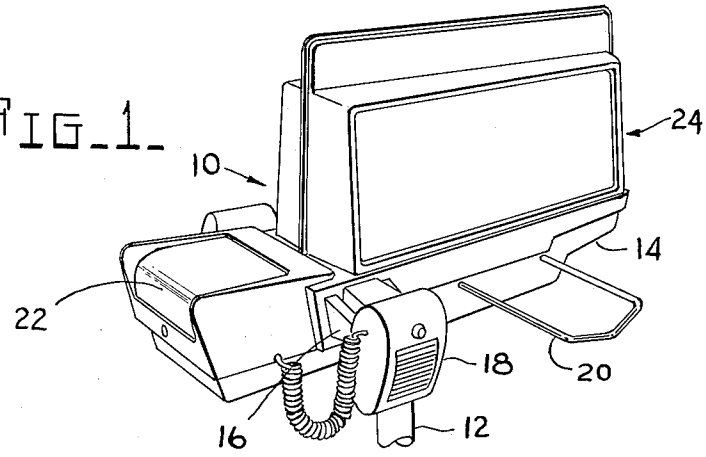
Oct. 2, 1962 A. BOUDOURIS 3,056,222

MENU STAND FOR DRIVE-IN RESTAURANT

Filed July 27, 1959 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1.



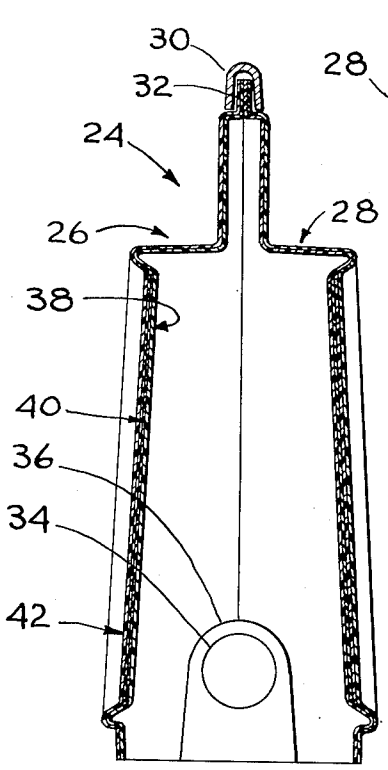


FIG. 2.

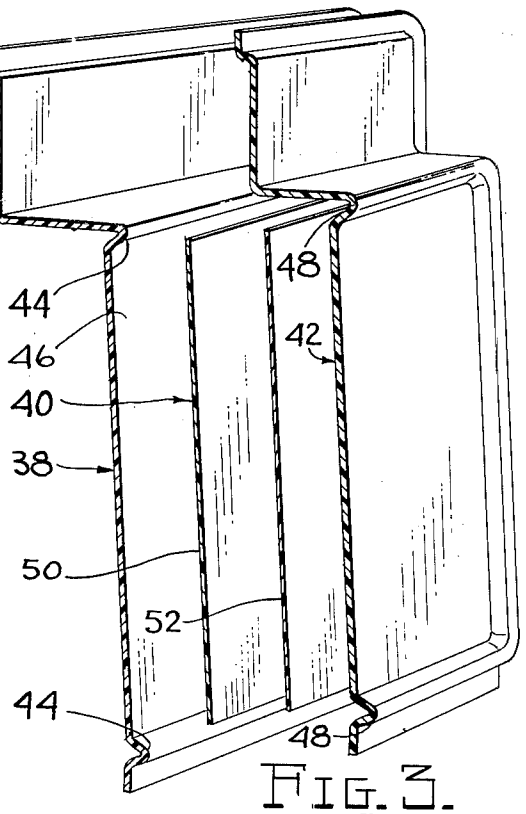


FIG. 3.

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MENU STAND FOR DRIVE-IN RESTAURANT

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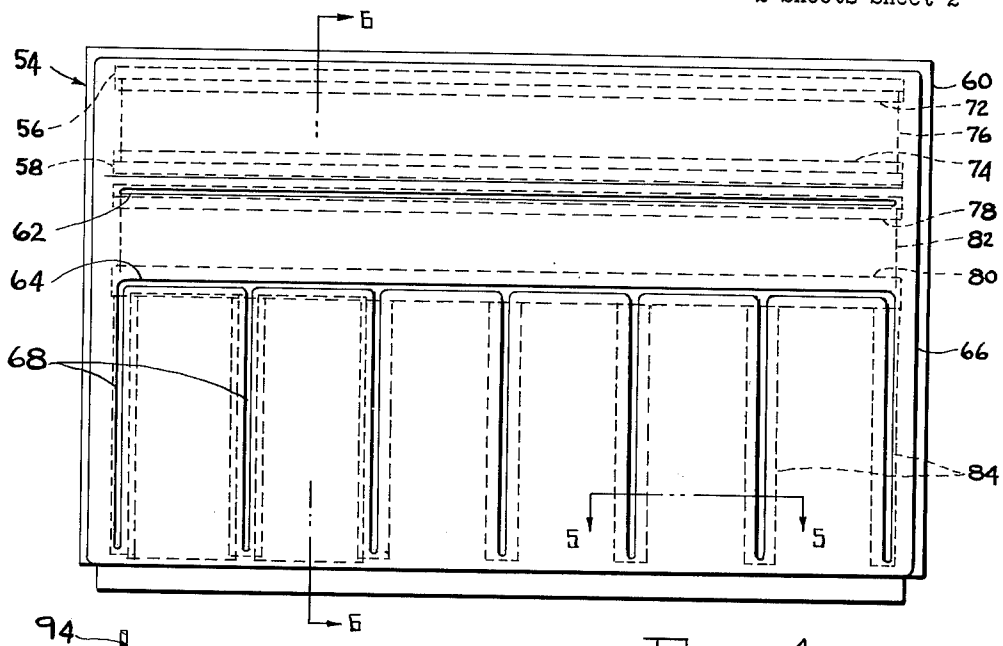


FIG. 4.

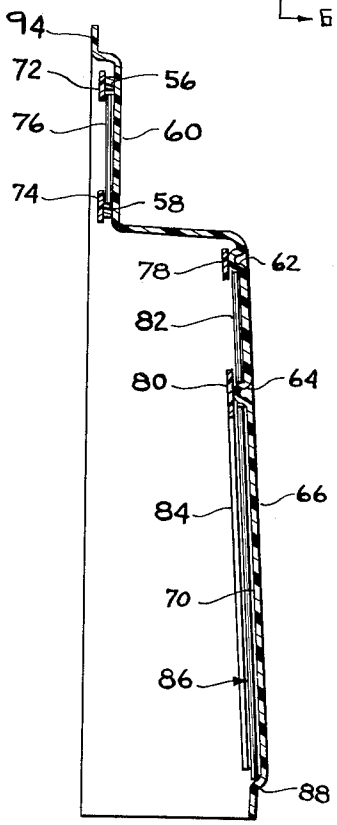


FIG. 6.

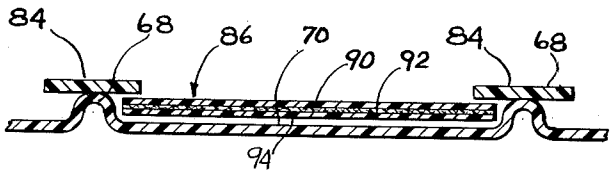


FIG. 5.

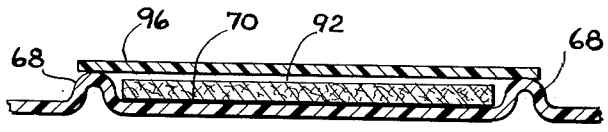


FIG. 7.

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3,056,222

MENU STAND FOR DRIVE-IN RESTAURANT

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Filed July 27, 1959, Ser. No. 829,810
2 Claims. (Cl. 40—132)

This invention relates to an improved menu stand for drive-in restaurants and the like.

Along with the increased popularity of drive-in restaurants in recent years has come the development of communication and conveying systems to reduce or eliminate the need for waitresses and to speed up service. Without waitresses to take orders from customers, menu signs must be placed around the drive-in layout so that they can be seen by all customers, who can select items from the signs and place their orders over a communications system directly to a central kitchen unit. One of the major difficulties with these signs is that they are relatively difficult to change when prices change or when different items are to be emphasized at different seasons of the year, because part or all of each sign must be repainted and re-lettered. Further, the signs are subject to weathering and require frequent renovating.

The present invention provides an improved menu stand intended to be located between two adjacent cars with menus readily visible to occupants of both cars. The stand includes a base having provisions for holding a speaker by means of which an order is transmitted to the central unit of the drive-in restaurant and having provisions for holding a tray of food, if desired. The base also carries a light source behind the menus which renders them readily readable at night time. A menu canopy fitting over the base and covering the light source includes two halves, each of which has a translucent backing for distributing light from the source, a menu sheet carrying a bill-of-fare for the restaurant, and a covering having a transparent portion to enable the menu sheets to be viewed externally. The menu sheets are separate and separable from the canopy half so that they may be easily changed, for example, when prices change or when it is desired to emphasize different items at different seasons of the year. The covering protects the menu sheets from weathering and enables them to last indefinitely.

Each menu sheet can be in two separate layers, a back one having a multi-colored design thereon, which serves as a background, and a front layer superimposed on the back one and carrying printing which sets forth the bill-of-fare of the restaurant. Light is transmitted through both of these layers except for the printed portions. When it is desired to change the menu, the front layer can be replaced by another carrying the new indicia, which replacement is relatively inexpensive because the front layer can be printed in a single coolr so that no elaborate printing process is necessary, as is true for the back layer containing the multi-colored design.

The menu sheet can also be made with the multi-colored design and the printing on a single sheet which can carry its own translucent backing, if desired, with the menu sheets segmented in individual sections with perhaps four or more carrying the complete menu. With this arrangement, any individual section can be changed without requiring replacement of the entire menu sheet.

One or more of these sections can list food which is popular particularly at one season of the year so that this section can be easily changed each time the particular season comes and goes.

It is, therefore, a principal object of the invention to provide an improved menu stand for a drive-in restaurant.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved menu stand in which the menu sheets can be changed easily with little expense.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved menu stand in which the menu sheets are more fully protected from the weather.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed description of preferred embodiments thereof, reference being made to the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a view in perspective of a menu stand according to the invention;

FIG. 2 is a view in cross section of a menu canopy which is part of the stand shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary view in perspective of the menu canopy showing parts thereof spaced slightly apart;

FIG. 4 is a side view in elevation of a modified canopy according to the invention;

FIG. 5 is a view in cross section taken along the line 5—5 of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a view in cross section taken along the line 6—6 of FIG. 4; and

FIG. 7 is a view in cross section similar to FIG. 5 of a modified canopy.

Referring to the drawings, and more particularly to FIG. 1, a menu stand according to the invention is indicated at **10** and includes a supporting post **12**, only a portion of which is shown, a base **14**, including a holder **16** for a speaker **18**, a support **20** for a tray of food, a compartment **22** into which the speakers **18** are placed at night, and a menu canopy **24**. The canopy **24** includes two canopy halves **26** and **28** connected by a molding clip **30** which clamps peripheral flanges **32** extending around the upper and side edges of the molding halves. The canopy **24** covers a fluorescent tube **34** located within the canopy and carried by a holder **36** affixed to the base **14**. Each of the canopy halves **26** and **28** includes a translucent backing **38** to diffuse light from the fluorescent tube **34**, a composite menu sheet **40**, and a transparent covering **42**. The inner backing **38**, which can be glass or plastic molded in the shape of either of the canopy halves **26** and **28**, includes a ridge **44** located in a rectangle to form a rectangular, menu-sheet-receiving recess **46** in which the menu sheet **40** is positioned by the ridge **44**. The transparent covering **42**, which also can be glass or plastic molded in the shape of either of the canopy halves **26** and **28**, includes means in the form of a ridge **48** corresponding to the ridge **44** of the backing **38** to nest therewith and hold the menu sheet **40** securely in place.

The menu sheet **40**, in this case, includes a back layer **50** and a front layer **52**. The back layer **50** is clear celluloid or similar material with multi-colored printing thereon which forms an attractive decorative background for the menu sheet **40**. The front layer **52** is also clear celluloid or similar material with printing thereon which sets forth the bill-of-fare of the restaurant. The latter can be easily changed by removing the transparent covering **42**, which protects the menu sheet **40** from the weather, and replacing the front layer **52** with another one having the desired changes printed thereon. The job takes but a few minutes and is inexpensive because the front layer **52**, being printed only in a single color, can be easily made with simple printing apparatus, unlike the multi-colored back layer **50** which forms a decorative background for the menu sheet **40**.

A modified canopy half **54** is shown in FIGS. 4–6. The half **54** has plastic strips or ridges **56** and **58** projecting inwardly and running horizontally on an upper part **60** and has molded, integral horizontal ridges **62** and **64** running horizontally on a lower part **66** with molded, integral vertical ridges **68** extending downwardly from the horizontal ridge **64** to form sign-receiving recesses **70**

(FIGS. 5 and 6). Wider plastic strips 72 and 74 are adhered to the upper, horizontal strips or ridges 56 and 58 to hold an upper sign 76 which can carry the name of the drive-in, for example. Plastic strips 78 and 80 are adhered to the ridges 62 and 64 to hold a lower sign 82 which can advertise a specialty of the drive-in restaurant, for example. The signs 76 and 82 can be removed by sliding them past the ends of the strips which hold them. Strips 84 are attached to the vertical ridges 68 to hold menu sections or segments 86 in the recesses 70. The strip 80 also aids in retaining the menu segments 86, which are inserted into the recesses 70 from below the lower ends of the strips 84, and are supported on an offset 88 (FIG. 6) of the lower part 66 of the canopy half 54. The half 54 is coated with a translucent coating on those portions not carrying the signs 76 and 82 or the segments 86 to diffuse light from a fluorescent tube or other light source within the canopy.

Referring to FIG. 5, each of the menu segments 86 includes a translucent backing 90 to diffuse light from a source within the canopy, a menu sheet 92, and a transparent sheet 94. The transparent sheet 94 is not essential but only enhances the attractiveness of the menu sheet 92 somewhat and helps to protect the sheet when stored out of the canopy 54 during off-seasons. The menu sheet 92 is suitably printed to set forth the bill-of-fare of the restaurant and can include multi-colored designs to enhance the attractiveness thereof. For a price change, or for different seasons of the year, one or more of the segments 86 can be replaced with one or more others which is easily accomplished by separating the canopy half 54 from the base and sliding the segments 86 out of the bottom of the sign-receiving recesses 70.

If desired, the strips 80 and 84 can be extended completely across the recesses 70 to form a translucent backing 96 (FIG. 7) for the menu sheet 92; the translucent backing 90 then can be eliminated.

Various modifications of the above described embodiments of the invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art. It is to be understood that such modifications

can be made without departing from the invention if within the scope and spirit of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A menu stand for a drive-in restaurant comprising a base, a supporting post for supporting said base in a fixed position above the ground, a holder on said base for carrying a speaker, a support on said base for carrying a food tray, a light source on said base, a translucent backing located on each side of said source for diffusing light from the source, a menu sheet in front of each backing, said menu sheet consisting of a first layer of transparent material having a background design thereon and a separable second layer of transparent material having a bill-of-fare thereon, said second layer lying on the side of said first layer opposite said light source, a covering for said backing and said menu sheet separate and separable therefrom, said covering being transparent over said menu sheet, and means including rigid means on said covering for positioning and supporting said backing and said menu sheet.

2. A menu stand according to claim 1 wherein said second layer of transparent material having a bill-of-fare thereon is divided into a plurality of separate and separable sections whereby each section can be replaced individually.

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