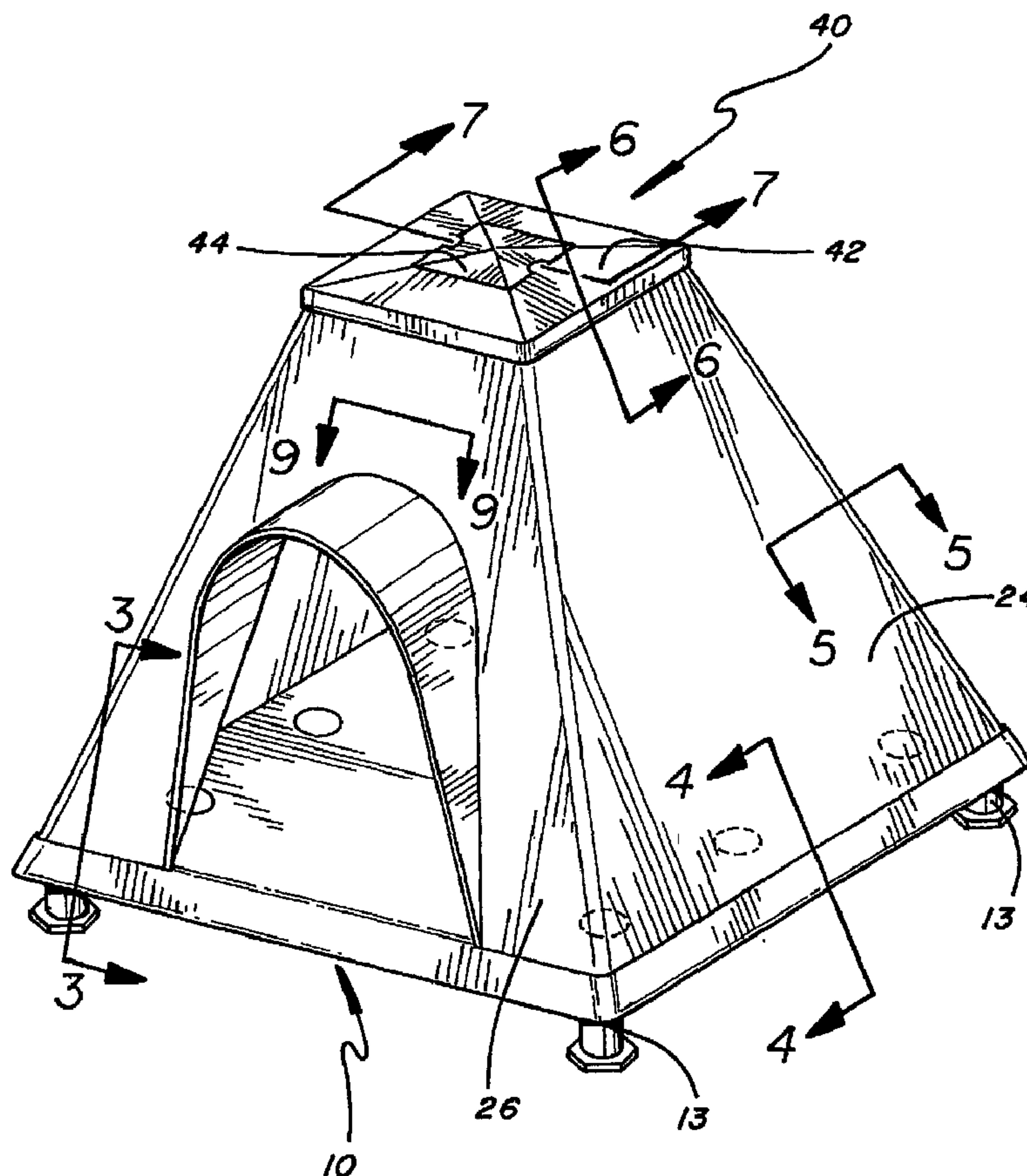




(86) Date de dépôt PCT/PCT Filing Date: 2001/04/24
(87) Date publication PCT/PCT Publication Date: 2001/11/01
(45) Date de délivrance/Issue Date: 2008/02/19
(85) Entrée phase nationale/National Entry: 2002/10/03
(86) N° demande PCT/PCT Application No.: US 2001/040596
(87) N° publication PCT/PCT Publication No.: 2001/080628
(30) Priorité/Priority: 2000/04/25 (US09/557,634)

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *A01K 1/03* (2006.01),
A01K 1/02 (2006.01)
(72) Inventeurs/Inventors:
RICHMOND, EDWARD A., US;
RICHMOND, GREGORY M., US
(73) Propriétaire/Owner:
AMERLIN, INC., US
(74) Agent: SMART & BIGGAR

(54) Titre : ABRI POUR ANIMAL
(54) Title: ANIMAL SHELTER



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A plurality of panels (24) preferably made from a heat insulating material define an enclosure for a pet shelter (10). One of the panels (24) has an opening (28) for the pet to enter or exit the enclosure. The panels (24) are disposed on a base member (14).

(57) Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):

Detents (31) on the panels (24) are removably disposed in detents (24) in the base member (14) to position the panels (24) in a particular relationship on the base member (14). The panels (24) may be tilted inwardly to dispose the ends of adjacent pairs of the panels (24) in a contiguous relationship. After being tilted, the panels (24) are joined by locking rails (32), each engaging the contiguous ends of a different pair of adjacent panels (24) and each removable to disengage the panels (24). A top cap (42) on the panels (24) defines a roof for the enclosure. When the panels (24) are separate, detents (31) on the top cap (42) are removably coupled to detents (31) on the panels (24), with the panels (24) tilted, to position the top cap (42) on the panels (24), thereby providing for easy assembly on, or disassembly from, the panels (24). The top cap (42) has an opening (50) to receive a vent cap (44). Whether the flaps are integral or separate, the vent cap (44) is slidable in the opening (50) in the top cap (42) to adjust the size of a passage through which air circulates into and out of the enclosure.

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
1 November 2001 (01.11.2001)

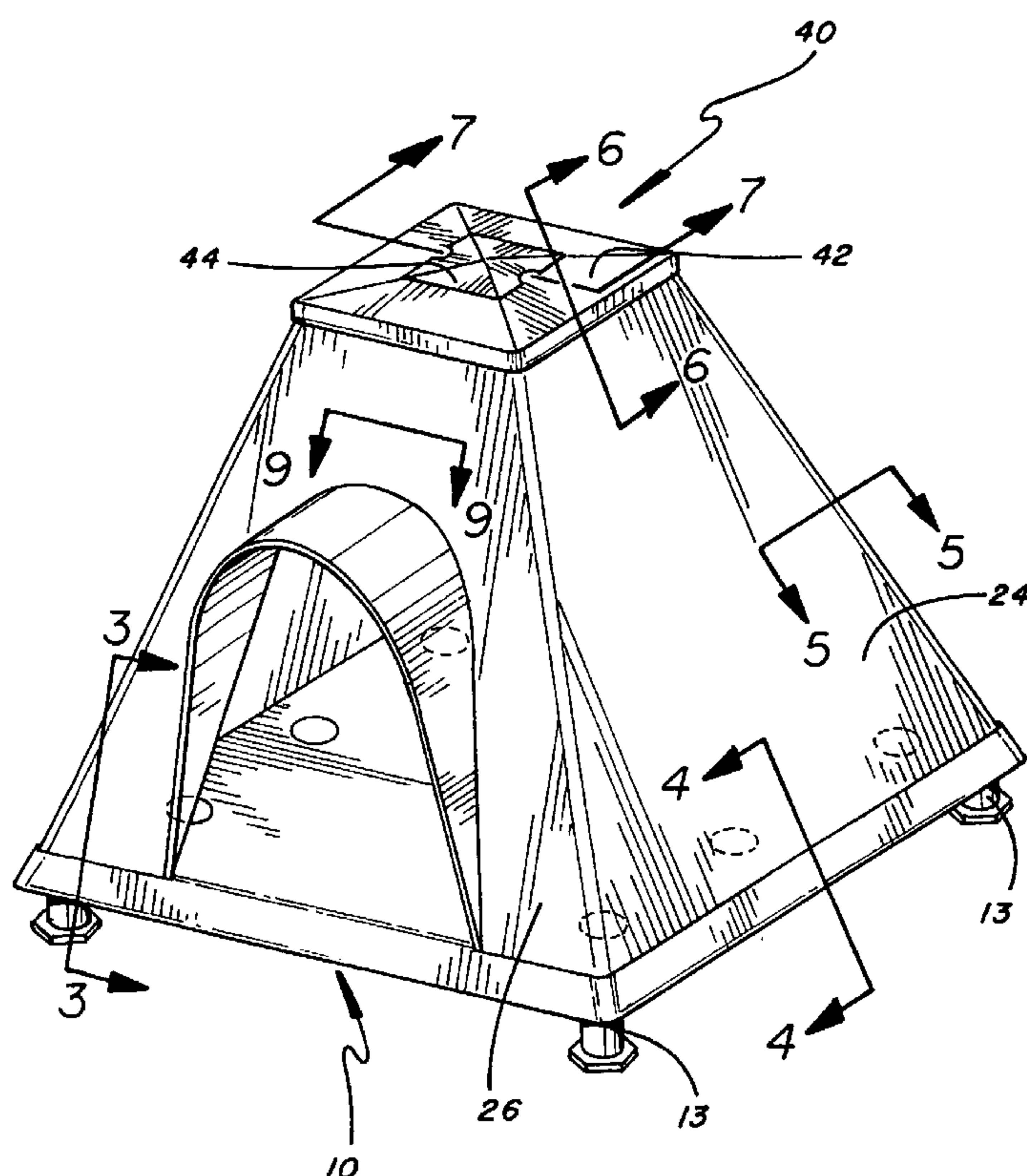
PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/80628 A1

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **A01K 1/02**
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US01/40596
- (22) International Filing Date: 24 April 2001 (24.04.2001)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
09/557,634 25 April 2000 (25.04.2000) US
- (71) Applicant: **AMERLIN, INC.** [US/US]; c/o Americh Corporation, 13212 Saticoy Street, North Hollywood, CA 91605 (US).
- (72) Inventors: **RICHMOND, Edward, A.**; 3551 Caribeth Drive, Encino, CA 91436 (US). **RICHMOND, Gregory, M.**; 1828 Purdue No. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (US).
- (74) Agents: **PARKHURST, David, G.** et al.; Fulwider Patton Lee & Utecht, LLP, Hower Hughes Center, 6060 Center Drive, 10th floor, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (US).
- (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- Published:
— with international search report

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: ANIMAL SHELTER



(57) Abstract: A plurality of panels (24) preferably made from a heat insulating material define an enclosure for a pet shelter (10). One of the panels (24) has an opening (28) for the pet to enter or exit the enclosure. The panels (24) are disposed on a base member (14). Detents (31) on the panels (24) are removably disposed in detents (24) in the base member (14) to position the panels (24) in a particular relationship on the base member (14). The panels (24) may be tilted inwardly to dispose the ends of adjacent pairs of the panels (24) in a contiguous relationship. After being tilted, the panels (24) are joined by locking rails (32), each engaging the contiguous ends of a different pair of adjacent panels (24) and each removable to disengage the panels (24). A top cap (42) on the panels (24) defines a roof for the enclosure. When the panels (24) are separate, detents (31) on the top cap (42) are removably coupled to detents (31) on the panels (24), with the panels (24) tilted, to position the top cap (42) on the panels (24), thereby providing for easy assembly on, or disassembly from, the panels (24). The top cap (42) has an opening (50) to receive a vent cap (44). Whether the flaps are integral or separate, the vent cap (44) is slidable in the opening (50) in the top cap (42) to adjust the size of a passage through which air circulates into and out of the enclosure.

WO 01/80628 A1

ANIMAL SHELTER

This invention relates to pet shelters. The invention particularly relates to pet structures which provide optimal comfort to pets housed within the pet shelter. The invention also relates to pet shelters which can be stored in a compact disassembled form and which can be easily assembled and subsequently disassembled.

5

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Most of the families in the United States own at least one (1) pet. The average per family approaches two (2) pets. Many of these families treat their pets almost as members of the families. Many of these families treat their pets almost as another child or children in the families. They lavish love and attention on their pets. They spend a considerable amount of money annually in caring for their pets. Pets are especially important to aging individuals since these individuals often live by themselves. The individuals talk to the pets almost as if the pets were human.

15 In spite of the love and attention devoted to their pets, the pets in many families sleep in pet shelters outdoors. This presents problems. The pets are not sheltered from the weather i.e., rain, snow, heat and cold. The pets suffer from an inadequate circulation of air inside the enclosure defining the pet shelter. The pet shelters are not comfortable.

20 The pet shelters now in use are large and bulky. For example, the pet shelters are so large that they cannot fit into automobiles or even into utility vehicles. When the families move from one location to another, the pet shelters cannot be easily dissembled at the first location and re-assembled at the second location. In many instances, the pet shelters cannot even be disassembled. Even
25 when they can be disassembled, they cannot be disassembled for storage in a compact storage space.

The problems discussed in the previous paragraph with respect to pets have been known for some time to exist. Furthermore, the problems have been known by a significant percentage of the population in the outer states. In spite of the opportunity of this large number of people to resolve the problems discussed in the previous paragraphs, the problems still exist.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In preferred embodiments of the invention, a plurality of panels preferably made from a heat insulating material define an enclosure for a pet shelter. One of the panels has an opening for the pet to enter or exit the enclosure. The panels are disposed on a base member. Detents (e. g. hooks) on the panels are removably disposed in detents (e. g. openings) in the base member to position the panels in a particular relationship on the base member. The panels may be integral with one another or may be separate. When separate, the panels may be tilted inwardly to dispose the ends of adjacent pairs of the panels in a contiguous relationship. After being tilted, the panels are joined by locking rails, each engaging the contiguous ends of a different pair of adjacent panels and each removable to disengage the panels. A top cap on the panels defines a roof for the enclosure. When the panels are integral with each other, the top cap may be integral with the panels. When the panels are separate, detents on the top cap are removably coupled to detents on the panels, with the panels tilted, to position the top cap on the panels, thereby providing for easy assembly on, or disassembly from, the panels. The top cap has an opening to receive a vent cap. Whether the flaps are integral or separate, the vent cap

2a

is slidable in the opening in the top cap to adjust the size of a passage through which air circulates into and out of the enclosure.

Accordingly, the present invention provides a pet shelter, including, a plurality of panels, one of the panels having an opening defining an entrance and an exit for the pet, the panels having upper and lower ends, a base member disposed relative to the panel for receiving and retaining the panels at the lower ends of the panels, the panels being tiltable toward one another at their upper ends to define an enclosure for the pet shelter, detents in the base member and at the lower ends of the panels for locking the panels to the base member in the tilted relationship of the panels, and a plurality of locking rails each coupled to an individual one of an adjacent pair of the panels in the tilted relationship of the panels to lock the panels to one another.

The present invention also provides a pet shelter, including, a plurality of panels tiltably disposed in adjacent relationship to one another in pairs to provide an enclosure defining the pet shelter, one of the panels having an opening defining an entrance and an exit for the pet shelter, locking rails operatively coupled to each pair of adjacent panels at upper ends of the panels to retain the panels in the tilted relationship for maintaining the enclosure, and a cap structure operatively coupled to the panels at the upper ends of the panels for providing a roof for the pet shelter and for providing an opening in the roof for the circulation of air between the interior and exterior of the pet shelter.

The present invention also provides a pet shelter, including, a base member, an enclosure formed from a plurality of panels, one of the panels having an opening providing for an entrance of the pet into the enclosure and an exit of the pet from the enclosure, there being male detents on one of the base member and the panels, there being female detents on the other of the base member and the panels, the male and

2b

female detents being constructed to provide an interlocking relationship between the male detents and the female detents, the panels being disposed on the base member with the male detents and the female detents in the interlocking relationship.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS SHOWING
THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In the drawings:

5 Figure 1 is a perspective view of a preferred embodiment of a pet shelter as seen from a position in front of, and to the right of, the pet shelter;

Figure 2 is an exploded perspective view of the different components in the preferred embodiment of the pet shelter, as seen from substantially the same position as the showing in Figure 1;

10 Figure 3 is a sectional view of the preferred embodiment of the pet shelter and is taken substantially on the line 3-3 in Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a sectional view of the preferred embodiment of the pet shelter and is taken substantially on the line 4-4 in Figure 1;

15 Figure 5 is a sectional view of the preferred embodiment of the pet shelter and is taken substantially on the line 5-5 in Figure 1;

Figure 6 is a sectional view of the preferred embodiment of the invention and is taken substantially on the line 6-6 in Figure 1;

Figure 7 is a sectional view of the preferred embodiment of the invention and is taken substantially on the line 7-7 in Figure 1;

20 Figure 8 is a partially exploded perspective view of a second preferred embodiment of the invention and is seen from substantially the same position as the showings in Figures 1 and 2;

Figure 9 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view showing the characteristics of the material used in fabricating the preferred embodiments of the
25 invention shown in Figures 1-8 and is taken substantially on the line 9-9 in Figure 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

As will be seen from the drawings, applicants provide two (2) preferred embodiments of a pet shelter constituting this invention. Both embodiments are
5 meant to be disposed outdoors as in a family's backyard. Both embodiments are made from a material which provides significant insulation against hot and cold temperatures and which protects against unpleasant environmental conditions such as rain, hail and snow. Both embodiments provide for an optimal and adjustable circulation of air through the pet shelters. Both embodiments are comfortable for
10 the pet. Both embodiments provide desirable aesthetic features. Both embodiments are relatively simple in construction.

One embodiment constituting a preferred embodiment is shown in Figures 1-7 and is generally indicated at 10. This embodiment includes knock-down features which provide for an easy assembly and disassembly of the pet shelter. This
15 assembly and disassembly can be performed by an individual without any great mechanical ability and without any special training. When disassembled, the components can be stored in a compact space such as in a garage. When disassembled, the parts can be easily transported in an automobile. This is in contrast to embodiments now being manufactured and sold. These embodiments
20 cannot be disassembled. They are so large that they cannot be transported in a majority of the vehicles. They are so large that they occupy valuable storage space in a pet owner's home when not in use.

The other embodiment is generally indicated at 12 in Figure 8. It is preferred but not as preferred as the embodiment 10. The embodiment 12 is pre-formed to a
25 considerable extent and, to that extent, cannot be subsequently disassembled. However, it includes some parts which have to be assembled to the pre-formed portion to complete the pet shelter and which can be subsequently disassembled from the pre-assembled portion. The preferred embodiment 12 cannot be as easily

transported as the preferred embodiment 10 and cannot be stored in a compact space as can the preferred embodiment 10. For these and other reasons, the embodiment 10 is preferred over the embodiment 12.

The pet shelter 10 includes a plurality of support legs 13 which are disposed to lift the pet shelter from the ground. In this way, the pet in the pet shelter 10 is protected from any moisture or mildew or cold or freezing temperatures on the ground. The legs 13 support a base member, generally indicated at 14 in Figure 2, which may be made from a pair of interlocking base portions 16. Each of the base portions 16 may be provided with projections 18 and recesses or slots 20. The projections 18 on each of the members are aligned with the recesses 20 in the other member, and correspond in configuration with the recesses 20, to interlock with the recesses in the other member in forming what may be considered to be a unitary floor. By forming the base member 14 from the pair of interlocking base portions 16, the different components forming the pet shelter 10 may be stored in a compact space when disassembled. The base portions 16 may be provided at their corners with detents such as recesses 20 (Figures 3 and 4).

A plurality of panels extend from the base member 16. Three (3) of the panels are indicated at 24 in Figure 2 and may be substantially identical. Each of the panels 24 may have a configuration in which the side panel slopes progressively from the bottom wall toward the top wall so that the top wall is shorter than the bottom wall. A fourth panel 26 may also be provided with the same general configuration as the panels 24. However, the panel 26 is provided with an opening 28 to define an entrance for the pet into the pet shelter 10 or an exit for the pet from the pet shelter. A shroud 30 extends from the opening 28 to provide protection for the pet from the atmosphere as the pet enters into the pet shelter 10 or leaves the pet shelter.

Each of the panels 24 and 26 is provided near its bottom end with detents which cooperate with the detents in the base member 14 to retain the panel in a fixed, but

removable, relationship on the base member. For example, when the detents on the base member 14 constitute the slots 20, the detents near the bottom of the panels 24 and 26 may constitute hooks 31 which extend into the slots 20 to couple the panels to the base member. The hooks 31 may be shaped to extend into the slots 20 and securely engage the
5 base member 14 when the panels are tilted toward one another and toward the panel 26.

Locking rails generally indicated at 32 in Figures 2 and 5 lock the contiguous ends of pairs of adjacent panels 24 and 26 in a fixed relationship to each other. Each locking rail 32 extends downwardly from the upper ends of the panels 24 and 26 to the base member 14. Sockets defining guides 34 are provided in each of the locking rails 32
10 to receive the contiguous ends of the adjacent panels 24 and 26 and hold the adjacent panels in a fixed relationship to each other. The locking rails 32 extend into sockets 36 in the base member 14.

When it is desired to disassemble the pet shelter 10, the hooks 37 in the locking rails 32 may be removed from the sockets 36 in the base member 14. The locking rail 32
15 may then be slid upwardly to disengage the panels 24 and 26 from the guides 34 in the locking rails. In this way, the panels 24 and 26 can be disassembled and stacked in a pile for easy transportation in an automobile and for storage in a confined area in a pet owner's basement, garage or attic.

When the panels 24 are tilted toward one another and toward the panel 26 and the
20 panels become fixedly positioned relative to one another by the locking rails 32, an opening 38 (Figure 2) is provided at the upper ends of the panels. A cap structure generally indicated at 40 is disposed in the opening 38. The cap structure may be considered to include a top cap 42 and a vent cap 44.

The top cap 42 (Figure 6) fits snugly on the panels 24 and 26 over the opening
25 38. The top cap 42 may be locked to the panels 24 and 26 by mating detents in the top cap and the panels. For example, the panels 24 and 26 may be provided with female

detents such as notches 46 (Figure 6) at spaced positions near the tops of the panels.

Male detents such as tangs 48 may be provided on the top caps 42 to mate with the notches 46 in the panels 24 and 26 and hold the top cap in a fixed relationship with the panels. The intercoupled relationship between the top cap 42 and the panels 24 and 26 is such that the top cap may be easily removed from the panels when it is desired to disassemble the pet shelter 10.

The top cap 42 has an opening 50 (Figure 7) which receives a retainer 52 in the vent cap 44 in a snug relationship. The retainer 52 is provided with a substantially v-shaped cut 54 to define a pair of spaced spring arms 56. The spring arms 56 may be pressed toward each other to insert the retainer 52 into the opening 50 in the top cap 42 or to remove the retainer from the opening. Lugs 58 extend outwardly from the spring arms 56 at the bottom of the spring arms to maintain the retainer 52 in the opening 50 until the spring arms 56 are pressed toward each other.

The vent cap 44 includes a cover 58 which is disposed on the retainer 52 in integral relationship with the retainer. The cover 58 has dimensions which are greater than the dimensions of the top cap 42. The cover 58 is shaped to seal the top cap 42 when the cover rests on the top cap 42. This is shown in solid lines in Figure 7. Because of this, when the cover 58 rests on the top cap 42, it prevents air from flowing from the atmosphere through the opening 50 into the enclosure defined by the pet shelter 10 or from the pet shelter through the opening into the atmosphere. When the vent cap 42 is raised upwardly from the top cap 42 as shown in broken lines in Figure 7, a passage 60 is produced for the flow of air through the opening 50 in the top cap 42 into or out of the enclosure defined by the pet shelter 10. The size of the passage 60 may be varied by moving the retainer 52 upwardly or downwardly in the opening 50.

The different parts of the pet shelter 10 are described in detail in any one or more of the following patents:

	PATENT NUMBERS	DATE OF ISSUANCE	INVENTOR(S)
	3,436,446	APRIL 1, 1969	RICHARD G. ANGELL, JR.
	3,876,566	APRIL 8, 1975	JAMES A. KOSHAK et al.
5	3,988,403	OCTOBER 26, 1976	RICHARD W. ANGELL et al.
	4,229,395	OCTOBER 1, 1980	TADUSHI NAGUMO, et al.
	4,384,032	MAY 17, 1983	HISAO TASHIRO et al.
	4,629,650	DECEMBER 16, 1986	HIROSHI KATAOAKA
	4,769,397	SEPTEMBER 6, 1988	ROBERT M. LAPIERRE et al.
10	4,827,872	MAY 9, 1989	WILLIAM R. SOMMERS

The different parts of the pet shelter 10 may be molded from a thermoplastic polymeric material as for example polymers and copolymers of olefinically
 15 unsaturated compounds and their derivatives such as polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, acrylonitrile - butadiene - styrene polymers, vinyl resins, nylons, polycarbonates, polyhydroxyethers, polyarylene polyethers and the like.

The mixture employed in the process can also contain conventional molding additives such as heat and light stabilizers, pigments, mold release agents and slip
 20 agents. A conventional nucleating agent such as calcium silicate may be added to the mixture to enhance the uniformity of the cells produced by the foaming action. The ingredients of the mixture can be premixed, if desired, and charged to an extruder wherein the thermoplastic material is fluxed and mixed.

A blowing agent can be selected from chemical compounds such as azo, N-
 25 nitroso, carbonate and sulfonylhydrazide compounds which are heat decomposable to yield a gas such as carbon dioxide or nitrogen. The blowing agent can also consist of normally gaseous agents such as methyl chloride, propylene, butylene and gaseous fluorocarbons, as well as gases such as nitrogen, carbon dioxide or air.

Volatile liquids such as pentane, water and liquid fluorocarbons can also be employed in the foaming of the polymer.

A charge of a thermoplastic material such as polyethylene is initially introduced into an extruder. The charge of the polyethylene only partially fills the mold cavity. A blowing agent such as nitrogen is also introduced into the extruder and is mixed with the charge of polyethylene to obtain a uniform mixture of the polyethylene charge and the nitrogen in the extruder. The mixture is extruded at a temperature above the foaming temperature of the nitrogen and at a pressure above the foaming pressure of the nitrogen. The mixture is introduced to an expandible accumulation chamber which is in continuous communication with the extruder and is adapted to receive the mixture from the extruder and to maintain the mixture in the accumulator in the molten state and at a pressure above the pressure of the nitrogen foaming agent.

A mold is adapted to be maintained as a pressure no greater than the pressure at which the mixture foams and expands. Communication is established between the chamber and the mold, and the mixture is rapidly forced out of the chamber and into the mold. The pressure difference between the chamber and the mold causes the mixture to expand rapidly in the mold. The mold is maintained at a temperature below the melting temperature of the thermoplastic material. Communication is terminated between the mold and the chamber at a point where the pressure is above the foaming pressure of the mixture. The mixture is removed between the point and the mold after terminating communication between the mold and the chamber.

When the pressure of the mixture in the mold is low, the charge expands to form a material indicated generally at 62 in Figure 9. This material includes relatively dense outer layers 64 which have high length-to-weight ratios. The material also includes a foamed core material 66 between the outer layers 64. The core material 66 is continuous or integral with the outer layers 64. This causes the material 62 to be tough and strong. Since the core material 66 is foamed, it provides

10

a heat insulation against hot and cold temperatures in the atmosphere outside of the pet shelter 10. This causes the pet within the shelter 10 to be relatively comfortable even when extreme temperatures exist in the atmosphere outside of the pet shelter.

The preferred embodiment 12 (Figure 8) may be made from the same
5 material as the preferred embodiment 10. The preferred embodiment 12 may include a base member 70 corresponding to the base member 14 in the preferred embodiment. The base member 70 may be disposed on legs 71. The preferred embodiment may also include a single member 72 which comprises panels corresponding to the panels 24 and 26 in the preferred embodiment 10 and which
10 also comprises a top cap 73 corresponding to the top cap 42 in the preferred embodiment 10 shown in Figures 1-7. It may further include a vent cap 74 corresponding to the vent cap 44 in the preferred embodiment 10 shown in Figures 1-7. The vent cap 74 is adjustable in position in an opening in the top cap 73 in a manner similar to that described above for the adjustable positioning of the vent cap
15 44 in the preferred embodiment 10.

The preferred embodiment 12 is advantageous in that it provides for an adjustable opening between the top cap 72 and the vent cap 74 in a manner similar to that described above for the preferred embodiment 10. The preferred
embodiments 12 is also advantageous in that it is formed from a minimal number of
20 parts. This minimizes the number of parts that have to be assembled to provide a completed unit. However, the preferred embodiment 12 cannot be assembled and disassembled, in the manner described above for the pet kennel 10, to provide a knock-down relationship for storing the disassembled parts in a minimal space.

Although this invention has been disclosed and illustrated with reference to
25 particular preferred embodiments, the principles involved are susceptible for use in numerous other embodiments which will be apparent to persons of ordinary skill in the art. The invention is, therefore, to be limited only as indicated by the scope of the appended claims.

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

1. A pet shelter, including,
 - 5 a plurality of panels, one of the panels having an opening defining an entrance and an exit for the pet, the panels having upper and lower ends,
 - a base member disposed relative to the panels for receiving and retaining the panels at the lower ends of the panels,
 - the panels being tiltable toward one another at their upper ends to define an
 - 10 enclosure for the pet shelter,
 - detents in the base member and at the lower ends of the panels for locking the panels to the base member in the tilted relationship of the panels, and
 - a plurality of locking rails each coupled to an individual one of an adjacent pair of the panels in the tilted relationship of the panels to lock the panels to one another.
- 15 2. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 1, including,
 - a top cap operatively coupled to the panels at the upper ends of the panels in the tilted relationship of the panels to define a roof for the pet shelter.
3. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 2, including,
 - a vent cap mounted in the top cap to define an opening in the roof for the
 - 20 circulation of air into, through and out of the pet shelter.
4. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 3 wherein
 - the vent cap is slidably mounted on the top cap to define an adjustable opening in the roof for the circulation of air into, through and out of the pet shelter.

5. A pet shelter as set forth in any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein

the panels and the base member are made from a material having dense outer layers and a foamed core disposed between the outer layers and integral with the outer layers.

5 6. A pet shelter, including,

a plurality of panels tiltably disposed in adjacent relationship to one another in pairs to provide an enclosure defining the pet shelter, one of the panels having an opening defining an entrance and an exit for the pet shelter,

locking rails operatively coupled to each pair of adjacent panels at upper ends of
10 the panels to retain the panels in the tilted relationship for maintaining the enclosure, and

a cap structure operatively coupled to the panels at the upper ends of the panels for providing a roof for the pet shelter and for providing an opening in the roof for the circulation of air between the interior and exterior of the pet shelter.

7. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 6 wherein

15 the cap structure is adjustably disposed relative to the panels at the upper ends of the panels to vary the size of the opening in the pet shelter for the circulation of air between the interior and exterior of the pet shelter.

8. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 7 wherein

the cap structure includes a member which extends over the roof in one position
20 of the member to close the opening in the roof and to provide the opening in other positions of the member.

9. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 6 wherein

the cap structure includes a top cap operatively coupled to the panels at the upper ends of the panels to define a roof for the pet shelter and to define an opening in the roof and includes a vent cap adjustably disposed in the opening in the vent cap to define, and vary the size of, the opening for the circulation of air between the interior and exterior of the pet shelter.

10. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 9 wherein the top cap and the panels have male and female detents which engage each other to interlock the top cap and the panels.

11. A pet shelter as set forth in any one of claims 6 to 10 wherein the panels and the cap structure are made from a material having dense outer layers and a foamed core disposed between the outer layers and integral with the outer layers.

12. A pet shelter as set forth in any one of claims 6 to 9, including, a base member having openings at spaced positions on the base member, the base member being disposed to support the panels, and

detents at the lower ends of the panels for disposition in the openings in the base member for an interlocking relationship between the base member and the panels when the panels are tilted toward one another at the upper ends of the panels.

13. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 9, wherein a member is adjustably disposed in the cap structure relative to the panels at the upper ends of the panels to vary the size of the opening in the pet shelter for the circulation of air between the interior and exterior of the pet shelter,

a base member is provided with openings at spaced positions on the base member, the base member being disposed to support the panels, and

detents are provided at the lower ends of the panels for disposition in the openings in the base member for an interlocking relationship between the base member
5 and the panels when the panels are tilted toward one another at the upper ends of the panels.

14. In a pet shelter, the combination of

a plurality of panels each having upper and lower ends and each disposed relative to the other panels to become tilted inwardly at their upper ends toward one another to a
10 position defining a multi-sided enclosure formed by adjacent pairs of panels, one of the panels having an opening defining an entrance and an exit for the pet shelter, and

a plurality of locking rails each disposed between an individual pair of adjacent panels in the multi-sided enclosure to retain the panels in the adjacent pair in a locked relationship when the panels are tilted inwardly toward one another.

15 15. In a pet shelter as set forth in claim 14,

a cap disposed on the panels at the upper ends of the panels and defining a roof for the pet shelter.

16. In a pet shelter as set forth in claim 14 or 15,

detents in the base member and the panels at the lower ends of the panels for
20 becoming interlocked to cooperate with the locking rails in retaining the panels on the base member in the tilted relationship of the panels.

17. In a pet shelter as set forth in claim 14 or 15,

detents on the cap and the panels at the upper ends of the panels for becoming interlocked to retain the cap structure in a particular relationship on the panels in the tilted relationship of the panels,

the cap constituting a top cap, and

5 a vent cap disposed on the top cap for defining an opening in the roof for the passage of air into and out of the pet shelter.

18. In a pet shelter as set forth in claim 14,

a cap structure including a top cap having detents for becoming interlocked with detents on the panels in the tilted relationship of the panels to retain the cap structure in a particular disposition on the panels in the tilted relationship of the panels and to define a roof for the pet shelter, the top cap having an opening,

the cap structure also including a vent cap disposed in the opening in the top cap in spaced relationship to the top cap for providing for a passage of air between the inside of the pet shelter and the outside of the pet shelter.

15 19. In a pet shelter as set forth in claim 18,

detents in the base member and the panels at the lower ends of the panels for becoming interlocked to cooperate with the locking rails in retaining the panels on the base member in the tilted relationship of the panels.

20. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 18 wherein

20 a top cap is disposed on the panels with the panels in the tilted relationship to define a roof and wherein

the panels are individual and are paired to define the enclosure and wherein the panels in each pair are disposed in an adjacent and tilted relationship and wherein the

tilted panels in the adjacent pairs are retained in a fixed interrelationship by locking rails each operatively coupled to the panels in an individual one of the pairs.

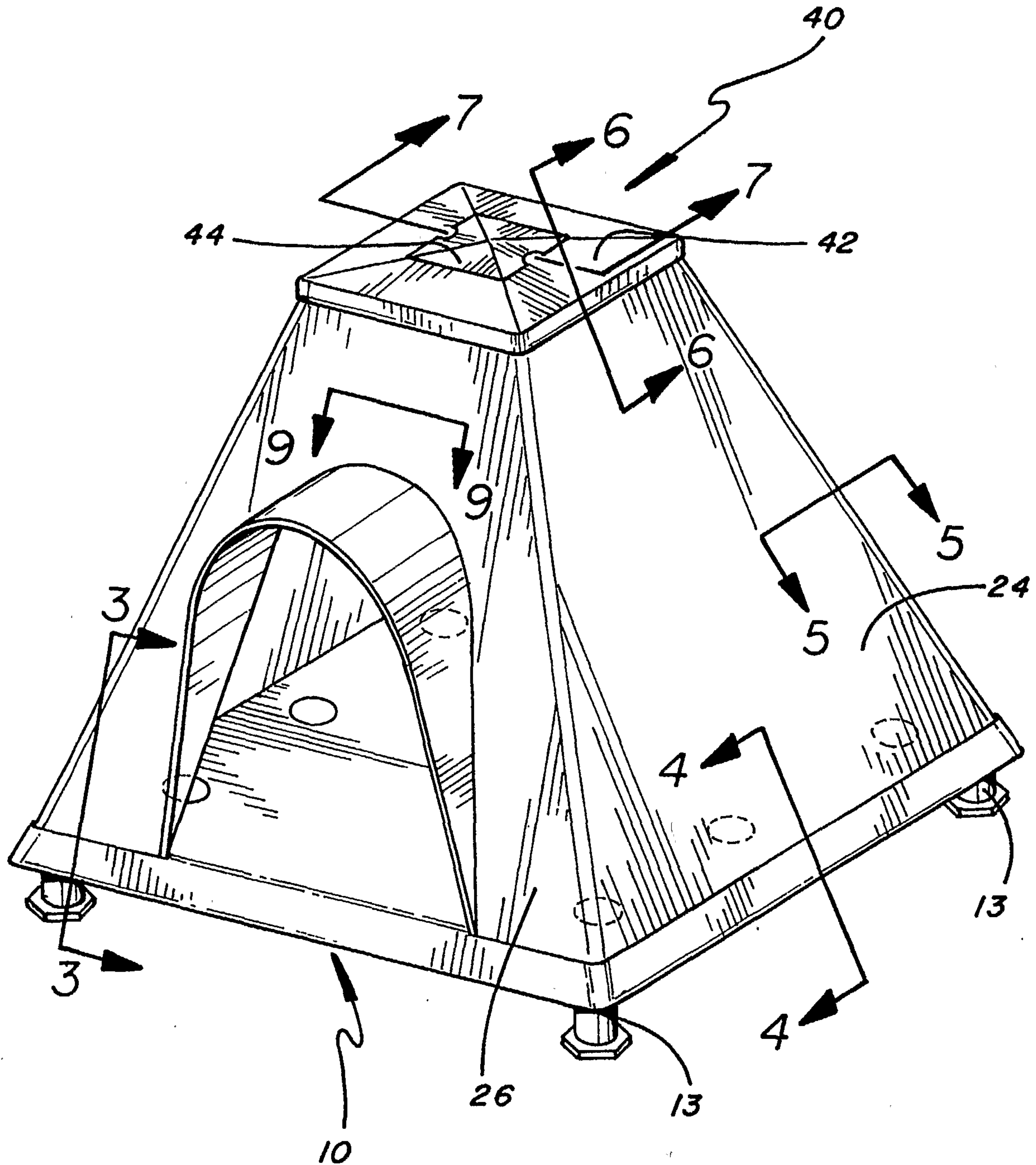
21. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 20 wherein
the panels are made from a material having dense outer layers and a foamed core
5 integral with, and disposed between, the dense outer layers.

22. A pet shelter as set forth in claim 20 wherein
the top cap has an opening and wherein
a vent cap is adjustably positioned in the opening in the top cap to provide a
passage for a flow of air through the passage and the opening into the enclosure and out
10 of the enclosure.

23. In a pet shelter as set forth in any one of claims 14 to 22,
the panels being made from a material having dense outer layers and a foamed
core disposed between, and integral with, the dense outer layers.

1/5

FIG. 1



SUBSTITUTE SHEET (RULE 26)

2 / 5

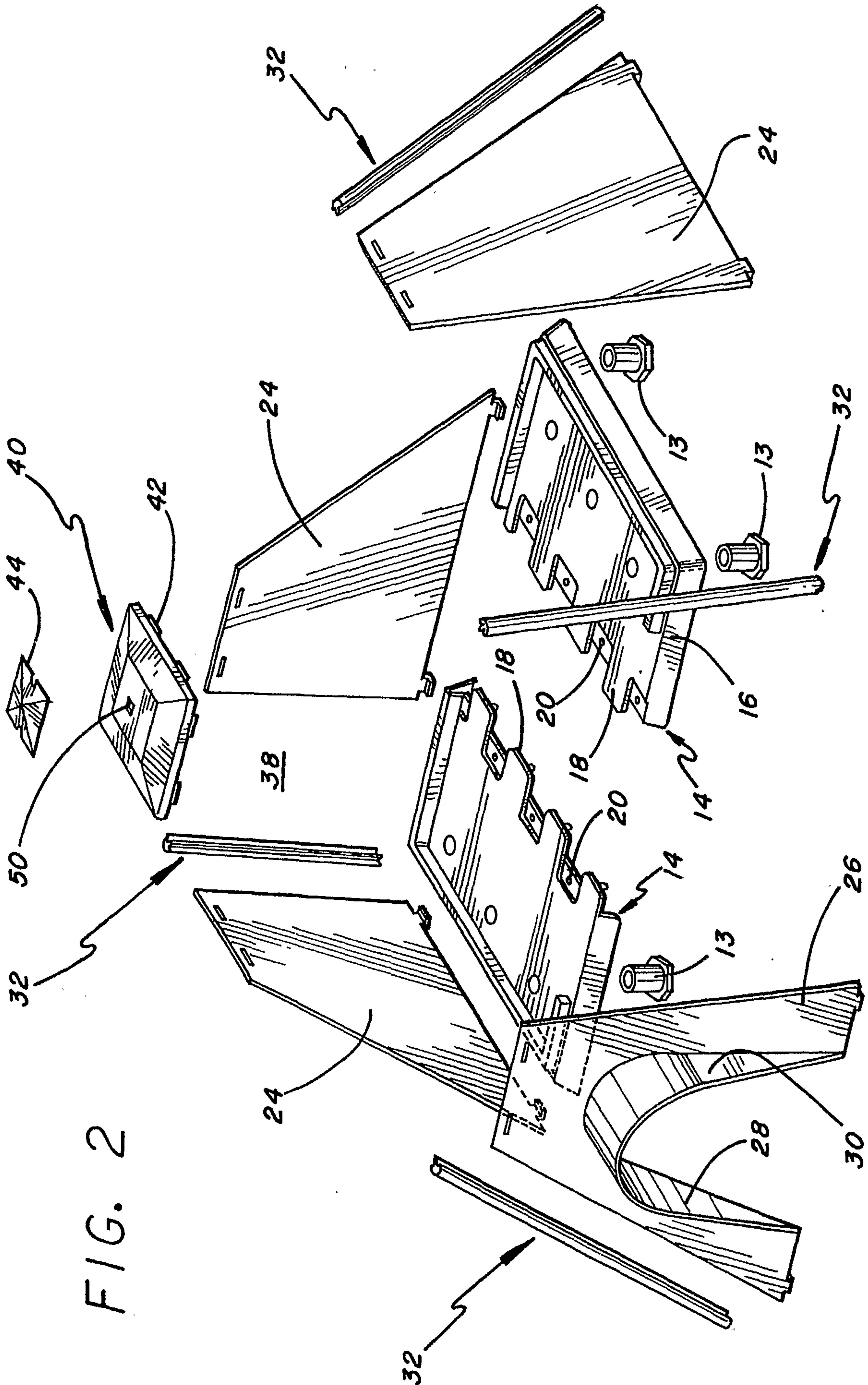
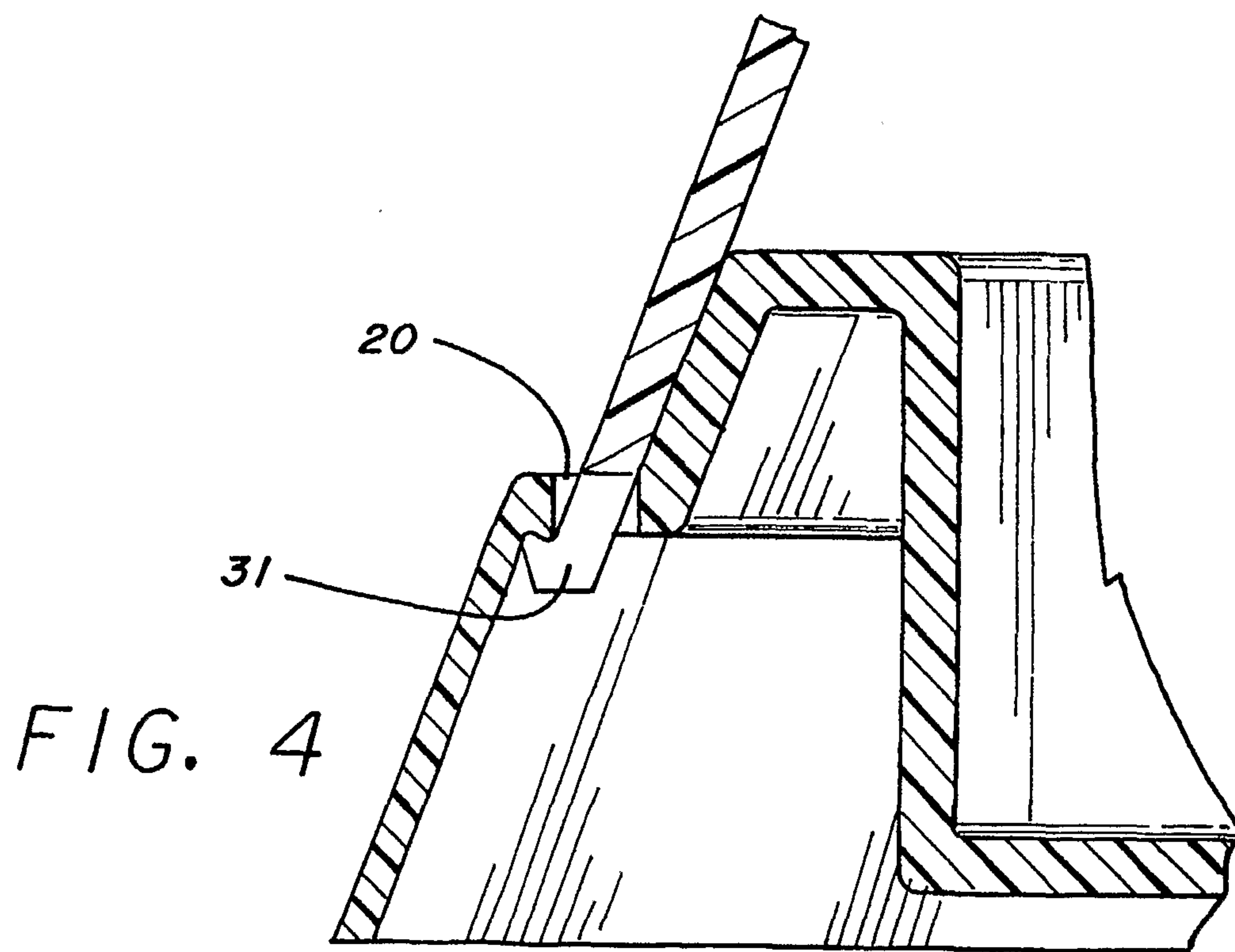
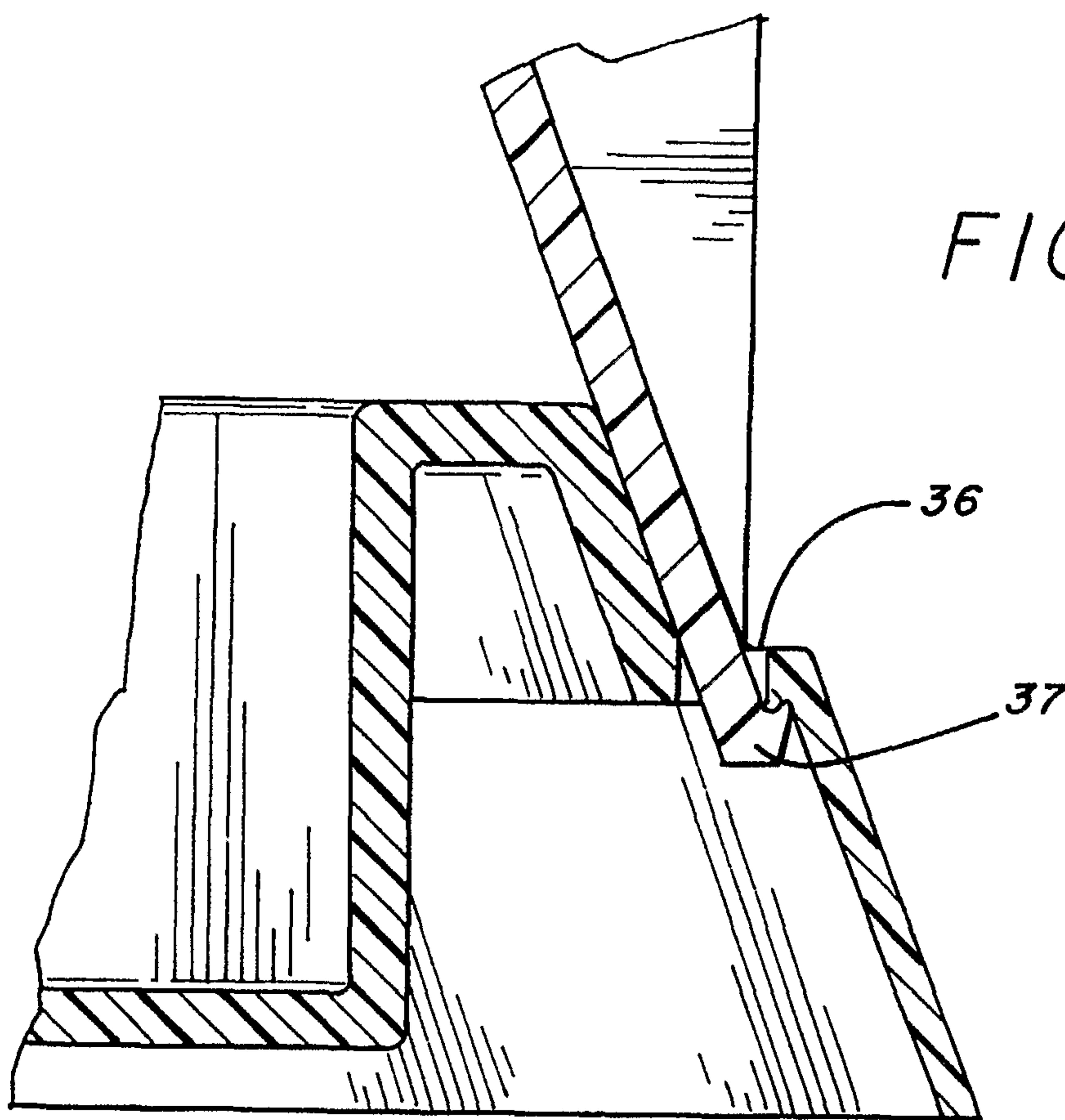


FIG. 2

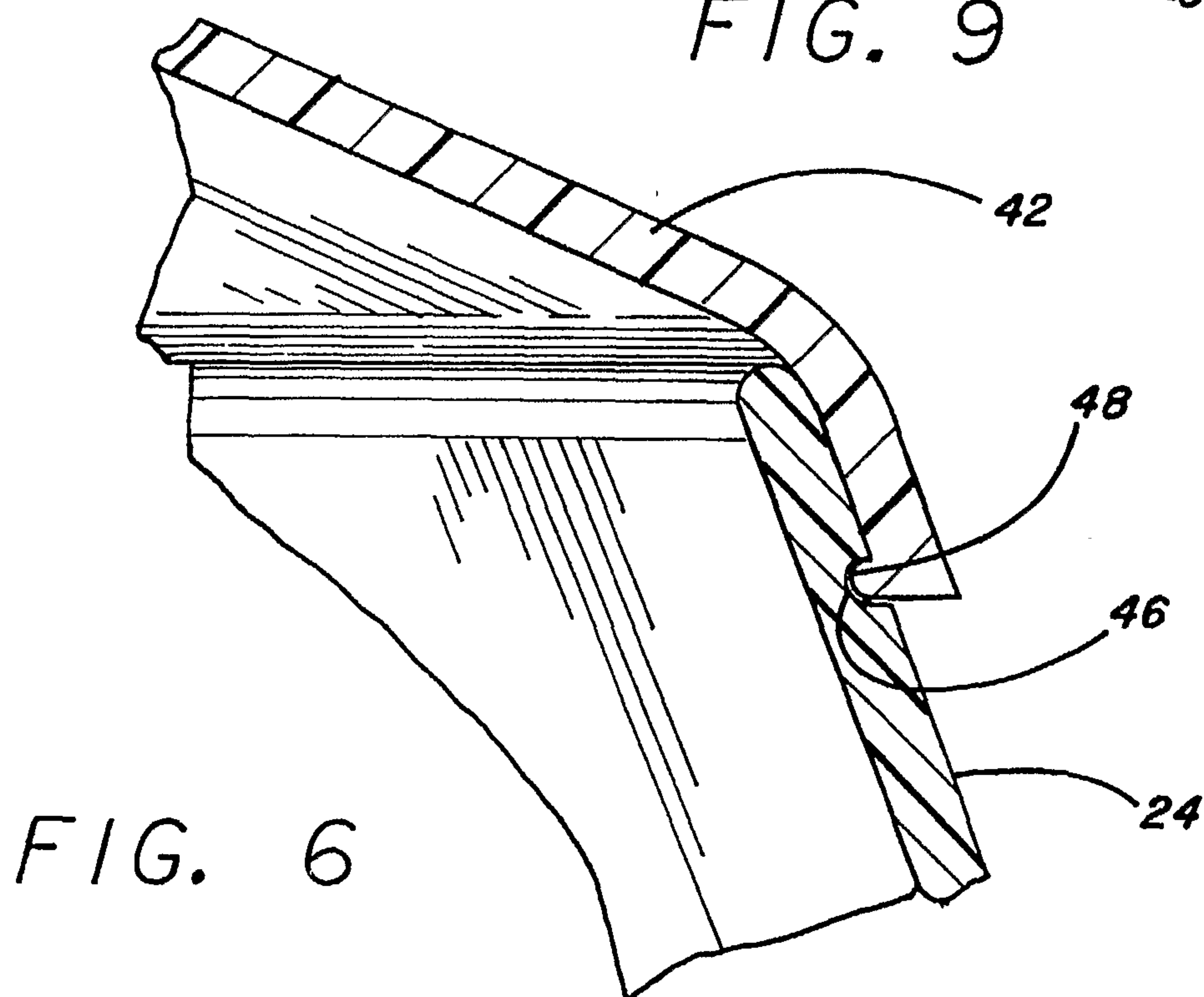
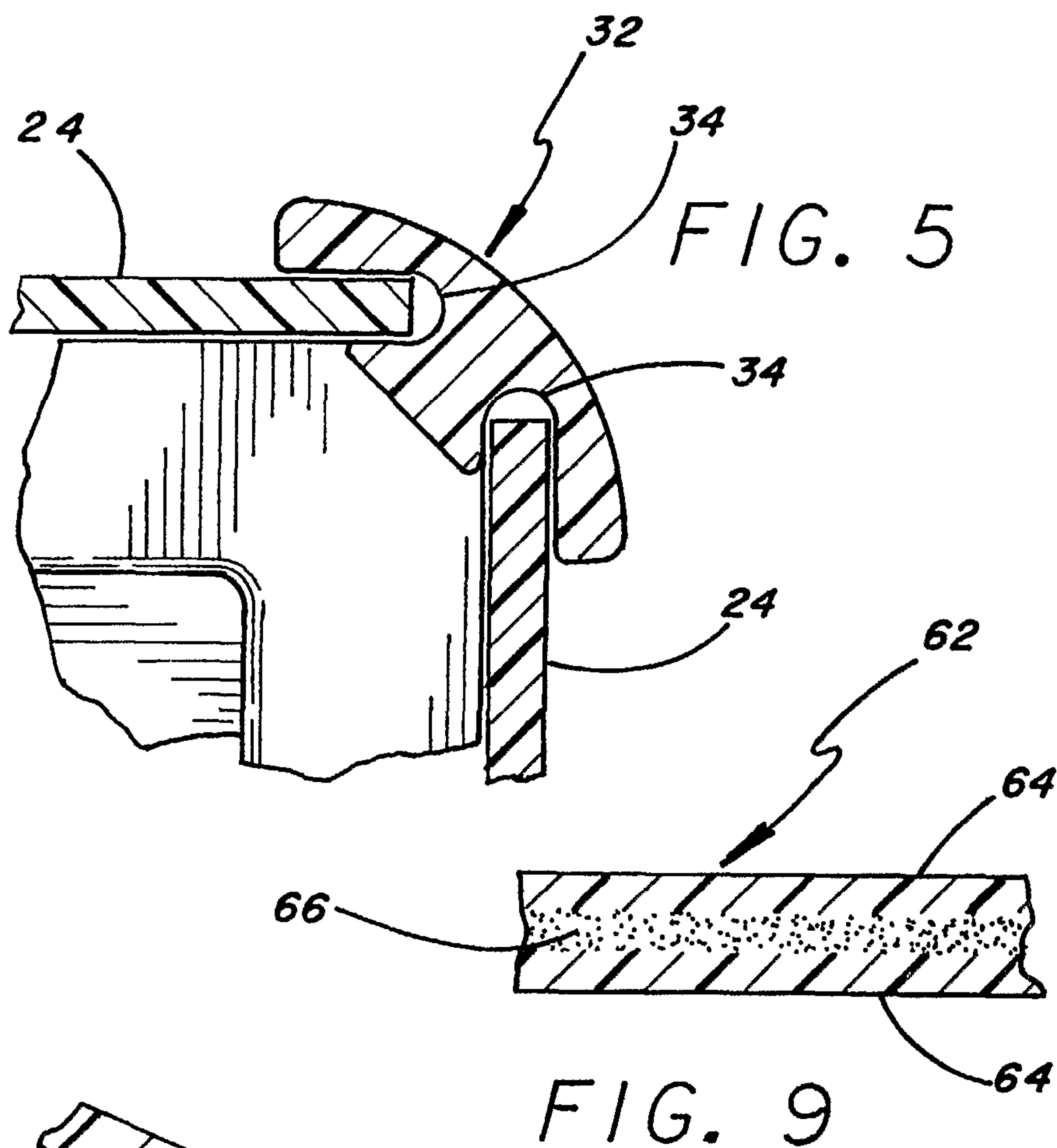
SUBSTITUTE SHEET (RULE 26)

3/5

FIG. 3



4/5



5 / 5

FIG. 7

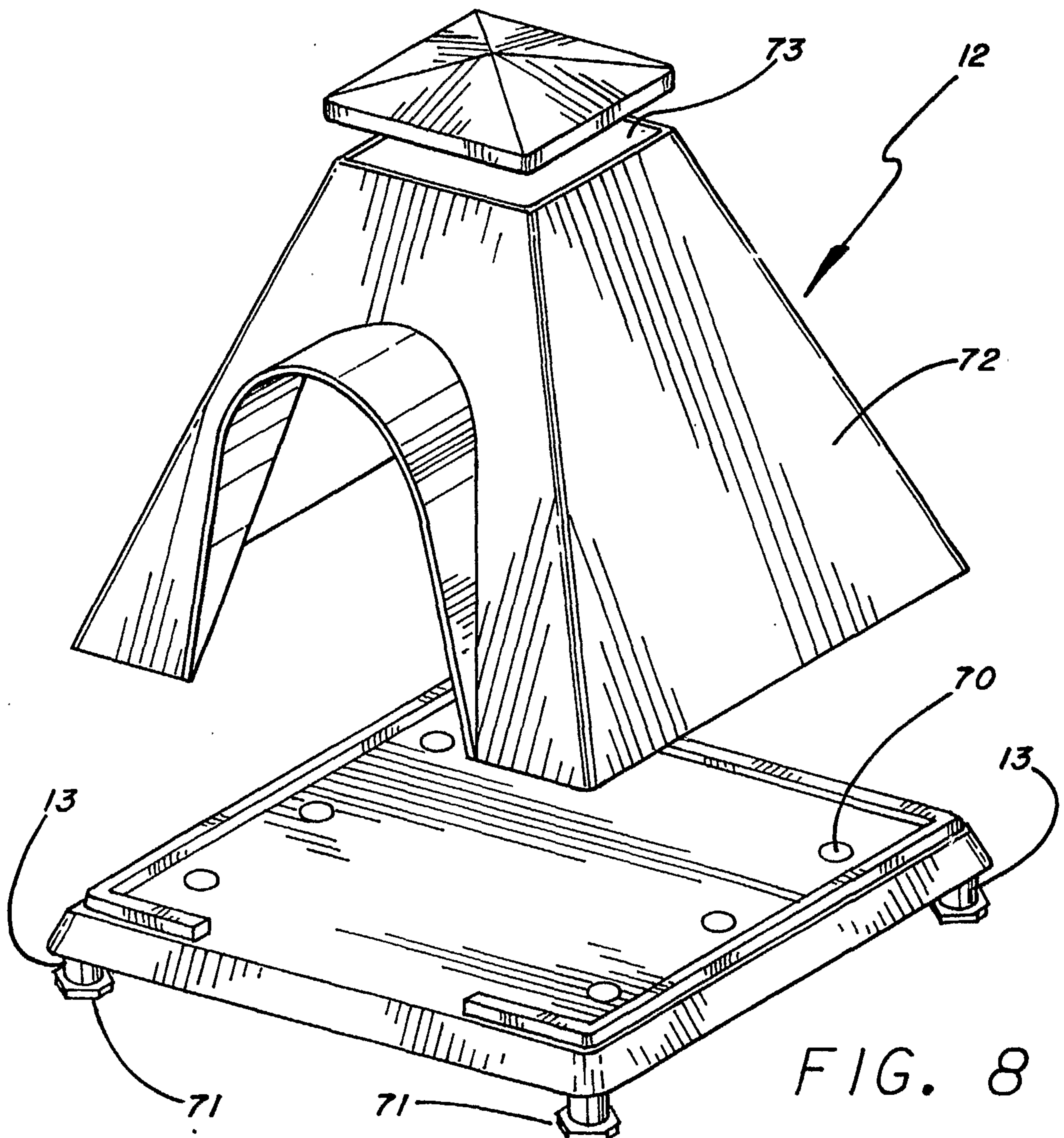
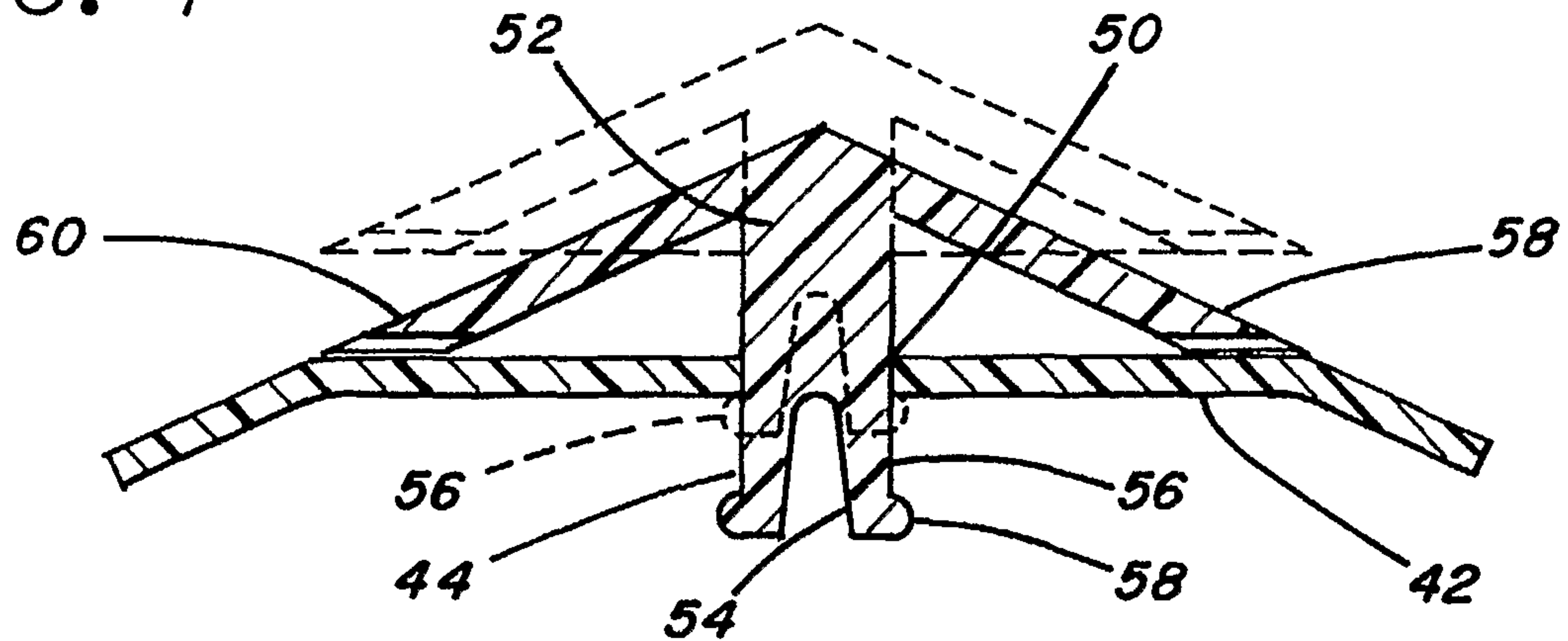


FIG. 8

