

[54] **SUPERMARKET CHECKSTAND WITH BAGGING SYSTEM**

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abandoned.

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[58] Field of Search **186/1 A, 1 AC; 53/384,
53/386, 387, 188**

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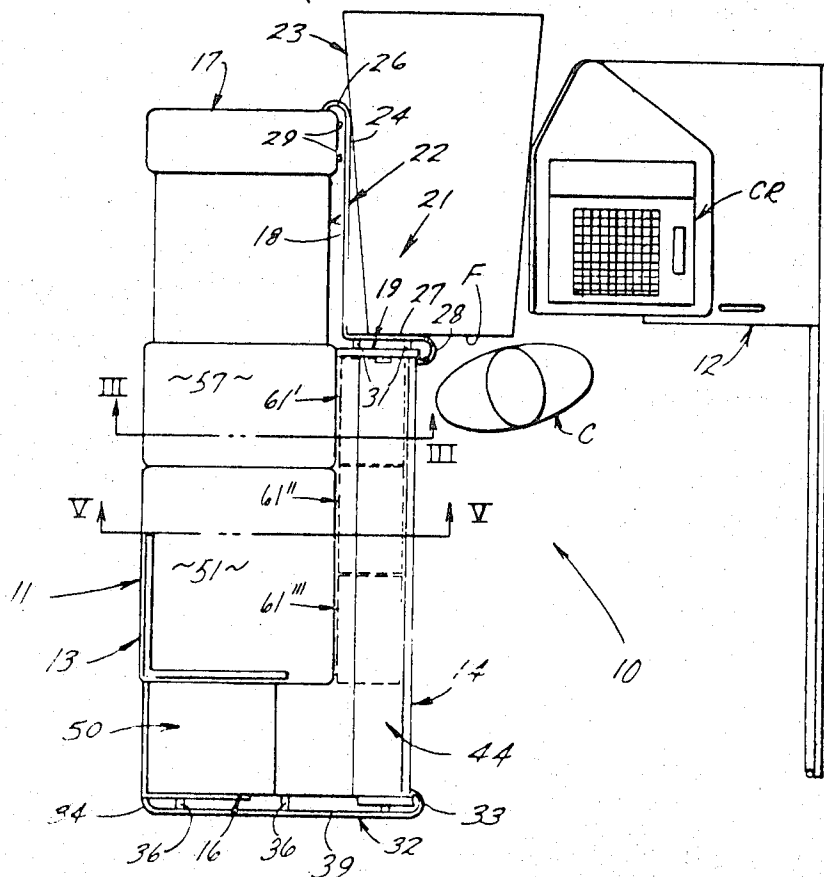
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[57]

ABSTRACT

A check-out counter having a cabinet with a bag storage well therein capable of storing a plurality of folded bags. The storage well is usually open on one side and closed on all of the remaining sides. An elongated trough is provided on the cabinet and one end communicates with the open side of the storage well and extends laterally therefrom. Means are provided for retaining the folded bags in the storage well but permitting passage thereof one at a time through the open side of the well as desired by an operator so that such operator may simultaneously open and transfer a bag from the storage well to the one end of the trough. A bag filled by the operator may then be moved manually or mechanically from the end of the trough laterally along the trough to make room for another of the bags to be transferred from the storage well to the end of the trough.

9 Claims, 18 Drawing Figures



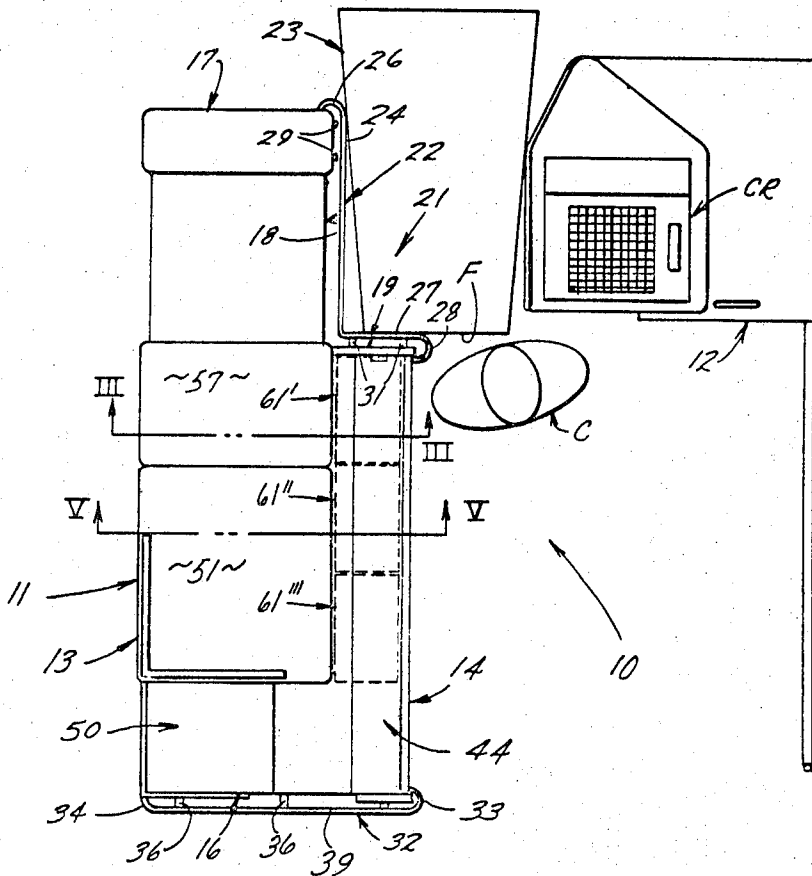


Fig. 1

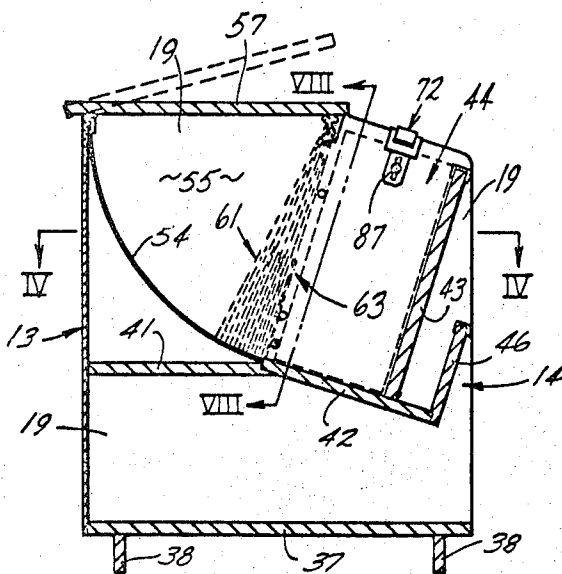
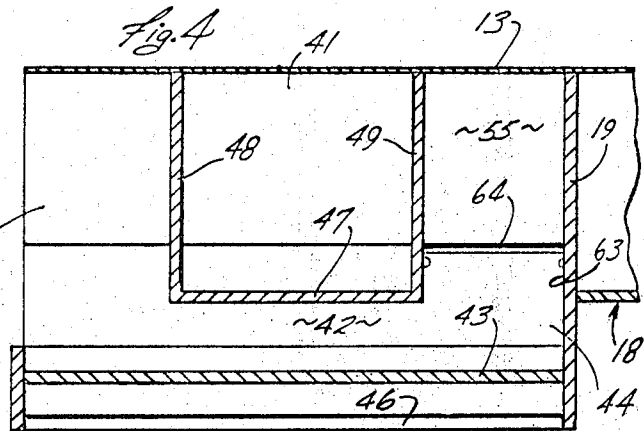
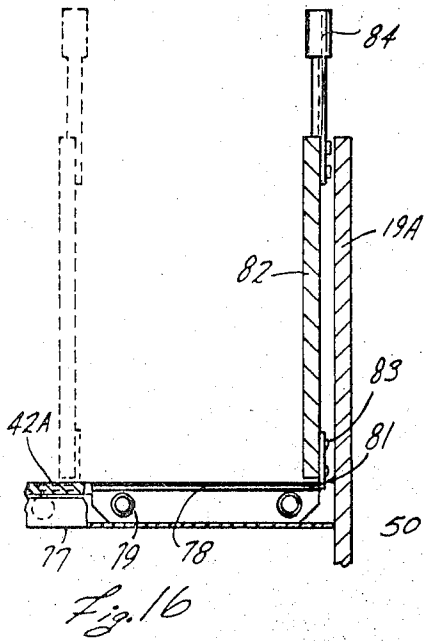
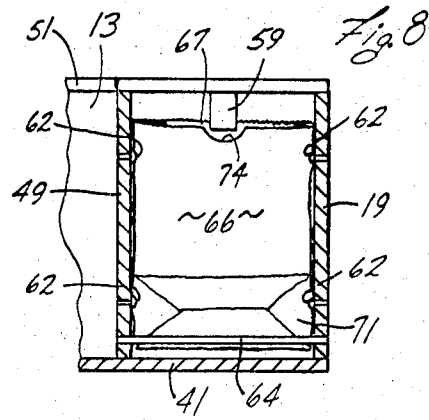
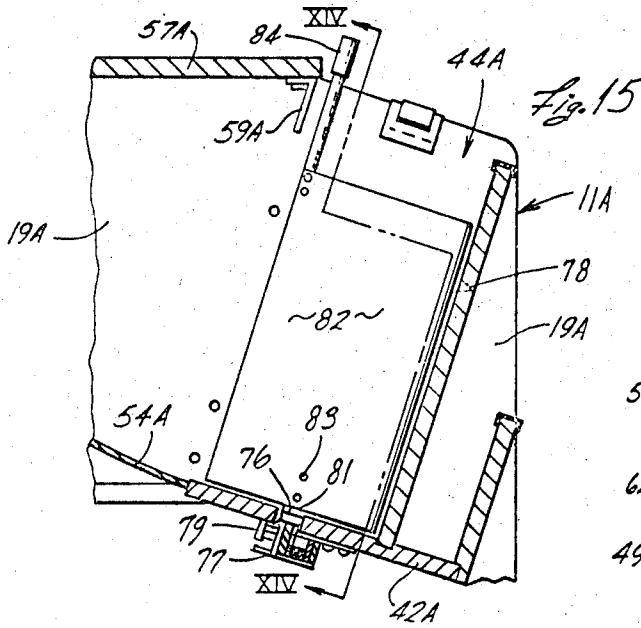
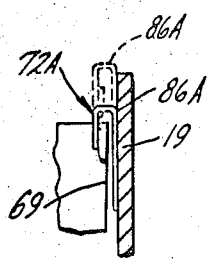
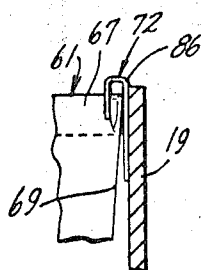
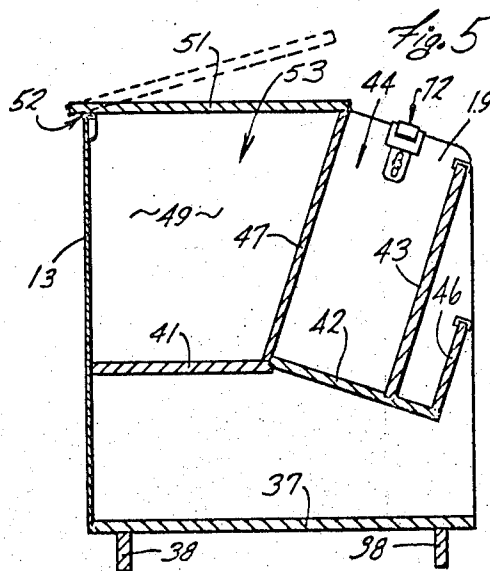
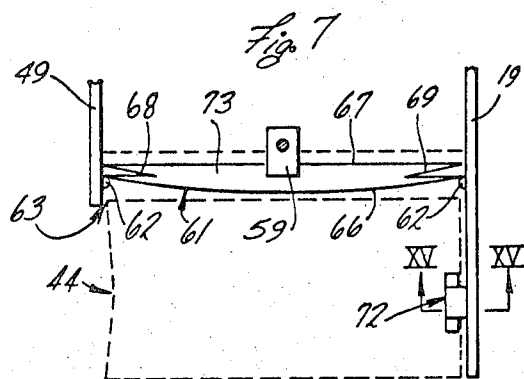
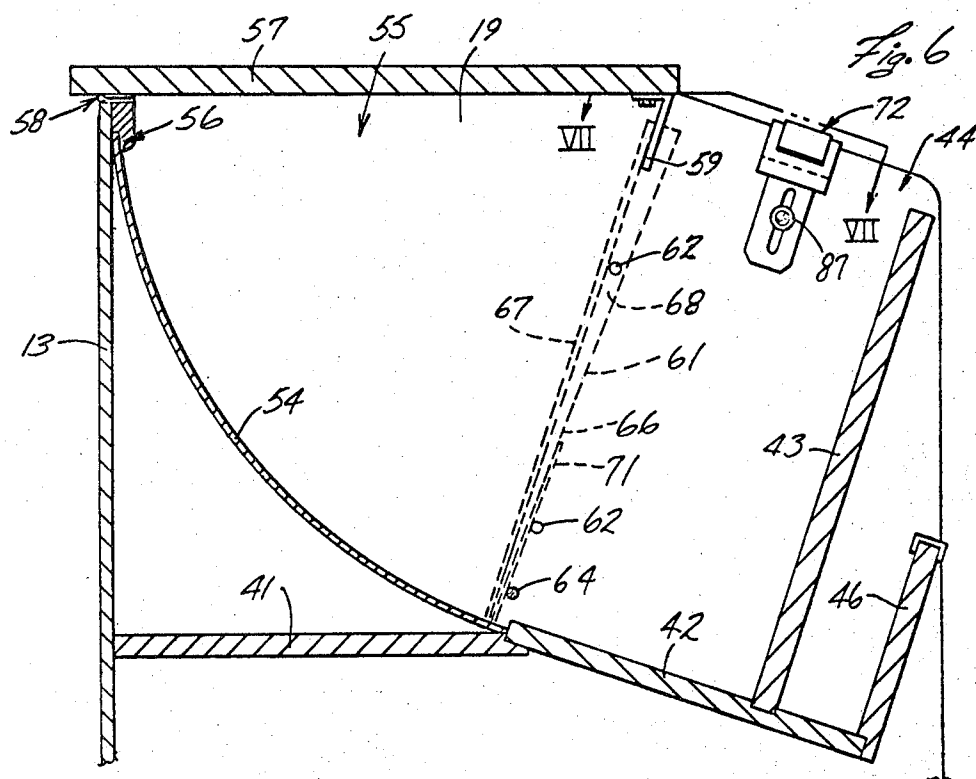
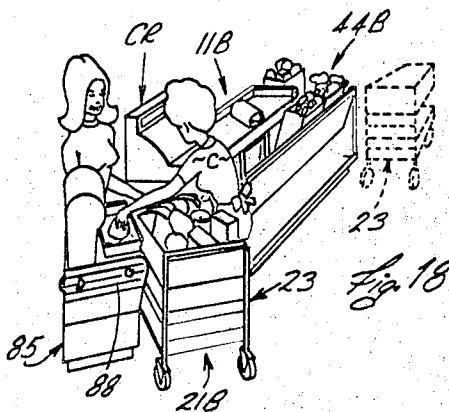
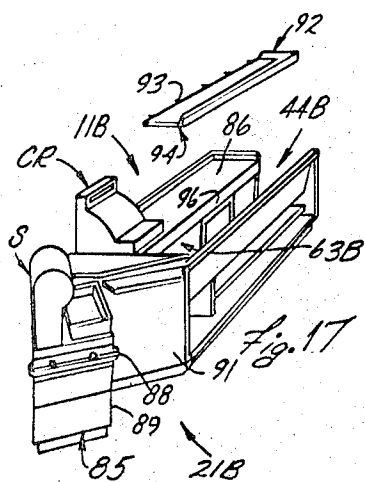
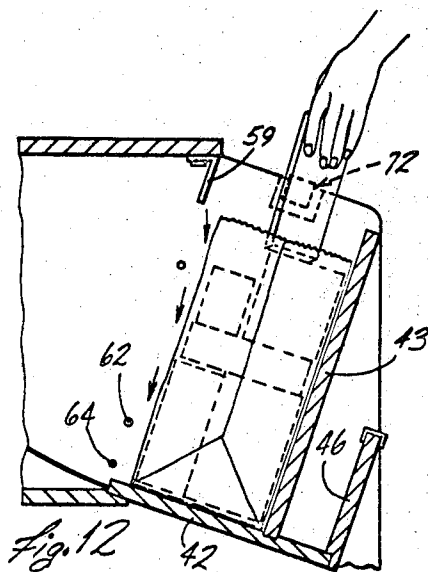
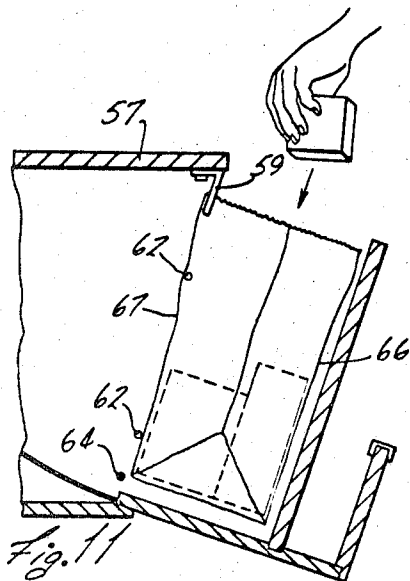
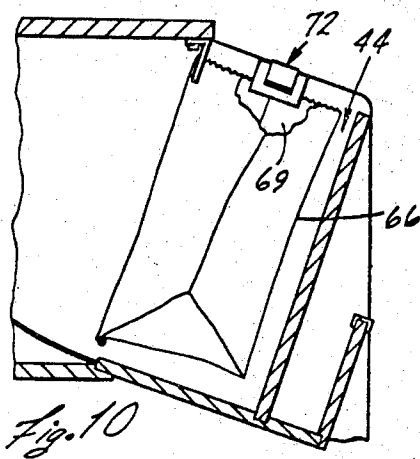
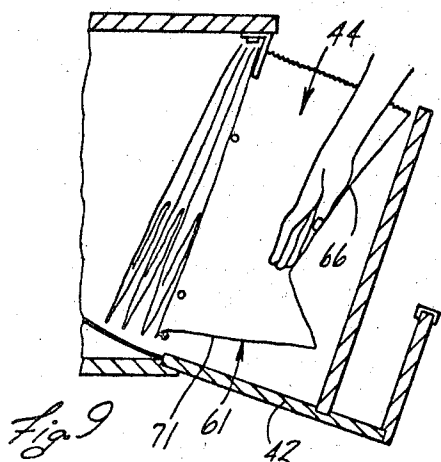


Fig. 2

Fig. 3







SUPERMARKET CHECKSTAND WITH BAGGING SYSTEM

This application is a continuation of my copending application, Ser. No. 809,578, filed Mar. 24, 1969, now abandoned.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a check-out counter and, more particularly, relates to a check-out counter having a bag storage well therein capable of storing a plurality of folded bags and having means thereon for dispensing the bags one at a time from the storage well into an elongated trough communicating with the storage well and extending laterally therefrom for holding open bags filled with merchandise.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

It has long been recognized in the operation of retail establishments of the supermarket type that an important factor of profitable operation is the easy and rapid flow of both merchandise and customers therethrough. Accordingly, great efforts have in the past been made, and are still being made, to promote such ease and rapidity of flow. Much of the equipment supplied for such retail establishments and, in fact, much of the design of such establishments themselves have been directed toward this end. However, a serious bottleneck has continued to exist at the check-out stand and this has been the source of frequent and often irritating delays for the customer. Accordingly, equipment which will tend to speed the flow of customers and merchandise past the checkstands will be advantageous.

Most of the equipment which has thus far been designed to speed the flow of customers and merchandise past the checkstands has involved the use of apparatus for aiding the customer in removing the merchandise from the shopping cart. This apparatus has taken many forms but in all thereof special cart and/or counter constructions are required which are expensive and not always fully satisfactory. Further, in present systems, with or without means for speeding the unloading of the carts, the cashier must often have an assistant to help with the bagging of the merchandise. If such assistant is not available, the cashier will then with nearly every customer have to discontinue the checking of the merchandise and proceed to the area of the checkstand wherein the bagging of merchandise is to take place. In such instances, the speeding of the unloading process is to no avail and the customers waiting in the checkout line are still irritated. Further, this necessity for the cashier to move to the bagging station will in many cases require that she moves a substantial distance from the cash register and check-out area, thus creating possibilities for pilfering from the cash register or for ship-lifting of the small articles which are often adjacent the cash register. Accordingly, it will be advantageous to provide equipment which will tend to reduce the need for a cashier to have an assistant for bagging the merchandise and which will, even when the cashier is required to bag, both speed the process and minimize the distance she must move from the cash register.

A still further problem arising from check-out counters as presently designed is that the goods, following checking by the cashier, are usually spread out on a single surface at the end of the check-out counter at a point beyond the cashier. This is true regardless of

whether the cashier or an assistant does the bagging. Because of the erratic manner in which groceries are necessarily pushed into this area by the cashier, it has been found that even with a large such area, such as 12-16 square feet, it is seldom that sufficient groceries to fill more than three or four bags can be received thereon. Thus, for a customer who has a very large order and if the cashier is also doing the bagging, it is often necessary for the cashier to stop checking part-way through the checking operation to bag the groceries which are then occupying the bagging area and then only after such bagging is finished is she able to return to the checking operation.

Thus, it is desirable to provide a system by which the groceries, inasmuch as they must be handled once by the cashier anyway in the checking process, can be placed directly into suitable bags and thus avoid a second handling. Further, the relatively large bagging space required in present designs of check-out counters are wasteful of expensive store floor space and, hence, it would be advantageous to provide, if possible, means for carrying out the bagging operation which will handle a larger number of bags of groceries than is presently convenient and yet do so in an actually smaller space than is now required.

Accordingly, the objects of this invention are:

1. To provide apparatus for use in retail establishments of the supermarket type which will tend to increase the speed and the convenience of flow of both customers and merchandise therethrough.

2. To provide apparatus, as aforesaid, which will permit the continued use of shopping carts already in existence in the retail establishments of the supermarket type and will not require the need for special shopping cart designs in order to cooperate with the checkstand system embodying the invention.

3. To provide apparatus which will permit the cashier to unload a shopping cart, and, therefore, permit the customer to watch the cashier check the merchandise in order to double check against errors in the checking process.

4. To provide apparatus which will permit the cashier to unload the shopping cart and simultaneously bag the merchandise to thereby minimize, and in some cases eliminate, the necessity of the cashier having a colleague to assist in the bagging of merchandise, thereby reducing the overhead of the retail establishments.

5. To provide apparatus which will permit the cashier to effect, or at least assist in, the bagging operation without leaving the cash register area and without turning her attention materially from it.

6. To provide apparatus, as aforesaid, which can be added to present checkstand designs at only a moderate additional cost.

7. To provide apparatus, as aforesaid, which will eliminate the presently common double handling of merchandise from the checker to a bagging platform and then from the bagging platform to a carrying bag for the customer but instead, will enable the cashier or checker to place the merchandise directly into bags by a single handling thereof.

8. To provide apparatus, as aforesaid, which by placing the merchandise directly into bags rather than temporarily accumulating same in the presently conventional bagging area will enable the checkstand to be made so as to occupy less floor space than is now conventional while at the same time enabling the check-

stand to receive at a single time a larger amount of merchandise than is presently feasible.

9. To reduce the risk of damage to merchandise which presently exists when same is pushed at random into the presently conventional bagging area.

10. To provide equipment, as aforesaid, which can be utilized with either presently conventional carts or carts equipped for automatic unloading thereof.

Other objects and purposes of this invention will become apparent to persons acquainted with checkstand apparatus of this general type upon reading the following specification and inspecting the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a top view of the checkstand embodying the invention;

FIG. 2 is an end elevational view of the checkstand;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along the line III—III of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a sectional view taken along the line IV—IV of FIG. 3;

FIG. 5 is a sectional view taken along the line V—V of FIG. 1;

FIG. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view of the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 3;

FIG. 7 is a sectional view taken along the line VII—VII of FIG. 6;

FIG. 8 is a sectional view taken along the line VIII—VIII of FIG. 3;

FIGS. 9–12 schematically illustrate the manner in which a folded bag is transferred from the bag storage well to the trough wherein merchandise can be placed into the bags;

FIG. 13 is a sectional view taken along the line XIII—XIII of FIG. 7;

FIG. 14 is a sectional view similar to FIG. 13 but showing a modification;

FIG. 15 is a fragmentary sectional view of a modified embodiment of the checkstand;

FIG. 16 is a sectional view taken along the line XVI—XVI of FIG. 9;

FIG. 17 is a perspective view of a modified checkstand; and

FIG. 18 is a perspective view of the modified checkstand of FIG. 17 illustrating the manner in which the checkstand is to be used in conjunction with a shopping cart.

Certain terminology will be used in the following description for convenience in reference only and will not be limiting. The words "up", "down", "right" and "left" will designate directions in the drawings to which reference is made. The words "in" and "out" will refer to directions toward and away from, respectively, the geometric center of the device and designated parts thereof. Said terminology will include the words above specifically mentioned, derivatives thereof and words of similar import.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The objects and purposes of the invention, including those set forth hereinabove, are met by providing a check-out counter having a cabinet with a bag storage well therein capable of storing a plurality of folded bags therein. The storage well is open on one side and is preferably closed on all of the remaining sides. An elongated horizontal trough is provided on the cabinet along the side thereof toward the cashier and commu-

nicates with the open side of the storage well and extends laterally therefrom. Means are provided for retaining the folded bags in the storage well but permitting a passage thereof one at a time through the open side of the storage well as determined by an operator, usually the cashier so that such operator may simultaneously open and transfer a bag from the storage well to the trough by the operator's introduction of one arm into the bag engaging the retaining means and manipulating same to cause the bag bottom to unfold. Thus, the operator can thereafter directly place articles into the open bag and after the bag is filled, the operator can move the bag along the trough to permit another of the bags to be transferred from the storage well into the trough.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring first to the embodiment of FIGS. 1–16 to illustrate one preferred embodiment of the invention, the checkstand system 10 comprises a pair of spaced-apart counters 11 and 12.

The system 10 is the subject of my copending application Ser. No. 831,368, filed June 9, 1969, now U.S. Pat. No. 3,557,907 and reference is to be had thereto for the details of the system. This invention relates to the counter 11.

The counter 11 has sidewalls 13 and 14 and end walls 16 and 17. A sidewall 18 adjacent the end wall 17 is offset from the sidewall 14 and a wall section 19 interconnects the sidewall 14 to the sidewall 18. In this particular embodiment, the sidewall 18 and the wall section 19 are at right angles to each other to define an L-shaped zone referred to hereinafter as a shopping cart unloading zone 21.

An L-shaped guide rail 22 for guiding a shopping cart 23 into the shopping cart unloading zone 21 comprises a leg 24 which is generally parallel to the wall 18 and is bent around as at 26 so that the end thereof abuts against the end wall 17. A leg 27 of the guide rail 22 is secured to the other end of the leg 24 and extends generally parallel with the wall 19 and is bent around as at 28 so that the end thereof abuts against the wall 14. In this particular embodiment, the leg 24 is spaced from the wall 18 by spacers 29 and the leg 27 is spaced from the wall 19 by spacers 31. The spacers 29 and 31 also serve to secure the legs 24 and 27, respectively, of the guide rails 22 to the counter 11.

A guide rail 32 comprises a straight bar 39 generally parallel with the end wall 16 and is bent around as at 33 so that the end thereof abuts against the sidewall 14. The guide rail 32 is also bent around as at 34 so that it abuts against and is flush with the sidewall 13. The guide rail 32 is spaced from the end wall 16 by spacers 36. The spacers 36 also serve to secure the guide rail 32 to the counter 11.

The foregoing described structure of the counter 11 is mounted on and secured to a base member 37 (FIG. 3) supported in an elevated position above the floor by a plurality of legs 38.

An intermediate platform 41 is secured along one edge to the sidewall 13 and is secured adjacent the longitudinal ends thereof to the end wall 16 and wall section 19. The intermediate platform 41 is positioned intermediate the base 37 and the upper edge of the sidewall 13. A trough platform 42 is secured to the right edge of the intermediate platform 41 and is secured to and extends between the end wall 16 and the wall sec-

tion 19. In this particular embodiment, the trough platform 42 is inclined to the vertical and extends downwardly away from the right edge of the intermediate platform 41.

The sidewall 14 comprises a wall section 43 secured to the upper surface of the platform 42 intermediate the longitudinal edges thereof and extends between and is secured to the end wall 16 and the wall section 19. In this particular embodiment, the wall section 43 extends perpendicularly upwardly from the platform 42 to a height approximately equal to the height of the wall section 19 and the sidewall 16 to define a trough 44 having a width approximately equal to but preferably slightly greater than the normal width of a desired size of paper grocery bag (such as a No. 50 bag which is approximately 6½ to 7 inches wide) into which merchandise is to be placed. The purpose for this construction will become more apparent hereinbelow. If desired, a further wall section 46 can also be secured to the rightwardmost longitudinal edge of the platform 42, and can extend between and be secured to the end wall 16 and the wall section 19. The spacing between the wall sections 43 and 46 is chosen to accommodate the storage of smaller sized paper grocery bags.

A wall section 47 (FIG. 5) is secured to the longitudinal edge of the intermediate platform 41 and extends upwardly therefrom parallel to the wall section 43. A pair of wall sections 48 and 49 (FIG. 4) are secured to the upper surface of the intermediate platform 41 and extend between the sidewall 13 and the wall section 47 to define an enclosure 53. If desired, a cover 51 (FIG. 5) may be secured as at 52, hingedly or fixed, to the upper edge of the sidewall 13. Thus, if said cover is hinged, same may be used for storage of extra bags or other materials as desired.

The sidewall 13, the wall section 49 and wall section 19 define a three-sided enclosure 55 having a bottom wall defined by the intermediate platform 41. The fourth side is open as at 63 and provides communication from the enclosure 55 into the trough 44. Means are provided for constantly urging, mechanically or by gravity, bags from within said enclosure 55 out through said opening 63. In this embodiment, such means comprise a curved piece of sheet metal 54 (FIGS. 3 and 6) which is secured to the rightwardmost longitudinal edge of the intermediate platform 41, extends upwardly to the left therefrom and is secured to the sidewall 13 as at 56 adjacent the upper edge thereof. In this particular embodiment, a cover 57 is hingedly secured as at 58 to the upper edge of the sidewall 13. A finger 59 is secured to the underside of the cover 57 adjacent the rightwardmost edge thereof (FIGS. 3 and 6) and depends downwardly therefrom toward the sheet metal base 54. The finger 59 serves to keep the upper edges of a plurality of paper bags 61 within the enclosure 55.

A plurality of aligned buttons 62 are secured to the opposed surfaces of the wall section 19 and wall section 49 adjacent the opening 63 and project outwardly into the opening 63. The buttons 62 serve to hold the lateral edges of the leading paper bag 61 (FIGS. 7 and 8) to prevent same from moving the resistance free into the trough 44. A cylindrical bar 64 is generally vertically aligned with the buttons 62 and is secured to and extends between the wall sections 19 and 49 adjacent the lower portion of the opening 63 and serves to retain the

lower edge of the leading paper bag 61 within the enclosure 55.

As illustrated in FIGS. 7 and 8, a paper bag 61 comprises sidewalls or panels 66 and 67 joined together along the longitudinal edges thereof by bellows folds 68 and 69. The bottom wall 71 is folded so that it is generally parallel with the sidewalls 66 and 67 and overlaps same. A recess 74 (FIG. 8) is provided in the upper edge of the sidewall 66. The bag 61 is open at the top as at 73 in FIG. 7.

If desired, an adjustable paper bag engaging clip 72 (FIGS. 6 and 7) can be provided which is secured to the upper edge of the wall 19 and serves to grip the bellows fold 69 after the bag is opened to the dotted line position in FIG. 7 to hold the bag in the opened position. The clip 72 comprises a U-shaped element 86 (FIG. 13) secured to the wall section 19 by a screw 87.

FIG. 14 illustrates another embodiment of the clip 72 and will be referred by the same reference numbers used to describe the clip 72 but with the suffix A added thereto. In this embodiment, the screw 87A is loosened so that the U-shaped element 86 is movable between a raised position illustrated in dotted lines in FIG. 14 and the lowered position shown in solid lines.

OPERATION

The operation of the device embodying the device will be described in detail hereinbelow for a better understanding of the invention.

As indicated above, the counter 11 embodying the invention is for use in self-service stores which have shopping carts supported on wheels for use by customers in accumulating merchandise from different parts of the store and for transportation of the selected merchandise to the checkstand system 10 for checking by the cashier C. Assuming that a selection of merchandise has been completed, the customer will then proceed to the check-out area and position the shopping cart 23 into the shopping cart unloading zone 21 between the counters 11 and 12. This is accomplished by pushing the front of the cart F into the zone 21 until it engages the leg 27 of the guide rail 22.

The opening 73 into the folded or collapsed bag 61 is caused by the finger 59 passing through the recess 74 in the upper edge of the wall 66 and engaging the wall 67. This holds the wall 67 in a supported position and permits the wall 66 to sag as illustrated in FIG. 7. The buttons 62 serve to hold the longitudinal edges of the bag in the enclosure 55. The cashier C prior to a starting of a checking operation, can insert a hand through the opening 73 (FIG. 7) and into a folded bag 61, thence, by applying a rightward pressure (FIG. 9) on the wall 66, can pull the wall 66 of the bag 61 in a rightward direction so that the bottom wall 71 is pulled outwardly from the lower set of buttons 62 and becomes generally aligned with the platform 42 in the trough 44.

At the completion of the bag opening process as illustrated in FIG. 9, the cashier C can then remove her arm and, if desired, slip the upper edge of the bellows fold 69 under the clip 72 so that the bag is left in an opened condition as illustrated in FIG. 10 ready for the reception of merchandise as illustrated in FIGS. 11 and 12. The first merchandise placed into the bag will cause the bottom wall of the bag to be pulled completely over the top of the cylindrical bar 64 so that it will be suspended

by a frictional engagement with the finger 59. As more merchandise is placed into the bag as illustrated in FIG. 12, the weight of the merchandise in the bag will be sufficient to overcome the frictional engagement between the bag and the finger 59 to cause same to settle down onto the platform 42. In so moving downwardly from the FIG. 10 to the FIG. 12 position, the bag moves downwardly away from the finger 59 and the clip 72 and is thereby enabled to move sidewardly when same is filled and the cashier is ready so to do. The cashier will have to lift the clip 72A (FIG. 14) up to the dotted line position to free the bag 61 from the grip thereof before moving the bag sidewardly.

After a bag has been filled, it may be moved by the cashier C from the position 61' (FIG. 1) to one of many positions such as positions 61'' and 61''' in the trough 44. Thus, a plurality of bags can be held in the trough 44 and the cashier can check the merchandise simultaneously with a bagging thereof to thereby minimize, or eliminate, the need for an assistant to effect the bagging of the checked merchandise.

An open platform 50 may be provided at the discharge end of the channel 44, if desired, for the further reception of filled bags. Said platform 50 is here provided by extending the wall 43 and intermediate platform 41 beyond the wall section 48. Bags when filled may be moved by the cashier onto the platform 50 for picking up by the customer at her convenience while the cashier proceeds to serve the next customer. Further, by providing a generally L-shaped zone for reception of filled bags, namely, the trough 44 and the platform 50, there can be readily provided reasonably within the reach of the cashier space for the reception of six to eight filled bags in a check-out counter of reasonable size. Thus, the cashier can fill such a number of bags without leaving her station at the cash register and this number of bags is ample to empty entirely a grocery cart of any ordinary size. This provides a distinct advantage over conventional check-out counters wherein merchandise is held on a single level beyond the cashier's station in that even the largest of these will not ordinarily hold more merchandise than is required to fill about four bags. Where a customer has more than such quantity of merchandise, the cashier is, in conventional apparatus, required to interrupt the checking operation to fill bags and then subsequently resume the checking operation, contributing both to customer irritation and potential inaccuracy. In the present system, this interruption and consequent possible customer irritation and inaccuracy is eliminated.

MODIFIED CONSTRUCTIONS

FIGS. 15-16

A fragmentary illustration of a modified check-out counter 11A is illustrated in FIGS. 15 and 16. Parts of the counter 11A are identical to the counter construction 11 illustrated in FIGS. 1-11 so that the parts of the modified construction 11A will be referred to by the same reference numerals designating corresponding parts of the counter construction 11 but with the suffix A added thereto.

In this particular embodiment, a slot 76 is provided in the platform 42 and extends longitudinally the full length of the trough 44A. A bracket 77 is secured to the underside of the platform 42 and overlaps the slot 76. A carriage 78 is movably supported on the bracket 76 for movement longitudinally of the trough 44A. In

this particular embodiment, the carriage 78 comprises a plurality of wheels 79 which engage the bracket to guide same therealong. A flange 81 is provided on one end of the carriage 78 and extends upwardly therefrom through the slot 76. A plate 82 is secured to the flange 81 by a plurality of screws 83. The plate 82 extends generally parallel with the wall 19A and is movable longitudinally of the trough 44A with the carriage 78. If desired, a handle 84 may be secured to the upper edge of the plate 82 for assisting the cashier C in moving the plate 82 longitudinally of the trough 44A. Thus, after a bag has become filled with merchandise, the cashier C may grasp the handle 84 and move same leftwardly (FIG. 16) so that the bag filled with merchandise will slide on the platform 42A to one of the positions 61'' or 61''' illustrated in FIG. 1. The carriage is then returned to the position shown ready to receive another bag for filling. After another bag has become filled, the cashier by grasping the handle 84 can slide the newly filled bag leftwardly until it engages the previously filled bag. Then, with a little more pressure, the cashier can then move both bags leftwardly so that they occupy positions, for example, those illustrated by reference numerals 61'' and 61''' in FIG. 1.

FIGS. 17-18

A further modified check-out counter 11B is illustrated in FIGS. 17 and 18. The modified check-out counter 11B comprises the usual sidewalls and a top wall 86 which provide the support for a cash register CR. A trough 44B is provided in the top wall 86 and extends longitudinally of the check-out counter 11B away from the cash register CR. An opening 63B provides communication between the trough 44B and a three-sided enclosure which defines the area for storing and dispensing paper bags which are to be filled with merchandise. The three-sided enclosure, while not illustrated in detail in FIGS. 17 and 18, is preferably identical to the three-sided enclosure 55 illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 6, for example, and no further detailing is required.

If desired, a further counter 85 may be attached to the end of the check-out counter 11B adjacent the cash register CR. This further counter 85 may support any piece of additional equipment required for checking merchandise, such as a scale S for weighing produce and the like. A guide rail 88 is secured to the stand 85 adjacent the upper end thereof. In this particular embodiment, the side 89 of the stand and a wall 91 of the check-out counter 11B define a cart unloading zone 21B into which a cart containing merchandise is to be placed.

If desired, a removable trough cover 92 having a length and width preferably equal to the length and width of the trough 44B in the check-out counter 11B may be provided for covering the trough 44B when an assistant to the cashier C is provided for bagging the checked merchandise. Guide pins 93 and cleats 94 are provided on the removable trough cover 92. The guide pins 93 are received into guide pin holes 96 provided in the upper edge of the trough 44B and the cleats 94 are received into receptacles (not shown) for securing the cover 92 to the check-out counter 11B and for making the top of the cover flush with the top surface 86 on the check-out counter.

In operation, FIG. 18 illustrates the manner in which the modified check-out counter 11B is to be utilized.

The cashier C can, from a single work station, remove the merchandise from the shopping cart 23 and simultaneously therewith place the merchandise into paper bags of the type illustrated at the end of the trough 44B spaced from the cash register CR. This particular embodiment permits the cashier C to have complete control over all portions of the shopping cart including the rear end portion of the basket. Thus, it is not necessary that the cashier have to reach long distances in order to reach the merchandise at locations in the basket of the shopping cart which are spaced an appreciable distance from the single work station. Thus, the cashier C can work more efficiently to speed the flow of merchandise and customers through the check-out portion of the market place.

At the completion of the checking process, the cashier can remove the shopping cart 23 to the position illustrated in dotted lines in FIG. 18 at which point the cashier can then place the bagged merchandise into the shopping cart to assist the customer in removing the merchandise from the store.

Although particular preferred embodiments of the invention have been disclosed above for illustrative purposes, it will be understood that variations or modifications thereof are fully contemplated.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A bagging check-out counter, comprising:

an elongated cabinet adapted to be supported on a support surface, such as a floor, said cabinet having plural substantially vertical side walls and a substantially horizontal uniplanar top fixed to said side walls;

said wall means fixed to said cabinet along one side thereof and extending substantially the full length of said top and defining an elongated upwardly opening trough for permitting bags containing articles to be manually slidably supported therein for movement from a position adjacent one end of said top to a position adjacent the other end thereof; said wall means including a smooth and substantially planar bottom wall positioned approximately midway between said floor and said top and being displaced sidewardly relative to said top, said bottom wall being slightly inclined relative to the horizontal and sloping downwardly toward the outer edge thereof;

said wall means also including a side bag guiding wall fixed relative to said bottom wall adjacent the outer edge thereof and projecting upwardly therefrom in substantially perpendicular relationship thereto, said guiding wall being inclined slightly relative to the vertical so as to extend upwardly and outwardly relative to said cabinet, said guiding wall having the upper free edge thereof spaced sidewardly a substantial distance from the adjacent edge of said top for defining therebetween said upwardly opening trough, whereby a bag as disposed within said trough is slidably supported by said bottom wall and said side guiding wall; and

said cabinet also including means defining a bag storage well for permitting storage of a plurality of closed bags, said storage well being defined within

said cabinet beneath said top, said last-mentioned means also defining a substantially vertically oriented opening defined between said top and said bottom wall for providing direct communication from said trough into said storage well.

2. A check-out counter according to claim 1, wherein said top has a length less than the length of said cabinet with said other end of said top terminating at a location which is spaced a substantial distance from the adjacent end of said cabinet; and

said cabinet further including a substantially horizontal and planar bag support platform extending between said other end of said top and said adjacent end of said cabinet, said bag support platform being positioned at an elevation closely adjacent the elevation of said bottom wall, the upper surface of said support platform and the upper surface of said bottom wall being joined to one another whereby said platform and said trough are in open communication with one another and define a substantially L-shaped bag storage zone, said platform extending laterally across the width of said cabinet from said trough to the other side of said cabinet.

3. A check-out counter according to claim 2, wherein said horizontal support platform has a width, as measured in the elongated direction of the cabinet, which is substantially greater than the width of said trough for enabling rectangular open bags as supported on said trough to be slidably moved in their longitudinal direction along the longitudinal direction of said trough from one end of said top to the other end thereof, with said bags then being slidably moved transversely across the width of said cabinet from said trough onto said horizontal bag support platform.

4. A check-out counter according to claim 2, wherein the means defining the bag storage well includes a bottom support wall which slopes downwardly from the other side of said cabinet towards said one side thereof for causing the bags to be urged toward said opening.

5. A check-out counter according to claim 1, further including means defining a cash register support disposed adjacent said one end of said top.

6. A check-out counter according to claim 1, further including means defining at least a partial barrier across the opening to said bag storage well.

7. A check-out counter according to claim 1, wherein the means defining the bag storage well include a bottom support wall which slopes downwardly from the other side of said cabinet towards said one side thereof for causing the bags to be urged toward said opening.

8. A check-out counter according to claim 7, wherein said bottom support wall is jointed to the bottom wall of said trough, said bottom support wall being inclined upwardly away from said trough for causing automatic movement of bags within said well toward said opening for permitting said bags to be moved directly into said trough.

9. A check-out counter according to claim 8, further including means defining at least a partial barrier across the opening to said bag storage well.

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