Jan. 31, 1967 G. FELDSER ETAL 3,301,618

REFRIGERATOR MATCHMATE CABINET

Filed June 11, 1965 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG 1

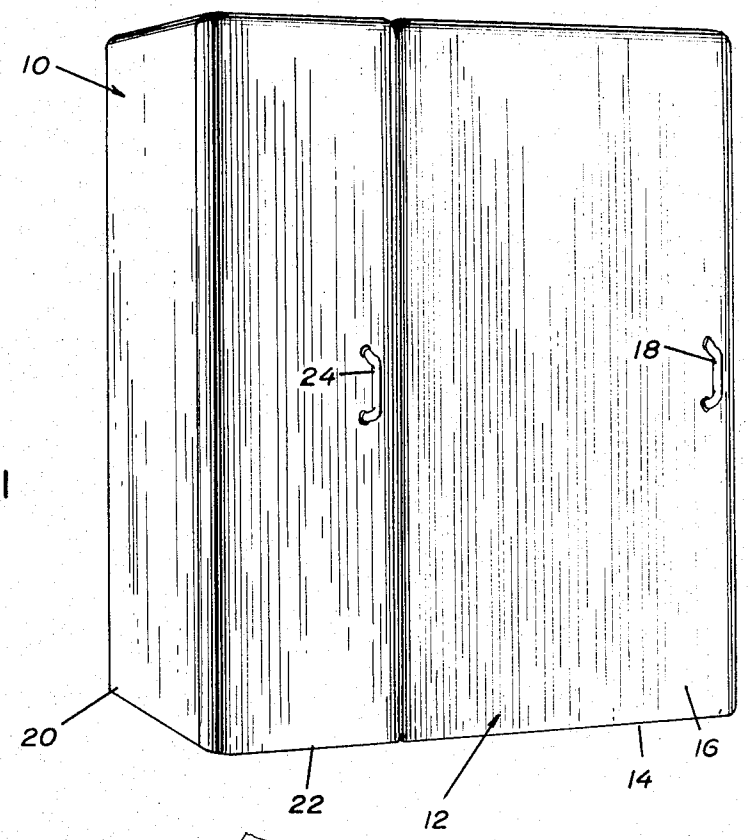
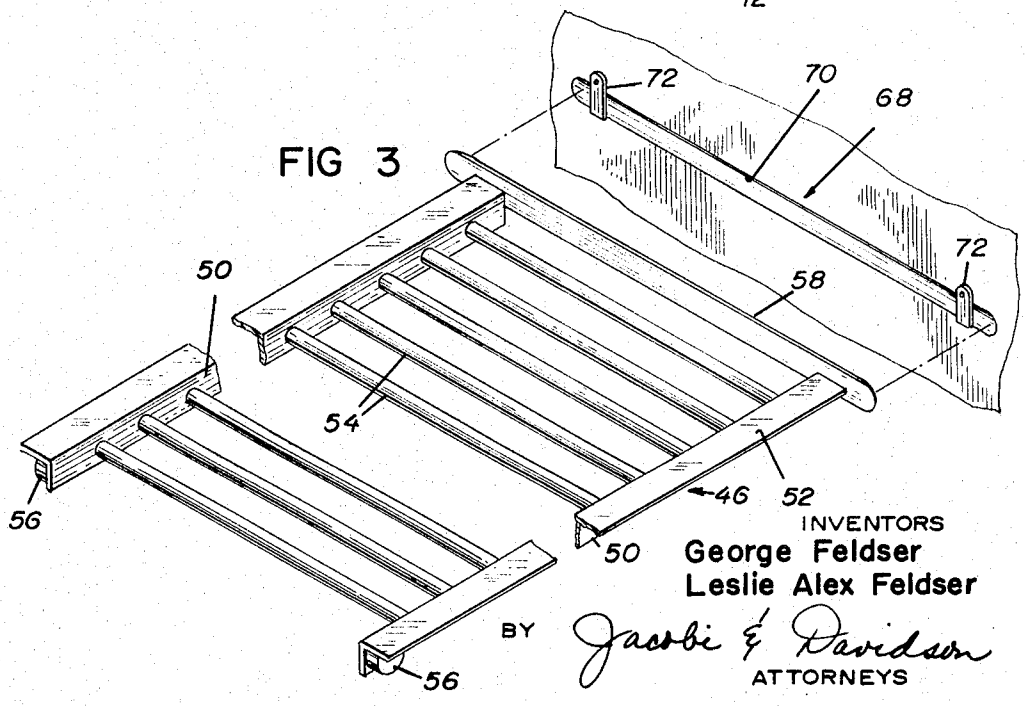


FIG 3



INVENTORS
George Feldser
Leslie Alex Feldser

BY Jacobi & Davidson
ATTORNEYS

Jan. 31, 1967 G. FELDSER ETAL 3,301,618

REFRIGERATOR MATCHMATE CABINET

Filed June 11, 1965 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

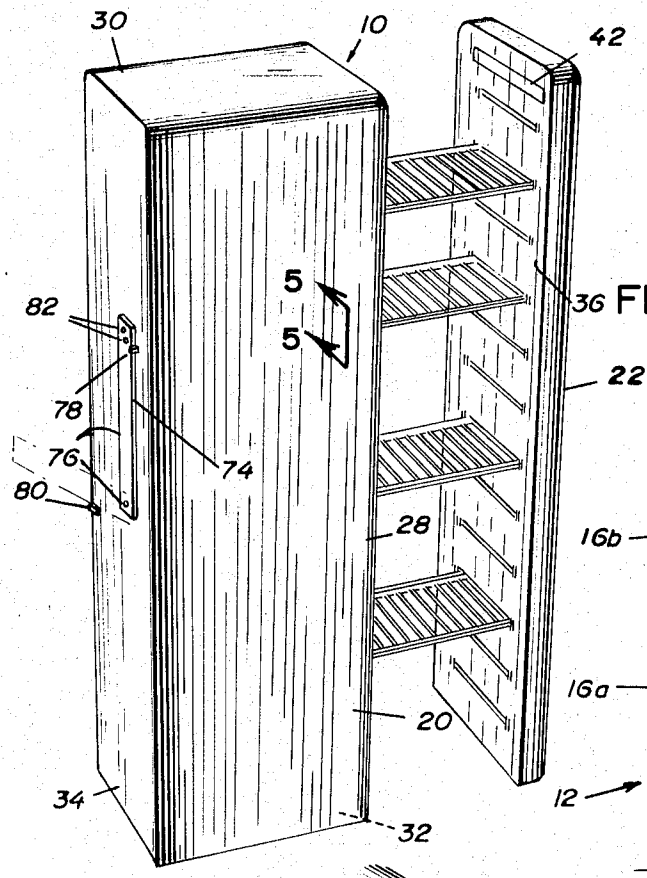


FIG 2

FIG 6

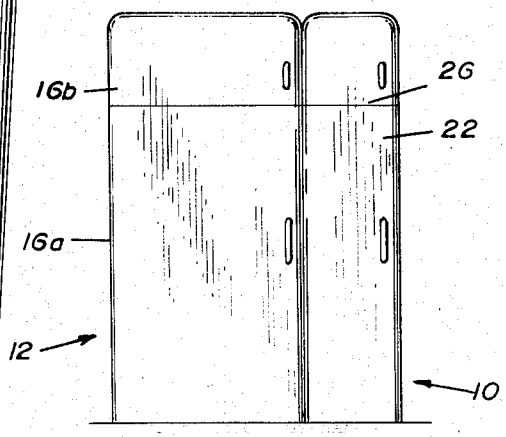


FIG 4

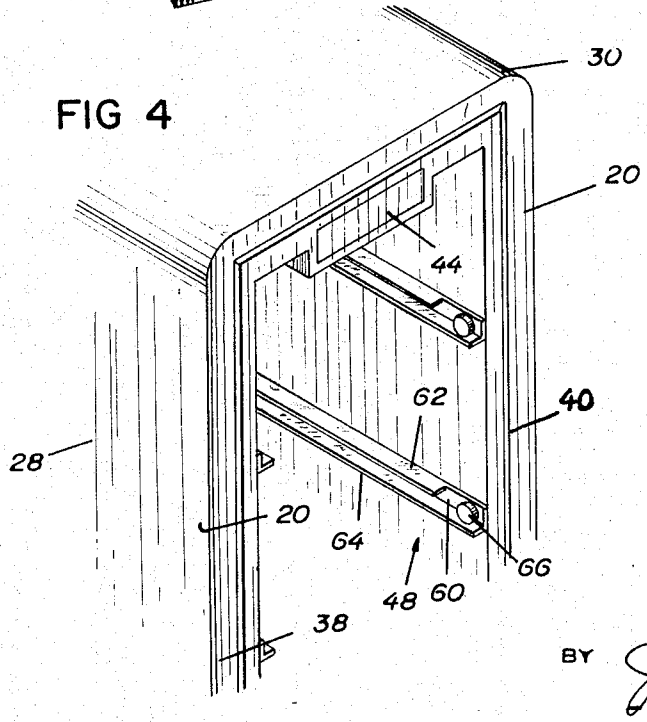
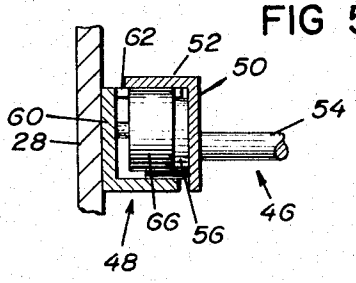


FIG 5



INVENTORS
George Feldser
Leslie Alex Feldser

BY Jacobi & Davidson
ATTORNEYS

United States Patent Office 3,301,618 Patented Jan. 31, 1967

3,301,618

REFRIGERATOR MATCHMATE CABINET

George Feldser and Leslie Alex Feldser, both of 501 S. Staples, Corpus Christi, Tex. 78401

Filed June 11, 1965, Ser. No. 463,138
4 Claims. (Cl. 312—111)

This invention relates to a multi-shelf storage cabinet adapted to be associated and used with a conventional refrigerator, and more partciularly it relates to a storage cabinet formed as a simulacrum of a conventional refrigerator.

In conventional kitchens, it is customary to provide built-in storage cabinets and closets in which non-perishable food items can be stored. However, such storage cabinets are not always arranged for easy access, and do not always provide sufficient storage space, and accordingly, it is often necessary to utilize a separate storage cabinet. The present invention is concerned with such a storage cabinet, and is particularly concerned with providing such storage cabinet for use in close association with a refrigerator.

It is thus a primary object of the present invention to provide a storage cabinet for use with such a refrigerator and to provide such a storage cabinet as an exact simulation of the refrigerator itself. That is, the storage cabinet of the present invention is to have a height corresponding to the height of a conventional refrigerator, and is preferably to have a depth corresponding to the depth of the conventional refrigerator. The front door of the storage cabinet of the present invention is formed to simulate exactly the front door of a particular refrigerator, and accordingly, it will be possible to merchandise the refrigerator and the cabinet as compatible mating units. Such a storage cabinet could be designed to simulate exactly, each particular model of refrigerator in any particular manufacturer's line, and the cabinet could thus be used by such manufacturer as a promotional item, either to be sold with the refrigerator or to be given away with the purchase of a refrigerator, as a sale promotional technique. If the manufacturer desired, he could apply his nameplate to the cabinet, just as the nameplate is supplied to the refrigerator. Such a cabinet could be placed immediately alongside a refrigerator, so that the cabinet door and the refrigerator door formed a pair of matching panels, preferably identical except in width. With the cabinet arranged in this particular location, it would not only enable easy access at one location to both the refrigerator and the cabinet, but additionally, such a cabinet could be placed within the wall recess often provided for a refrigerator. In most houses, the wall recess for a refrigerator is somewhat wider than the width of the refrigerator itself, and thus the cabinet of the present invention could be placed within such recess between one side thereof and the side of the refrigerator.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a cabinet of the hereinbefore described type, wherein such a cabinet is air-tight and hermetic when the door thereof is closed. Thus, although such a cabinet is not refrigerated, it does provide a useful storage area for various food items which need not necessarily be refrigerated, but which have a tendency to spoil or age rapidly when left exposed to the air. Items of this type can include fruits, cheeses, candies, and the like.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a cabinet having a plurality of slidable shelves, adjustable in height, but wherein all of said shelves are simultaneously opened with the opening of the cabinet door.

Other objects, advantages and salient features of the present invention will become apparent from the following detailed description, which, taken in conjunction with

the annexed drawings, discloses a preferred embodiment thereof.

Referring to the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a cabinet in accordance with the present invention utilized in combination with a conventional refrigerator;

FIGURE 2 is a perspective view of the cabinet of the present invention, with the door thereof moved to an open position;

FIGURE 3 is a fragmentary perspective view of the cabinet door, a cabinet shelf, and their manner of attachment to one another;

FIGURE 4 is a fragmentary perspective view of the housing utilized in the cabinet of the present invention;

FIGURE 5 is a fragmentary sectional view taken along line 5—5 of FIGURE 2; and

FIGURE 6 is a front elevational view of a modified form of cabinet utilized in conjunction with a modified form of refrigerator.

In general, the present invention provides a storage cabinet generally designated **10** which is adapted for use in conjunction with a conventional refrigerator generally designated **12**. As shown in FIGURE 1, the refrigerator, as is customary, includes a casing **14** having a given height and a given depth, and a refrigerator door means **16** movably secured to the casing and extending across the front thereof. Such refrigerator door means include a handle means **18** fixed to the exterior thereof to permit the door **16** to be swung toward and away from the casing **14**.

The cabinet **10** includes a housing **20** having a height and a depth which preferably corresponds to that of the refrigerator casing **14**. A cabinet door means **22** closes the normally open front of the housing **20**, and a handle means **24** is affixed to such door means. To assure that the cabinet **10** properly simulates the refrigerator **12**, the cabinet door means **22** is formed as an exact simulation of the refrigerator door **16**. That is, each of such doors is formed of the same material, is covered with an identical coating such as porcelain, has the same thickness, and has a handle means **24** corresponding identically to the handle means **18** on the refrigerator. Additionally, as previously described, if a manufacturer's nameplate is utilized on the refrigerator door **16**, the same nameplate, preferably in the same location, should be provided on the cabinet door **22**. If, as shown in FIGURE 6, the refrigerator door means includes a lower portion **16***a* and a separate upper freezer door portion **16***b*, then the cabinet door **22** should be provided with a fake seam or dividing line **26** coextensive with the line of division beween the two portions **16***a* and **16***b*. Thus, even though the cabinet door **22** is, in fact, a continuous integral panel, its appearance will nevertheless simulate exactly the appearance of the refrigerator front.

Referring now to FIGURE 2 for a further description of the storage cabinet **10**, it will be noted that the housing **20** is formed by a pair of spaced opposed side walls **28**, **28**, a top wall **30**, a bottom wall **32**, and a rear wall **34** extending between the side, top and bottom walls. All of these walls serve to define within the housing, an internal storage area. The cabinet front door **22** has a height corresponding to the height of the side walls **28**, and a width corresponding to the width of the rear wall **34**, or, stated another way, the front door has a size and shape corresponding to a vertical cross section through the housing **20**. The front door means **22** is formed as a single continuous integral panel, which, on its inner surface, has a peripheral margin **36** extending thereabout. By referring to FIGURE 4, it will be seen that the forward edges of the side walls **28**, the top wall **30** and the bottom wall **32**, all terminate at the same point, thereby forming a continuous front edge **38** on the

housing. A continuous rubber gasket means 40 is disposed along this front edge 38, with such gasket means serving the function, and simulating the appearance, of the rubber gasket utilized between the door and casing of a conventional refrigerator. When the cabinet door 22 is moved to a closed position, the peripheral margin 36 on the door engages and seats against the gasket 40, thereby hermetically sealing the internal storage space in the housing 20, and thus rendering the cabinet air-tight. Means may be provided for maintaining the door means 22 in closed position, against inadvertent opening thereof, and such means may take the form of a magnet 42, as shown on the door in FIGURE 2, with such magnet seating against a metallic plate 44 carried by the housing, as shown in FIGURE 4.

To serve as a means for supporting items within the cabinet, a plurality of shelves generally designated 46 are provided. A plurality of shelf mounting means generally designated 48 are provided in spaced relation along the side walls 28 of the housing 20. The purpose of the shelf mounting means 48 is to enable the shelves 46 to be adustably positioned within the housing 20, and to enable such shelves to be slid outwardly when the door means 22 is opened, thereby permitting easy access to the items carried by the shelf means 46.

While various forms of shelf constructions and shelf mounting means are suitable for the purposes of the present invention, an exemplary form of construction is shown in FIGURES 3, 4 and 5. Referring to such figures and particularly FIGURE 3, it will be noted that the shelves 46 include a pair of spaced parallel side channels 50 having outwardly extending flanges 52 extending from the top edge thereof. A plurality of bars or rods 54 extend between the side channels 50 to support the items to be stored in the cabinet. A circular stop means 56 is mounted at the rear end of each of the channels 50, for purposes to be presently described, and an elongated bar or rod 58 extends across the forward end of each shelf 46, with the ends of the bar projecting beyond the side channels 50.

The shelf mounting means 48, as shown in FIGURE 4, each includes a generally U-shaped channel member 60 having spaced apart upper and lower flanges respectively identified as 62 and 64. The lower flange 64 extends substantially to the front edge 38 of the cabinet, but the upper flange 62 terminates somewhat short thereof, to permit a roller 66 to be rotatably mounted to the channel 60.

When the shelf 46 is inserted between a pair of spaced mounting means 48, in the manner shown in FIGURE 5, the stop means 56 rides between the spaced apart flanges 62 and 64, and thus supports the shelf, even when the same is in an extended condition slid outwardly from the housing. The flange 62 on the shelf rides along the top of the roller 66, and thereby enables the shelf 46 to be readily slid inward and outward within the housing 20.

The door means 22 on the cabinet 10 is supported solely by means of the shelves 46, but additionally, it is necessary that the door be coupled or attached to such shelves, to thereby assure that the shelves will be slid outwardly when the door is pulled open. To this end, shelf attaching means must be provided on the interior of the door means, and such shelf attaching means are shown in FIGURES 2 and 3 and are generally designated 68. In the exemplary form of shelf attachment means illustrated, a plurality of recesses 70 are provided on the interior of the door means 22, with each such recess being aligned with the plane of a pair of spaced apart shelf mounting means 48. Each recess 70 is of a size and shape to accommodate the bar 58 on the forward end of a shelf 46, and at the opposite ends of each of the recesses, a pair of pivotally mounted ears 72, 72, are provided. The pivot mounting for each ear is above the recess 70, so that the ear normally hangs in the downward position

shown due to its own weight and the effect of gravity. When it is desired to attach a shelf 46 to the door 22, the ears are momentarily moved upwardly to enable the bar 58 to seat within the recess 70. Then, when the ears 72 are released, they will swing downwardly and thereafter, serve to lock the bar 58 within the recess 70.

In accordance with the present invention, a plurality of shelf mounting and attaching means are provided, so that the shelves 46 may be positioned at any desirable height within the cabinet itself. Actually, only two shelves 46 need be used to properly support the door 20, although in actual practice, several shelves will be utilized. As will be seen, the shelves 46 not only serve the function of supporting the times stored within the cabinet, but additionally, serve the function of providing the sole support for the cabinet door means 22. Still further, it will be seen that the shelves 46 not only support the door 22, but are slid outwardly from the cabinet when the door 22 is pulled outwardly, generally by a pulling force effected upon the handle means 24. When the door means 22 has been pulled outwardly to its outer limit, the stop means 56 on the shelves, abuts against the roller 66 on the shelf mounting means to prevent further outward movement of the door and the shelves.

In order to prevent the cabinet from accidentally being pulled forward when the door means 22 is opened, it may be desirable to provide a means on the cabinet 10 which coacts with the associated refrigerator 12 to assure that the rear wall 34 of the cabinet housing stays in general alignment with the rear wall of the refrigerator casing. To this end, and as shown in FIGURE 2, an elongated bar 74 can be provided, pivotally attached at its lower end to the rear wall 34 by means of a pivot mounting 76. An abutment 78 may be provided above and in off-set relation to the pivot mounting 76, so that when the bar is in its position of non-use, as shown in solid lines in FIGURE 2, it will rest against such abutment. However, when it is desired to have the bar project behind the refrigerator, the bar can be swung downward to its dotted line position whereat it will rest upon another abutment surface 80. When the bar is in its downward position of use, it will extend behind the refrigerator, and will prevent the cabinet from moving forwardly with respect to the refrigerator. Holes 82 may be provided at the end of the bar 74, so that, if desired, bolts can pass therethrough into the rear of the refrigerator, thereby positively securing the cabinet and the refrigerator together.

In use, the cabinet 10 is disposed immediately alongside a conventional refrigerator 12, as shown in FIGURES 1 and 6, and if desired, the projecting bar means 74 is swung downward to extend behind the refrigerator. Then, the shelves 46 are mounted at their desired adjusted positions within the cabinet and are coupled to the door means 22 by way of the attaching means 68. As long as the door means is in the open position, as shown in FIGURE 2, items may be placed upon and removed from, the shelves 46, from either side of the cabinet. Then, when the door is pushed inwardly, the shelves 46 will slide back into the cabinet until the inner peripheral margin 36 on the door contacts and compresses the gasket 38 on the forward edge of the housing. When this occurs, the storage compartment within the cabinet will be maintained in an air-tight and hermetic condition, thus protecting the items on the shelves from the deleterious effects of exposure to the air.

After reading the foregoing detailed description, it will be apparent that the objects set forth at the outset of the specification have been successfully achieved by the present invention. Accordingly what is claimed is:

1. A multi-shelf storage cabinet having the simulation of a refrigerator and comprising:

a shaped housing having side walls, a top wall, a bottom wall and a rear wall which serve to define an internal storage area;

said housing having a front edge circumscribed by the forward edges of said top, bottom and side walls;

a continuous rubber gasket extending around said housing front edge;

a front door including a continuous panel having a size and shape corresponding to the vertical cross-section of said housing;

said front door having a handle affixed to its outer surface for moving said door relatively to said housing;

said front door having a peripheral margin on its inner surface adapted to contact and at least partially compress said rubber gasket when said front door is moved to a closed position;

a plurality of shelf mounting means disposed in spaced parallel relation along said side walls and extending into said internal storage area;

a plurality of shelf attaching means disposed along said front door inner surface in a spacing corresponding substantially to the spacing of said shelf mounting means;

at least two shelves having opposed parallel side edges and opposed substantially parallel forward and rear edges;

each of said shelves having their side edges mounted within said shelf mounting means;

each of said shelves having their forward edges coupled to said front door by said shelf attaching means;

said front door being attached to said housing solely by the coupling between said shelves and said front door; and,

stop means on said shelves to prevent said shelves from inadvertently separating from said shelf attaching means and hence for preventing said front door from inadvertently separating completely from said housing.

2. A multi-shelf storage cabinet as defined in claim 1 but further including projecting means affixed to said rear wall for projecting beyond said housing for engagement with the rear of an associated refrigerator.

3. In combination:

a refrigerator having a casing of a given height and depth;

refrigerator door means coupled to said casing and movable away therefrom to permit access to said casing;

said refrigerator door means having handle means on the exterior thereof;

a cabinet having a housing of said given height and depth;

cabinet door means coupled to said housing and movable away therefrom to permit access to said housing;

said cabinet door means including a continuous integral panel being an identical simulation of said refrigerator door means;

said cabinet door means having handle means on the exterior thereof simulating exactly the handle means on said refrigerator door means; and,

means affixed to said housing and projecting behind said casing to prevent the rear of said cabinet from inadvertently moving ahead of the rear of said refrigerator,

said cabinet including a plurality of shelves disposed in spaced relation within said housing and means slidably mounted on said shelves;

said cabinet door means being affixed to said shelves and being supported solely thereby, whereby, when said cabinet door means is moved away from said housing by pulling on said cabinet door handle means, all of said shelves will be pulled out of said housing.

4. The combination defined in claim 3 wherein said cabinet includes a continuous gasket between said cabinet door means and said housing.

References Cited by the Examiner

UNITED STATES PATENTS

888,735	5/1908	Person	312—274
1,221,498	4/1917	Zerse	312—236
2,163,182	6/1939	Warren et al.	312—273 X
2,444,887	7/1948	Wyeth	312—198
2,518,344	8/1950	Luneke	62—326
2,815,649	12/1957	Di Angelus et al.	312—351 X
3,106,202	10/1963	Arduna	312—273 X

CHANCELLOR E. HARRIS, *Acting Primary Examiner.*

F. DOMOTOR, *Assistant Examiner.*