

[54] FEE COLLECTION DEVICE

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[51] Int. Cl. B65d 91/00

[58] Field of Search 232/1 R, 45, 44, 4

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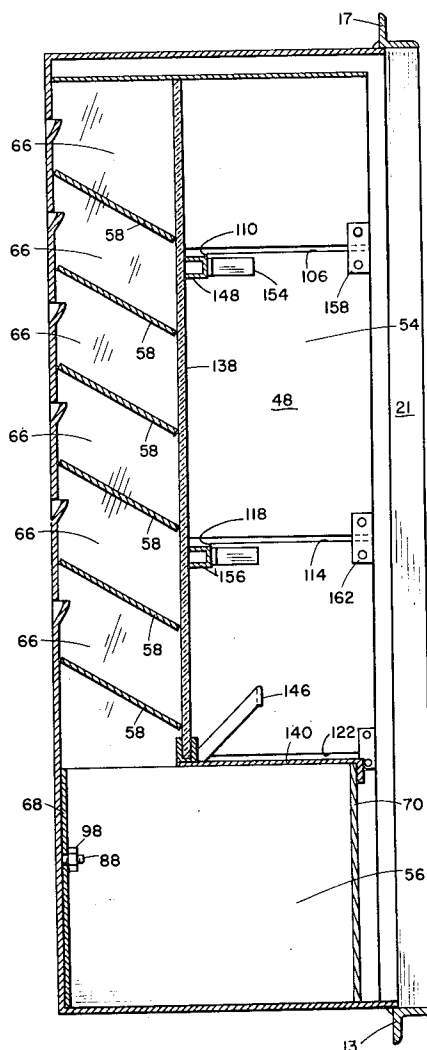
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—William S. Dorman

[57]

ABSTRACT

A fee collection device for the collection and storage of parking fees at a self-service parking lot and comprising a fully enclosed housing having an upper collection compartment and a lower storage compartment therein, the said housing also comprising a front face panel having an array of louvered deposit slots therein in communication with the collection compartment for receiving fee deposits therethrough, the said collection compartment comprising an array of inclined collection subcompartments in communication with the front face panel, one said subcompartment for each louvered deposit slot, and fee inspection and discharge means slidably disposed within the collection compartment for permitting inspection of the collection subcompartments and discharge of the collected fees from the collection subcompartments into the lower storage compartment after inspection thereof.

5 Claims, 8 Drawing Figures



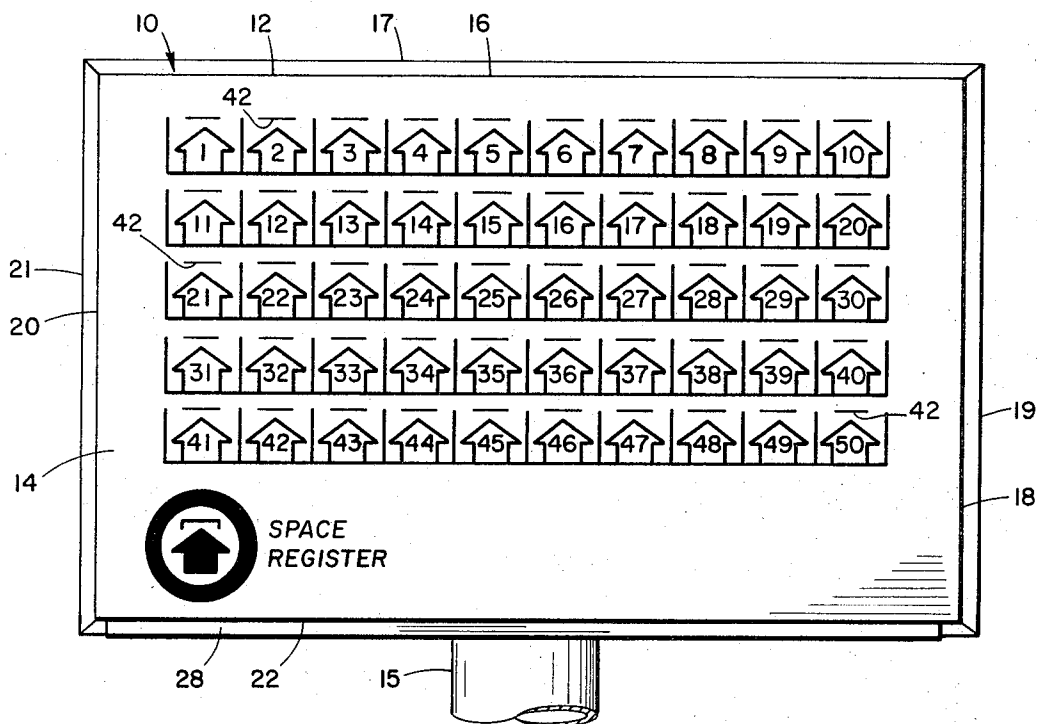


Fig. 1

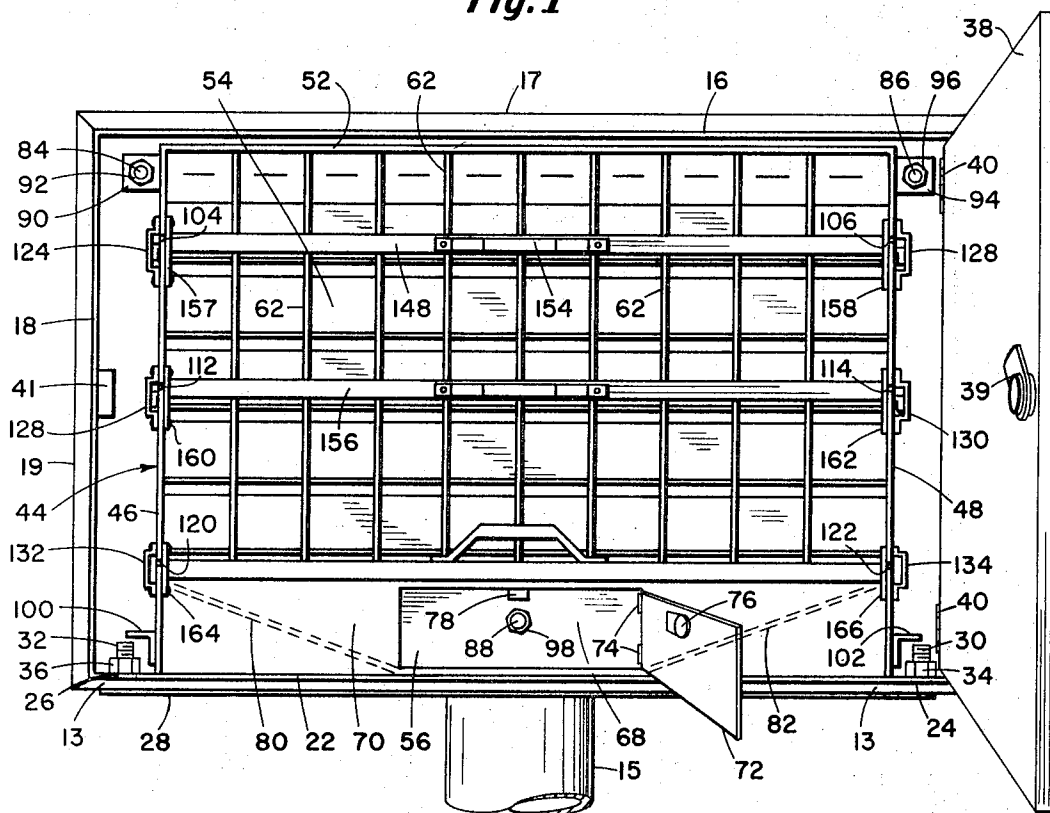


Fig. 2

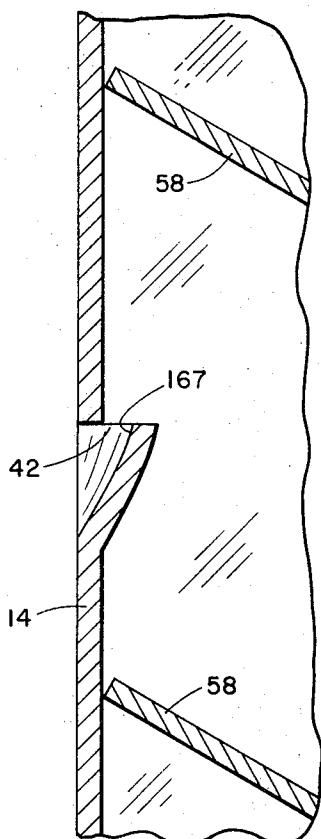


Fig. 5

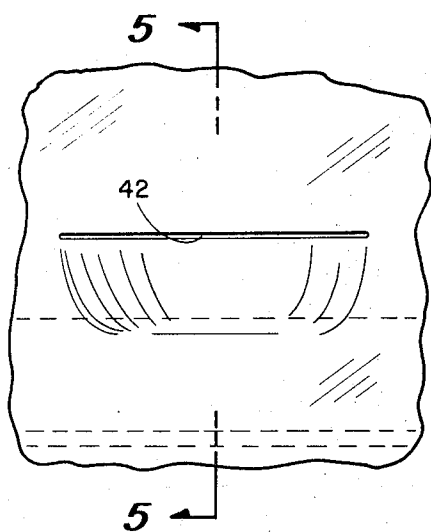


Fig. 4

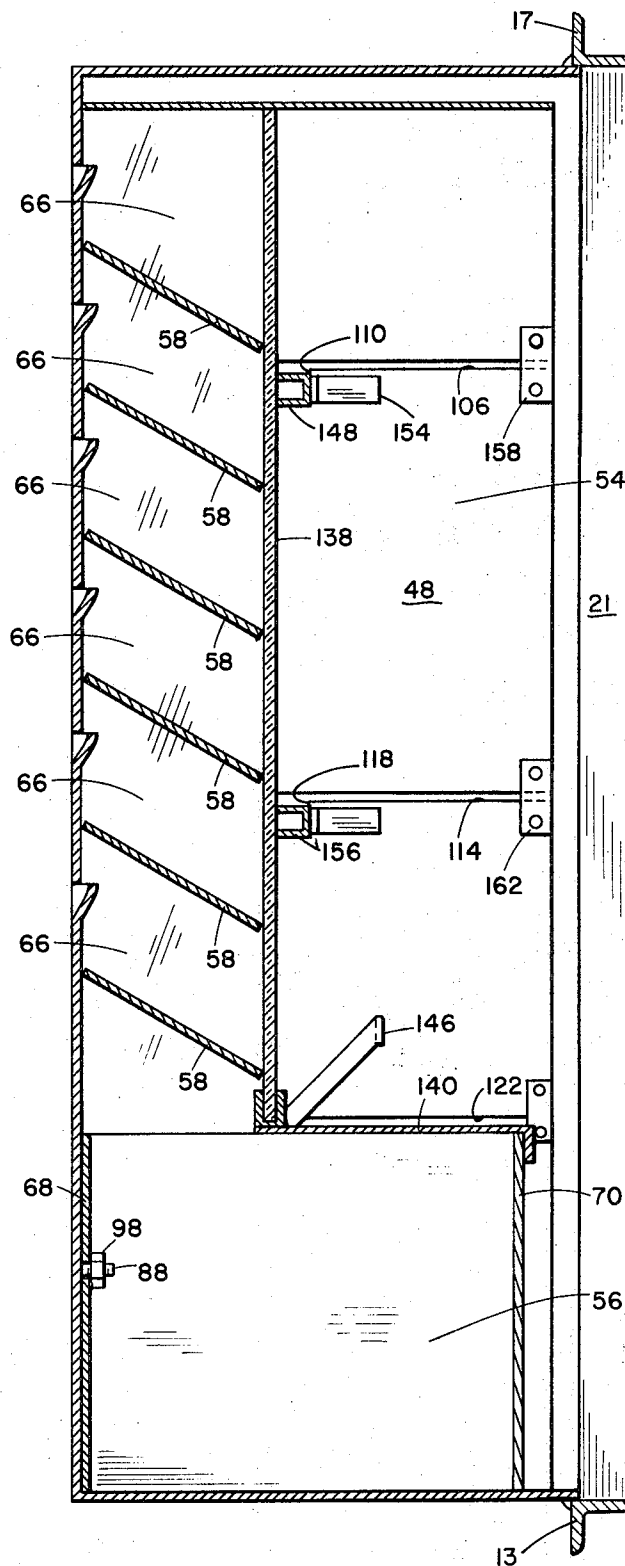


Fig. 3

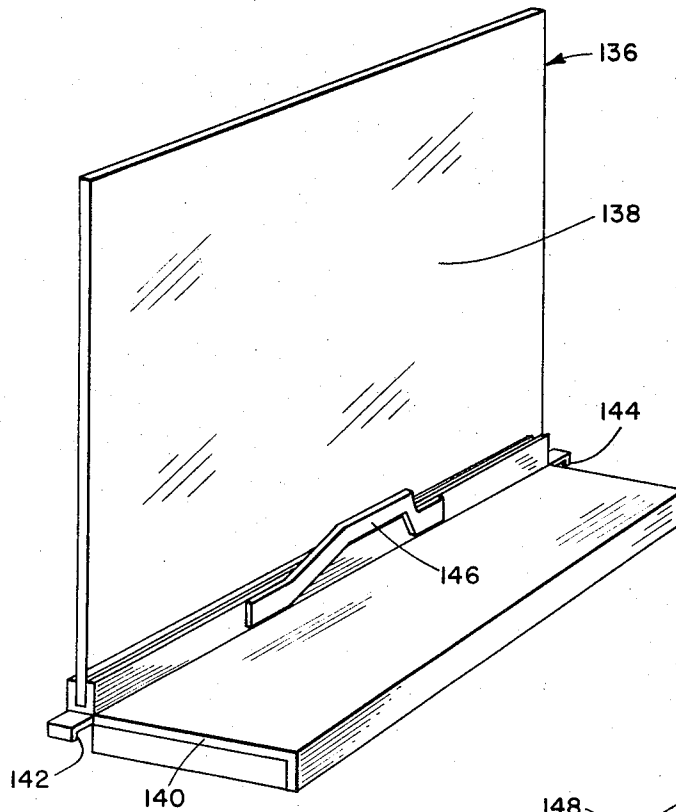


Fig. 6

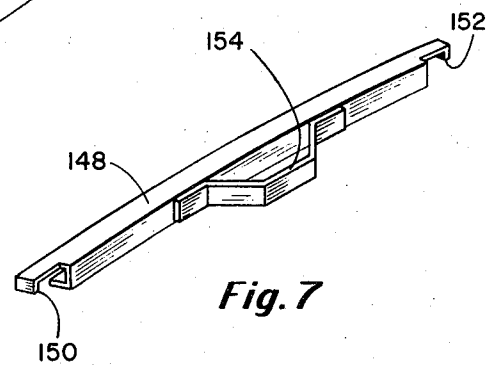


Fig. 7

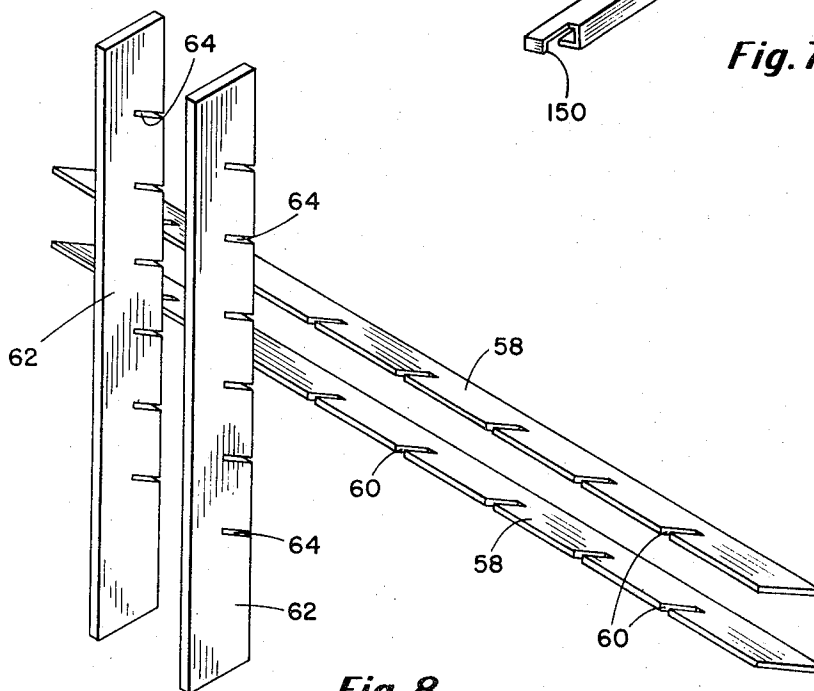


Fig. 8

FEE COLLECTION DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to improvements in fee collection devices and more particularly, but not by way of limitation, to a fee collection device for the collection and storage of parking fees at a self-service parking lot, the said fee collection device comprising a collection compartment having specially louvered slots for the deposit and collection of fees which is virtually theft-proof, a vault type storage compartment disposed beneath the collection compartment for storage of the fees and a specially designed inspection and discharge means for permitting inspection of the said collection compartment and discharge of the collected fees from the collection compartment into the lower storage compartment.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Fee collection devices are normally of a box-type configuration such as that disclosed in the patent to Perrill, U.S. Pat. No. 3,542,283, issued Nov. 24, 1970, and entitled "Coin Collection Box", which utilize an array of coin deposit slots in one face of the said box, the coin deposit slots being in communication with rotatable coin receiving chutes whereby upon inspection of the device, the chutes may be simultaneously rotated to discharge the coins into a lower storage compartment for subsequent collection thereof. This type of coin collection box has certain disadvantages in that first, the design configuration of the coin receiving slot is particularly susceptible to burglary thereof by thieves and vandals utilizing "pick" type devices and the like. Secondly, the slot configuration on existing devices freely permits rain, snow, dust and the like to blow into the coin collection compartment thereby subsequently causing rust and damage to the interior parts thereof. A third deficiency of the above type collection box is apparent in that the complicated movement of rotating the chutes for discharging the coins therein may fail to operate or become inadvertently unlatched, thereby leaving the chutes in a discharge position, whereby upon inspection of the said device, it would be impossible for the attendant to determine which fees have been paid and which fees have not.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention contemplates a novel fee collection device designed and constructed for overcoming the above disadvantages. The present fee collection device is provided with a collection compartment having an array of fixed and immovable collection subcompartments therein for receiving and temporarily storing fee deposits. Each of the fee collection subcompartments is disposed in communication with a specially constructed louvered deposit slot which, in operation, requires that the fee, whether in bills or in coin, pass upwardly and inwardly through the louvered slot and into its associated collection subcompartment. This required "upward and inward" movement of the fees through the slot and into the said subcompartments renders the said subcompartments virtually theft-proof in that the thief would be required to insert a pick, or similar device through that same slot upwardly, inwardly, and down into the collection box in order to pick up the fee deposited therein. This specially de-

signed louvered slot also provides a distinct advantage over the ordinary slots employed by the presently available parking lot collection devices in that it is virtually impossible for rain, snow, dust and the like to blow into the louvered slot since such rain and other foreign particles would also be required to travel upwardly and inwardly in order to enter the said collection box.

The said collection subcompartments are disposed within the collection compartment on an incline which slopes downwardly away from the louvered deposit slots whereby upon deposit of fees therein, whether coin or bills, the said fee will slide to the rear of the said collection subcompartment and come to rest against a specially designed movable transparent inspection and discharge plate which is slidably disposed within the said collection compartment whereby upon opening the rear access door of the fee collection device, the subcompartments may be inspected through the transparent inspection and discharge plate without the inspecting attendant having access to the money deposited therein. After inspection, the attendant may then disengage the inspection and discharge plate and slide the said plate away from the inclined subcompartments, thereby releasing the fees therein and allowing the same to fall into the storage compartment which is disposed directly beneath the collection compartment. The novel fee collection device is constructed in a manner that during the inspection and discharge operation the inspecting attendant does not have access to the collected money stored therein. Thereafter, closure of the rear access door of the collection device requires that the inspection and discharge plate be moved back into contact with the subcompartment thereby avoiding inadvertently leaving the said subcompartments in a discharge position.

The lower storage compartment of the present fee collection device is provided with a separate locked access door and an interior configuration which is particularly designed for ease in collection of the fees stored therein.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Other and further advantageous features of the present invention will hereinafter more fully appear in connection with a detailed description of the drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a front view of a fee collection box embodying the invention.

FIG. 2 is a rear view of the collection box of FIG. 1 having the rear access door open.

FIG. 3 is a side elevational view of the inner housing of the fee collection device.

FIG. 4 is a front view of one of the louvered slots of FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 is a sectional elevational view of the said deposit slot taken along the broken line 5-5 of FIG. 4.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the inspection and discharge means.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of one of the plate retainer bars.

FIG. 8 is an exploded view of the panels making up the collection subcompartments.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring to the drawings in detail, reference character 10 generally indicates a fee collection device com-

prising an enclosed outer housing 12 which may be rigidly secured to an upright post 15 or the like. The housing 12 comprises a front face panel 14, a top panel 16 which is secured to the front face panel 14, and at right angles thereto, a pair of substantially identical opposing side panels 18 and 20, which are secured to the front panel 14 and the top panel 16 and a base panel 22 which is secured to the front panel 14 and the side panels 18 and 20. The base panel 22 is provided with suitable mounting attachment apertures 24 and 26 for mounting the outer housing 12 on a mounting plate 28. The mounting plate 28 is provided with at least two upwardly extending threaded studs 30 and 32 in alignment with the attachment apertures 24 and 26, respectively. The housing 12 is secured to the plate 28 by means of a pair of threaded nuts 34 and 36 which are tightened about the studs 30 and 32 respectively against the base panel 22. The housing 12 also comprises a rear access door 38 which is hingedly secured to the side panel 20 either by a plurality of hinges 40 or a piano type hinge (not shown) extending the full height of the access door 38. The front face panel 14 is provided with an array of substantially horizontally disposed louvered deposit slots 42 for receiving parking fees consisting of bills, coins, tokens or the like there-through in a manner that will be hereinafter set forth.

The top and base panels 16 and 22 of the outer housing are provided with a reinforcement angle iron extrusions 13 and 17 secured along the outside rear edge thereof in any well known manner such as by welding. The side panels 18 and 20 of the said outer housing 12 are provided with a pair of substantially identical angle iron extrusions 19 and 20, respectively, which are also secured along the outer rear edges thereof. The rear access door 38 is provided with a rotatable locking mechanism 39 and the inside rear edge of the side panel 18 is provided with a latch plate 41 which works in connection with the rotatable locking mechanism 39 when the rear access door 38 is closed. The rear access door 38 is constructed so that upon closure, the outside face of the said access door 38 is recessed within the rear edge of the outer housing side panels 18 and 20 and top and bottom panels 16 and 22.

The fee collection device 10 also comprises an inner housing generally indicated by reference character 44 which is removably installed in the outer housing 12 through the rear access door 38. The inner housing 44 comprises a pair of spaced side panels 46 and 48, which may have an inner housing base panel (not shown) secured between the side panels 46 and 48 at the bottom thereof and at right angles thereto. The inner housing 44 may also be provided with a top panel 52 secured between the upper ends of the side panels 46 and 48 at right angles thereto. The said housing 44 also comprises an upper collection compartment 54 and a lower storage compartment 56 which is disposed directly beneath the said collection compartment 54. The front portion of the collection compartment 54 is provided with a plurality of transversely disposed vertically spaced elongated panels 58, each of the said panels 58 being provided with a plurality of spaced notches 60 extending from the front edge thereof to approximately mid-way toward the rear edge. Each of the elongated panels 58 are secured at each end thereof to the housing side panels 46 and 48 on an incline, the front edge of each of the said panels 58 being disposed vertically

higher than the rear edge thereof. Experimentation has shown that the preferred angle of inclination for each of the said panels 58 is approximately 30° with respect to the horizontal for reasons that will be hereinafter set forth. A plurality of vertical, spaced divider panels 62, each having a plurality of spaced angular notches 64 are slidably secured to the elongated panels 58, the notches 64 of the panels 62 engaging with the notches 60 of the panels 58, thereby forming an array of chute-like collection subcompartments 66 for purposes that will be hereinafter set forth.

The lower storage compartment 56 is provided with a front face panel 68 which is secured to the front edges of the vertical side panels 46 and 48. The said storage compartment 56 is also provided with a rear panel 70 which is also secured to the rear edges of the vertical side panels 46 and 48 at right angles thereto. The rear panel is provided with a centrally disposed storage compartment access door 72 which is hingedly secured to the said rear panel 70 by suitable hinges 74. The said access door may be hinged at one side thereof as shown in FIG. 2, but is not limited thereto. The said access door 72 is provided with a rotatable locking mechanism 76 disposed in the upper central portion of the said access door 72 and requires a special storage compartment key (not shown) for rotation of the said locking means 76. A latch plate 78 is secured to the upper portion of the rear panel 70. The said latch plate 78 extending vertically downwardly into the storage compartment access door opening for engagement with the locking means 76 when the door 72 is closed. The storage compartment access door 72 is secured to the rear panel 70 in a manner so that when the said access door 72 is closed, it will be flush with the rear surface of the panel 70. The storage compartment 56 is also provided with a pair of oppositely disposed inclined panels 80 and 82, the said inclined panel 80 being secured at the outer end thereof to the side panel 48 at a point near the bottom thereof, the inner end of the said panel 80 being secured to the bottom panel 50 near the center of the said bottom panel 50. The panel 82 has the outer end thereof secured to the side panel 48 near the bottom thereof, the inner end of the said panel 82 being secured to the bottom panel 50 near the center of the said bottom panel 50. It is readily apparent that fees consisting of coins, bills, tokens or the like, upon being deposited in the storage compartment 56 will be directed toward the center portion of the said compartment 56 by the inclined panels 80 and 82 for ease of removal thereof through the opening of the access door 72.

The rear surface of the front panel 14 of the housing 12 is provided with a pair of oppositely disposed rearwardly extending threaded stud members 84 and 86 near the upper corners of the said front face panel 14. The rear face of the front face panel 14 is also provided with a third rearwardly extending threaded stud member 88 which is centrally disposed in the lower portion of the said panel 14. The side panel 46 of the inner housing 44 is provided at the upper portion thereof with an attachment bracket 90 having a bore therein for receiving the threaded stud member 84 there-through. A threaded nut 92 is used to tighten the said bracket 90 against the rear face of the front face panel 14. The side panel 48 is also provided with an attachment bracket 94 secured to the upper front portion thereof, the said bracket 94 being provided with a bore

therein for receiving the threaded stud member 86 therethrough. A threaded nut 96 is then used to tighten the said bracket 94 to the rear surface of the front face panel 14. The front panel 68 of the storage compartment 56 is provided with a centrally disposed bore therein for receiving the threaded stud member 88. A threaded nut 98 is then utilized to tighten the front panel 68 of the storage compartment 56 to the rear surface of the front face panel 14 of the housing 12. Therefore, it is readily apparent that in order to remove the inner housing 44 from the outer housing 12 it is necessary to gain access to the interior of the storage compartment 56. A first angle iron 100 having an inverted L cross-sectional shape is rigidly secured to the outside bottom portion of the side panel 46 for covering the covered end of the upwardly extending threaded stud member 32 of the mounting plate 28. A substantially identical oppositely disposed angle iron section 102 is rigidly secured to the outer base portion of the opposite side panel 48 for also covering the upper end of the threaded stud member 30 of the mounting plate 28.

It is obvious that when the inner housing 44 is installed within the outer housing 12, the threaded nuts 34 and 36 cannot be removed from the stud members 30 and 32, respectively. Therefore, in order to remove the entire housing 12 from the mounting plate 28, it would be necessary to first gain access to the storage compartment 56 and remove the inner housing 44 from the said outer housing 12. Thus, in the unlikely event that a thief is able to gain access through the rear access door 38 and also gain access to the storage compartment 56 through the storage compartment access door 72, he would already have access to the money stored therein and would have no reason for stealing the fee collection device itself.

Referring now to FIG. 3, each of the inner housing side panels 46 and 48 are provided with a first pair of aligned, oppositely disposed, horizontally extending elongated slot-like apertures 104 and 106, respectively, which extend from the rear edge of the said side panels 46 and 48 frontwardly to a point adjacent to the rear end of the collection subcompartments 66 for a purpose that will be hereinafter set forth. The front end of the apertures 104 and 106 are provided with downwardly extending slots 108 and 110, respectively. The mid-portions of the side panels 46 and 48 are likewise provided with a pair of oppositely disposed elongated horizontally disposed slot-like apertures 112 and 114, respectively, which extend from the rear edge of the said side panels 46 and 48 forwardly to a point adjacent to the rear end of the collection subcompartments 66. Likewise, the front end of the apertures 112 and 114 are provided with a downwardly extending slot 116 and 118, respectively. The side panels 46 and 48 are also provided with a third pair of aligned, oppositely disposed, horizontally extending, elongated slot-like apertures 120 and 122, respectively, which extend from the rear edge of the side panels 46 and 48 forwardly to a point adjacent to the rear end of the collection subcompartment 66. The slot-like apertures 120 and 122 are disposed adjacent to the top of the storage compartment 56.

An elongated horizontally disposed extrusion 124 of a substantially U-shaped cross sectional configuration is rigidly secured to the outside of the side panel 46 and along the aperture 104 for enclosing the said aperture

104 and providing additional strength to the side panel 46 about the said slot-like aperture 104. A pair of substantially identical extrusions 128 and 132 are rigidly secured to the outside of the side panel 46 along, and for protection of, the slot-like apertures 112 and 120. Three substantially identical extrusions 126, 130 and 134 are rigidly secured to the outside of the side panel 48 along and for protection of the slot-like apertures 106, 114 and 122, respectively.

The collection compartment 54 is provided with a fee inspection and discharge means generally indicated by reference character 136 comprising a vertically disposed transparent rectangular inspection plate 138, the lower edge of the plate 138 being provided with a rearwardly extending storage compartment cover plate 140 secured thereto. The size of the said inspection plate 138 must be sufficient to cover the rear ends of all of the collection subcompartments 66. Each end of the storage compartment cover plate 140 is provided with an outwardly and downwardly extending tongue member 142 and 144, the said tongue members being oppositely disposed adjacent to the forward edge of the said cover plate 140. The fee inspection and discharge means 136 is slidably disposed within the collection compartment 54 with the said outwardly and downwardly extending tongue members 142 being slidably disposed within the slot-like apertures 120 and 122 respectively, of the side panels 46 and 48 of the inner housing 44, whereby the said inspection and discharge means 136 may be moved forwardly to the point where the inspection plate 138 is butted against the rear edges of the horizontally disposed panels 58 and their associated vertically disposed divider panels 62 to provide a rear end closure for the array of collection subcompartments 66. The said fee inspection and discharge means 136 may also be slidably moved in a rearward direction away from the collection subcompartments 66 thereby allowing the fee that is collected therein to drop vertically into the storage compartment 56. The storage compartment cover plate 140 is also provided with a centrally disposed handle member 146 to facilitate movement of the said fee inspection and discharge means both forwardly and rearwardly.

An elongated inspection plate retainer bar 148 having a pair of oppositely disposed outwardly and downwardly extending tongue members 150 and 152 slidably disposed in the slots 104 and 106, respectively, for securing the inspection plate 138 to the rear ends of the collection subcompartments 66. The retainer bar 148 is provided with a slight curvature in the horizontal plane with the outer ends thereof extending rearwardly from the center portion thereof. The retainer bar 148 is also provided with a centrally disposed handle means 154 to facilitate removal thereof. When the retainer bar is moved to its forwardmost position in order to press the upper portion of the inspection plate 138 against the rear ends of the collection subcompartments 66, it is necessary to exert a slight force at each end of the said retainer bar in order to allow the tongue members 150 and 152 to move downwardly into the slot 110 and the corresponding downwardly extending slot (not shown) for the slot 104, thereby causing a spring-like pressure to be exerted on the inspection plate 130 by the entire length of the retainer bar 148. A substantially identical inspection plate retainer bar 156, having a pair of oppositely disposed outwardly and downwardly extending tongue members (not shown) is

slidably disposed within the slots 112 and 114 for securing the mid-to-lower portion of the inspection plate 138 against the rear ends of the collection subcompartments 66. The retainer bar 156 is also provided with a slight curvature in the horizontal plane thereby requiring an exertion of pressure at either end thereof in order to lower the tongue members thereof into the downwardly extending slots 116 and 118 of the inner housing side panels 46 and 48, respectively. The rear edge of the slot 104 and the rear edge of the slot 106 are provided with a pair of oppositely disposed stop members 157 and 158, respectively, which are secured to the side plates 46 and 48, respectively, across the said slots 104 and 106 to prevent removal of the retaining bar 148 after it has been installed. A substantially identical pair of stop plates 160 and 162 are secured to the side plates 46 and 48, respectively, and across the slots 112 and 114 for preventing the removal of the retainer bar 156. A third pair of substantially identical stop plates 164 and 166 are secured to the rear edge of the side panels 46 and 48, respectively, and across the slots 120 and 122 for preventing the removal of the inspection and discharge plate 138.

The array of louvered slots 42 which are provided in the front face panel 14 of the outer housing 12 may be configured by any means whereby it is necessary upon insertion of the fees therethrough, that the said fees pass upwardly and inwardly into said collection subcompartment 56. However, the configuration as depicted in FIGS. 4 and 5 has been determined by experimentation to be the preferred configuration. The louvered slot has been constructed by first cutting a very narrow elongated slot horizontally in the front face panel 14 of the outer housing 12. Then a portion of the material of the front panel 14 directly below the slot which has just been cut is pushed or bent in a rearward direction so that the front face of the upper portion thereof is positioned behind the rear face of the front panel 14 thereby providing an aperture 167 therein for receiving the parking fees, consisting of coins, bills, tokens or the like therethrough into the collection subcompartment 66. It is also noted that the previously described cutting and bending operation may comprise only one die cutting operation. Again, experimentation has produced the optimum sizes and shapes for the louvered deposit slots 42 and the collection subcompartments 66. For example, for a fee collection device which is designed to receive coins no larger than a half dollar, the optimum length for the slot 42 is approximately 1 3/4 inches, whereas the optimum width of the aperture 167 of the slot 42 is approximate 0.120 inches, with the forward edge of the transversely extending inclined panel 58 positioned approximately 1 1/4 inches above the slot 42. These dimensions will allow a coin or token as large as a 50-cent piece to be passed upwardly and inwardly into the collection subcompartment 66. This configuration will also permit the insertion of folded bills through the same slot into the collection subcompartment 66.

In operation, the outer housing 12 of the fee collection device is rigidly secured to an upright post 15 or the like, having a horizontally extending attachment plate 28 secured to the upper end thereof by means of at least two upwardly extending stud members 30 and 32 and associated threaded nuts 34 and 36, respectively. The rear access door 38 of the housing 12 is then opened and the inner housing 54 is slidably inserted

into the outer housing 12 in a manner so that the collection subcompartments 66 are in open communication with the array of louvered deposit slots 42. The said inner housing 44 is then secured to the outer housing 12 by means of the threaded rearwardly extending stud members 84, 86 and 88 and their associated threaded nuts 92, 94 and 98, respectively. The storage compartment access door 72 is then closed and locked by means of the locking mechanism 76. The fee inspection and discharge means 136 is then moved to its forward position and the retaining bars 148 and 156 are locked into place thereby securing the inspection plate 138 against the rear portion of the collection subcompartment 66. The rear access door 38 of the outer housing 12 is then closed and locked by the locking mechanism 39, and the said fee collection device 10 is now ready for use.

The patrons of the parking lot (not shown) may park their vehicles and pay required parking fee by inserting the required amount upwardly and inwardly through the aperture 167 of the louvered deposit slot 42 corresponding to the parking space which their vehicle has occupied. Subsequently, a parking lot attendant who has been provided with a key (not shown) for the locking mechanism 39 of the rear access door 38 may then open the rear access door 38 and then inspect the collection subcompartments 66 for the appropriate fees which have been deposited therein and compare the same with the status of the parking lot. After appropriate inspection has been made, the attendant may then release the two retaining bars 148 and 156 and withdraw the said bars 148 and 156 rearwardly against their respective stop plates 157, 158, 160 and 162. The said attendant may then slide the fee inspection and discharge means 136 rearwardly back against the stop members 164 and 166 therefor, thereby allowing the fees that have been collected in the respective collection subcompartments 66 to be discharged downwardly into the storage compartment 56. It is readily apparent that the said attendant will at no time have access to the fees which have been collected in the collection subcompartment 66 nor the fees which have been discharged into the storage compartment 56 without also having a key (not shown) to operate the locking mechanism 76 of the storage compartment access door 72.

The said attendant may then push the fee inspection and discharge means 136 to its forwardmost position and then lock the retaining bars 148 and 156 into position thereby securing the inspection plate 138 against the rear portion of the collection subcompartments 66. The attendant may then close the rear access door 38 of the housing 12 and lock the same by means of the locking mechanism 39. Subsequently thereto, a trusted attendant may be dispatched to collect the said fees collected in the storage compartment 56 whereby the said trusted attendant may open the rear access door 38 by means of the locking mechanism 39 and then open the storage compartment access door 72 by means of the locking mechanism 76. It is noted that the collection of the fees from the storage compartment 56 may be easily made due to the fees having been funnelled to the center of the storage compartment 56 directly behind the said access door 72 by means of the inclined panels 180 and 82 as hereinbefore set forth.

It is also readily apparent that if a thief approaches the said fee collection device with intent to burglarize

the same, he is first confronted with the fact that it is virtually impossible for him to insert a picking device through the aperture 167 of the louvered slots in order to "fish out" fees which have been deposited therein. If the thief decides that he is going to steal the entire fee collection device, he is then confronted with the fact that there are no exposed attachment means accessible to him from the outside of the housing 12. The thief would then be forced to attempt to open the rear access door 38 in an effort to gain entrance into the fee collection and storage compartments 54 and 56 therein. The said rear access door 38 of the housing 12 would be extremely hard to pry open since, as hereinbefore set forth, the said access door 38 is recessed within the side panels 18 and 20 and the top and bottom panels 16 and 22 which have been reinforced by the angle iron members 17, 19 and 21 as hereinbefore set forth. However, if the thief manages to open the rear access door 38, he is further confronted with the problem of gaining access to the money deposited therein. He cannot remove the inner housing 52 from the outer housing 12 without gaining access to the interior of the storage compartment 56 for removing the attachment nut 98 from the rearwardly extending stud member 88 therein. He cannot remove the entire outer housing 12 by means of the plurality of upwardly extending stud members 30 and 32 because of the bolt protection angle irons 100 and 102. If at this point, the thief is not completely frustrated in his attempt to burglarize the device, he must then direct his efforts to obtaining access to the storage compartment 56 through the access door 72. Again, he is faced with the door 72 which is recessed within the back storage compartment panel 70 thereby rendering it very difficult to insert a pry bar or the like therein for opening the said storage compartment access door 72. If, however unlikely, the thief were able to gain access to the storage compartment 56, then his having access to the fees stored therein would render it unnecessary for him to attempt to remove and steal the said fee collection device 10 or any portion thereof, thereby at least saving the mechanism which may be repaired and put back into service at a later date.

From the foregoing it will be readily apparent that the present invention provides a fee collection device particularly designed and constructed for providing an efficient means for collecting parking fees at a self-service parking lot while simultaneously providing a virtually theft-proof and weather-proof fee collection and storage device which may be positioned at an untended parking lot or the like. The novel fee collection device is simple and efficient in operation and economical and durable in construction.

Whereas the present invention has been described in particular relation to the drawings attached hereto, it should be understood that other and further modifications, apart from those shown or suggested herein, may be made within the spirit and scope of this invention. For example, the louvered slots 42 need not be horizontally disposed but may be constructed so that they are rotated in either direction to compensate for prevailing winds or the like at the location where the device is being used to prevent rain, snow, or dust and the like from entering the said louvered deposit slots 42.

What is claimed is:

1. A fee collection device for the collection and storage of parking fees at a self-service parking lot and comprising a fully enclosed housing having an upper

collection compartment and a lower storage compartment therein, the said housing also comprising a front face panel having an array of louvered deposit slots therein in communication with the collection compartment for receiving fee deposits therethrough, the said collection compartment comprising an array of inclined collection subcompartments in communication with the front face panel, one said collection subcompartment for each louvered deposit slot, fee inspection and discharge means slidably disposed within the collection compartment for permitting inspection of the collection subcompartments and discharge of the collected fees therefrom into the lower storage compartment after inspection thereof, said fee collection device including a removable inner housing for containing the upper collection compartment and the lower storage compartment therein, the said inner housing being removably secured to the inside of the fully enclosed housing, the said inner housing also being provided with at least one pair of aligned, forwardly extending slots, the forward end of each slot having a locking slot at right angles thereto and in communication therewith, said fee inspection and discharge means comprising a rectangular transparent inspection plate which is slidably disposed against the collection subcompartments and providing a back surface for the said subcompartments, and a horizontally disposed cover plate having the front edge thereof rigidly secured to the lower edge of the inspection plate and extending rearwardly from the said inspection plate at right angles thereto for providing a cover for the lower storage compartment, slide means operably connected between the housing and the fee inspection and discharge means for permitting the fee inspection and discharge means to be slidably moved rearwardly away from the collection subcompartments and inspection plate retaining means for securing the said inspection plate against the collection subcompartments when the said fee inspection and discharge means is in its forward position whereby upon visual inspection of the collection subcompartments for the fees deposited therein the inspection plate retainer means may be released and the fee inspection and discharge means slidably moved rearwardly thereby allowing the fees collected in the collection subcompartments to fall downwardly into the lower storage compartment, said inspection plate retaining means comprising at least one elongated bar having an outwardly and downwardly extending tongue member at each end thereof, the said tongue members of each bar being slidably disposed in one of the pairs of forwardly extending slots of the inner housing, the said elongated bar being curved with the outer ends of the bar extending rearwardly from the center portion thereof whereby when the fee inspection and discharge means is in its forward position, each of the said retaining bars may be slidably moved against the back of the inspection plate, the outer ends of each retaining bar being responsive to forwardly directed pressure to allow the tongue members thereof to move forwardly within the forwardly extending slots and into the locking slots thereby locking the said inspection plate into its forward position and causing a spring-like pressure to be exerted on the said inspection plate by the entire length of the elongated bar.

2. A fee collection device as set forth in claim 1 wherein each louvered deposit slot is formed as an integral part of the front face panel and having an aperture

which is substantially horizontally disposed and offset rearwardly from the front surface of the front face panel whereby deposit of the parking fees therethrough requires that the said parking fees be passed upwardly and rearwardly through the said slot and into the respective collection subcompartment.

3. A fee collection device for the collection and storage of parking fees at a self-service parking lot and comprising a fully enclosed outer housing, the said outer housing comprising a front face panel having an array of louvered deposit slots therein, a rear lockable access door which is recessed within the housing when the said rear access door is closed; an inner housing removably disposed within the outer housing, the said inner housing comprising an upper collection compartment in communication with the array of louvered deposit slots, and a lower storage compartment in communication with the bottom of the upper collection compartment, the said upper collection compartment comprising an array of inclined collection subcompartments adjacent to and in communication with the front face panel of the outer housing, one said subcompartment for each louvered deposit slot, and a fee inspection and discharge means slidably disposed within the upper collection compartment, the said inspection and discharge means comprising a slidably transparent inspection plate which in its forward position constitutes a rear wall for the inclined collection subcompartments for holding the fees collected therein and a horizontally disposed cover plate secured to the lower edge of the inspection plate and at right angles thereto for providing an upper cover for the lower storage compartment when the said inspection plate is at its forwardmost position, and wherein the lower storage compartment comprises a lockable rear access door which is recessed within the said storage compartment when the door is closed, and a pair of inclined panels disposed within the said storage compartment for funnelling the funds collected therein to an area adjacent to the storage compartment rear access door for ease of removing the said fees collected therein.

4. A fee collection device for the collection and storage of parking fees at a self-service parking lot and comprising a fully enclosed housing having an upper collection compartment and a lower storage compartment therein, the said housing also comprising a front face panel having an array of louvered deposit slots therein in communication with the collection compartment for receiving fee deposits therethrough, the said collection compartment comprising an array of inclined collection subcompartments adjacent to and in communication with the front face panel, one said collection subcompartment for each louvered deposit slot, a rectangular transparent inspection plate slideably disposed against the collection subcompartments and pro-

viding a back surface for the said subcompartments, a horizontally disposed cover plate having the front edge thereof rigidly secured to the lower edge of the inspection plate and extending rearwardly from the said inspection plate at right angles thereto for providing a cover for the lower storage compartment, slide means operably connected between the housing and the inspection plate for permitting the inspection plate and cover plate to be slideably moved rearwardly away from the collection subcompartments and inspection plate retaining means for securing the said inspection plate against the collection subcompartments when the said inspection plate is in its forward position whereby upon visual inspection of the collection subcompartments for the fees deposited therein the inspection plate retainer means may be released and the inspection plate and cover plate slideably moved rearwardly thereby allowing the fees collected in the collection subcompartments to fall downwardly into the lower storage compartment.

5. A fee collection device for the collection and storage of parking fees at a self-service parking lot and comprising a fully enclosed housing having an upper collection compartment and a lower storage compartment therein, the said housing also comprising a front face panel having an array of louvered deposit slots therein in communication with the collection compartment for receiving fee deposits therethrough, the said collection compartment comprising an array of inclined collection subcompartments adjacent to and in communication with the front face panel, one said collection subcompartment for each louvered deposit slot, and fee inspection and discharge means slideably disposed within the collection compartment for permitting inspection of the collection subcompartments and discharge of the collected fees therefrom into the lower storage compartment after inspection thereof, each of said louvered deposit slots comprising a rearwardly and upwardly directed passageway through the front face panel whereby the deposit of parking fees therethrough requires that the fees be passed upwardly and rearwardly through the said passageway into its respective inclined collection subcompartment,

said passageway being formed as an integral part of the front face panel and having a rearwardly and upwardly directed slot aperture which is substantially horizontally disposed,

said slot aperture being further defined by a forward horizontal edge in said front face panel and a rear horizontal edge on a portion of said front face panel bent inwardly away from said front face panel and into its associated collection subcompartment.

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