has been given for clearness of understanding only and no unnecessary limitations should be understood therefrom as some modifications will be obvious to those skilled in the art.

We claim:

1. An amusement device including, in combination, a base which simulates a house with rooms and which defines a playing area with a plurality of playing positions thereon in a pattern or path from room to room through the house, means defining an alarm area in at least some of the rooms on said path, at least one playing piece movable relative to said base between and onto said playing positions in a predetermined or chance game plan, means for random conditioning of some but not all of said playing positions to activate associated apparatus when occupied by a playing piece; and a sound-producing apparatus associated with said conditioned playing positions to produce a ringing sound when said playing piece is positioned on one of the conditioned playing positions whereby a player may be required to move his playing piece to an alarm area on effecting the ringing sound.

2. An amusement device which includes a base which defines a playing area having a plurality of playing positions in a pattern or path along which playing pieces are moved, said base having a false bottom defined at least partially by a pair of spaced horizontal conductive plates; a plurality of untethered conductive

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pieces loosely supported for free movement between said plates and beneath said playing positions, playing pieces each having a magnetic portion whereby when a playing piece overlies one of the conductive pieces it causes contact between the conductive piece and said conductive plates and closes a circuit operating a sound-reproducing apparatus, and barrier means

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between said conductive plates to loosely confine the movement of said otherwise freely movable conductive pieces to said sub-areas to prevent said conductive pieces from being gathered in an undesirably large number under only a single portion of said playing area.

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