United States Patent

Hayes

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[54] BOARD GAME APPARATUS

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[73] Assignee: **Marvin Glass & Associates, Chicago, Ill.**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** .....**273/134 G, 273/134 D, 273/138 R**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **A63f 3/00**

[58] **Field of Search** 273/134, 120, 139

[56] **References Cited**

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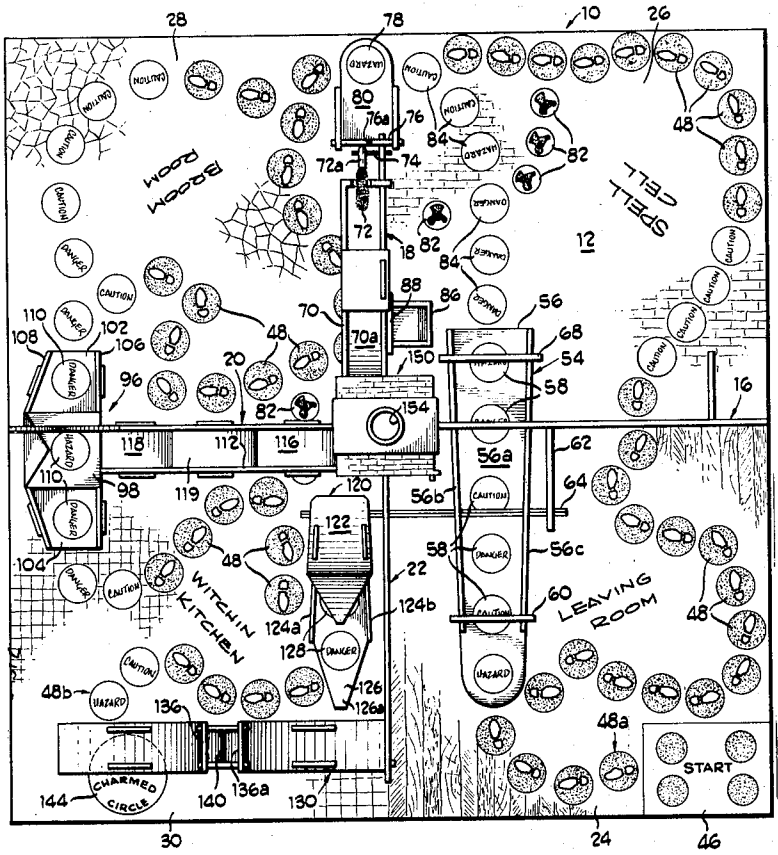
[57] **ABSTRACT**

A game device of the type involving random chance advancement and possible retrograde movement of playing pieces, characterized by the provisions of a game board having upstanding partitions defining different playing area compartments with openings in the partitions defining paths of advancement for playing pieces between the compartments and a tower structure positioned medially of the partitions with openings in the tower structure directed toward the several partitions and a random directing device for directing a ball element dropped into the tower outwardly of one of the openings towards the path of travel of the playing piece through the partitions with structure directing a ball element to one of a plurality of hazard devices which may be occupied by the game pieces so that a game piece occupying a particular hazard element to which the ball element is directed will be displaced.

15 Claims, 9 Drawing Figures



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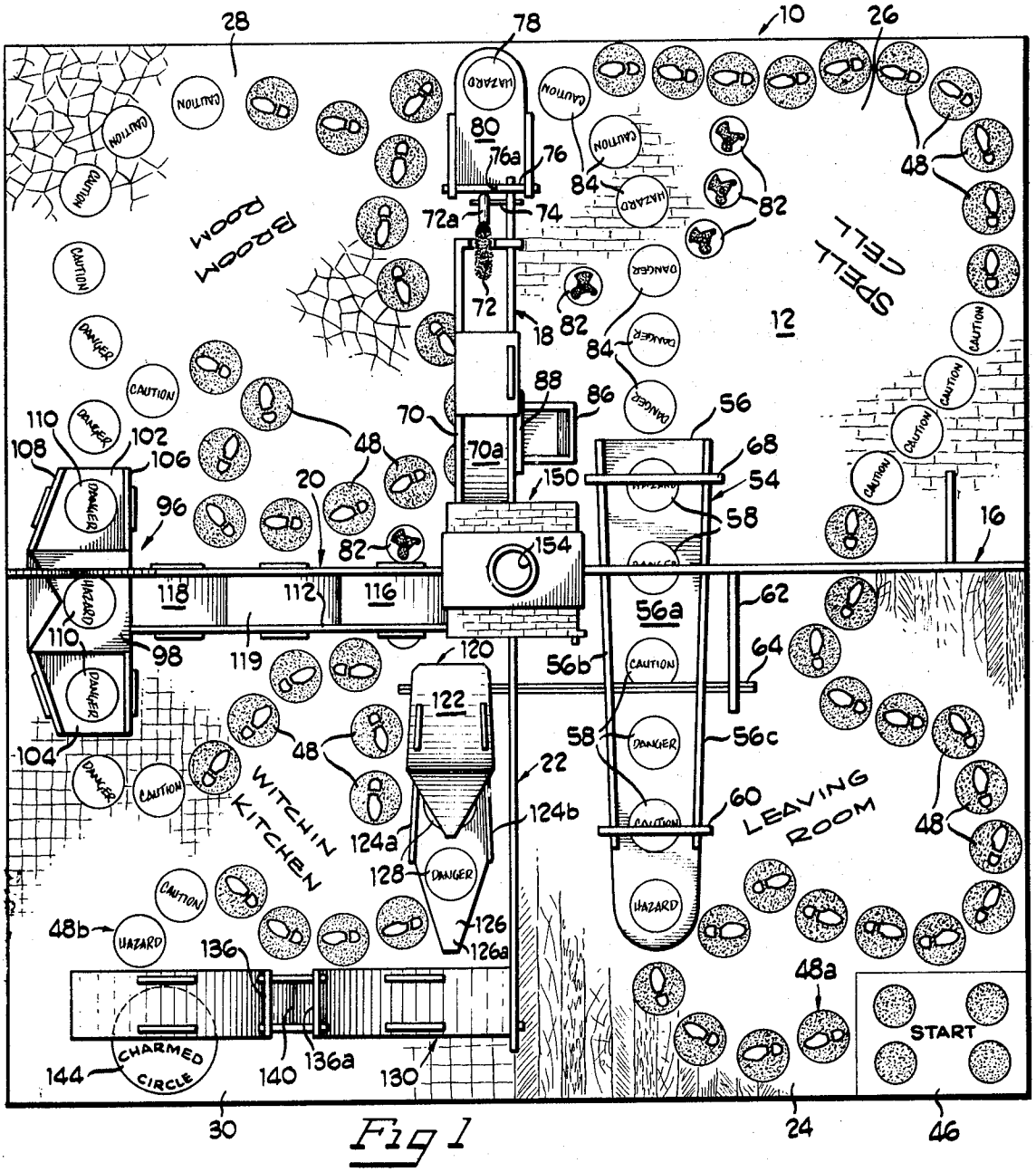

Fig 1

Fig 6

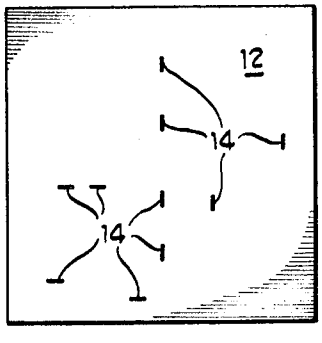

Fig 7

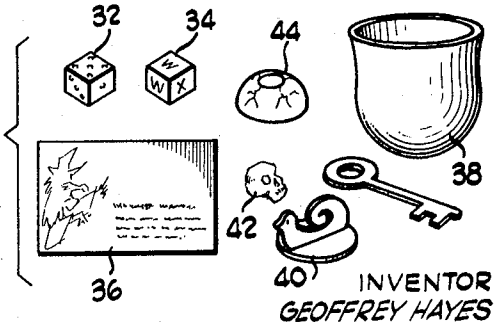

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Fig 2

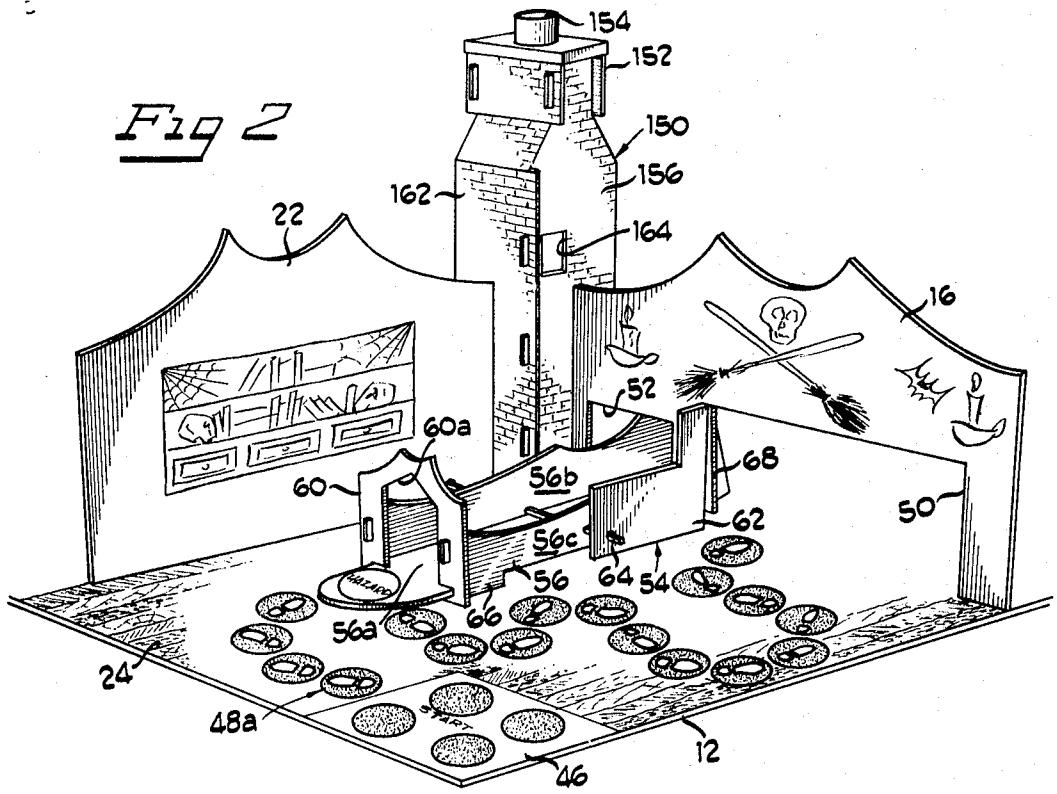

Fig 3

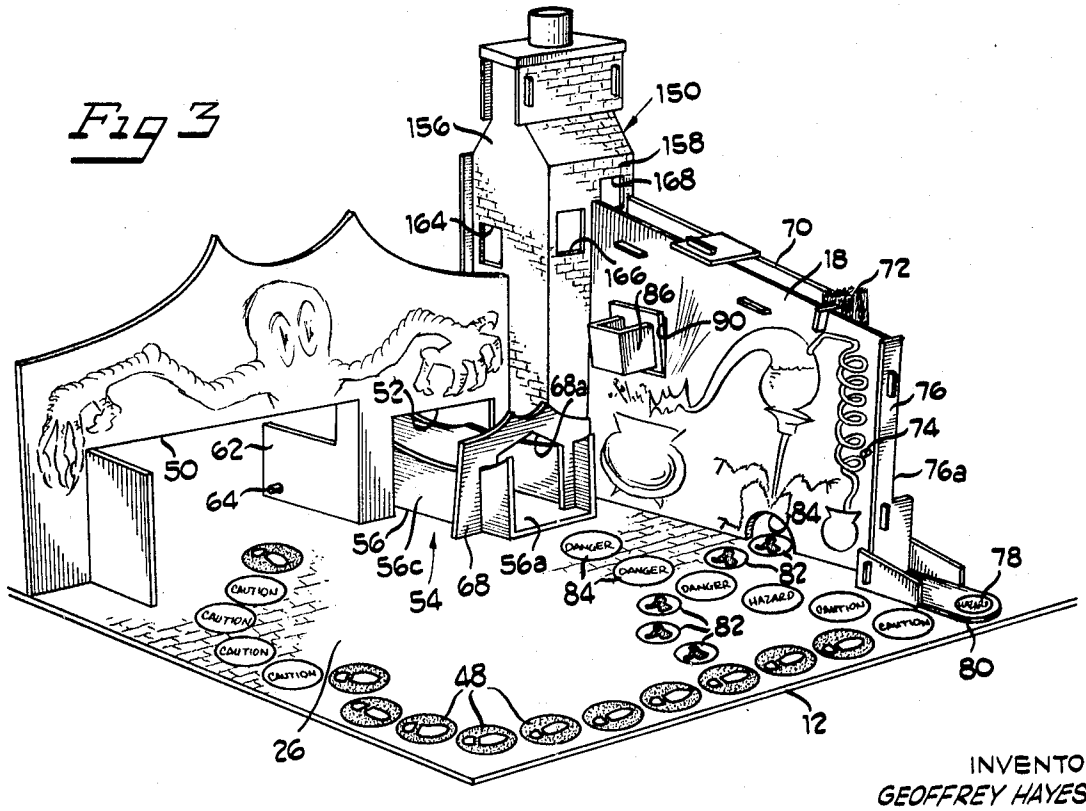

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Fig 4

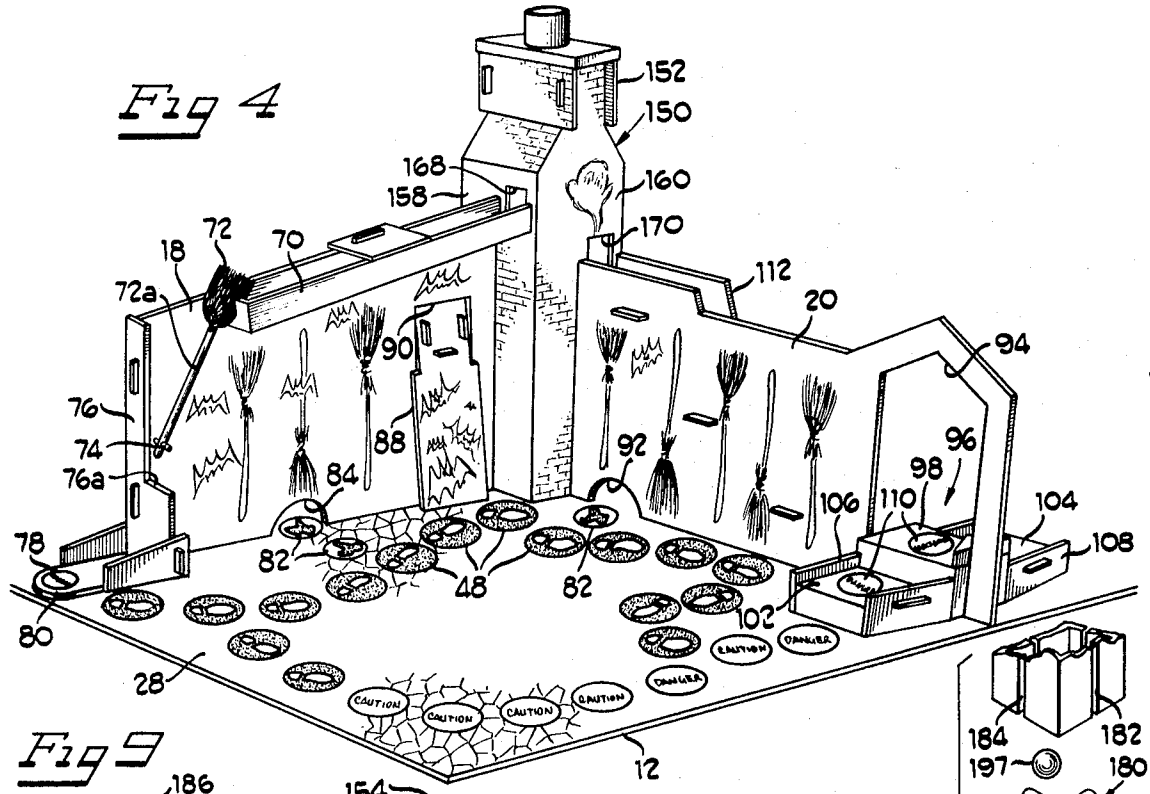

Fig 9

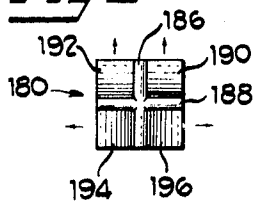

Fig 8

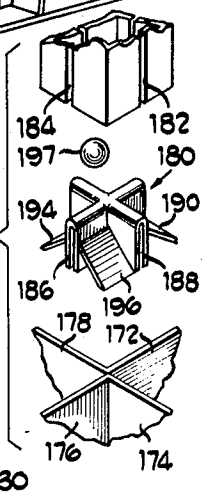

Fig 5

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BOARD GAME APPARATUS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to game devices, and, more particularly, to game devices of the type wherein a playing piece is advanced responsive to the dictates of a chance device and is also subject to retrograde movement responsive to other random means.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

There are many games of the type wherein players or participants are provided with playing pieces which must travel a certain sequential route along a game board through certain potential dangers or hazards to successful completion at the end of the path of travel. In such game devices it is typical that the participants move the playing pieces certain spaces responsive to the dictates of a chance device, such as dice or a spinner. Further, it is typical that the playing pieces may land on a space that imposes a penalty, such as through direct retrograde movement to an area closer to the starting point of the game, or by requiring the selection of an instruction card to determine subsequent action to be taken with respect to the playing piece. Games of this type have long been popular in that they are easily understood and capable of being played by participants of widely divergent ages. Being so popular, improvements in, or new versions of, games of this type are well received and desired in the art.

Heretofore, there has been no such game of the type described hereinabove known to the applicant, wherein the possible hazard to be inflicted, resultant from one playing piece or participant selecting a random instruction or the like, might, through the act of another random device, affect play in any area of the board and on any of the other playing pieces. Thus, this invention is directed towards meeting the need to provide such an improvement in games of this type.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention is directed, in brief, to an improvement in games of the type where playing pieces are advanced forwardly responsive to the dictates of a random device and may be subjected to hazards or instructions resulting in retrograde movement of the playing pieces.

The best mode currently contemplated for carrying out the invention is a game board having a means thereon indicating a sequential playing piece path of travel. The game board is provided with upstanding partitions forming different compartments on the board and a central upstanding random device positioned medially of the game board and medially of the several partitions. Playing pieces and chance devices as well as instruction cards are provided. A random projectile is provided for insertion into the upstanding central random device. Hazard elements which are located in the possible path of playing piece travel are provided with portions which are movable responsive to being struck by the projectile. The upstanding central random device has a plurality of possible exit patterns for the projectile which will feed to one or more of the hazard devices to cause movement of the same and dislodgment or disruption of the playing pieces thereon if struck by the projectile fed outwardly from the random device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of the game device of this invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of one quadrant or compartment area of the game device of this invention;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a second quadrant or compartment area of the game device of this invention;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a third quadrant or compartment area of the game device of this invention;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a fourth quadrant or compartment area of the game device of this invention;

FIG. 6 is a top plan view of the game board in an unassembled condition;

FIG. 7 is a view illustrating some of the subsidiary game components utilized with the game device of this invention;

FIG. 8 is an exploded perspective view of the structure of the central tower or random device; and

FIG. 9 is a top playing view of a portion of the interior structure of the central tower or random device.

While this invention is susceptible of embodiment in many different forms, there is shown in the drawings and will herein be described in detail a specific embodiment therefor, with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered as an exemplification of the principles of the invention and is not intended to limit the invention to the embodiment illustrated.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The game **10** of this invention includes a game board **12**, here shown in a rectangular configuration, and preferably made of a suitable hard rigid material such as a cardboard, pressed wood, plastic or the like. Game board **12** has a plurality of notches **14** therein for receiving tabs (not shown) for mounting partitions **16**, **18**, **20** and **22** in an upright fashion relative to the board **12**. Partitions **16** through **22** generally serve to divide the game board into compartments **24**, **26**, **28** and **30**, respectively.

Further provided with the game device is a chance means, here shown in the form of two dice, **32** and **34**. Preferably, die **32** is of the conventional type having numerals on the faces thereof and die **34** is provided with indicia in the form of letters such as "W" or "X" on the faces thereof. The game further includes a plurality of instruction cards, such as the instruction card **36**, for determining a certain course of action to be taken depending upon the location of a playing piece. A die shaker, preferably in the form of a simulated kettle, **38**, is also provided for utilization in shaking dice **32**, **34**. Playing pieces **40**, **42** and **44**, illustrated herein as a simulated bird, skull and eyeball, are also provided and it is to be understood that other forms of playing pieces such as a mouse, snail, frog, cat and the like may be utilized in the play of the game. The game board is provided with a starting area **46**, located in one corner of the board **12** in the compartment **24**, from which all players start their movement. A plurality of tortuously tandem arranged footstep areas **48** defines a playing piece path of travel which players must travel from beginning **48***a* to end **48***b* for successful completion of the game.

Partition **16** has a relatively large opening **50** therein, through which footstep areas **48** of the path are directed. The partition further has a smaller opening **52** which receives a first hazard means, or tilting ramp assembly **54** therethrough. The first hazard means **54** includes a generally U-shaped channel member **56**, the bottom **56***a* providing an alternate path for traversal by the playing pieces along the hazardous path spots **58** indicated thereon. Thus, players may elect either to follow the footsteps **48** to leave the compartment **24**, or to take the potentially hazardous course along the auxiliary path **58**.

An upright doorway structure **60**, having an opening **60***a*, is provided at the end of channel member **56** in compartment **24**. Partition **16** includes a leg **62** which extends into compartment **24**. A pin or pintle **64** extends through a rotatable mounting with leg **62** and fixed securement between the sides **56***b* and **56***c* of channel **56** and through rotatable mounting in an aperture in partition **22**. The arrangement is such as to hold the bottom **56***a* of channel **56** normally spaced above game board **12**. The forward or entry end of the channel **56** is provided with depending feet such as **66** normally in contact with the game board **12**. However, it can be readily appreciated that if the end opening into compartment **26** through opening **68***a* of doorway structure **68** is struck or displaced by a falling instrument, it will cause the entire channel structure **56** to rock about the pivotal mounting with pin **64**.

Partition 18 includes a channeled downwardly sloping secondary chute member 70 having a downwardly sloping bottom 70*a* and being affixed to one side of the top of partition 18. A simulated broom 72 is positioned at the end of the chute 70 and the handle portion 72*a* thereof is pivotally connected to a pin 74 which is secured in partition 18. A narrow end wall 76 at the end of partition 18 is recessed at 76*a* to permit pivotal movement of broom 72 through the recess 76*a* thereof so that it may swing from an at rest position at the end of the chute 70 through an arc in its path of travel which will cause it to intersect, and strike, a playing piece which may be occupying the second hazard area or space 78 located on tongue 80 which extends outwardly from the foot of wall 76.

Game board 12 in the area of compartment 26 is also provided with a specific character or creature traversal path, indicated by mouse spaces or spots 82, which leads from a portion of footsteps 48 through a small aperture 83 in the bottom of partition 18 and enters into the area of compartment 28. The portion of the path from the terminus of the first hazard 54 to the space 78 is indicated as a hazardous or dangerous path in the ares 84.

The partition 18 also supports a receptacle 86 connected to an upright tongue or paddle-like member 88 which extends through opening 90 in partition 18 from one side thereof with the receptacle 86 extending through to the other side of the partition. Thus, should a projectile or object be received in the receptacle 86 it will cause the member 88 to tilt so that it will perform a sweepinglike motion with respect to any playing pieces which may occupy any footsteps 48 of that portion of the playing piece path of travel adjacent thereto. Another special character or creature path element 82 extends through a small opening 92 in the bottom of partition 20 affording a short path for a specific character or creature from compartment 28 into compartment 30.

Partition 20 is provided with an arch-like doorway opening 94 at its outer end and a third hazard means 96 extends therethrough. Hazard means 96 is a stair-step-type structure including a middle or highest platform area 98 flanked by adjacent lower platform portions 102 and 104, all of which are held between upright side members 106 and 108 that extend through the opening 94. The portion of the path of travel through the third hazard 96 is indicated at the spaces 110 as a hazardous portion of the path of travel.

Closely spaced from partition 20 is upright inside wall structure 112 which cooperates with partition 20 to support a stair-step-type structure 114 which extends from an upper or elevated end 116 to a lower end 118 adjacent the platform portion 98 of hazard 96. A projectile dropped upon the portion 116 of stair-step structure 114 will roll downwardly, leaving the lower portion 118 and rolling onto the platform portion 98 of hazard 96, from which it may roll onto either of the laterally adjacent platform portions 102 and 104 for further deposit into either compartment 28 or 30.

A fourth hazard means 120 is provided adjacent the path of travel 48 of the compartment 30. This fourth hazard means takes the form of a simulated jaw having a top 122, sides 124*a* and 124*b*, and a bottom 126 with danger path of travel spaces 128 thereon. Pin 64 extends through the spaced sides 124*a* and 124*b* of fourth hazard 120. The bottom 126 of fourth hazard 120 is also normally spaced above the playing surface 12 with the forward end 126*a* thereof normally in engagement with the playing surface. Since the fourth hazard 120 is connected for pivotal movement with the first hazard 54, any pivotal movement imparted to the first hazard 54 will also cause pivotal movement of the fourth hazard 120.

The terminal end of the path of travel defined by footsteps 48 is adjacent to exit means 130 which includes spaced upright walls 132 and 134. Walls 132 and 134 include a simulated chimney 136 having an opening 136*a* therein, with a triangular playing piece random deflecting means 140 located below the open end of chimney 136. Element 140 is a triangular structure directly below the opening 136*a* of chimney 136. Wall 134 has an opening 142 on one side thereof, under which there is provided a space 144 indicating successful completion of the game, which space may be referred to as a so-called "charmed circle." Wall 132 has an opening 146 to the other side of deflecting means 140 opposite from opening 142. When a player has successfully advanced through the game and comes to a footstep 48 adjacent the exit means 130, the playing piece is deposited in the chimney 136. If the playing piece is directed by deflecting means 140 to the area of opening 142, the player has successfully completed the game. However, if the playing piece is deflected by the means 140 to the area of the simulated fireplace opening 146, then the player must return to a previous position, such as the last space in the previous compartment or the like.

Each of the partitions 16, 18, 20 and 22 are joined to a centrally or medially mounted random chance device or hazard element dispensing means 150, here shown in the form of a simulated tower or the like. Random chance device 150 is a vertically elongate, hollow, boxlike structure having a reduced top portion 152 with a simulated chimney opening 154 therein, which opens to the interior of device 150. Device 150 is made up of four side walls 156, 158, 160 and 162 which are joined together to form the enclosure. The side walls are provided with simulated windows or hazard element openings or projectile openings, such as the window 164 in side wall 156, the window 166 and window 168 in side wall 158 and window 170 in side wall 160.

The interior of random device 150 is provided with a quadraform structure made up of four intersecting partitions 172, 174, 176 and 178 on which there is received a random projectile or hazard element directing member, generally indicated 180. The partitions are intended to be received in slots, such as slots 182 and 184 in the interior of the walls of the random device 150 for supporting the partitions uprightly therein. The random deflecting device 180 includes intersecting U-shaped ribs 186 and 188. Deflecting device 180 is assembled over the top of the partitions with the U-shaped ribs 186 and 188 embracing partitions 172, 174, 176 and 178.

The random directing device 180 has downwardly and outwardly inclined surfaces between the intersecting U-shaped portions or ribs 186 and 188 thereof. These surfaces are constructed and arranged to deflect a ball-like projectile, or hazard element, downwardly and outwardly in different directions responsive to the deposit thereof through the simulated chimney opening 154. For example, downwardly and outwardly inclined surfaces 190 and 192 on either side of rib 186 will deflect a ball in the same direction, but in spaced apart planes. Surfaces 194 and 196 on opposite sides of rib 186 and on the side of rib 188 opposite from surfaces 190 and 192 will deflect a ball in opposed directions from each other and generally transversely to the direction of deflection of the surfaces 190 and 192.

With reference to FIGS. 8 and 9, if a ball or projectile or hazard element 197 is dropped through the simulated chimney opening 154, and lands on the surface 190, the ball 197 will be deflected out the window 166 into a path of travel which will cause it to land in the receptacle 86 and cause movement of the paddle-like member 88. If the ball 197 lands on surface 192 it will be deflected out of window 168 and caused to roll down ramp 70 to broom 72 and send the broom 72 through a sweeping motion. If the ball 197 lands on surface 194 it will be deflected outwardly from the window 170 and caused to traverse down the stair-step structure 114, until it lands on the platform 98 from which it will continue to drop either on the platform 102 or 104 and roll into the adjacent compartment. If, following deposit through simulated chimney 154, the ball 197 lands on surface 196, it will be caused to exit out of window 164 and thereby will be deposited on the floor 56*a* of the first hazard 54 causing it to tilt as well as causing the fourth hazard 120 to tilt.

To play the game, players determine the initial starter by one of several acceptable means, such as by a throw of die 32, to see who has the high number. Players then select a suitable playing piece and initiate the play of the game by throwing

both die **32** and die **34**. If the facet of die **34** showing upwardly has a "W" thereon, then the player selects one of the cards **36** from an instructional card arrangement and follows the instructions on the card. The card may direct a player to move to the next hazard, in which case the player must disregard the number of spaces allowed to be moved according to the number showing upwardly on the die **32**. The card may also direct that the player is to change his form into a certain other specific creature, such as a simulated mouse or the like. In this instance, it is envisioned that several different creature figures could be provided and that these creatures could have unique abilities. For example, if a player were changed into a frog, for each normal single space movement allotted by the number on the die **32**, he would be allowed twice as many moves. If, on the other hand, the player were a snail, he would be allowed only half as many spaces. If the player were an owl, then the player would be allowed to fly over a wall instead of having to go under the next opening or the like, and so forth. The illustration of the mouse spaces **82** is provided to show that players who have been changed into that creature may follow some of the shorter paths of travel which will enable them to go through some of the particular openings in the partitions in the path of travel of the mouse spaces **82**.

As the game progresses, some players may be along the regular path of travel **48** and others may be on the hazards, either by way of choice to obtain a shorter path of travel, or by dictation of the instruction cards **36**. If an instruction card **36** is turned up which directs that a ball **197** be dropped down chimney **154**, then any of the players in the game are subjected to the resultant hazards. After the ball **197** is dropped down a chimney **154**, the directing or deflecting device, **180**, will determine out of which of the windows **164** through **170** the ball will go. This, as previously explained, may affect any playing pieces on any of the hazards or in areas adjacent thereto. If a player is on a hazard which is truck by the ball **197** after it has been projected outwardly from the central random device **150** and this causes displacement of the player, then he must return to a previous room or to the start. Furthermore, as the ball **197** rolls about the adjacent compartment of the game board, if it strikes other playing pieces, then these playing pieces also must return to the previous room. It is envisioned that two or more players may occupy the same space so that two or more players might be displaced upon a hazard at the same time.

Once a player has successfully traversed the game board to a point where he is adjacent the end wall **130**, then the procedure of dropping the playing piece downwardly through the open chimney **136** is followed, with the playing piece being deflected by the device **140**, either to the "charmed circle" **144**, which means the game has been successfully completed for that player; or through the fireplace **146**, which means the player must return to an adjacent room or an adjacent hazard.

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

I claim:

1. A game device comprising: a plurality of playing pieces; means for determining the extent and direction of movement of the playing pieces; a game board having means defining a primary path of travel for the playing pieces; means defining hazard areas adjacent to said path of travel for the playing pieces said hazard areas defining alternate accessible paths of travel for said playing pieces; a hazard element; means connected to the game board for random dispensation of said hazard element in any one of different directions toward any one of said hazard areas to displace a playing piece occupying any one of said hazard areas to which said hazard element is directed; whereby the positioning of a playing piece on any one hazard area may be disturbed by dispensation of said hazard element out of said random dispensing means.

2. The game device of claim **1**, wherein there is at least one additional hazard area which includes a movable portion in the path of travel of the hazard element dispensed from said random dispensation means, said movable portion being mounted for displacement responsive to receipt of said hazard element to thereby engage and displace a game piece.

3. The game device of claim **1** including means defining secondary paths of travel for playing pieces and instruction means associated with the means for determining the extent and direction of movement for directing the movement of said playing pieces along said secondary paths of travel.

4. The game device of claim **1** including means defining an intermediate path of travel for playing pieces between portions of said primary path of travel with said intermediate path of travel extending through some of said hazard areas.

5. The game device of claim **1** including partition means for dividing the game board into a plurality of compartments with said hazard areas being adjacent to said partition means.

6. The game device of claim **1** wherein the random dispensation means is positioned medially of the game board and wherein partitions defining compartments radiate outwardly therefrom.

7. The game device of claim **6** wherein said random dispensation means includes a chute-like member connected to the board and having plural outfeed paths associated with a common inlet.

8. The game device of claim **7** wherein there is at least one additional hazard area which includes a ramp means movably connected to one partition with the ramp means extending through an opening in said one partition, said ramp means being mounted for displacement responsive to receipt of a hazard element to thereby engage and displace a game piece.

9. The game device of claim **7** wherein there is at least one additional hazard area which includes a playing piece receiving space adjacent one of said partitions and chute means leading from said random dispensing means, the chute means including a member pivoted to the end thereof for swinging movement from a rest position adjacent the end of the chute means through a path of travel which intersects said additional hazard area.

10. The game device of claim **7** wherein there is at least one additional hazard area which includes portions of different elevation connected to the game board and extending through an opening on one of said partitions and wherein the said one partition includes means defining a path of descent for a hazard element extending from said random dispensing means to said additional hazard area.

11. The game device of claim **7** including at least one additional hazard area which includes a tongue swingably associated with one side of one of the partitions and a hazard element receptacle connected thereto on the other side of the said one of the partitions.

12. The game device of claim **7** including at least one additional hazard area which comprises a ramp means connected with another ramp means through a common partition for conjoint movement therewith.

13. The game device of claim **7** including wall means at the terminal end of the playing piece path of travel with the wall means including a playing piece receiving portion spaced from the playing piece path of travel including means for randomly deflecting an inserted playing piece back toward the path of travel or away from the path of travel.

14. The game device of claim **7** including means defining secondary paths of travel for playing pieces and instruction means associated with the means for determining the extent and direction of movement for directing the movement of said playing pieces on said secondary paths of travel.

15. The game device of claim **7** wherein the means for determining the extent and direction of movement of the playing pieces includes a change device and a plurality of instruction means, with the chance device including two independently movable components having different indicia thereon.

* * * * *