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(54) **DEVICE FOR HOLDING A PORTABLE  
COMPUTER FOR OPERATION IN A SUPINE  
POSITION**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(76) Inventor: **Yong Hui Kim**, Princeton, NJ (US)

Correspondence Address:  
**Patrick H. Higgins**  
**Fox Rothschild LLP**  
**Building 3**  
**997 Lenox Drive**  
**Lawrenceville, NJ 08648 (US)**

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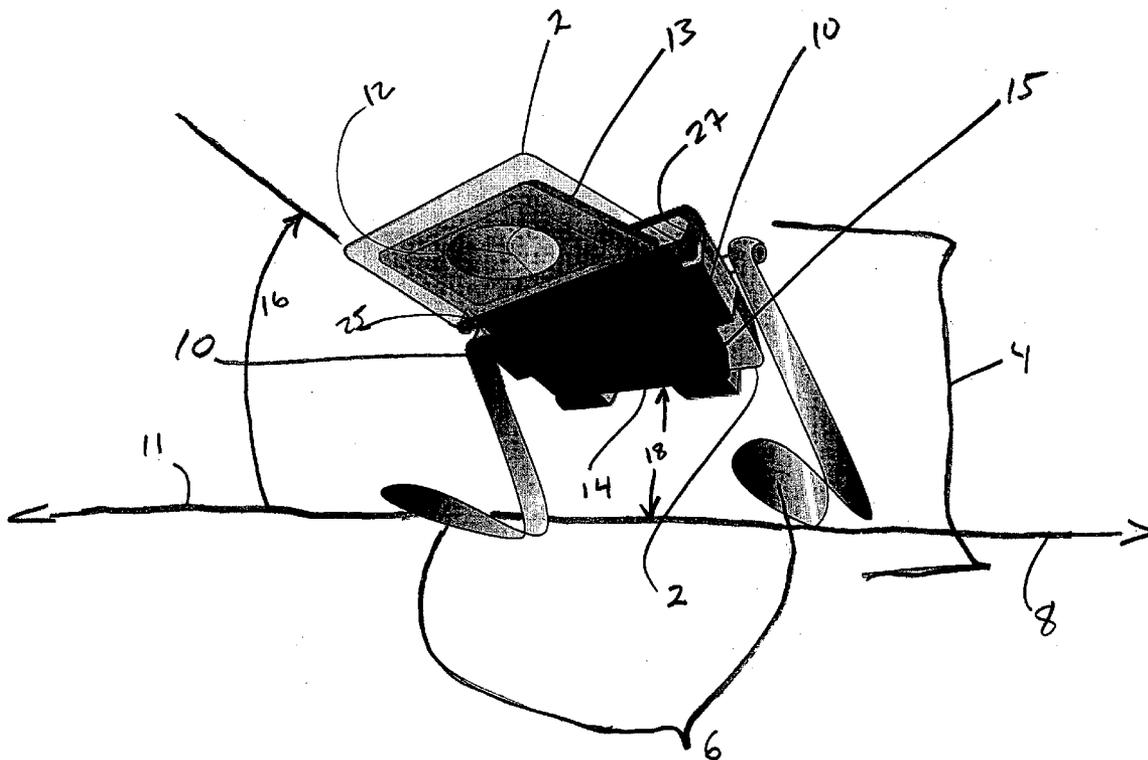
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A device for holding a portable computer in an inverted position for operation while an operator thereof is in a supine position is provided which comprises at least one substantially planar support panel having a first face, a second face, and a perimeter of support; a stand, for bearing the panel above a surface suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs for contacting the surface and forming a substantially planar base of contact, and a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel, wherein the support panel forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and wherein upon securing the computer to the panel, an accessible keyboard face and/or a viewable face of a monitor of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and wherein a distance between the legs where the surface is contacted and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel.



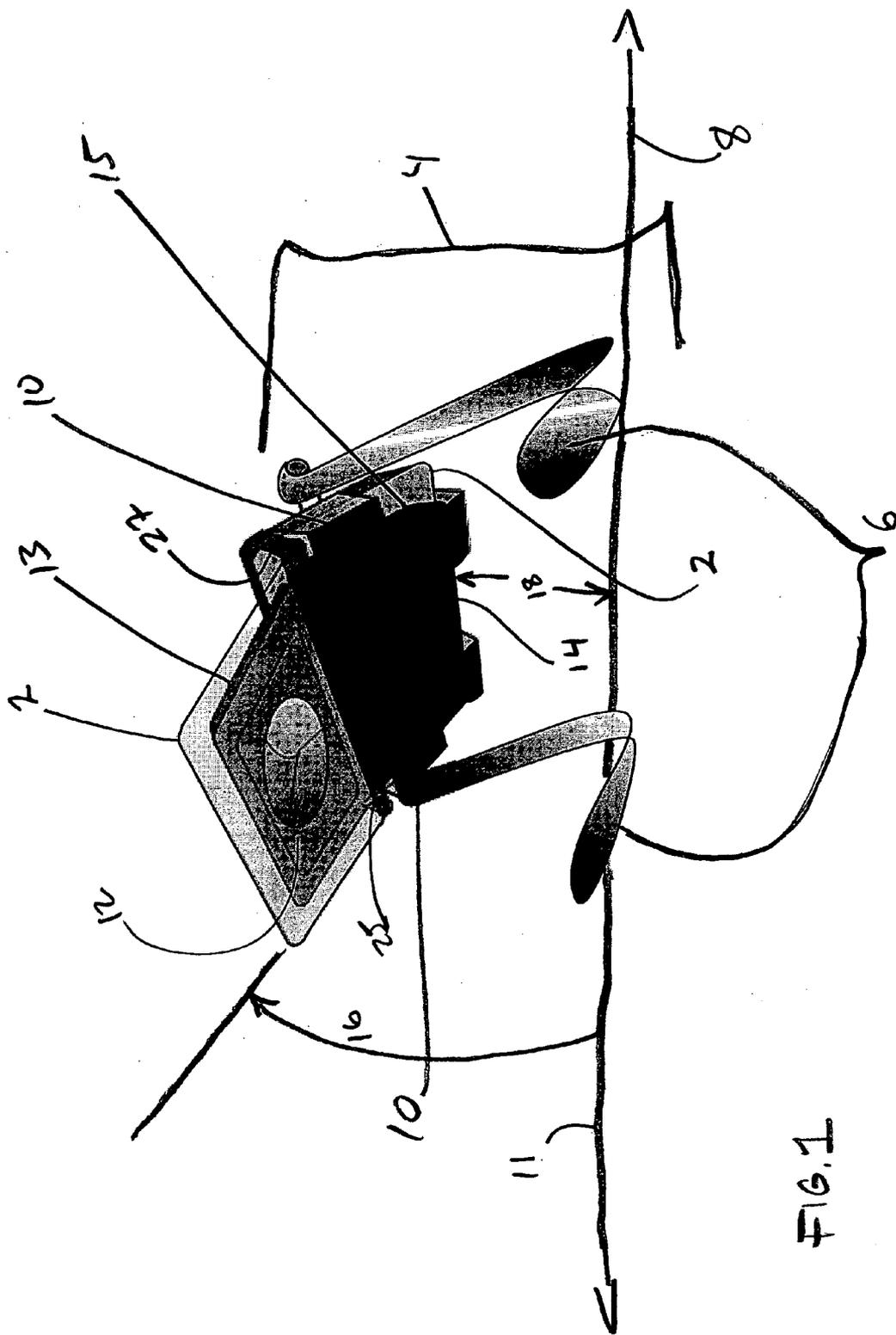


FIG. 2A

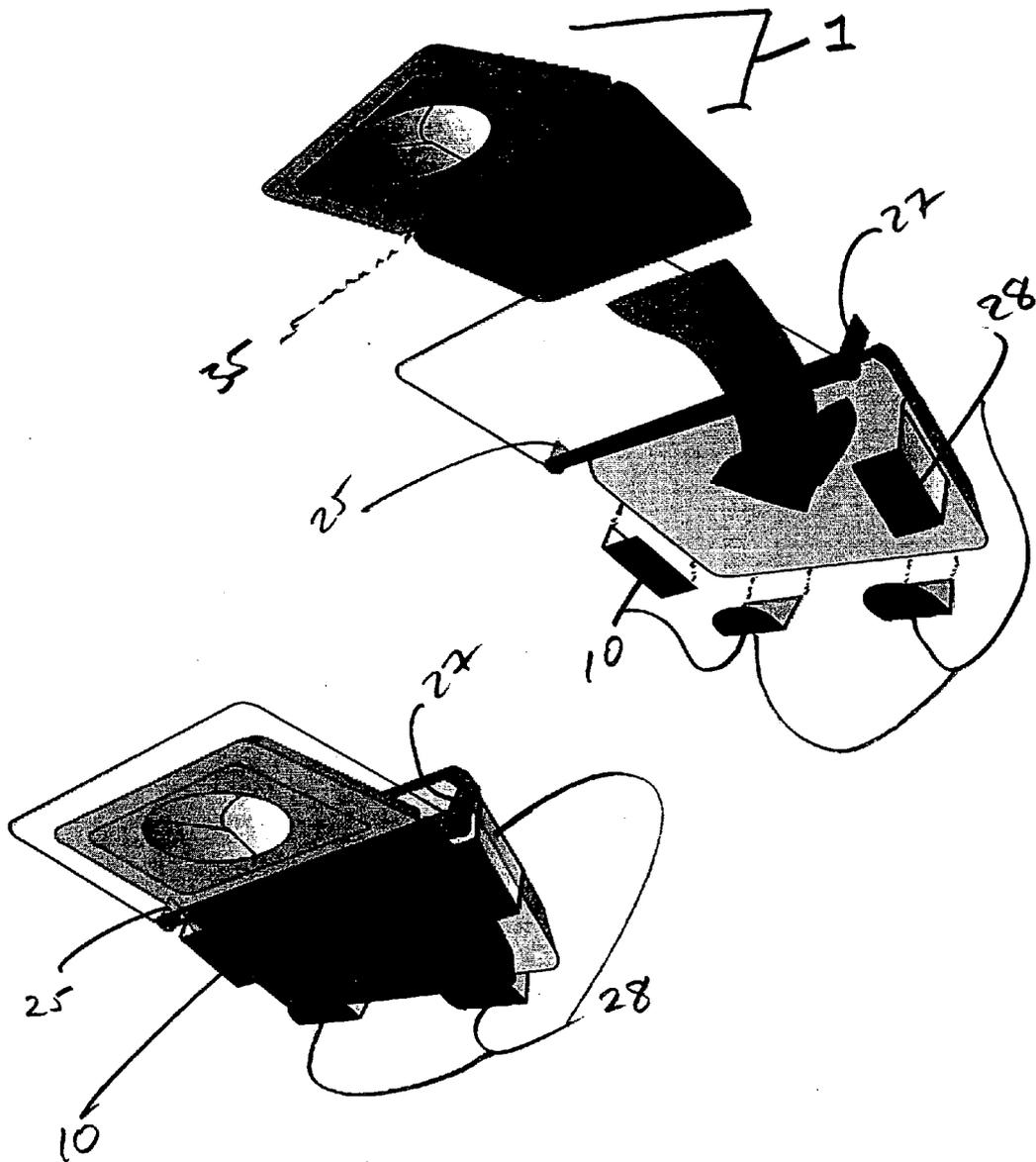


FIG. 2B

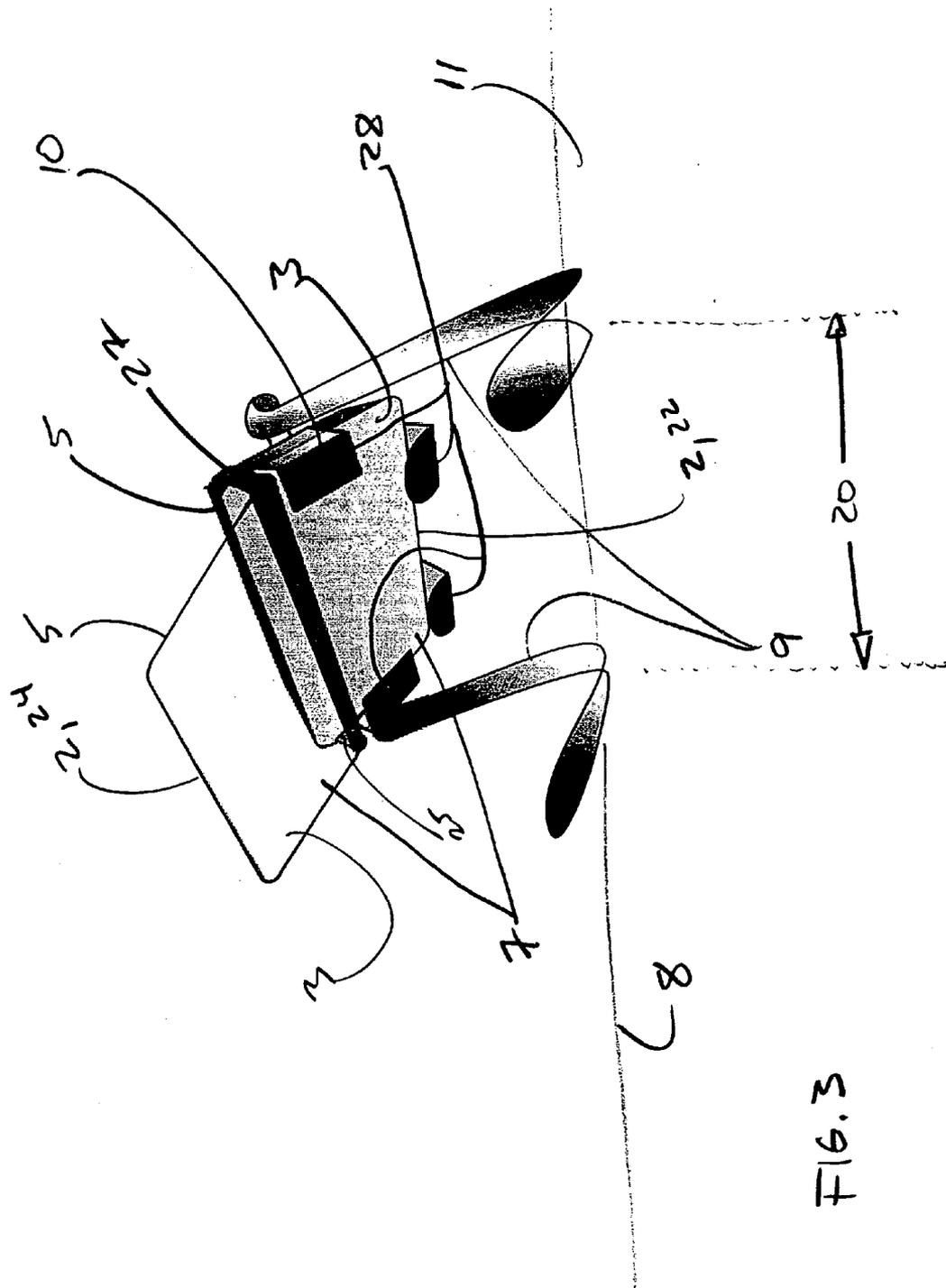


FIG. 3

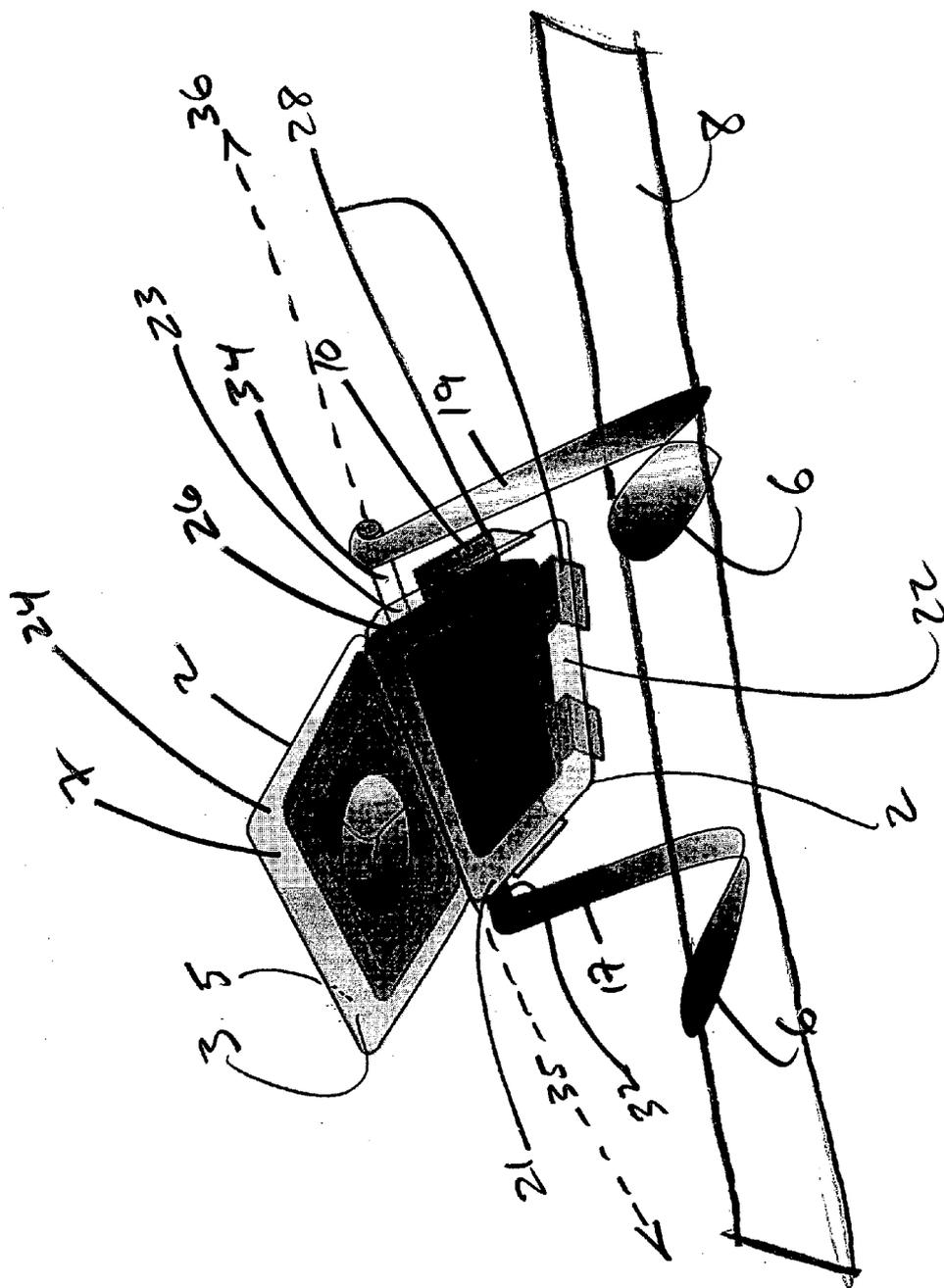


FIG. 4

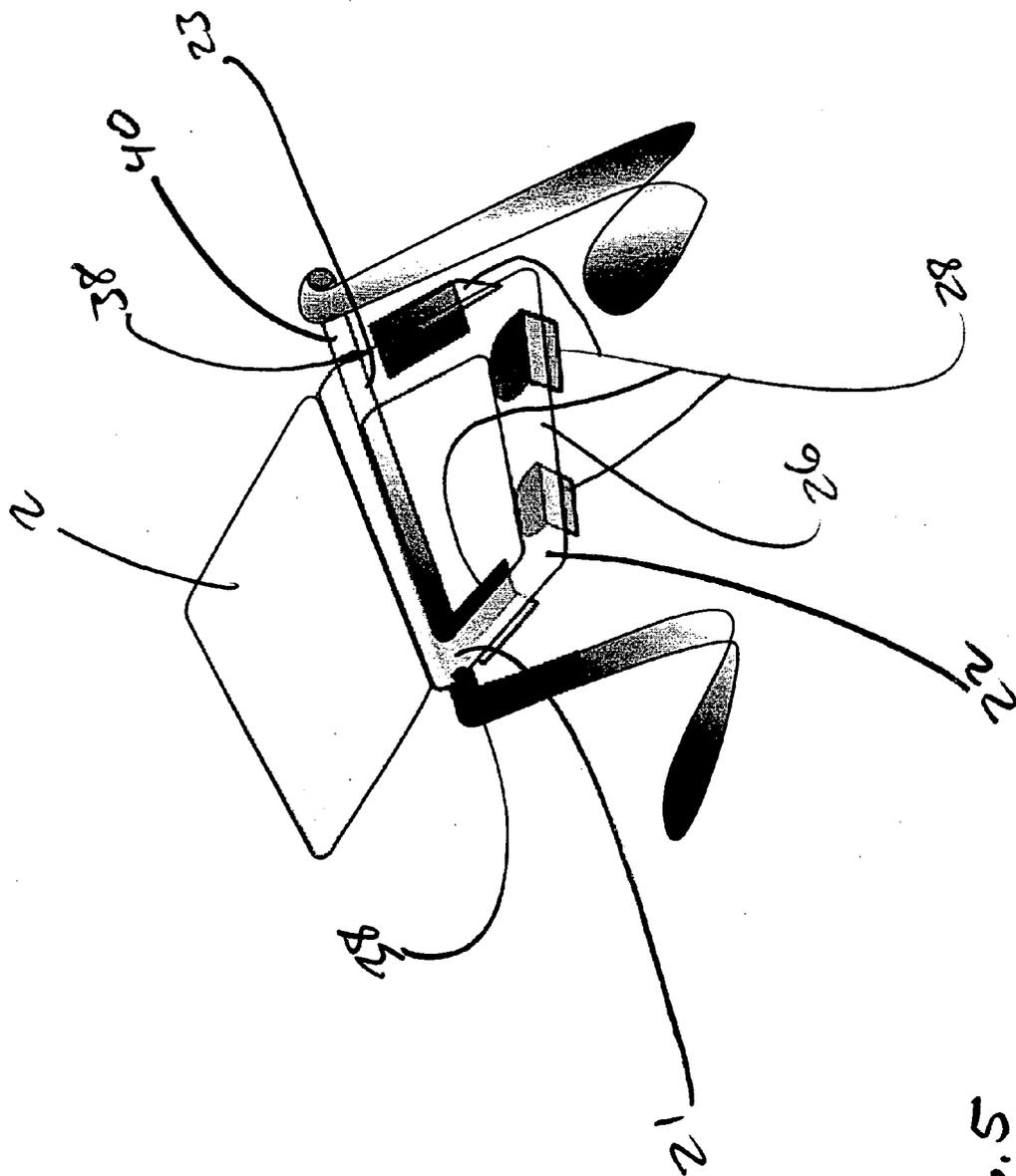


FIG. 5

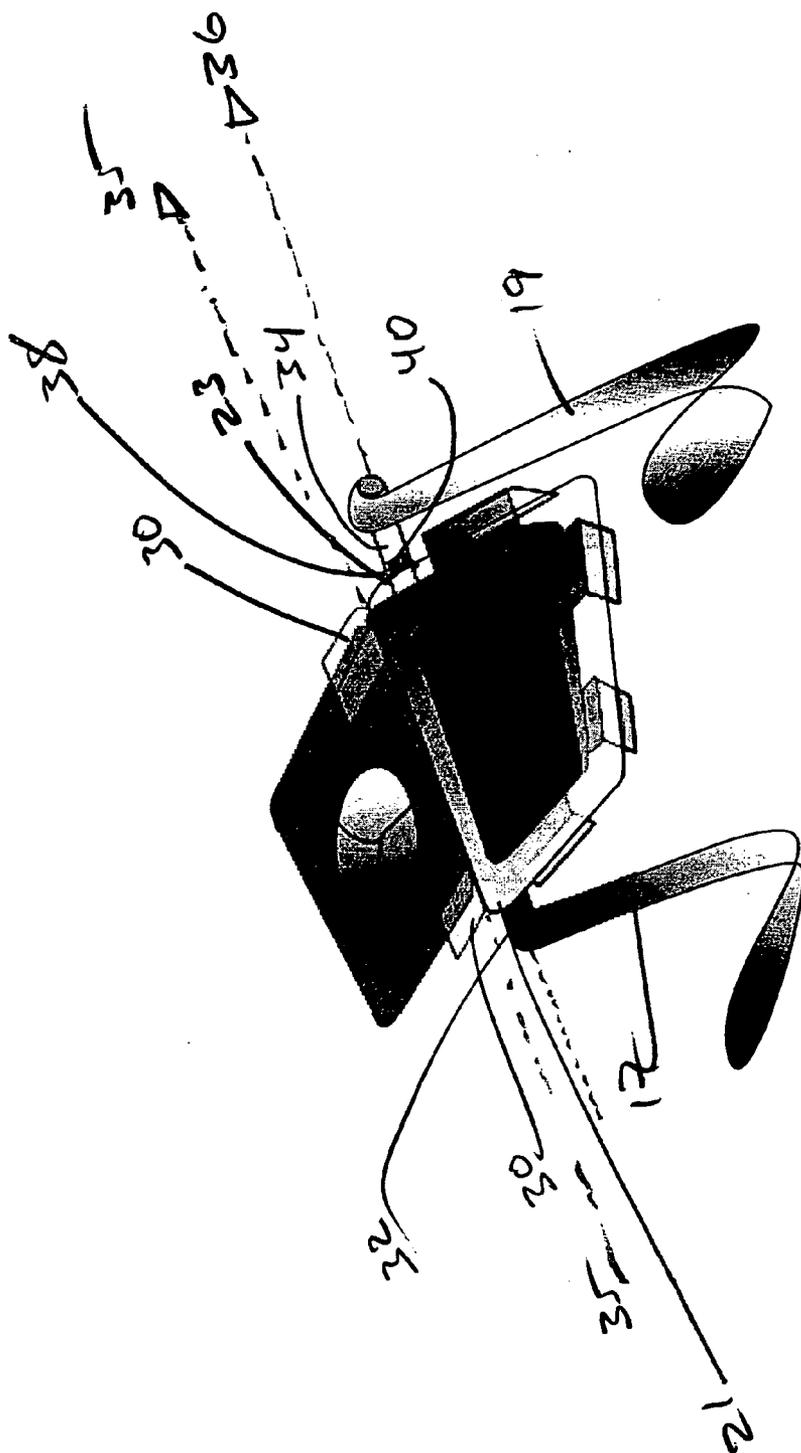


FIG. 6

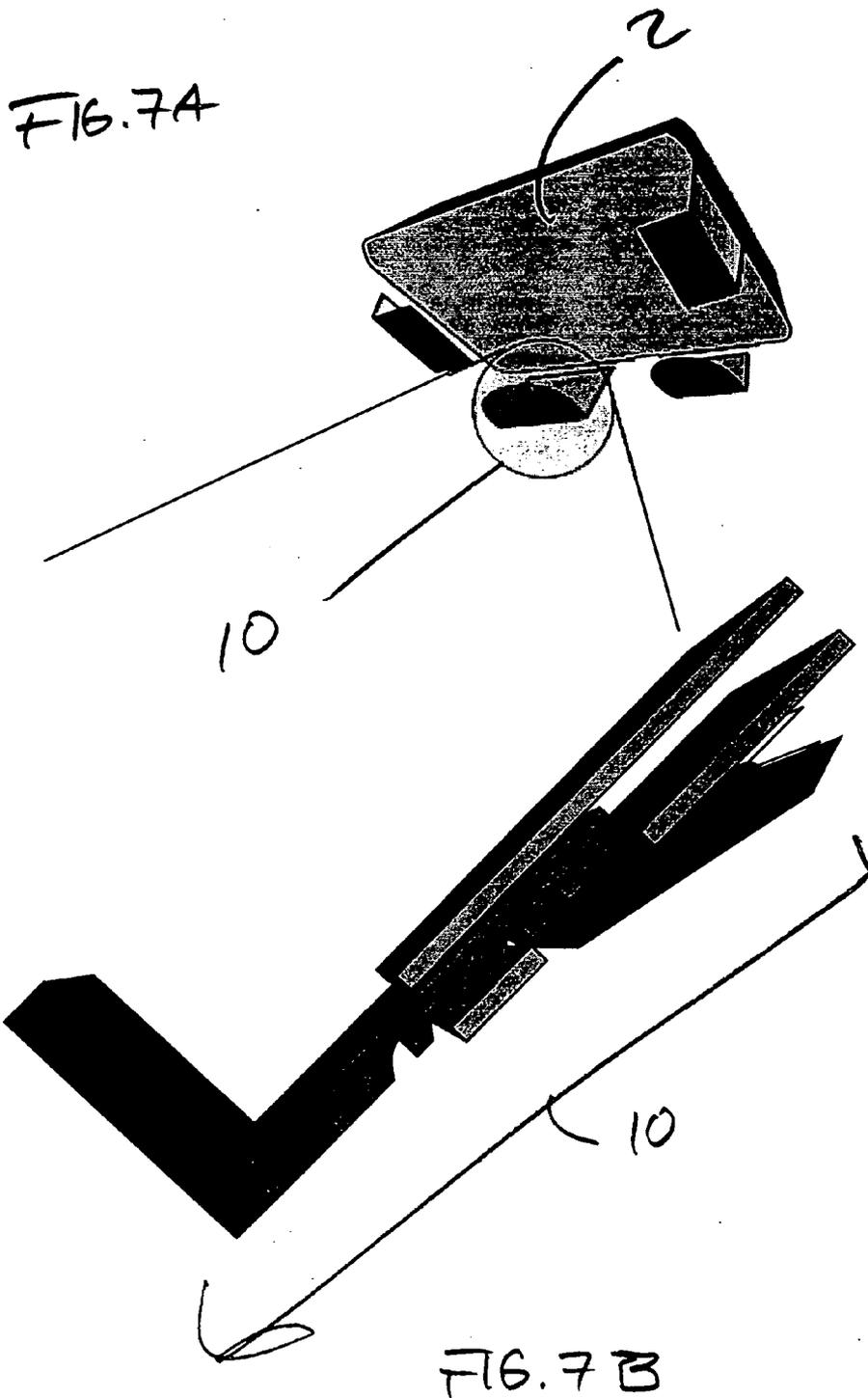


FIG. 8A

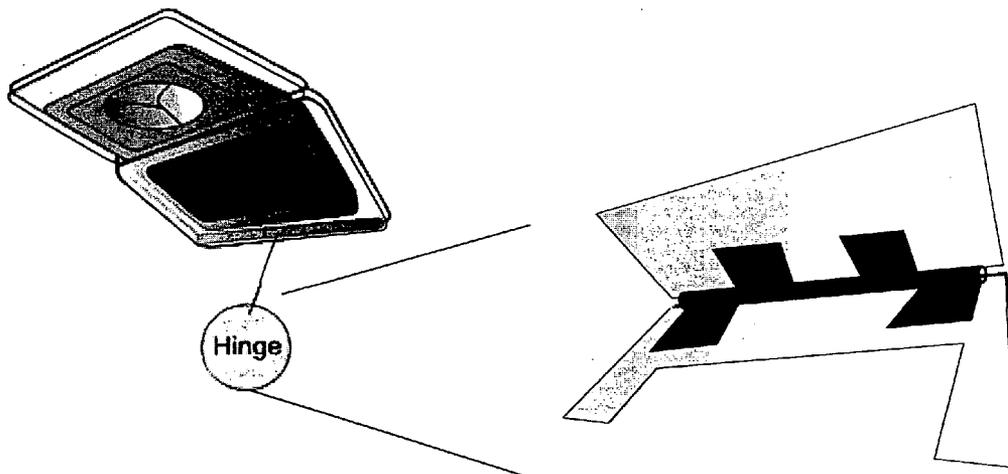
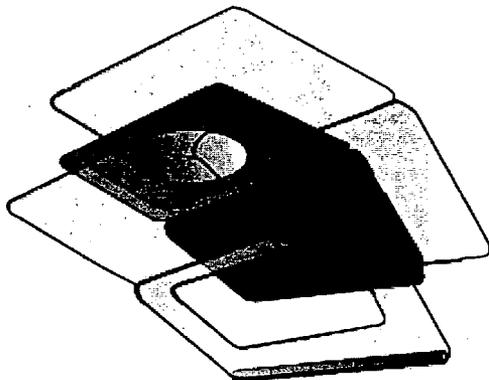


FIG. 8B

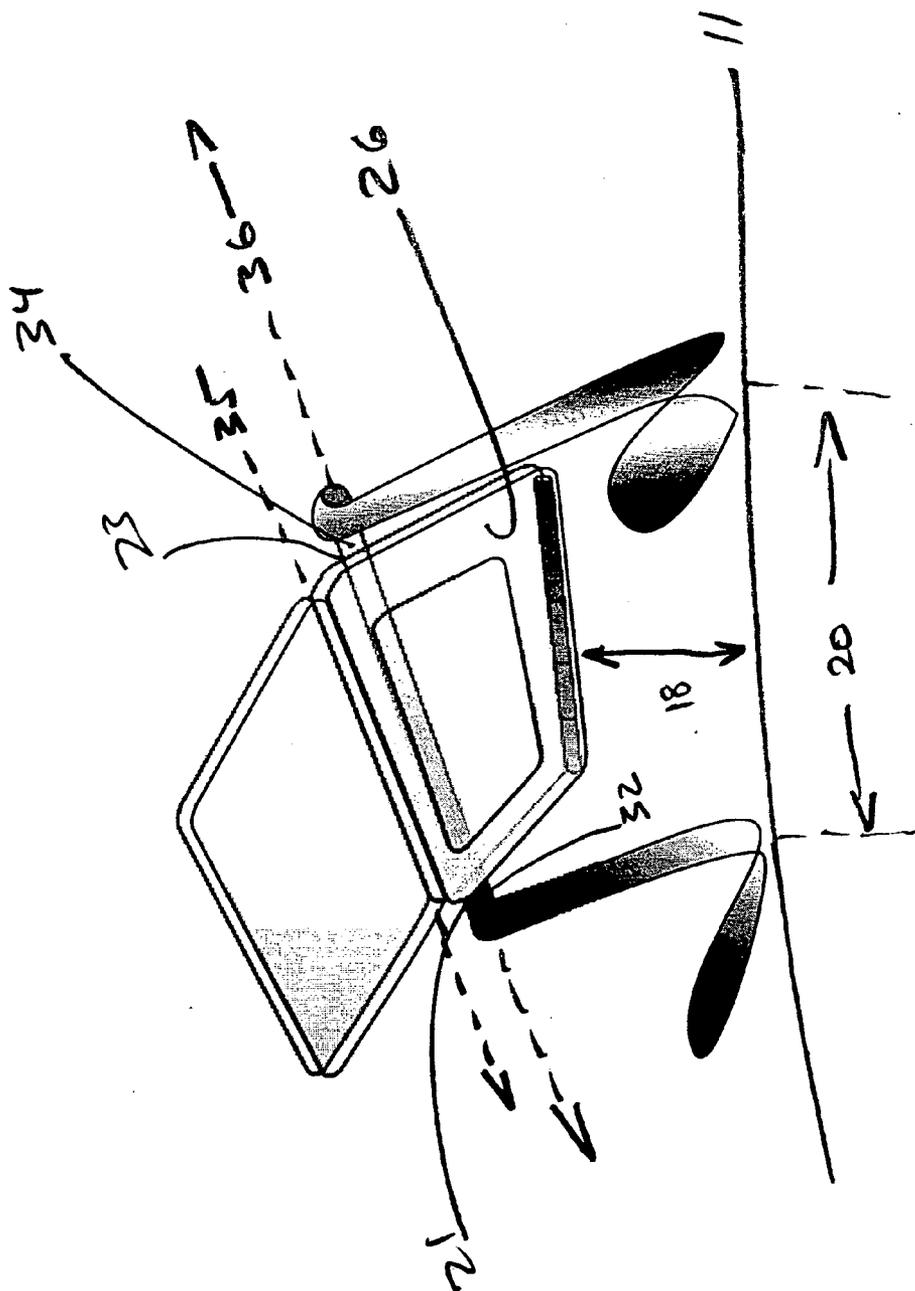


FIG. 9

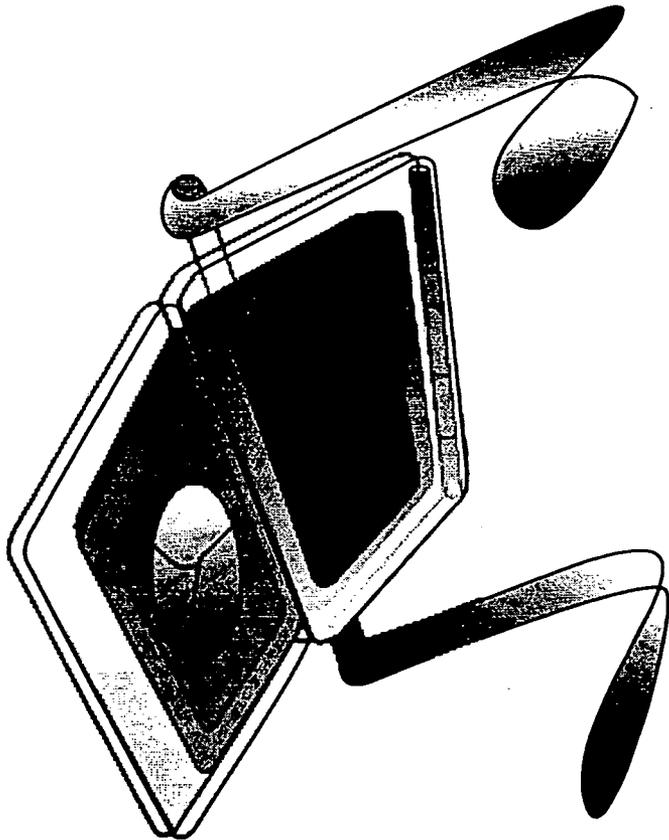


Fig. 10

**DEVICE FOR HOLDING A PORTABLE  
COMPUTER FOR OPERATION IN A SUPINE  
POSITION**

**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

**[0001]** A device for holding a portable computer in an inverted position is described for operating and viewing the computer while the operator is in a supine position.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**[0002]** Laptop computers have evolved to the point where they are almost indispensable for effective communication and receipt of timely information in almost all areas of industry and commerce today. Particularly, laptop computers are necessarily used, for example, to access critical information and to create and transmit electronic documents. Laptop computers are also used for entertainment, e.g., interactive games, music and movies. The laptop computer, particularly now with the advent of wireless technology, can be used almost anywhere. However, in contrast to television, for example, laptop computers are interactive and controlled normally by physical interaction by the user. Accordingly, due to the nature of the devices, laptop computers are very difficult to use while in a supine position, for example, while lying in bed.

**[0003]** Laptop computer holders described in the art are generally upright holders or docking stations that raise the computer for ergonomic access of operators that are either seated or standing. Laptop computer holders are generally shelves designed to raise portables and, in some cases, provide document holders and storage underneath. U.S. Pat. No. 6,327,982 to Jackson, and U.S. Pat. No. 5,732,910 to Martin, for example, each describe an apparatus for supporting a computer keyboard or laptop computer on the lap of the user.

**[0004]** Since laptop computers are generally well suited for portability, but not suited for operation while the user is in a supine position, a need indeed exists for a device to properly hold and provide for ease of operation of a laptop computer for example while the user is lying in bed, for example, or generally in a supine position.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

**[0005]** The present invention is directed to a device for holding a portable computer in an inverted position for operation while an operator thereof is in a supine position comprising:

- [0006]** at least one substantially planar support panel having a first face, a second face, and a perimeter of support;
- [0007]** a stand, for bearing the panel above a surface suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs for contacting the surface and forming a substantially planar base of contact, and
- [0008]** a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel,
- [0009]** wherein the support panel forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and wherein upon securing the computer to the panel, an accessible keyboard face and/or a viewable face of a

monitor of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and

- [0010]** wherein a distance between the legs where the surface is contacted and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel.
- [0011]** Embodiments of the present invention comprise a rotatable support panel rotatably attached to the stand wherein the support panel forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and wherein upon securing the computer to the panel, an accessible keyboard face and/or a viewable face of a monitor of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES**

**[0012]** **FIG. 1** displays a preferred embodiment of the device wherein a computer is slidably inserted into a plurality of tabs which extend from a keyboard support panel suspending the keyboard over the operator and placing the viewable face of the monitor behind a transparent support panel.

**[0013]** **FIG. 2A** is a separated view of features of an embodiment which also illustrates an example insertion of a computer. **FIG. 2B** shows example features and relationships two separate support panels.

**[0014]** **FIG. 3** displays details of a preferred embodiment of the device for holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position.

**[0015]** **FIG. 4** displays details of a preferred embodiment of the device holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position wherein both the monitor and keyboard of the computer are behind the support panel in relation to the operator.

**[0016]** **FIG. 5** displays details of a preferred embodiment of the device holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position for supporting both the monitor and keyboard of a computer behind the support panel in relation to an operator.

**[0017]** **FIG. 6** displays details of a preferred embodiment of the device holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position wherein the monitor is supported by adjustable appendages which extend from the support panel.

**[0018]** **FIG. 7A** is a separated view of features of an embodiment of a device holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position. **FIG. 7B** shows an example feature of a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of a support panel.

**[0019]** **FIG. 8A** is a separated view of features of an embodiment of a device holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position. **FIG. 8B** shows an exploded view of an example hinge for attaching adjacent support panels.

**[0020]** **FIG. 9** displays details of an embodiment of the device holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position, which employs support panels attached at a base of a support panel by a hinge.

**[0021]** **FIG. 10** displays details of a device holding a portable computer for operation in a supine position which employs support panels attached at a base of a support panel by a hinge.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE  
INVENTION

[0022] Unless defined otherwise, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meaning as is commonly understood by one of skill in the art to which this invention belongs. All publications and patents referred to herein are incorporated by reference.

[0023] The term computer or portable computer as used herein refers to a computer generally referred to as an open laptop computer which comprises a keyboard having a front face for entering information and a back face, and a monitor having a viewable face and a back face.

[0024] The term “support panel”, as used herein, refers to a generally flat planar structure which, upon insertion of a computer into the device, or attachment of a computer, for example, is superposed (over or under) in relation to a face, e.g., the keyboard, of the computer. However, a single support panel may be bent, e.g., a bent planar structure wherein, upon insertion of a computer into the device, or attachment of a computer, a face of the keyboard and a face of the monitor are superposed in relation to the single support panel. Separate support panels, for example, which do not intersect at their planar perimeters are also employed in various embodiments of the present invention.

[0025] Referring to the figures, a device of the present invention is provided that secures and positions an open “laptop” computer 1 for ease of use, i.e., operation and viewing, while the user is in a supine position. Particularly provided is a device for holding a portable computer for operating and viewing the computer while the operator is, for example, lying in bed. The device of the present invention is comprised of at least one (optionally rotatable, adjustable) support panel 2 for supporting and positioning the computer, stand 4 for supporting and positioning support panel 2. Stand 4 comprises base 6 for resting on a surface 11 which base substantially forms a plane of contact 8 upon resting on a surface 11, and means of securing 10 an open “laptop” computer to support panel 2 so that viewable face 12 of a monitor and/or accessible keys 14 of a keyboard of the computer face downward, wherein the planar viewable face 12 of the monitor and/or substantially planar face of the accessible keyboard 14 form an angle 16 less than 90°, in relation to a substantial 0° reference plane of contact 8 formed by a base of the stand 6, as a result of securing the computer to support panel 2 by means 10 provided. Stand 4 is a means for bearing, and in some embodiments for positioning support panel 2 wherein a base of the stand 6 rests on a surface 11 while providing ample room on the surface 11 for a supine person to occupy space 18 beneath the support panel 2 and comfortably operate the secured computer. The stand functions to position the open laptop computer 1 a distance 18 from the operator to enable access to the open laptop computer 1, to allow the ability of the user to comfortably operate the keyboard 14 as well as to view the monitor 12 in a supine position, for example, when the operator is flat on their back. A “face” of an open portable computer, as used herein, generally refers to a viewable face 12 of a monitor, a back face of a monitor 13, the substantially planar face of the accessible keyboard 14, and back 15 of the keyboard portion. A basic embodiment of a device for holding a laptop computer 1 for operation while an operator thereof is in a supine position comprises:

[0026] at least one substantially planar support panel 2 having a first (front) face 3, a second (back) face 5, and a perimeter of support 7;

[0027] a stand 4, for bearing the panel 2 above a surface 11 suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs 9 for contacting the surface 11 and forming a substantially planar base of contact 8, and

[0028] a means of securing 10 a face of an open portable computer to a face of a support panel 3, 5,

[0029] wherein each support panel 2 forms an acute angle of 90° or less 16 with the base of contact 8, and wherein upon securing the computer 1 to the panel 2, an accessible keyboard face 14 and/or a viewable face of a monitor 12 of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less 16 with the base of contact 8, and

[0030] wherein a distance between the legs 20 where the surface is contacted 8 and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel 18 is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel 2.

[0031] The support panel 2 feature of the present invention is fundamentally a structure or series of structures for which to fasten, hold, or support a portable computer 1 in a position suitable for use by the operator (user) of the computer. Support panels 2 described herein may be constructed of either transparent or opaque material. Transparent, clear or pigmented, as well as opaque polymeric materials for manufacturing and construction of stands 4 for computers, for example, are well known in the art. Each support panel 2 has a first face 3 which faces the computer user during use and a second face 5, opposite the first face.

[0032] Since either face of the keyboard 14, 15 and/or monitor 12, 13 may be fastened or held to either face 3, 5 of a support panel 2, including separate support panels 22, 24 corresponding to each of the keyboard 22 and monitor 24, either part of the computer, i.e., the keyboard 14 or monitor 12 may be in front 3 of or behind 5 a support panel 2, per se, relative to the supine user.

[0033] With reference to FIG. 1, for example, separate support panels 22, 24, e.g., for independently supporting the monitor 12 and keyboard 15, for example, can be set apart from each other by separate left 25 and right 27 appendages to enable the slidable insertion of the computer into the device so that, for example, after insertion, a viewable face of a monitor 12 is supported by a rear face 5 of a support panel 24, and the accessible keyboard face 14 is supported (suspended) by a plurality of tabs 28 connected to a support panel 22 spatially adjacent to the back face 15 of the inserted keyboard. A device may further comprise a horizontal rail raised from a top portion of the support panel which provides space between the rail and support panel to hold a laptop computer adjacent to the support panel.

[0034] A transparent, and polarized panel can be or be attached to a support panel 2, for example, to reduce eye strain by dissipating the glow from the monitor 12. Panels referred to herein 2 may generally be a solid plane of material or may merely provide a perimeter, e.g., a rectangular frame of support 26, or a rectangular frame of support 26 with tabs 28 or members to hold the monitor 12 and/or

keyboard portion **14** of the computer. Several support panels **2** contemplated herein, for example, form a transparent sleeve (superposed panels) formed of Lucite or Acrylic, for example, for which to insert the monitor **12**, **13** of the computer while the keyboard **14** is supported by a second face **5** of an extended rectangular frame **26** or at least one support panel **2** and a means for securing **10** a back face of a keyboard **15** to a first face **3** of the support panel **2**. The keyboard **14**, **15** and/or monitor **12**, **13** may be fastened or held **10** to separate support panels **2** corresponding to each of the keyboard **14**, **15** and monitor **12**, **13**. The stand **4** is comprised of at least two legs **9** for contacting the surface **11** and forming a substantially planar base of contact **8**.

[0035] In one embodiment (**FIG. 1**, **FIG. 3**), the back face of a keyboard **15** of a computer is held against (in front of) a first face of a support panel **3** by a means for securing **10** a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel, for example, a plurality of tabs **28**, clips, clamps, or a perimeter sleeve, for example, to suspend the keyboard over the user. The support panel **2** may be large enough to similarly provide support for the monitor **12**, **13** of the computer or at least one separate support panel **24** may be provided for the monitor. However, since the monitor does not generally require physical interaction with the user, the viewable face of the monitor **12** can be positioned behind the second face **5** of a transparent support panel **2**, e.g., behind a solid transparent panel. Although preferred embodiments of the present invention, for example, comprise a panel **2** for the keyboard **14**, **15** to provide support for the interactive force necessary during use, embodiments of the invention do not necessarily have a support panel **2**, **24** for the monitor. Since the monitor does not generally involve physical interaction with the user, certain embodiments of the invention are provided wherein a means is provided for merely propping or holding **30** the monitor in a viewable position against gravitational force. In this type embodiment at least one, preferably adjustable, appendage **30** extends from an existing support panel **2**, **22** or the stand **4** of the device, to hold the monitor **12** of the computer in a desirable position for viewing by a supine operator.

[0036] As used herein "a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel"**10** refers to mechanical means well-known in the art of temporary attachment materials including, but not limited to, spring loaded clamps, ratchet devices, hand-operated screw clamps, elastic or Velcro® straps.

[0037] A stand **4** comprised of at least two legs **9**, e.g., a first leg **17** and a second leg **19**, bears (supports) a support panel **2** in a position suitable for use by a supine operator, i.e., above a surface **11** occupied, for example, by a supine user. The stand **4** including the legs **9** may be associated with or directly connected to the support panel **2** in any manner that is effective to bear the panel and computer and effectively position the panel **2** for use of the computer by the operator further discussed infra and to enable a suitable distance between legs **20** of the stand. An example embodiment of the present invention comprises two legs, a left leg **17** and a right leg **19**, attached to a left **21** and right **23** perimeter portion of a support panel **2**, **22**, respectively. A displayed embodiment of the present invention comprises a left bar structure **32** and a right bar structure **34**, attached to a left **21** and right **23** perimeter portion of a support panel **2**,

**22**, respectively, which in turn, is connected to (optionally rotatably connected) and is supported by a left leg **17** and a right leg **19**, respectively.

[0038] One curved L-shaped leg **17** of the stand **4** is connected to a left perimeter **21** of a support panel and one curved L-shaped leg **19** of the stand **4** is connected to a right perimeter **23** of a support panel **2**, **22**. The legs **9** of the present invention can each comprise a flexible junction (e.g., pivotally connected) at each of their points of connection to the support panel which thereby enable the legs to fold inwardly beneath the support panel. Particularly, certain embodiments of the present invention employ a foldable stand **4**, e.g., a stand comprised of legs **9** that each comprise a flexible junction at each of their points of connection to the support panel which thereby enable the legs to fold beneath the support panel. The flexible junctions may be a joint of flexible polymer material well known in the art or conventional hinges, or ball joints, for example. Joint structures to accommodate this optional feature of the present invention are well-known in the art. Ball joints as well as hand-operated screw joints as well as ratchet mechanisms are contemplated for use in constructing various embodiments of foldable legs as an optional feature of the present invention. Each leg may also, for example, comprises an elbow rest near a terminal end distal from the support panel, for example, manufactured of silicone or other relatively soft material to render comfortable resting of elbows of the user.

[0039] Embodiments of the present invention are further contemplated, however, which provide for ease of use of the secured portable computer when the user is in various reclined positions. The legs **9**, in this manner, for example, can be directly or indirectly integrated into the support panel **2** at their point of attachment to the panel **2** or bar **32**, **34** to provide a fixed position **16** of the panel -or- the legs **9** can similarly be adjustably or pivotally attached to the panel **2** to allow rotation about an axis **36** between the areas of attachment of the legs. Left and right appendages **38** are present in embodiments, for example, to set the support panel **2**, **22**, **26** away from a suspension bar **40** to enable slidable insertion of a computer **1**.

[0040] The axis **36** created by the attachment of the legs **9** to a panel **2** need not be in alignment with an axis **35** otherwise created where the monitor meets the keyboard in a computer held in the device described herein. The stand **4** of the device described herein is associated with at least one support panel **2** for bearing the panel **2** above a surface **11** suitable for a supine operator and is comprised of at least two legs **9** for contacting the surface **11** and forming a substantially planar base of contact **6**, **8** wherein the support panels **2**, **22**, **24** preferably form an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact **6**, **8** and wherein upon securing the computer to the panel, an accessible keyboard face **14** and/or a viewable face of a monitor **12** of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact **8**, and wherein a distance between the legs **20** where the surface **11** is contacted and a height **18** of the legs between the surface **11** and each panel **2** is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel **2**, **22**.

[0041] Embodiments of the device of the present invention are also contemplated wherein the support panel **2** is further comprised of one or a series of sleeves or tab-guide **28** extensions of the panel which the computer slips into. The

function of the panel 2 is merely to provide a means of supporting the computer, accordingly the structure 2, although substantially planar as a whole, may be constructed in a myriad of different embodiments. As stated supra, although the device of the present invention comprises at least one support panel 2, as defined herein, embodiments of the present invention may have two or more support panels 22, 24, for example, to provide independent support of the keyboard 14, 15 and monitor 12, 13, respectively. Particularly since, during certain reclined positions of the user, the viewable face of the monitor 12 may be preferred by the user to be positioned at a smaller angle 16 in relation to the base 6 than the keyboard 14.

[0042] An example embodiment of the present invention comprises at least one adjustable arm 30, for support and positioning of the monitor 12 about the axis of the computer 35 where the monitor meets the keyboard, which extends from a support panel 2. The arm, appendage, or tab 30, for example, can be pivotally connected to a support panel 2 or to a leg 17, 19 portion of the stand 4, for example, at either axis 35, 36.

[0043] Embodiments of the present invention are further contemplated wherein a plurality of support panels, e.g., 4, enclose the computer after insertion. See, FIG. x. In this embodiment a base of two panels corresponding to the monitor are attached by a hinge.

[0044] Although not necessary, in part due to the advent of wireless technology, certain embodiments of the present invention further comprise means for power, telephone line, and/or cable internet connections and one or more outlets on the device for connecting the portable computer and/or cell phone or conventional telephone. These embodiments of the present invention are particularly useful for receiving and transmitting information while in bed, for example, due to an acute or chronic injury or handicap. Embodiments of the present invention are further contemplated that have at least one light integrated into or connected to a support panel, for example, to enable the operator to view an accessible keyboard face of a secured computer. A plurality of LED lights, for example, are contemplated for integration into a support panel to provide light for the operator. Embodiments of the present invention are further contemplated that have at least one light integrated into or connected to a support panel, for example, to enable the operator to view an accessible keyboard face of a secured computer. A plurality of LED lights, for example, are contemplated for integration into a support panel to provide light for the operator.

[0045] Certain embodiments of the present invention comprise adjustable support panels, for example, to accommodate portable computers of different sizes as well as for ease of insertion of the computer into the device described herein. In one embodiment, for example, a support panel is comprised of at least one slidably expandable/contactable vertical band (front slide guard) and/or at least one slidably expandable/contactable horizontal band (side slide guard) wherein each slidably expandable/contactable band further comprises a hook-shaped slide guard at at least one end of the band to hold the computer in place. This type embodiment may further comprise at least one fastening strap to hold the computer in place which extends across at least one horizontal support panel band. The front slide guard resembles a rectangular hook from its side, and holds the laptop from sliding

forward, and falling downward. The length of the front slide guard is adjustable to enable the guard to hold the laptop. The front slide guard of the support panel is connected, for example, to the stand by means of a horizontal rail, for example, that extends between a left leg and a right leg. A side slide guard similarly holds the computer and prevents it from sliding side to side. In one example embodiment both the front slide guard and the fastening strap are attached to the side slide guard. The side slide guard also slides along the front slide guard to accommodate the laptop's length. The fastening strap can be replaced with a rigid fastening bar that runs across before the viewable face of the monitor. Alternately, the front slide guard rests on a support panel base which is generally a rectangular planar base for support. A horizontal rail that runs across its width raised from a top portion of the support panel provides space between the rail and support panel to hold a laptop computer adjacent to the support panel.

[0046] Various modifications and variations of the described embodiments of the invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention. Although the invention has been described in connection with specific preferred embodiments it should be understood that the invention as claimed should not be unduly limited to such specific embodiments. Indeed, various modifications of the described examples and modes for carrying out the invention which are obvious to those skilled in the art or related fields are intended to be within the scope of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A device for holding a portable computer in an inverted position for operation while an operator thereof is in a supine position comprising:

at least one substantially planar support panel;

a stand, for bearing the panel above a surface suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs for contacting the surface and forming a substantially planar base of contact, and

means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel,

wherein the support panel forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact,

and wherein a distance between the legs where the surface is contacted and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the support panel.

2. The device according to claim 1 wherein means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel is selected from the group consisting of clamps, clips, sleeves, tabs, hook-shaped slide guards, screws, and straps.

3. A device according to claim 1 which comprises a plurality of support panels adapted for each securing a face of a keyboard and a face of a monitor.

4. The device according to claim 3 which comprises separate support panels for securing a back face of a keyboard and a back face of a monitor.

5. A device according to claim 3 which comprises separate support panels for securing a front face of a keyboard and a front face of a monitor.

6. A device according to claim 3 which comprises separate support panels for securing a back face of a keyboard and a front face of a monitor.

7. A device according to claim 1 wherein the stand is connected to a support panel at a perimeter of the support panel.

8. A device according to claim 7 wherein a first of the legs of the stand is a curved L-shaped leg connected to a left perimeter of a support panel and a second leg of the stand is a curved L-shaped leg connected to a right perimeter of a support panel.

9. A device according to claim 8 wherein the support panel is pivotally attached to each leg thereby enabling rotation of the support panel about an axis substantially parallel with the base of contact.

10. A device according to claim 9 wherein the attachment of the legs to a panel creates an axis of rotation of the panel which is in substantial adjacent alignment with an axis where a monitor meets a keyboard of a computer held in the device.

11. A device according to claim 8 wherein the legs each comprise a flexible junction at each of their points of connection to the support panel which thereby enable the legs to fold inwardly beneath the support panel.

12. A device according to claim 8 wherein the first and second legs each comprise an elbow rest near a terminal end distal from the support panel.

13. A device according to claim 1 wherein the support panel is a rectangular planar structure comprising a hook-shaped slide guard.

14. A device according to claim 13 further comprising a horizontal rail raised from a top portion of the support panel which provides space between the rail and support panel to hold a laptop computer adjacent to the support panel.

15. A device for holding a portable computer in an inverted position for operation while an operator thereof is in a supine position comprising:

at least one substantially planar support panel comprised of at least one slidably expandable/contactable vertical band having a first face, and a second face, wherein said support panel further comprises a hook-shaped slide guard at at least one end of the band;

a stand, for bearing the panel above a surface suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs for contacting the surface and forming a substantially planar base of contact, and

a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel,

wherein the support panel forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and wherein upon securing the computer to the panel, an accessible keyboard face and/or a viewable face of a monitor of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and

wherein a distance between the legs where the surface is contacted and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel.

16. A device according to claim 15 which further comprises at least one substantially planar support panel comprised of at least one slidably expandable/contactable horizontal band having a first face, and a second face, wherein

said support panel further comprises a hook-shaped slide guard at at least one end of the band.

17. A device for holding a portable computer in an inverted position for operation while an operator thereof is in a supine position comprising:

at least one substantially planar support panel comprised of at least one slidably expandable/contactable horizontal band having a first face, and a second face, wherein said support panel further comprises a hook-shaped slide guard at least one end of the band;

a stand, for bearing the panel above a surface suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs for contacting the surface and forming a substantially planar base of contact, and

a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel,

wherein the support panel forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and wherein upon securing the computer to the panel, an accessible keyboard face and/or a viewable face of a monitor of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and

wherein a distance between the legs where the surface is contacted and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel.

18. A device for holding a portable computer in an inverted position for operation while an operator thereof is in a supine position comprising:

at least one substantially planar support panel having a first face, a second face, and a perimeter of support;

a stand, for bearing the panel above a surface suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs for contacting the surface and forming a substantially planar base of contact, and

a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel, and

wherein a distance between the legs where the surface is contacted and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel.

19. A method of operating a portable computer in an inverted position while an operator thereof is in a supine position comprising:

inserting a portable computer in an inverted position into a device comprising

at least one substantially planar support panel having a first face, a second face, and a perimeter of support;

a stand, for bearing the panel above a surface suitable for a supine operator, comprised of at least two legs for contacting the surface and forming a substantially planar base of contact, and

a means for securing a face of an open portable computer to a face of the support panel,

wherein the support panel forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact, and wherein upon secur-

ing the computer to the panel, an accessible keyboard face and/or a viewable face of a monitor of the computer forms an acute angle of 90° or less with the base of contact,

wherein a distance between the legs where the surface is contacted and a height of the legs between the surface and the panel is sufficient for the operator to comfortably fit beneath and reach the panel, and

operating the computer by means of touching the keyboard and viewing the monitor.

**20.** A method of operating a portable computer in an inverted position while an operator thereof is in a supine position according to claim 19 wherein the device comprises separate support panels for securing a face of a keyboard and a face of a monitor.

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