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Geesaman et al.

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[54] ROTATABLE SILVERWARE HOLDER

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[52] **U.S. Cl.**..... **312/284,** 206/16 R, 206/16 S, 206/75, 211/60 T, 211/70, 211/131

[51] **Int. Cl.**..... **A47b 81/00**

[58] **Field of Search**..... 312/135, 284; 211/60 T, 211/70, 128, 129, 131; 206/16 R, 16 S, 17, 17.1, 75

[56] **References Cited**

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A rotatable silverware holder consisting of a base member supporting a circular tray in a rotatable manner thereon with a cylinder cover adapted to completely close the tray compartment, the tray compartment being partitioned into a plurality of radially extending segments with each segment provided with a pair of different diameter concentric circular members each having radially extending slots therein with each slot adapted to receive an item of silverware therein, the tray being rotatable about its axis with the cover member being mounted for axial movement upwardly from the tray to permit access to the contents of the tray compartments, with the cover adapted to close the tray compartments in a protective dust free manner.

6 Claims, 4 Drawing Figures

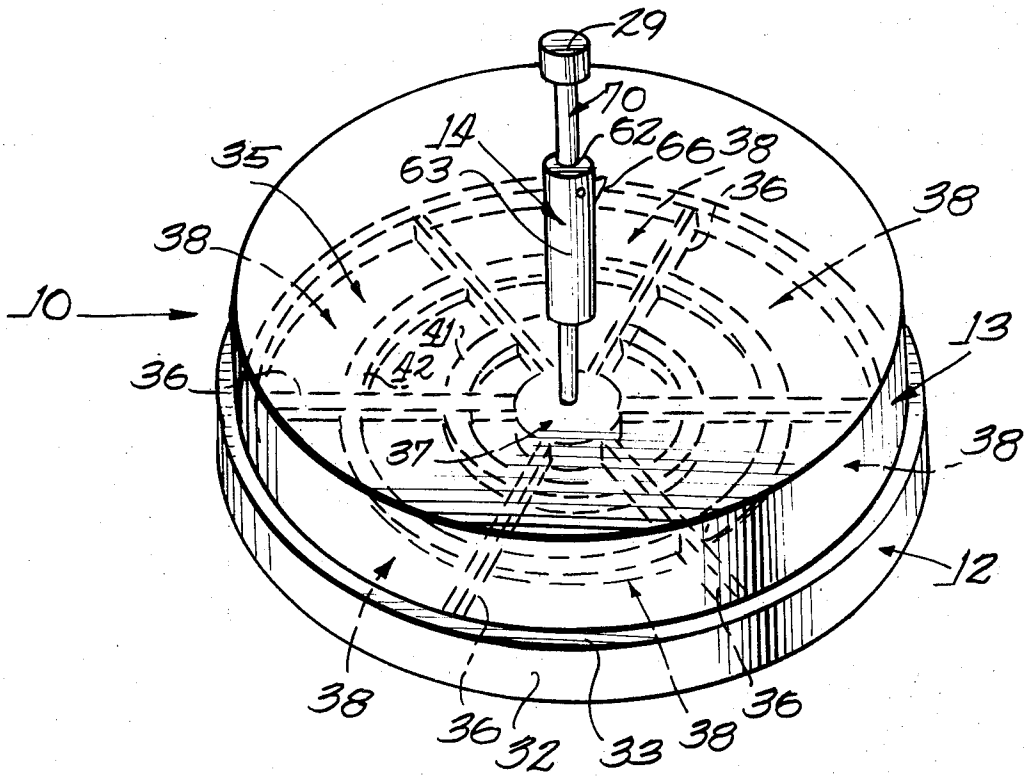


Fig. 1

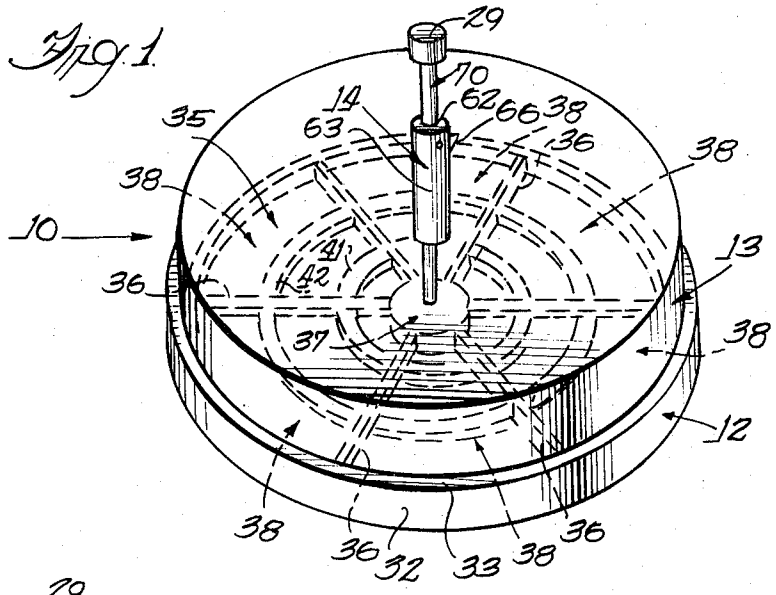


Fig. 2

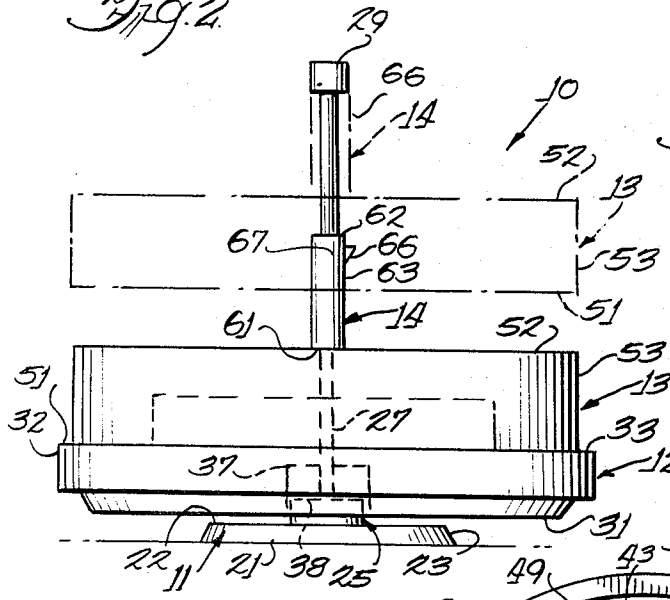


Fig. 4

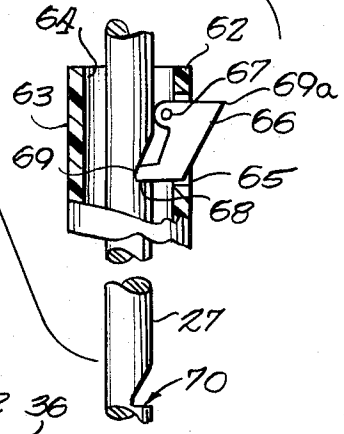
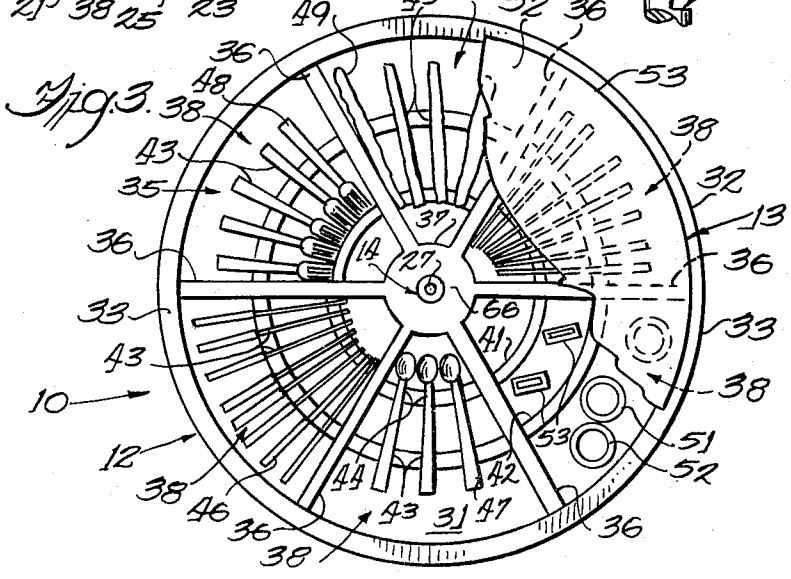


Fig. 3



ROTATABLE SILVERWARE HOLDER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to silverware holders and more particularly to a novel and improved rotatable silverware holder adapted for holding, storing and dispensing of various items of silverware from separate compartments defined therein with each compartment adapted to hold a separate silverware item, such as forks, spoons, knives, and the like.

2. Description of the Prior Art

It has been known in the prior art to provide many types of silverware holders for use in either storing silverware, washing silverware, or carrying silverware from one place to another, such carrying normally being performed in a relatively expensive silverware chest or the like when it is desired that each piece of silverware be retained in its own separate compartment apart from contact with any other piece of silverware. This is quite inconvenient to the normal housewife who generally encounters difficulties during the serving of meals in that she must constantly run back and forth between the kitchen and dining room whenever extra silverware is required. The only alternative being to keep silverwave in the dining room in the aforementioned silverware type chest which is normally quite bulky and which presents an appearance to most people as a display case for the silverware which some people may find offensive on the part of the housewife.

It would thus be desirable to provide a silverware holder for a multiplicity of items of silverware maintained in a manner where individuals seated at a dining room table or the like could readily select extra silverware as required without the housewife having to be bothered or without the individual selecting such silverware having to bother other individuals at the table.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention recognizes the problems and plight of the normal housewife and provides a novel solution to the silverware holding and dispensing problem by providing a novel rotatable tray type container having a plurality of compartments therein each adapted to hold in side-by-side relationship different items of silverware, the tray being readily rotatable by any individual at a table on which the tray is positioned such that the individual may remove any selected item of silverware therefrom without disturbing any other individual at the table.

Further, the present invention provides a novel silverware holder having a silverware containing tray rotatable about its axis with a transparent cover adapted to close the tray to protect the silverware therein from dust and other contaminants while being readily raised therefrom and secured in the raised position permitting access to the items of silverware therein.

It is a feature of the present invention to provide a silverware holder including a rotatable tray having compartments defined therein for holding a compact form and making readily and instantly available a desired item of silverware in such a manner that any item of silverware in the holder may be brought to view and easily and readily removed from the holder for use at the table.

Yet still a further feature of the present invention provides a rotatable silverware holder which is aesthetically pleasing and refined in appearance so as to be suitable for placing on a dining room table during entertainment of guests and the like, which is simple in construction; and which is practical and efficient in operation without requiring any special instructions or expertise on the part of the guests in obtaining silverware from the holder.

The provision of a rotatable silverware holder, such as briefly outlined above, and possessing the stated advantages, constitutes the principal features of the present invention. The provision of a holder which is relatively inexpensive to manufacture due to its simplicity of construction; one which is of a pleasing and yet durable construction; one which is adapted to hold a variety of silverware items in separate partitioned compartments; and one which, otherwise, is well adapted to perform the services required of it, are further desirable features which have been borne in mind in the production and development of the present invention.

Other features and advantages of this invention will be apparent during the course of the following description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification, and in which like reference characters are employed to designate like parts throughout the same:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a rotatable silverware holder constructed in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. **2** is a front elevational view of the rotatable silverware holder showing the cover in the closed position and showing the cover in phantom configuration in the open position;

FIG. **3** is a top plan view of the rotatable silverware holder with the cover partially broken away to disclose the compartments in the tray and the silverware items disposed therein; and

FIG. **4** is an enlarged fragmentary front elevational view, partially in cross-section, of the mechanism for retaining the cover in the open position.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the drawings in detail there is illustrated a preferred form of a rotatable silverware holder constructed in accord with the invention and designated in its entirely by the reference numeral **10** and which is comprised of a base member **11**, a circular bowl shaped tray **12**, and a cylindrical cover member **13** having a handle **14** connected axially thereto and projecting upwardly therefrom. The rotatable silverware holder **10** may be manufactured out of a variety of suitable satisfactory materials and in a variety of colors, a preferred embodiment having the tray **12** formed of an opaque colored high density polystyrene plastic which may be covered with a wood grain paper vinyl or the like, with the cover **13** being produced in a transparent high density polystyrene or, if desired, in a translucent polystyrene.

The base **11** is of a circular configuration having a bottom surface **21**, a top surface **22**, and tapered side walls **23** interconnecting the peripheral edges of the top and bottom surfaces respectively. Disposed centrally of

the base member and projecting axially upwardly from the top surface 22 thereof is a cylindrical boss like member 25 having a top surface 26 with an elongated cylindrical rod 27 disposed concentric with the boss member and projecting axially upwardly from the top surface thereof.

The tray 12 is of a circular configuration having a bottom surface 31 with a cylindrical side wall 32 extending upwardly from the peripheral edges of the bottom surfaces and terminating in a top edge surface 33, there being defined above bottom surface 31 and between side walls 32 a compartment 35 of a circular configuration and having a plurality of angularly spaced radially extending partitions 36 disposed between the outer circular surface of a cylindrical boss 37 disposed concentrically in the compartment 35 and extending axially upwardly from the interior of the tray bottom surface, and the interior surface of the side walls 32. Disposed interior of cylindrical boss 37 is a cylindrically shaped recess 38 extending through bottom surface 31 and adapted to rest on the top surface 26 of boss 25 in a manner to rotatably support the tray 12 with the bottom surface 31 spaced a slight vertical distance above the top surface 22 of the base 11, the tray being rotatable about its central axis on the boss 25.

Disposed in compartment 35 and secured to the interior of the bottom surface 31 thereof is a pair of concentric ring like members 41 and 42 each projecting upwards a slight distance from the bottom surface 31 to form spacer members with each including a plurality of transversely oriented slots 43 in spacer member 42 and slots 44 in spacer member 41, such slots being of a generally radially extending orientation and each respective set of slots being axially aligned and adapted to receive therethrough the handle portion or blade portion of silverware such as designated by knives 46, spoons 47, and forks 48. In addition, such slots are also adaptable to support therebetween a plurality of napkins such as designatd generally by reference numeral 49. In addition, one of the compartments may readily be utilized to store other items normally used at the table, such as salt and pepper shakers 51 and 52, spices 53, and the like.

It is to be noted that the partitions 36 may be separately formed and connected between the inner hub 37 and the interior of the side walls 32, or alternatively the complete tray 12 including spacer members 41 and 42, partitions 36, interior boss 37, and the side walls 32 and bottom surface 31 may be integrally formed as a unitary partitioned one piece plastic molded tray of circular configuration, such partitions 36 extending integrally from the inner hub 37 to the periphery or interior surface of the side walls 32 of the tray thus forming not only separate compartments 38 therebetween but also serving to strengthen the molded tray configuration.

Disposed concentric with the tray and positioned thereabove is the cylindrical cover member 13 including an open end 51, a closed end surface 52, and cylindrical side wall 53 interconnecting the respective end surfaces, the cover 13 being of a diameter greater than the interior diameter of the side walls 32 but less than the exterior diameter thereof such that edge 51 of the cover rests on edge 33 of the tray when the cover is in the closed position so as to protect the contents of the tray from dirt and other contamination. Disposed concentric with the cover and extending axially upwardly therefrom is handle member 14 having an end 61 attached to the top surface 52 of the cover with the opposite end 62 projecting axially therefrom, the handle member including a hollow tubular body member 63 interconnecting the end surfaces, the rod 27 extending axially through the cover top surface 52 and through an elongated cylindrical chamber 64 defined through body member 63, the top end of the rod terminating in an enlarged head portion 29 serving both to assist in the transporting of the silverware holder 10 as well as serving as a stop to prevent the handle member 14 from being axially removed off of the rod 27.

In handle member 14 there is provided a longitudinally elongated slot 65 in the side wall of the body member 63 with a locking member 66 pivotally connected to the body member at pivot point 67 permitting the locking member to pivot thereabout with locking edge surface 68 selectively pivoting in a direction toward or away from the rod 27. The interior leading edge of the locking edge 68 is in the form of a finger 69 adapted to engage in a triangular notch 70 provided in rod 27 upon the handle and connected cover member 13 being vertically raised along rod 27 until reaching the intended open position of the cover spaced vertically from the tray 12, this position designated in phantom configuration in FIG. 2, and at this position finger 69 engages in slot 70 to retain the cover 13 in the open position. To close the cover, it is only required that edge 69*a* of locking member 66 be depressed inwardly in a rotative direction upwardly and forwardly toward the top end 62 of the handle 14, this serving to pivot finger 69 and locking edge 68 out of notch 70 and permit the cover 13 to be lowered onto the tray 12 for covering the silverware and other items contained in the tray.

There is thus provided a novel rotatable silverware holder including a cover member adapted to be selectively moved between a closed position covering the contents of the tray and an open position permitting access to the contents of the tray in a rapid and efficient manner so that the holder may serve both to store, carry and dispense articles of silverware on a dining room table or the like.

It is to be understood that the form of this invention herewith shown and described is to be taken as a preferred example of the same, and that this invention is not to be limited to the exact arrangement of parts shown in the accompanying drawings, or described in this specification, as various changes in the details of construction as to shape, size, and arrangement of parts may be resorted to without departing from the spirit of the invention, the scope of the novel concepts thereof, or the scope of the sub-joined claims.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. A rotatable silverware holder comprising:

a base member adapted to rest on any suitable support surface and including an elongated cylindrical boss projecting upwardly a slight distance therefrom and having an elongated vertically extending rod projecting axially upwardly from the top surface of the boss;

a circular tray rotatably supported on the boss projecting from the base for rotation about its axis, the tray including a centrally disposed axially inwardly projecting hub member and a cylindrical outer side wall surface, the elongated rod projecting axially

through the hub member through a suitable aperture provided axially therethrough;

a plurality of angularly spaced elongated rectangular partitions radially extending between the hub member and the tray side walls to define therebetween a plurality of separate compartments in the tray, the ends of the partitions engaging the hub member and the interior of the side walls with a side edge of each of the partitions disposed adjacent the tray bottom surface;

a pair of different diameter concentric ring like spacer members connected to the interior tray bottom surface, the partitions dividing the spacer members into arcuate sections with an arcuate section of each spacer member being disposed in each of the compartments, each spacer member having a plurality of radially extending slots provided therein with each slot being of a size and shape adapted to receive a particular item of silverware therein in a manner to support and store the same in a side-by-side relationship;

a hollow cylindrical cover open at one end and closed at the opposite end and being of a diameter to completely cover the compartments in the tray, the closed end having a centrally disposed aperture permitting the rod to extend axially therethrough;

an elongated hollow tubular member having one end connected to the center of the exterior top surface of the closed end of the cover with the opposite end projecting axially upwardly therefrom, the handle being concentric with the rod which extends axially therethrough; and

means for retaining the cover in an open position spaced axially upwardly a distance from the tray to permit silverware to be inserted into the tray and also to permit silverware to be removed from the tray, such means being readily released to permit the cover to close the tray to protect the same from dirt and other contamination.

2. The rotatable silverware holder as set forth in claim **1** wherein each of the spacer members has a substantially rectangular crossection, each of the plurality of slots defined in such spacer means being transversely oriented relative to the axis of the spacer means with each slot adapted to pass a portion of an item of silverware therethrough, the slots in the second spacer member being the same in number as the slots in the first spacer member and substantially aligned therewith and adapted to receive therethrough other portions of the item of silverware, the slots in one of the compartments adapted to receive the blade and handle portion of knife silverware members, the slots in another compartment adapted to receive the front and back portions of spoon type silverware items, with the slots in yet a further compartment being adapted to receive the leading and handle portions respectively of fork like silverware items, the partitions disposed in the tray and extending to a height not exceeding the top edge of the tray side walls.

3. The rotatable silverware holder as set forth in claim **2** wherein the cover member is of a diameter greater than the interior diameter of the tray side walls and less than the exterior diameter of the tray side walls, the peripheral edge surface of the cover member adapted to seat against the peripheral top edge surface of the tray side walls.

4. The rotatable silverware holder as set forth in claim **3** wherein the handle member includes a longitudinally elongated slot formed in the side wall thereof, a locking member pivotally secured to the handle member with an operating portion thereof projecting outwardly from the slot, and the rod including a notch adapted to cooperate with the locking member to secure the cover in a raised position relative to the tray.

5. The rotatable silverware holder as set forth in claim **4** wherein the locking member includes a trapezoidal flat member pivoted at one corner inwardly of the handle member with the opposite corner projecting outwardly of the slot, the corner opposite the corner projecting from the slot defining a locking finger adapted to engage in the notch provided in the rod, the notch in the rod including a base portion extending normal to the axis of the rod and a tapered upper surface extending upwardly and outwardly from the axis of the rod to the side wall of the rod, the locking member being gravity biased into having the locking edge in constant sliding engagement with the side wall of the rod whereby when the cover is raised by the handle to a position where the locking member engages in the notch then the cover will be retained in the raised position until after the projecting end of the locking member is manually rotated in an upward and inward direction toward the rod to release the locking edge from the notch and permit the cover to be lowered onto the top edge surfaces of the side walls of the tray.

6. The rotatable silverware holder as set forth in claim **5** wherein the tray is molded as a unitary structure including therein the radial partitions, spacer members, and inner boss member which are all integrally molded therewith.

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