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(54) Title: ORGANIZER WITH RESILIENT RETAINING MEMBERS

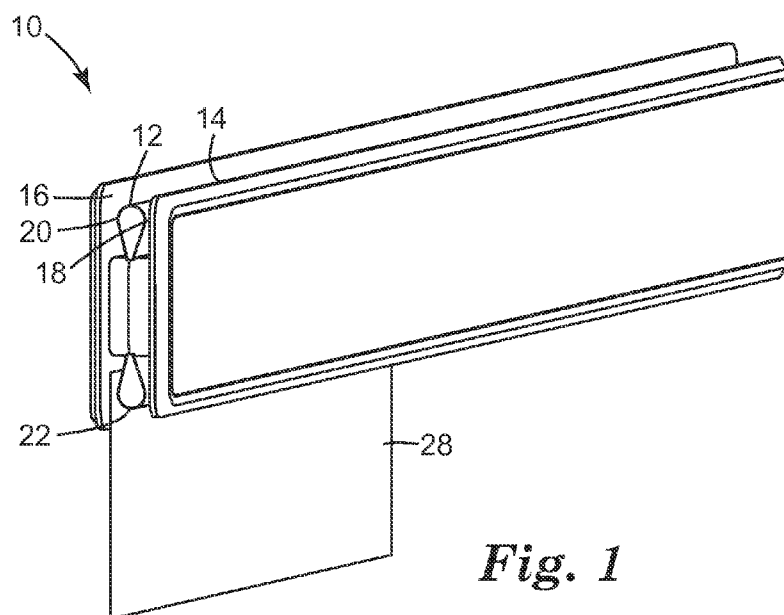


Fig. 1

(57) Abstract: An organizer comprising at least one retaining member and at least one support member, wherein the at least one retaining member is deformable and resilient, wherein the retaining member and support member are positioned in parallel juxtaposition with one another to define an elongate retention channel therebetween.



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ORGANIZER WITH RESILIENT RETAINING MEMBERSField

The present invention relates to organizers, e.g., for holding or displaying photographs, memos, etc.

Background

A variety of organizers for holding or displaying photographs, memos, cards, etc. are known. In addition to those merely having slots in which an item sits by force of gravity, many use hand activated devices such as crocodile or alligator clips, binder clips to secure the items. These can be somewhat complex to assemble and unwieldy to operate as well as susceptible to causing damage to the item being held.

The need exists for organizers which are easy to use, provide secure gripping and release.

Summary

The present invention provides new organizers that are easy to use.

In brief summary, an organizer of the invention comprises at least one retaining member and at least one support member. The at least one retaining member is deformable and resilient. The retaining member and support member are positioned in parallel juxtaposition with one another to define an elongate retention channel therebetween. In some embodiments, organizers of the invention will have two or more retention channels.

Organizers of the invention can be made in a variety of configurations, having selected aesthetic appearance and appeal. They can be easily and conveniently used to hold or display photographs, memos, cards, etc.

Brief Description of Drawing

The invention is further explained with reference to the drawing wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of an illustrative embodiment of an organizer of the invention having two retention channels, shown in illustrative use;

Fig. 2 is an end view of the organizer shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is an exploded view of the organizer shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of a second illustrative embodiment of an organizer of the invention having eight retention channels, two on each of four sides;

Fig. 5 is an end view of one side of the organizer of Fig. 4;

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of a portion of the organizer of Fig. 4;

Fig. 7 is an exploded view of the organizer of Fig. 4; and

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of a third illustrative embodiment of an organizer of the invention. These figures are not to scale and are intended to be merely illustrative and not limiting.

Detailed Description of Illustrative Embodiments

5 Briefly summarizing, organizers of the invention comprise at least one retaining member and at least one support member. The at least one retaining member is deformable and resilient. The retaining member and support member are positioned in parallel juxtaposition with one another to define an elongate retention channel therebetween. In some embodiments, organizers of the invention will have two or more retention channels. As used herein, resilient means the retaining member, under the
10 conditions used, does not undergo permanent yield or plastic deformation and exhibits a tendency to seek to recover its initial configuration such that it will impart a compressive force toward the juxtaposed support member when an article has been inserted into the retention channel defined by the retaining member and support member.

Figs. 1 and 2 show such an organizer 10. Retaining member 12 is positioned in parallel
15 juxtaposition with front support member 14 and rear support member 16 to define retention channels 18, 20, respectively. In addition, organizer 10 comprises retaining member 22 positioned in parallel juxtaposition with other portions of front support member 14 and rear support member 16 to define retention channels 18, 20, respectively. In Fig. 1, an article 28 such as a note is shown secured in retention channel 26.

20 Typically, the juxtaposed position of adjacent retaining member and support member, or in some embodiments adjacent retaining members, defines a retention channel therebetween. In some embodiments, the adjacent members abut, i.e., are in contact with one another, in other embodiments they may be spaced a small distance apart to form a defined gap. The relative size of the gap if any, and deformability and resilience properties of the retaining member(s) will in part define the gripping power
25 of the retention channel as well as the dimensions of articles that can be securely retained in accordance with the invention. For instance, embodiments intended to be used with single sheets of paper will typically be configured with little or no gap, while embodiments intended to be used with thicker stock materials, e.g., photographs, multiple sheets of paper, greeting cards, may be configured with a suitable gap of to define the retention channel with corresponding capacity.

30 In accordance with the invention, the retaining member is deformable and resilient. An article to be secured by the organizer must be thicker than the dimension of the gap, if any, of the retention channel. As the article is inserted into the retention channel, the retaining member, and optionally the juxtaposed support member, deforms slightly to permit the article to be inserted therebetween, but the retaining member and support member should collectively impart a compressive pressure tending to close the
35 retention channel and thereby grip the article. In the embodiment shown in Fig. 1, retaining member 18 and support member 16 collectively impart sufficient compressive force to support the weight of article 28.

If the retaining member exhibits insufficient deformability, attempting to insert an article in the retention channel may be impossible or result in damage to the article. If the retaining member exhibits insufficient resilience, it may not impart sufficient compressive force to retain an article as desired.

Illustrative examples of materials suitable for making the retaining members include sheets of plastic films, e.g., PET films, that can be bent into desired configuration to provide desired deformability and resilience. Typically films having thickness on the order of about 4 to 8 mils will be well suited, though films having thicknesses outside this range will be useful in some embodiments. In many embodiments, adjacent retaining members will be configured into loops that have a curvature peak spacing of from about 0.2 to about 0.5 inch, though it will be understood that in some embodiments materials having finer or coarser peak spacing may be used in accordance with the invention if desired.

Other illustrative examples of suitable retaining members include sheets of other materials that can be configured as described herein, e.g., paper or metal sheets, etc. In some embodiments, the retaining member is constructed in the desired shape to define the retention channel. For example, retaining members may be formed from foam materials that are suitably deformable and resilient.

In Fig. 2, the assembly of an illustrative organizer 10 is shown. Retaining member 12 is positioned in parallel juxtaposition with front support member 14 and rear support member 16 to define retention channels 18, 20, respectively. In addition, organizer 10 comprises retaining member 22 positioned in parallel juxtaposition with other portions of front support member 14 and rear support member 16 to define retention channels 18, 20, respectively. Retaining members 12, 22 are plastic films bent into shape to service as retaining members. Front support member 14 has standoff 28 and rear support member has standoff 30. The standoffs 28, 30 provide a location at which sheets 12 and 22 may be secured in appropriate configuration such that the retaining members can be positioned in desired juxtaposition with the support members to form the retention channels.

Fig. 3 is an exploded view of the illustrative organizer shown in Fig. 1. In this embodiment, retaining members 12, 22 may be separate sheets folded over and interleaved has shown with apertures 32 formed therein. To assemble the organizer, apertures 32 are aligned with pins 34 on rear support member 16 which then engage with corresponding apertures (not shown) in front support member 14. If desired, the retaining members may be attached to one another, e.g., with heat sealing, adhesive, etc. In some embodiments, a single sheet may be folded appropriately to form retaining members 12, 22. In some instances, the sheet of each retaining member is fastened releasably, e.g., by removable screws, clips, etc. to the support member or it may be fastened permanently thereto.

The retaining member(s) and support member(s) may be selected for desired aesthetic appearance, e.g., color, finish, etc. In some embodiments, a portion of the front or exterior face 36 of support member 14 may be adapted to provide some additional functional purpose, e.g., it is a writable surface such a dry erasable surface, is magnetic, is tacky, has hook or loop fastener, corkboard, etc.

Typically, the organizer will be adapted to facilitate mounting the organizer on a desired surface, e.g., wall, file cabinet, door, window, cupboard, refrigerator, etc.

The embodiment shown in Figs. 1-3 has two support members juxtaposed on either side of a retaining member to define a retention channel on either side of the retaining member. In the embodiment, the support member may be rigid. Illustrative examples of materials from which the two support members and their respective standoffs may be made include wood, plastic, or metal. In many
5 embodiments, such components will be chosen in part to impart desired physical strength and dimensional stability to the organizer as a whole. The rear support may be adapted to mount the organizer on a support, e.g., provided with adhesive means such as 3M® COMMAND® Fasteners, brackets or other features adapted to mate with hanging devices, holes to accommodate nails or support stubs on a wall, etc.

10 Figs. 4-8 show another illustrative embodiment of organizer of the invention. In this embodiment, organizer 110 comprises retaining members 112, 122 positioned in parallel juxtaposition with front support member 114 and rear support member 116 to define retention channels in accordance with the invention. In this embodiment, three retention channels are formed on each side, for a total of twelve. On side 140, retention channel 150 is defined between front support member 114 and retaining member 112,
15 retention channel 152 is defined between retaining members 112 and 122, and retention channel 154 is defined between retaining member 122 and rear support member 116. Correspondingly, on side 142, retention channel 156 is defined between front support member 114 and retaining member 112, retention channel 158 is defined between retaining members 112 and 122, and retention channel 160 is defined between retaining member 122 and rear support member 116. Similarly, three retention channels are
20 similarly defined on sides 144 and 146.

Fig. 6 shows a portion of the organizer 110 where each of the retaining members 112 and 122 is a substantially square sheet with apertures 162 therein and tabs 164. In assembly, apertures 162 located near the central portion of the retaining member 122 align with pins 134 protruding from standoff 130 of rear support 116. The corners of the each sheet are folded in to form the desired deformable resilient
25 portions of the retaining members that will define the respective retaining channels; tabs 168 may be adapted to engage with one or both support members, e.g., by holes 170 that align with pins (not shown) to secure the retaining members in desired configuration. To facilitate assembly and stable construction, holes formed in the retaining members align with pins on the standoff of rear support member 116.

30 If desired, at least a portion of the front face 136 of support member 114 may be adapted to provide some additional functional purpose, e.g., it is a writable surface such a dry erasable surface, is magnetic, is tacky, has hook or loop fastener, corkboard, etc.

In some embodiments, organizers of the invention may comprise adjacent, parallel retention channels, e.g., by configuring at least one elongate retaining member and at least two support members in parallel juxtaposition as described herein, on one or more sides of the organizer. If desired, two
35 deformable and resilient retaining members may be positioned adjacent one another so as to define retention channel therebetween. In such embodiments the retaining members are acting as a support

member for one another, with the resultant ease of use, holding power, etc. being defined by the collective deformability and resilience properties of the two retaining members.

In some embodiments, as shown in Figs. 1-7, the support members each define substantially planar surfaces that are oriented in substantially parallel arrangement to one another. In other
5 embodiments, this parallel orientation is not used. For example, Fig. 8 shows a third illustrative embodiment of the invention where organizer 210 comprises front support member 214 and rear support member 216 which are oriented at an angled arrangement. In accordance with the invention, a retaining member 212 is positioned them so as to define retention channel 218 with front support member 214 and retention channel 220 with rear support member 216.

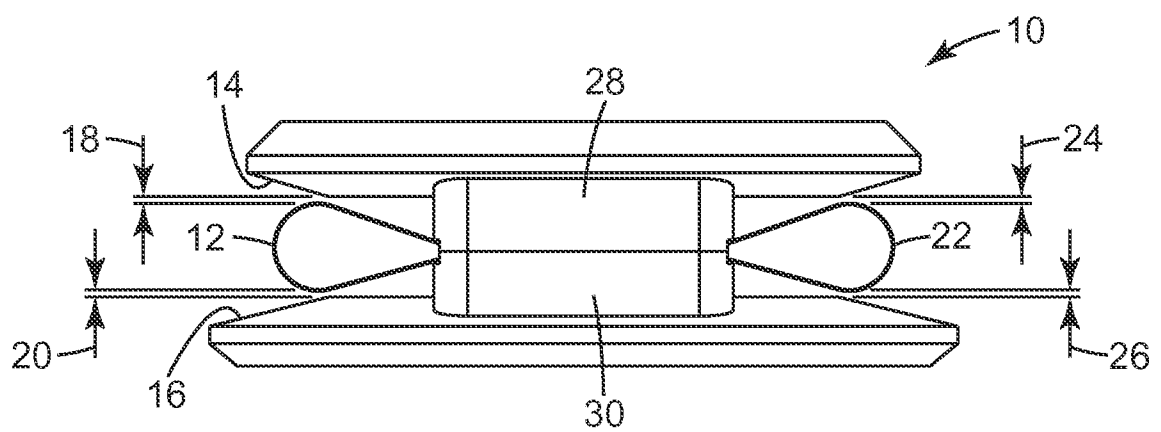
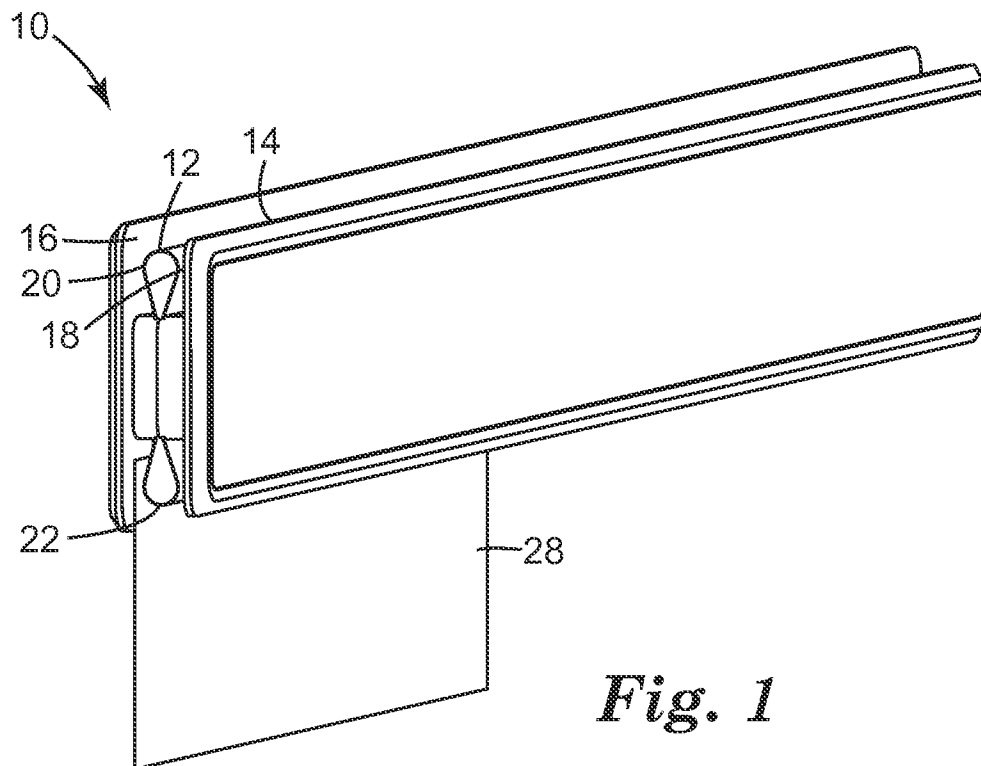
10 Although the present invention has been fully described in connection with the preferred embodiments thereof with reference to the accompanying drawings, it is to be noted that various changes and modifications are apparent to those skilled in the art. Such changes and modifications are to be understood as included within the scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims unless they depart therefrom.

15 The complete disclosure of all patents, patent documents, and publications cited herein are incorporated by reference. The foregoing detailed description and examples have been given for clarity of understanding only. No unnecessary limitations are to be understood therefrom. The invention is not limited to the exact details shown and described, for variations obvious to one skilled in the art will be included within the invention defined by the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An organizer comprising at least one retaining member and at least one support member, wherein the at least one retaining member is deformable and resilient, wherein the retaining member and support member are positioned in parallel juxtaposition with one another to define an elongate retention channel therebetween.
2. The organizer of claim 1 wherein the at least one retaining member and at least one support member abut along the retention channel.
3. The organizer of claim 1 further comprising a second retaining member positioned in parallel juxtaposition with the at least one retaining member to define an elongate retention channel therebetween.
4. The organizer of claim 1 wherein the retaining member is a resilient sheet configured into loop form.
5. The organizer of claim 1 wherein the at least one support member is deformable and resilient.
6. The organizer of claim 1 wherein the at least one support member is rigid.
7. The organizer of claim 1 comprising at least two retaining members or at least two support members to define at least two retention channels.
8. The organizer of claim 1 wherein the sheet of each retaining member is bent completely upon itself and fastened.
9. The organizer of claim 1 further comprising a writable surface on the exterior face of the at least one support member.
10. The organizer of claim 1 having two or more retention channels.
11. The organizer of claim 1 having a generally rectangular shape with four side and having at least one retention channel on at least two adjacent sides thereof.
12. The organizer of claim 11 having at least one retention channel on four sides.

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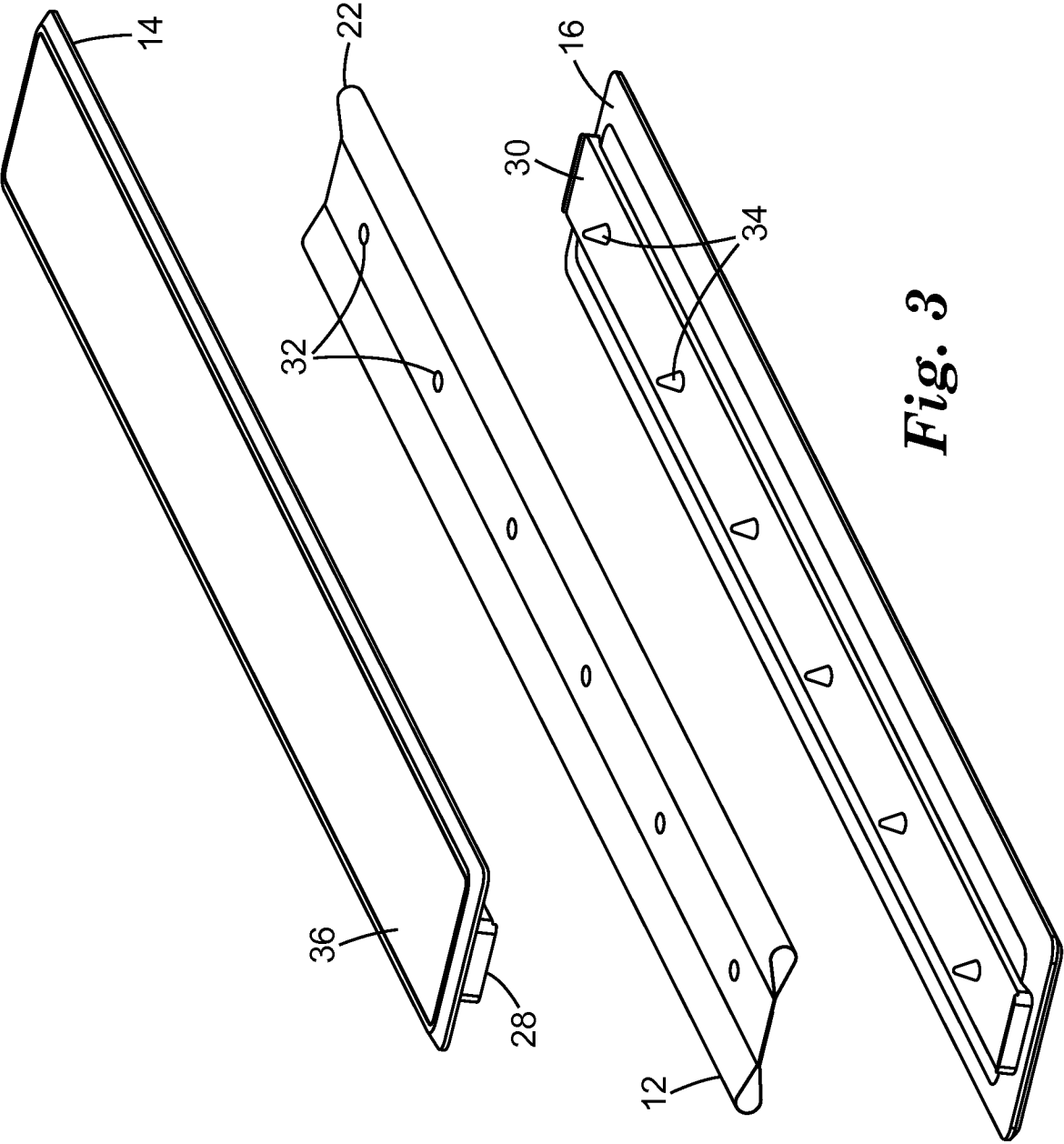


Fig. 3

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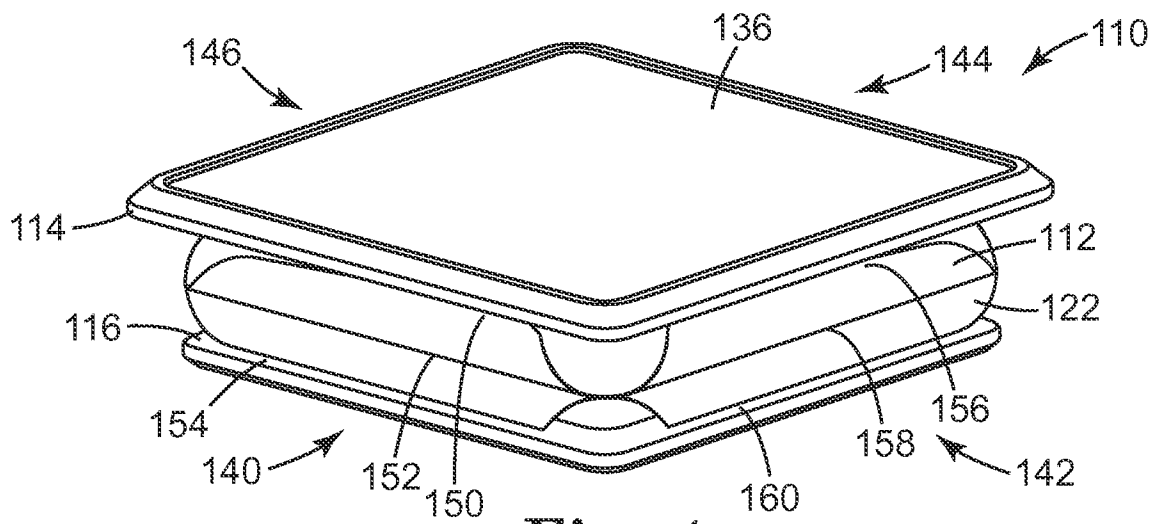


Fig. 4

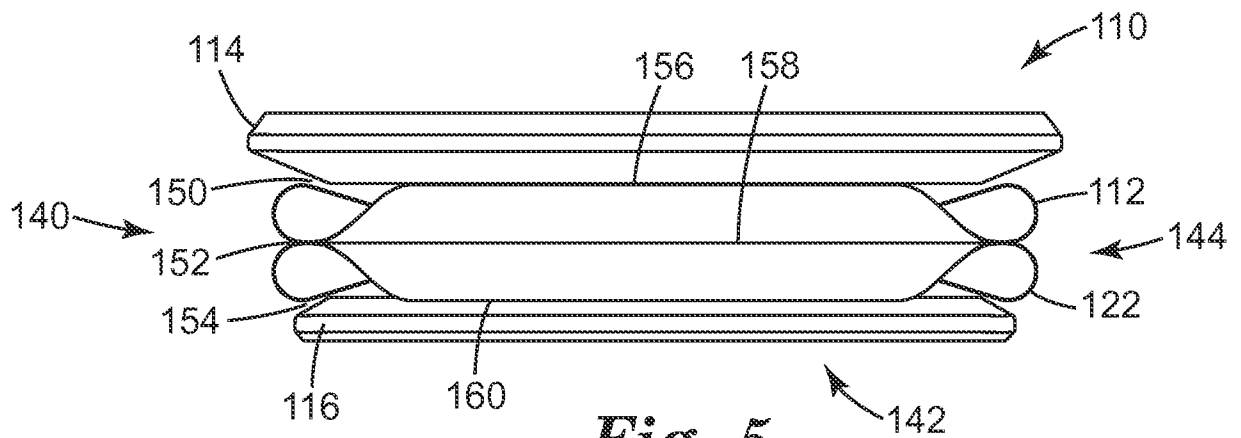


Fig. 5

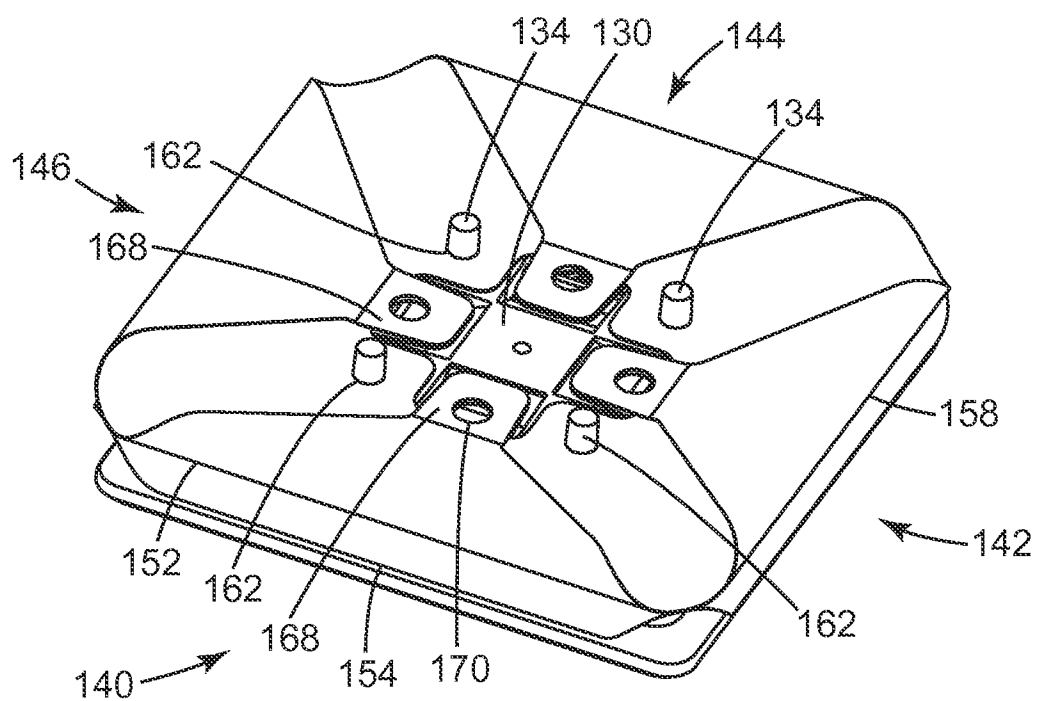


Fig. 6

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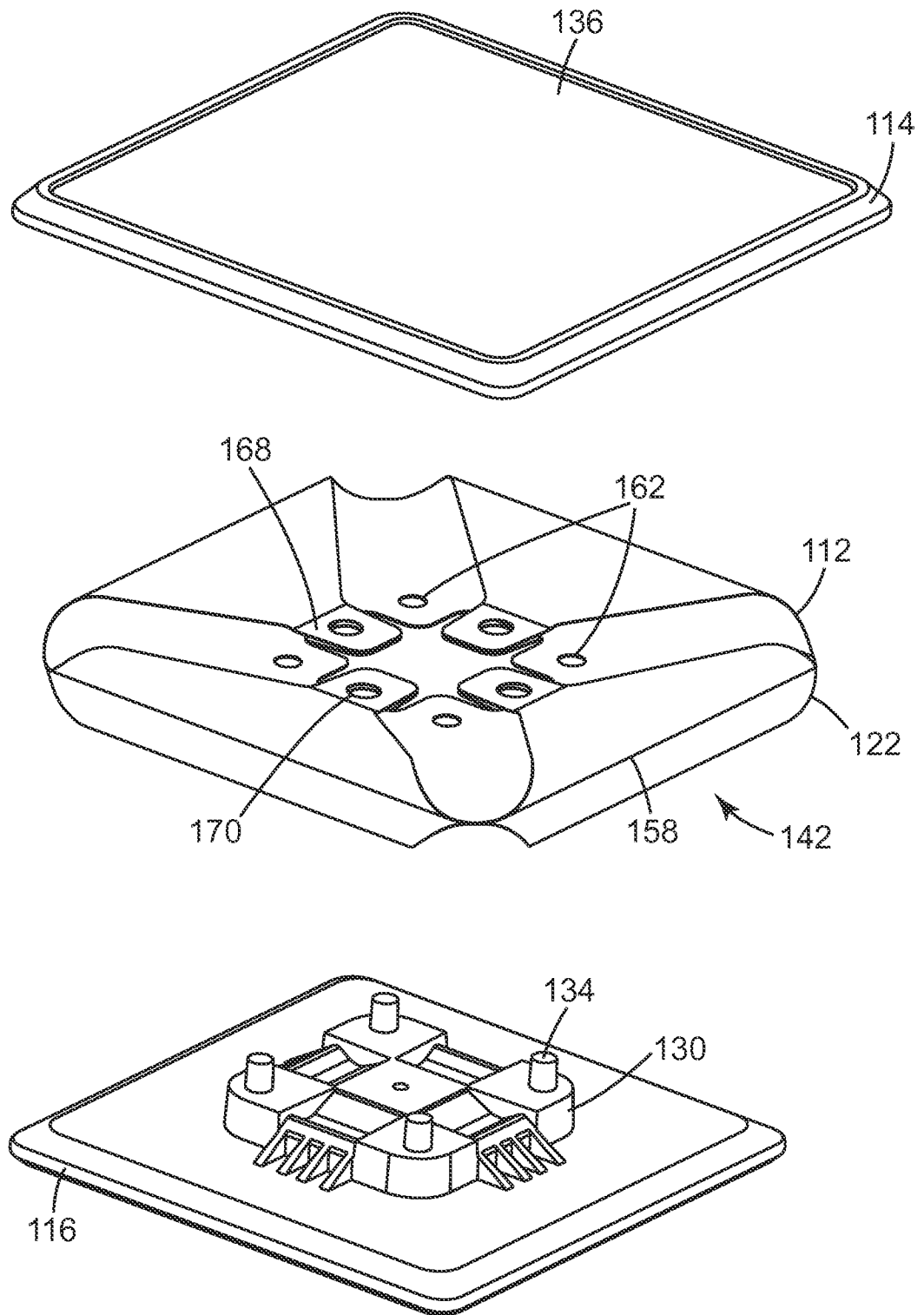
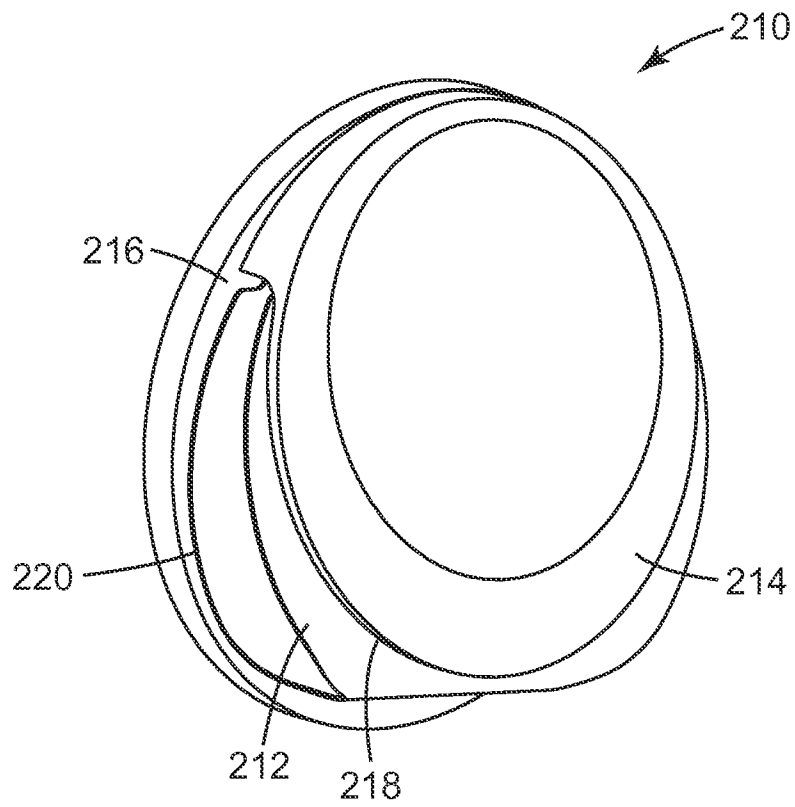


Fig. 7

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*Fig. 8*

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2013/074094

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

A47F 5/08 (2006.01) A47F 7/14 (2006.01) A47F 7/00 (2006.01) B42F 11/02 (2006.01) B42F 7/04 (2006.01)

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WPI & EPODOC: IPC & CPC marks B42F7/04/low, B42F11/02/low, B42F15/06/low, A47F5/08/low, A47F7/14/low, A47F7/00/low, A47B63/02/low, A47G29/02/low, G09F1/10/low & key words (organizer, retain, support, deform, flexible, plastic, channel, abut & loop) and similar terms.

Google patents & ESPACENET: Keywords (retention, organizer, flexible, channel & loop) and similar terms.

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
	Documents are listed in the continuation of Box C	



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C



See patent family annex

* "A"	Special categories of cited documents: document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E"	earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&"	document member of the same patent family
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT		International application No.
C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		PCT/US2013/074094
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X Y	WO 1996/020089 A1 (JUNIUS et al.) 04 July 1996 Abstract, Figures 3, 4, & 6, Pages 4-10 Abstract figures 3, 4 & 6 & Page 6, paragraph (d)	1-7, 9-12 8
Y	US 4105127 A (HOLL) 08 August 1978 Figure 2 & column 1, lines 42-46	8
X	US 2006/0108493 A1 (PARIS) 25 May 2006 Abstract, Figures 1-2 & Page 1	1-12
X	US 4773545 A1 (JONES) 27 September 1988 Abstract, Figure 1, Column 1 & column 2	1-12

Form PCT/ISA/210 (fifth sheet) (July 2009)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT Information on patent family members		International application No. PCT/US2013/074094	
This Annex lists known patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.			
Patent Document/s Cited in Search Report		Patent Family Member/s	
Publication Number	Publication Date	Publication Number	Publication Date
WO 1996/020089 A1	04 Jul 1996	US 6286800 B1	11 Sep 2001
		WO 9620089 A1	04 Jul 1996
US 4105127 A	08 Aug 1978	DE 2645169 B2	28 Aug 1980
		GB 1529775 A	25 Oct 1978
		US 4105127 A	08 Aug 1978
US 2006/0108493 A1	25 May 2006	None	
US 4773545 A1	27 Sep 1988	None	
End of Annex			
Due to data integration issues this family listing may not include 10 digit Australian applications filed since May 2001. Form PCT/ISA/210 (Family Annex)(July 2009)			