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Dresser et al.

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(54) **MANEUVERABLE SERVICE DOOR FOR BEVERAGE DISPENSING MACHINES**

(71) Applicant: **Cornelius, Inc.**, St. Paul, MN (US)

(72) Inventors: **Zachary Dresser**, West Chicago, IL (US); **Slawomir Kielian**, Des Plaines, IL (US)

(73) Assignee: **Cornelius, Inc.**, Osseo, MN (US)

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B67D 1/00 (2006.01)
B67D 1/06 (2006.01)
B67D 1/08 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***B67D 1/06*** (2013.01); ***B67D 1/00*** (2013.01); ***B67D 1/0888*** (2013.01); ***B67D 1/0891*** (2013.01); *B67D 2210/00041* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC B67D 1/06; B67D 1/00; B67D 1/0888; B67D 1/0891; B67D 1/0021; Y10T 292/1039; Y10T 292/1041; E05Y 2900/20; E05Y 2900/31; E05Y 2900/132; E05Y 2900/609; E05Y 2900/00
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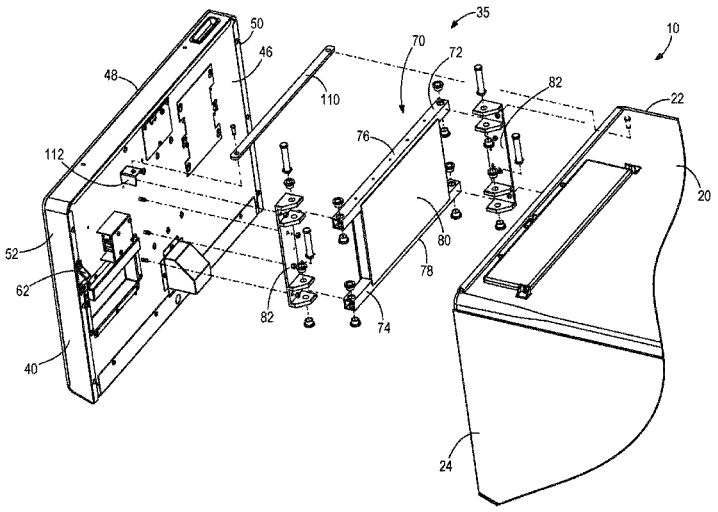
Primary Examiner — Charles P Cheyney
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Andrus Intellectual Property Law, LLP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A beverage dispensing machine which defines a service opening through which beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator includes a service door on a housing that is movable between an open position, such that the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator via the service opening, and a closed position, such that the service door closes the service opening so that the beverage dispensing equipment is inaccessible to the operator. A display panel on the service door displays operational characteristics of the beverage dispensing equipment. When the service door is in the open position the display panel is maneuverable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening so that an operator can view the display panel while accessing the beverage dispensing equipment via the service opening.

14 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC 312/322, 325, 324, 319.2, 109; 222/23, 222/129.1, 145.6, 1, 144.5, 63, 325
See application file for complete search history.

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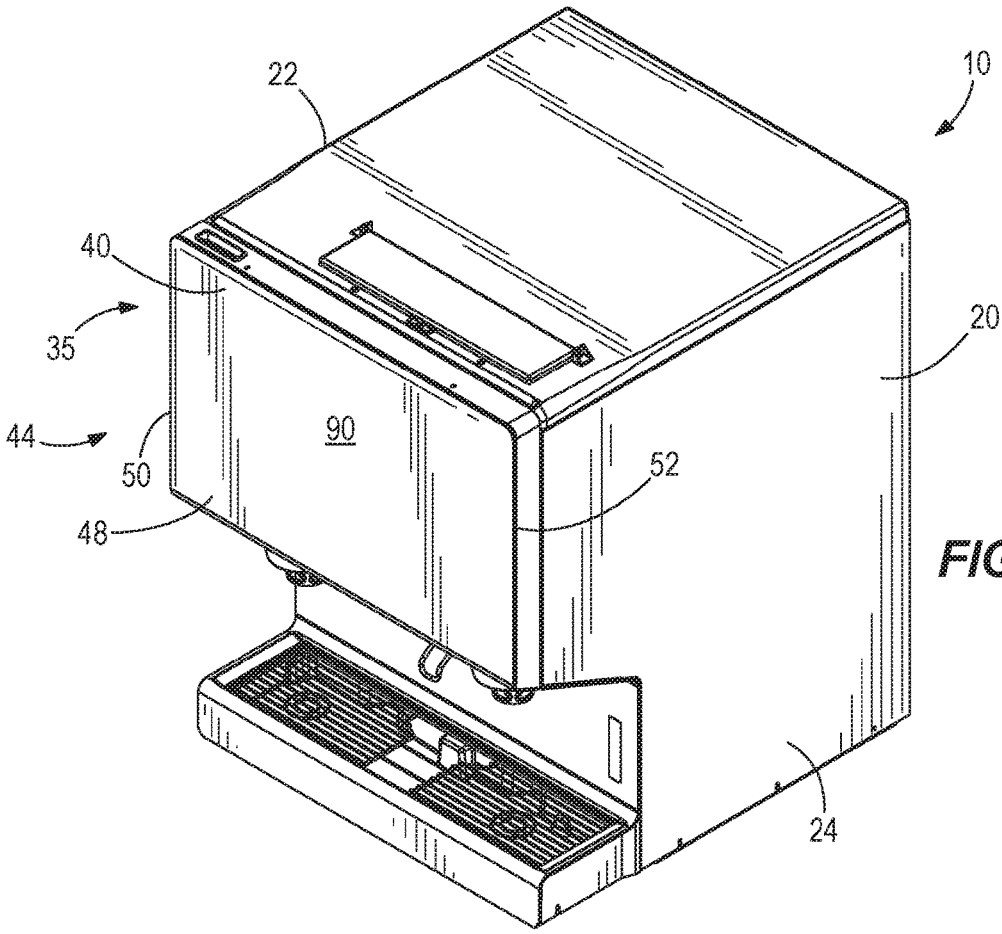

FIG. 1

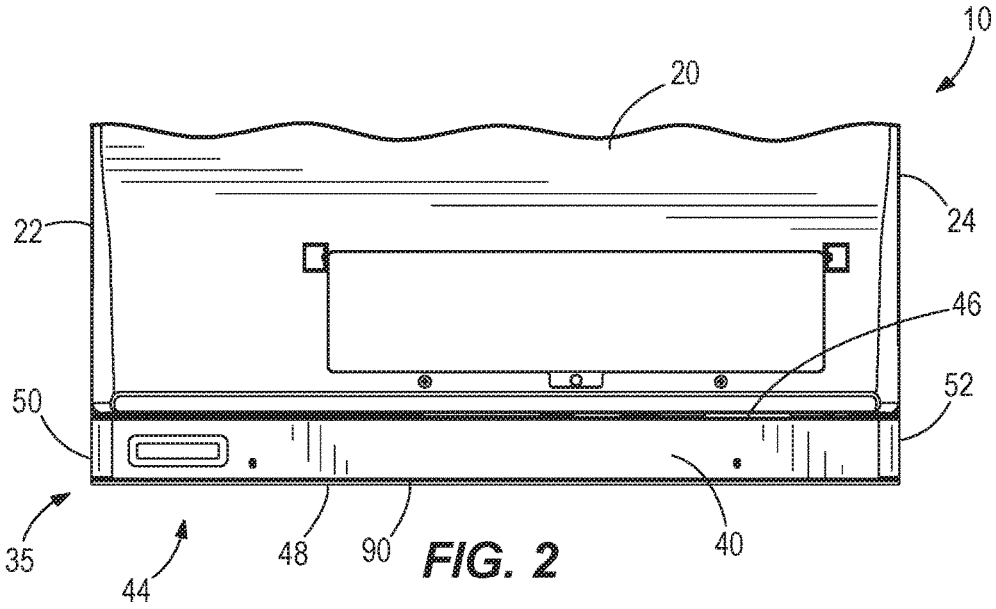

FIG. 2

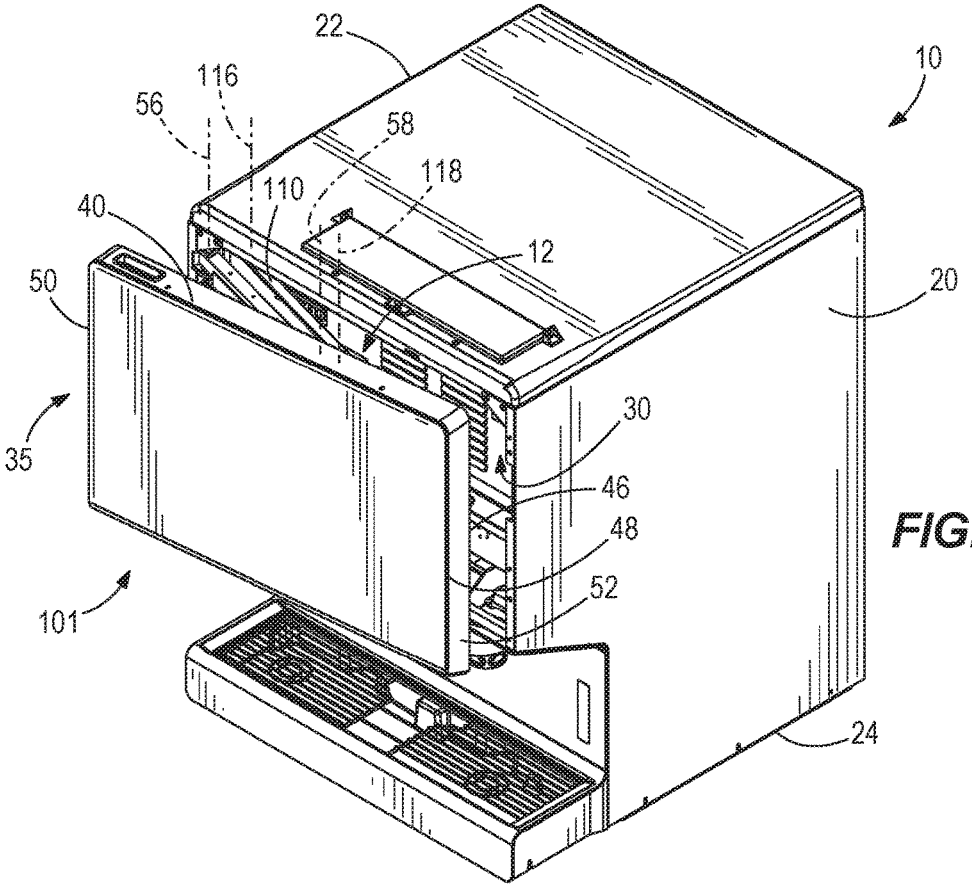
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FIG. 3

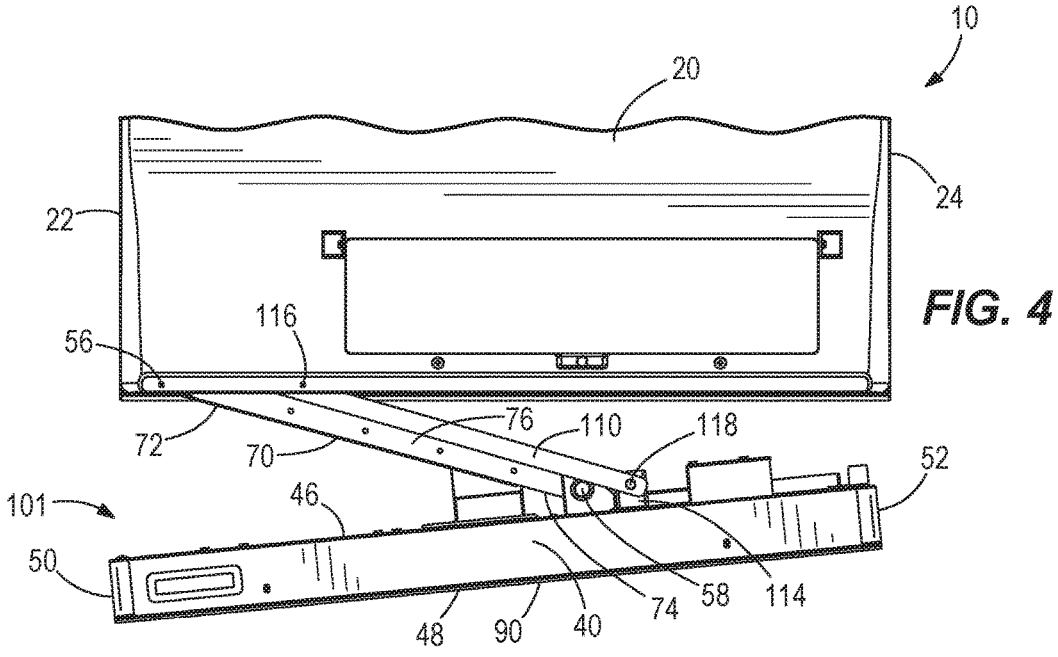
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FIG. 4

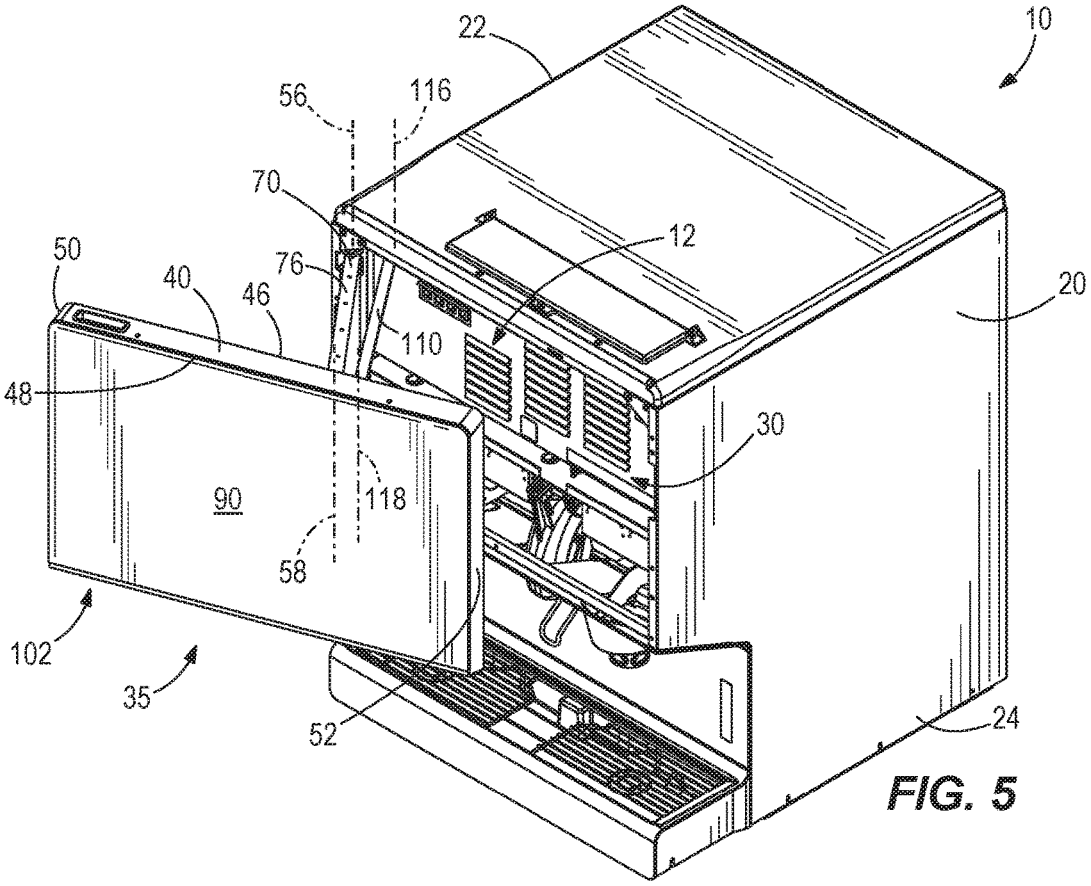
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FIG. 5

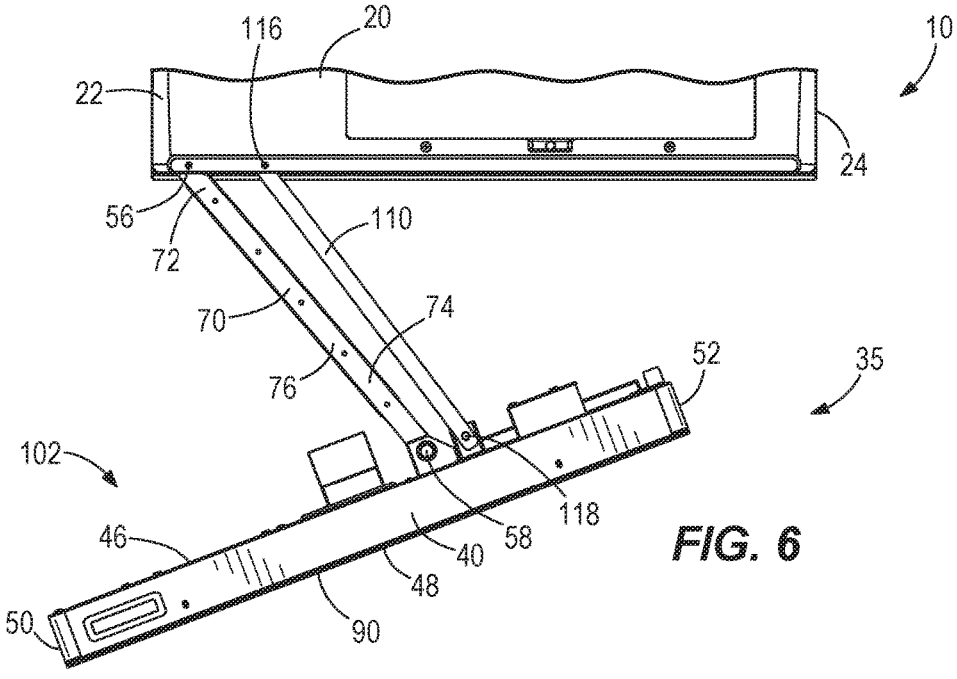
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FIG. 6

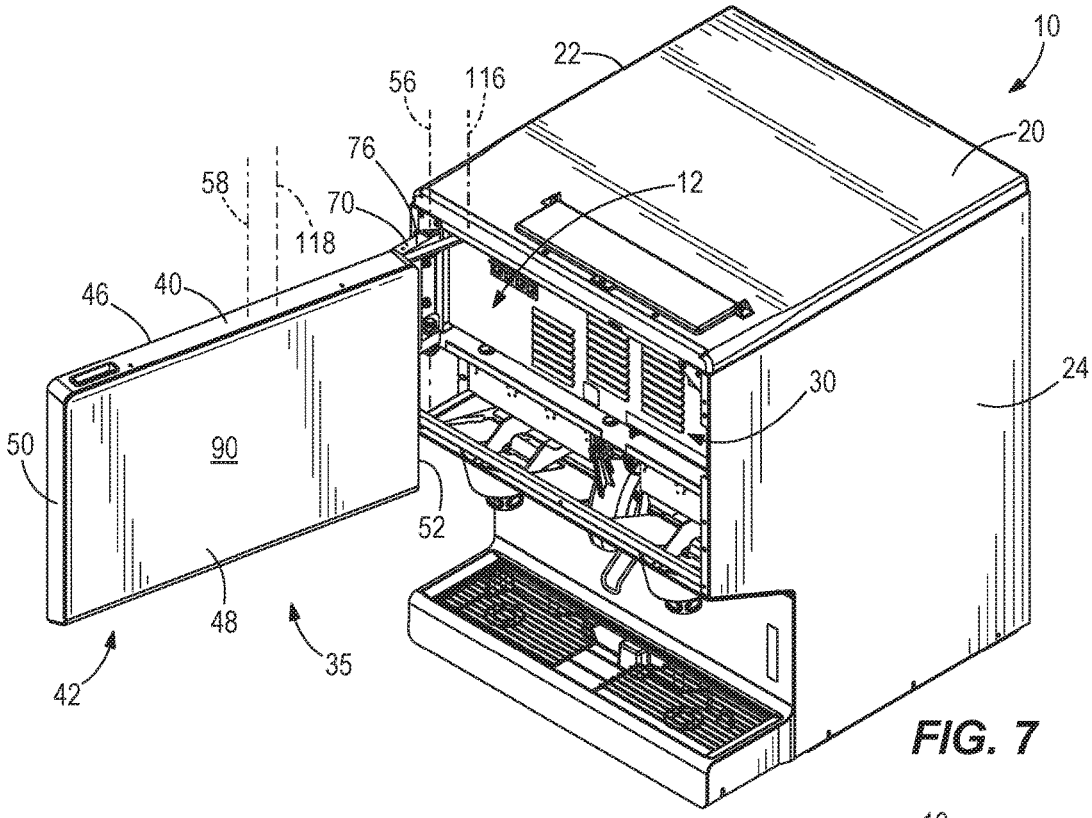
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FIG. 7

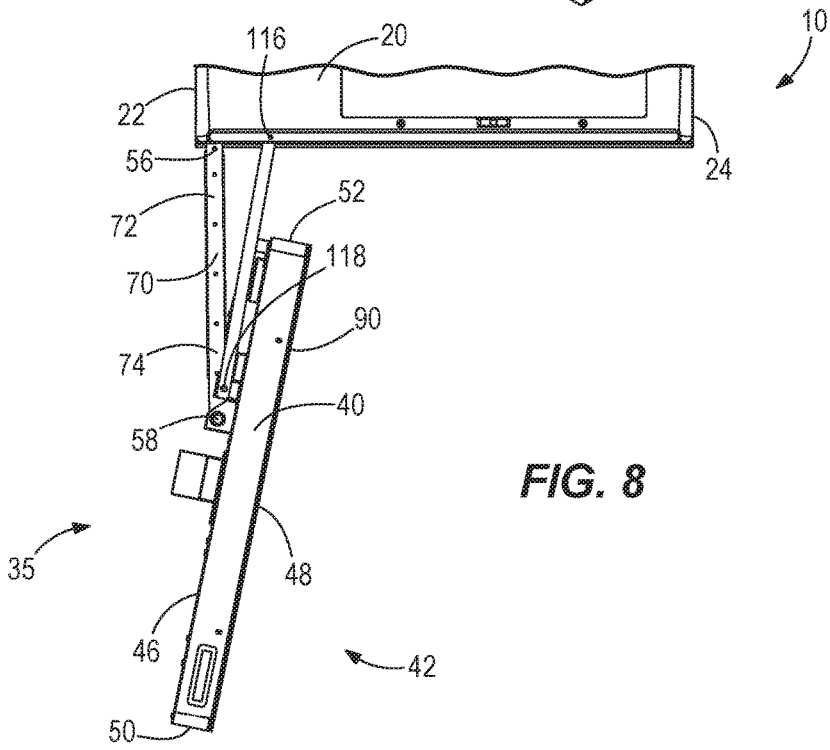
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FIG. 8

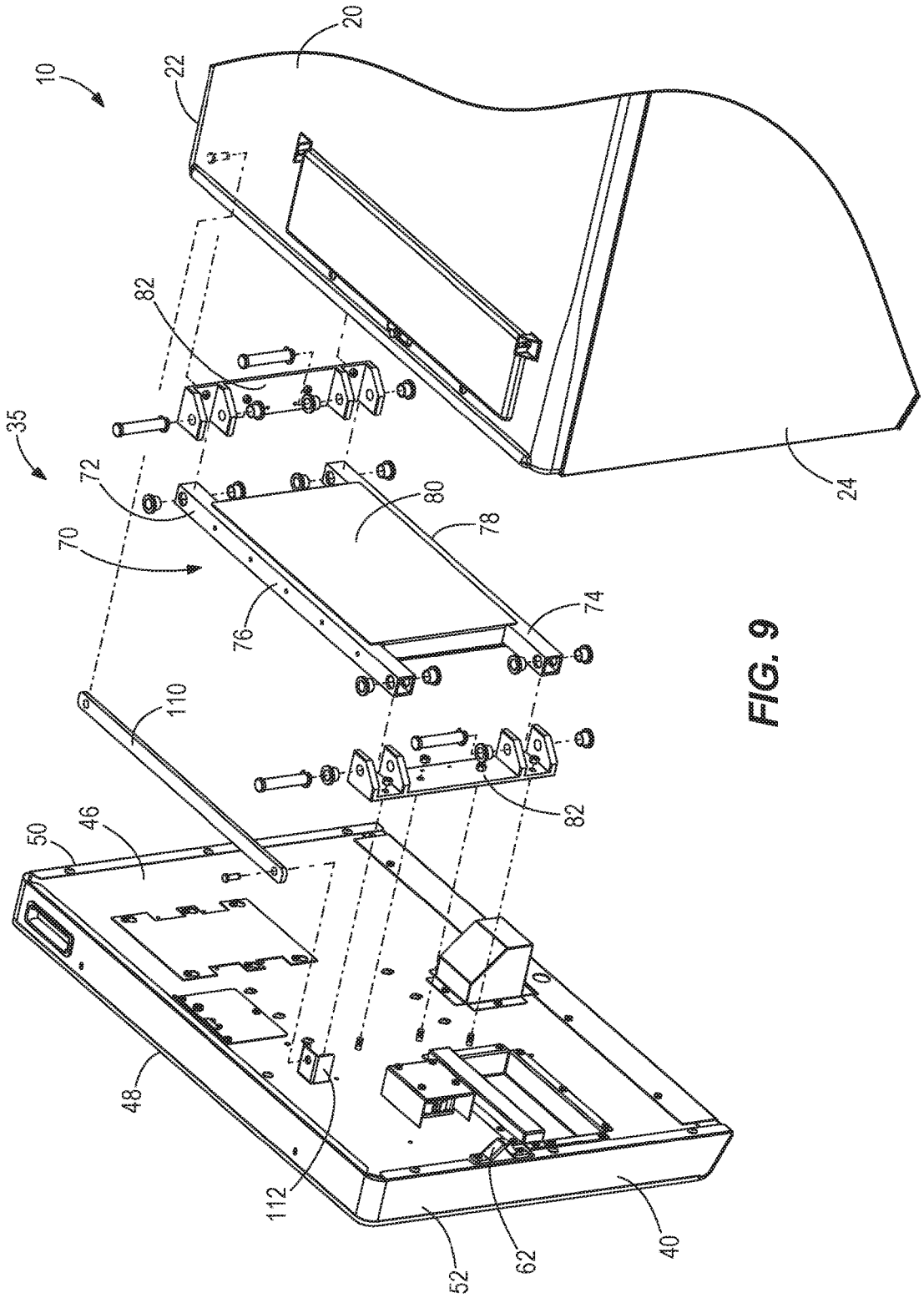

FIG. 9

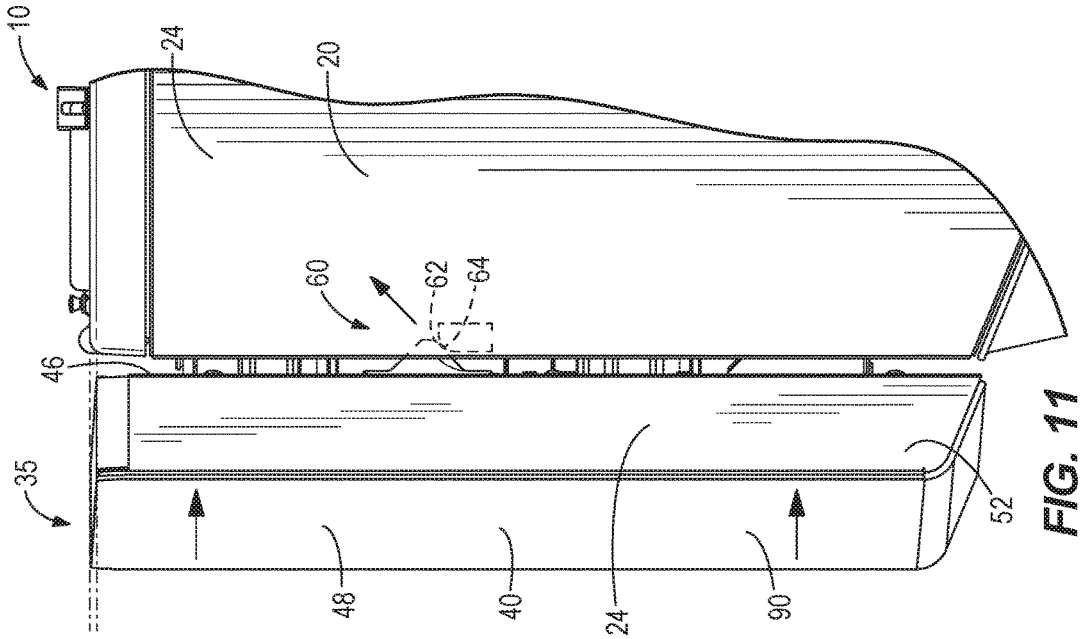
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FIG. 11

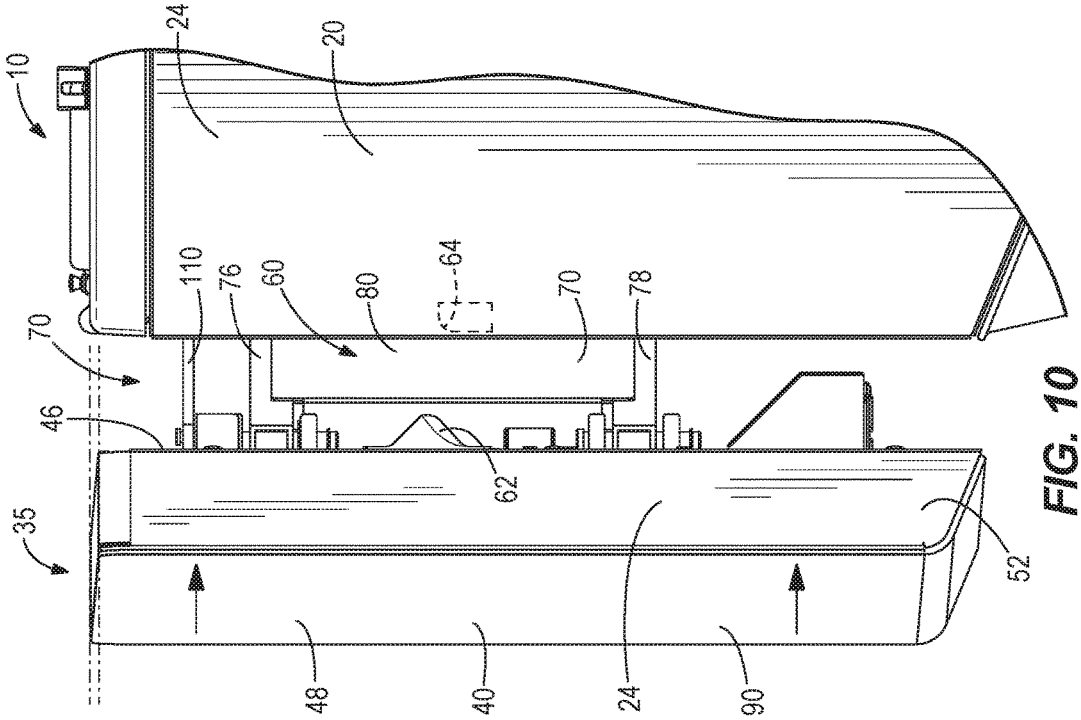
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FIG. 10

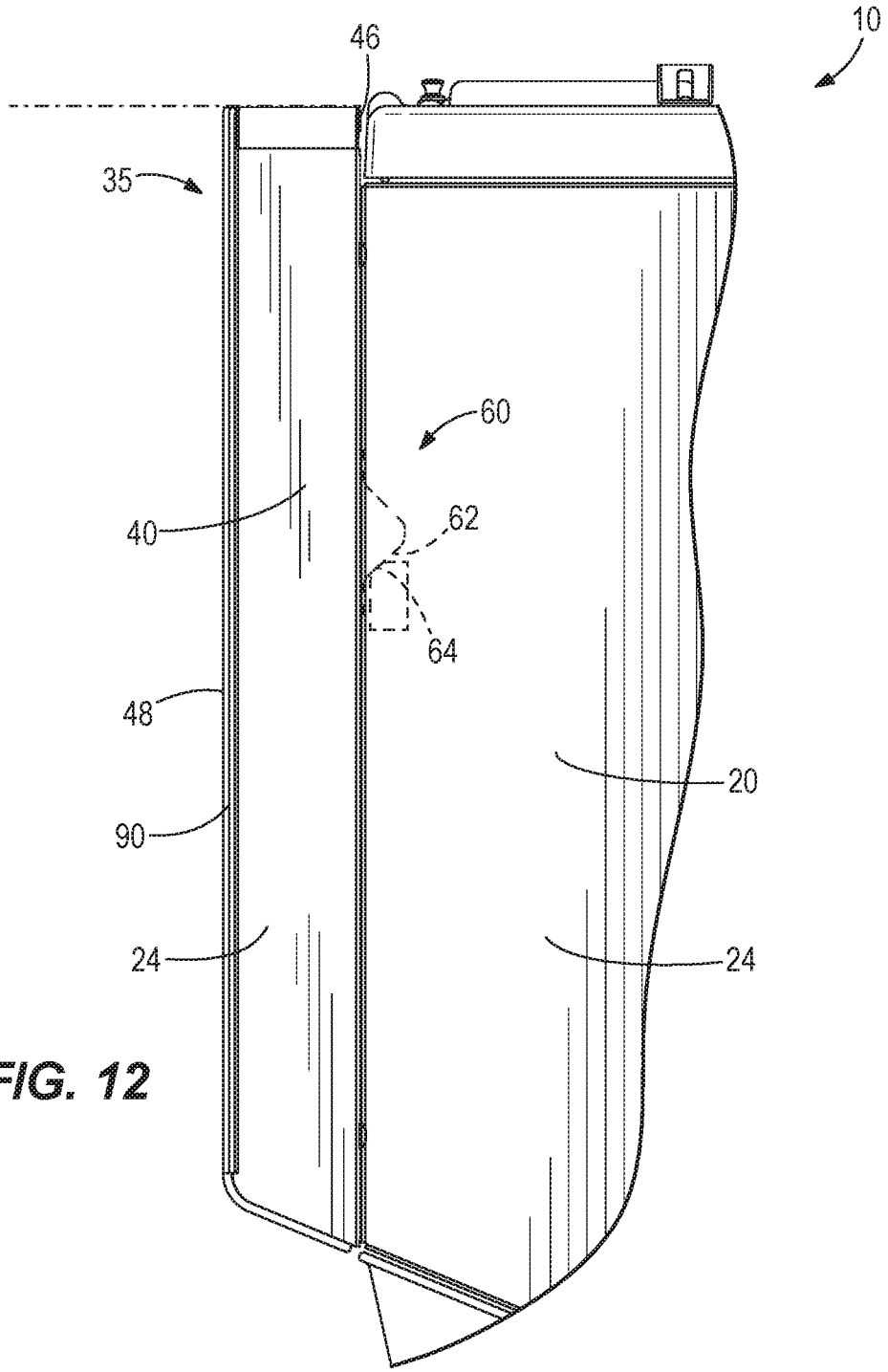

FIG. 12

MANEUVERABLE SERVICE DOOR FOR BEVERAGE DISPENSING MACHINES

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

The present application claims priority U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/239,463, filed on Oct. 9, 2015, the content of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

FIELD

The present disclosure relates to apparatuses for beverage dispensing machines, specifically maneuverable service doors for beverage dispensing machines.

BACKGROUND

The following U.S. patents and patent application are incorporated herein by reference in entirety: U.S. Pat. Nos. 8,690,016, 8,893,926, and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/696,592 (filed Apr. 27, 2015).

SUMMARY

This Summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts that are further described herein below in the Detailed Description. This Summary is not intended to identify key or central features from the claimed subject matter, nor is it intended to be used as an aid in limiting the scope of the claimed subject matter.

In certain examples, a beverage dispensing machine includes a housing that houses beverage dispensing equipment for the beverage dispensing machine. The housing defines a service opening through which the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator. The beverage dispensing machine includes a service door on the housing that is movable between an open position such that the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator via the service opening and a closed position such that the service door closes the service opening so that the beverage dispensing equipment is inaccessible to the operator. The service door has an inner side that faces the housing when the service door is in the closed position and the service door has an outer side that faces away from the housing when the service door is in the closed position. A display panel on the outer side of the service door is configured to display an operational characteristic of the beverage dispensing equipment to an operator when the service door is in the closed position and when the service door is in the open position. When the service door is in the open position the display panel is maneuverable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening so that an operator can view the display panel while accessing the beverage dispensing equipment via the service opening.

In certain examples, a door apparatus for a beverage dispense machine having a housing for housing beverage dispensing equipment of the beverage dispensing machine and defining a service opening through which the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator includes a service door coupled to the housing and movable between an open position such that the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator via the service opening and a closed position such that the service door closes the service opening so that the beverage dispensing equipment is inaccessible to the operator. The service door has an inner side that faces the housing when the service door is in the closed position and an outer side that faces away from the housing when the service door is in the closed position. A display panel on the outer side of the service door is configured to display an operational characteristic of the beverage dispensing equipment to an operator when the service door is in the closed position and when the service door is in the open position. When the service door is in the open position the display panel is maneuverable such that the display panel is angled towards the service opening so that an operator can view the display panel while accessing the beverage dispensing equipment via the service opening.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Examples of a beverage dispensing machine are described with reference to the following drawing FIGURES. The same numbers are used throughout the FIGURES to reference like features and components.

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a beverage dispensing machine having a service door in a closed position.

FIG. **2** is a top view of FIG. **1**.

FIG. **3** is a perspective view of the service door in a first intermediate position.

FIG. **4** is a top view of FIG. **3**.

FIG. **5** is a perspective view of the service door in a second intermediate position.

FIG. **6** is a top view of FIG. **5**.

FIG. **7** is a perspective view of the service door in an open position.

FIG. **8** is a top view of FIG. **7**.

FIG. **9** is an exploded view of a pivot arm.

FIG. **10** is a side view of the service door moving toward a housing.

FIG. **11** is a side view of the service door moving toward the housing and a first camming surface and a second camming surface contacting each other.

FIG. **12** is a side view of the service door in the closed position.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGS. **1-12** depict an example beverage dispensing machine **10** that includes a doors apparatus **35** configured to allow an operator to view a display panel **90** while working on beverage dispensing equipment **12** enclosed by a housing **20**. The beverage dispensing equipment **12** (see FIG. **7**) is accessible to an operator though a service opening **30** after the door apparatus **35** is maneuvered away from the service opening **30**.

The housing **20** houses the beverage dispensing equipment **12** for the beverage dispensing machine **10** and defines the service opening **30** through which the beverage dispensing equipment **12** is accessible to an operator (see FIG. **7**). The housing **20** has a left side **22** and a right side **24** that are on opposite sides of the service opening **30**.

The door apparatus **35** is coupled to the housing **20** and includes a service door **40** and the display panel **90**. The service door **40** is movable between an open position **42** (see FIGS. **7** and **8**) wherein the beverage dispensing equipment **12** is accessible to an operator via the service opening **30** and a closed position **44** (see FIGS. **1** and **2**) wherein the service door **40** closes the service opening **30** so that the beverage dispensing equipment **12** is inaccessible to the operator. As the service door **40** is moved between the open position **42** and the closed position **44**, the service door **40** can move into intermediate positions between the open position **42** and the

closed position **44** such as a first intermediate position **101** (see FIGS. **3** and **4**) and a second intermediate position **102** (see FIGS. **5** and **6**). The service door **40** has a left side **50**, a right side **52**, an inner side **46** that faces the housing **20** when the service door **40** is in the closed position **44**, and an outer side **48** that faces away from the housing **20** when the service door **40** is in the closed position **44** (see FIG. **2**). The display panel **90** is coupled to the outer side **48** of the service door **40** and is configured to display an operational characteristic of the beverage dispensing equipment **12** to the operator when the service door **40** is in the closed position or open position. The display panel **90** can display any type of operational characteristic such as operating status, maintenance instructions, and/or the like via any suitable type of device such as a video board, a LCD screen, a touch screen, a graphic picture, and/or the like.

When the service door **40** is in the open position **42** the display panel **90** is maneuverable so that the display panel **90** is angled towards the service opening **30**. (see FIG. **7**). In this position, the operator can view the display panel **90** while accessing the beverage dispensing equipment **12** via the service opening **30**. In some examples, the both the service door **40** and the display panel **90** are maneuverable and/or pivotable so that the display panel **90** is angled towards the service opening **30**. The service door **40** pivots about a first pivot axis **56** between the open position **42** and the closed position **44**. (see FIGS. **3** and **5**) When the service door **40** is in the open position **42** (see FIG. **7**), the service door **40** and display panel **90** are pivotable about a second pivot axis **58** so that the display panel **90** is angled towards the service opening **30**.

Referring to FIG. **9**, the door apparatus **35** includes a pivot arm **70** which couples the service door **40** to the housing **20**. (see FIGS. **4** and **6**). The pivot arm **70** includes a first end **72** that is coupled to the housing **20** at the first pivot axis **56** and a second end **74** that is coupled the service door **40** at the second pivot axis **58**. In some examples, the pivot arm **70** is coupled to the left or right side **22**, **24** of the housing **20** so that pivoting of the service door **40** about the first pivot axis **56** from the open position **42** to the closed position **44** completely closes the service opening **30**. The pivot arm **70** is coupled to the service door **40** between the left and right sides **50**, **52** so that the second pivot axis **58** located between the left and right sides **50**, **52**.

In the illustrated example, the pivot arm **70** includes an upper support member **76** and a lower support member **78** that each extend between the first and second pivot axes **56**, **58**. A vertical support plate **80** extends between the upper support member **76** and the lower support member **78**, and vertical pivot brackets **82** couple the upper and lower support members **76**, **78** to the housing **20** and the service door **40**, respectively.

Referring to FIGS. **10-12**, a latch **60** latches the service door **40** into the closed position **44**. The latch **60** is configured to align the service door **40** with the service opening **30** such that the service door **40** aligns with and closes the service opening **30** despite sag occurring in the pivot arm **70** due to the weight of the door apparatus **35**. The latch **60** includes a first camming surface **62** on the service door **40** and a second camming surface **64** on the housing **20** (the second camming surface **64** is depicted in dashed lines; the second camming surface **64** in the example depicted by FIGS. **10-12** is on the inside surface of the housing **20**). The first camming surface **62** and second camming surface **64** are curved. When the service door **40** is moved from the open position **42** towards the closed position **44**, the first camming surface **62** is cammed upwardly by the second camming surface **64** to squarely align the service door **40** with the service opening **30**.

Referring to FIGS. **4**, **6**, and **8-9**, a guide bar **110** pivotally couples the door apparatus **35** to the housing **20**. The guide bar **110** is coupled to the inner side **46** of the service door **40** by a first guide bracket **112** at a fourth pivot axis **118** and the housing **20** by a second guide bracket (not shown) at a third pivot axis **116**. The guide bar **110** controls the rotation of the service door **40** and the display panel **90** about the first pivot axis **56** and the second pivot axis **58** as the service door **40** and the display panel **90** move between the open position **42** and the closed position **44**. The third pivot axis **116** is offset and parallel to the first pivot axis **56** adjacent to the housing **20**, and the fourth pivot axis **118** is offset and parallel to second pivot axis **58** along the inner surface **46** of the service door **40**. The guide bar **110** can be disconnected the door apparatus **35** and/or the housing **20** to allow the door apparatus **35** to freely rotate.

In the present description, certain terms have been used for brevity, clearness and understanding. No unnecessary imitations are to be implied therefrom beyond the requirement of the prior art because such terms are used for descriptive purposes only and are intended to be broadly construed. The different apparatuses described herein may be used alone or in combination with other apparatuses. Various equivalents, alternatives and modifications are possible within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A beverage dispensing machine comprising:

a housing that houses beverage dispensing equipment for the beverage dispensing machine, wherein the housing defines a service opening through which the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator;

a service door on the housing, the service door being movable between an open position wherein the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator via the service opening and a closed position wherein the service door closes the service opening so that the beverage dispensing equipment is inaccessible to the operator;

wherein the service door has an inner side that faces the housing when the service door is in the closed position and wherein the service door has an outer side that faces away from the housing when the service door is in the closed position;

a display panel on the outer side of the service door, wherein the display panel is configured to display an operational characteristic of the beverage dispensing equipment to an operator when the service door is in the closed position and when the service door is in the open position, wherein when the service door is in the open position the display panel is maneuverable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening so that an operator can view the display panel while accessing the beverage dispensing equipment via the service opening;

a pivot arm that couples the service door to the housing, wherein the pivot arm has a first end that is coupled to the housing at a first pivot axis and a second end that is coupled to the service door at a second pivot axis, the pivot arm further includes a pair of support members that are vertically spaced apart from each other and a support plate that extends between the pair of support members, each support member of the pair of support members has a first end at the first pivot axis and an opposite, second end at the second pivot axis and; and

a latch that latches the service door into the closed position, wherein the latch is configured to vertically align the service door with the service opening such that the service door squarely aligns with and closes the service opening despite sag due to gravity occurring in the pivot arm;

wherein the latch comprises a first camming surface that is fixedly coupled to the service door and a second camming surface that is fixedly coupled to the housing, and wherein the first camming surface remains stationary with respect to the service door and the second camming surface remains stationary with respect to the housing as the first camming surface and the service door are upwardly cammed by the second camming surface so as to align the service door with the service opening.

2. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **1**, wherein in the open position both the service door and the display panel are maneuverable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening.

3. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **1**, wherein in the open position both the service door and the display panel are pivotable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening.

4. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **1**, wherein the first and second camming surfaces are curved.

5. A door apparatus for a beverage dispense machine having a housing that houses beverage dispensing equipment for the beverage dispensing machine, wherein the housing defines a service opening through which the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator, the door apparatus comprising:

a service door for the housing, the service door being movable between an open position wherein the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator via the service opening and a closed position wherein the service door closes the service opening so that the beverage dispensing equipment is inaccessible to the operator;

wherein the service door has an inner side that faces the housing when the service door is in the closed position and wherein the service door has an outer side that faces away from the housing when the service door is in the closed position;

a display panel on the outer side of the service door, wherein the display panel is configured to display an operational characteristic of the beverage dispensing equipment to an operator when the service door is in the closed position and when the service door is in the open position, wherein when the service door is in the open position the display panel is maneuverable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening so that an operator can view the display panel while accessing the beverage dispensing equipment via the service opening;

a pivot arm that couples the service door to the housing, wherein the pivot arm has a first end that is coupled to the housing at a first pivot axis and a second end that is coupled to the service door at a second pivot axis, the pivot arm further includes a pair of support members that are vertically spaced apart from each other and a support plate that extends between the pair of support members, each support member of the pair of support members has a first end at the first pivot axis and an opposite, second end at the second pivot axis; and

a latch that latches the service door into the closed position, wherein the latch is configured to vertically align the service door with the service opening such that the service door squarely aligns with and closes the service opening despite sag due to gravity occurring in the pivot arm;

wherein the latch comprises a first camming surface that is fixedly coupled to the service door and a second camming surface that is fixedly coupled to the housing, and wherein when the service door is moved into the closed position, the first camming surface remains stationary with respect to the service door and the second camming surface remains stationary with respect to the housing.

6. The door apparatus according to claim **3**, wherein in the open position both the service door and the display panel are maneuverable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening.

7. The door apparatus according to claim **3**, wherein in the open position both the service door and the display panel are pivotable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening.

8. The door apparatus according to claim **5**, wherein the first and second camming surfaces are curved.

9. A beverage dispensing machine comprising:

a housing that houses beverage dispensing equipment for the beverage dispensing machine, wherein the housing defines a service opening through which the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator;

a service door on the housing, the service door being movable between an open position wherein the beverage dispensing equipment is accessible to an operator via the service opening and a closed position wherein the service door closes the service opening so that the beverage dispensing equipment is inaccessible to the operator, wherein the service door has an inner side that faces the housing when the service door is in the closed position and wherein the service door has an outer side that faces away from the housing when the service door is in the closed position;

a display panel on the outer side of the service door, wherein the display panel is configured to display an operational characteristic of the beverage dispensing equipment to an operator when the service door is in the closed position and when the service door is in the open position, wherein when the service door is in the open position the display panel is maneuverable so that the display panel is angled towards the service opening so that an operator can view the display panel while accessing the beverage dispensing equipment via the service opening;

a pivot arm extending between a first end that couples to the housing at a first pivot axis and a second end that couples to the service door at a second pivot axis and including a pair of support members that are vertically spaced apart from each other and a support plate that extends between the pair of support members, each support member of the pair of support members has a first end at the first pivot axis and an opposite, second end at the second pivot axis; and

a guide bar coupled to the housing and the service door and configured to control pivoting of the service door about the first pivot axis and the second pivot axis; and

wherein the guide bar is coupled to the housing at a third pivot axis and to the service door at a fourth pivot axis, wherein the first pivot axis is parallel and offset form the third pivot axis and wherein the second pivot axis is parallel and offset from the fourth pivot axis;

a latch that latches the service door into the closed position, wherein the latch is configured to vertically align the service door with the service opening such that the service door squarely aligns with and closes the service opening despite sag due to gravity occurring in the pivot arm;

wherein the latch comprises a first camming surface that is fixedly coupled to the service door and a second camming surface that is fixedly coupled to the housing, and wherein the first camming surface remains stationary with respect to the service door and the second camming surface remains stationary with respect to the housing as the first camming surface and the service door are upwardly cammed by the second camming surface so as to align the service door with the service opening.

10. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **9**, wherein the guide bar is configured to be disconnected from the housing or service door such that the service door freely pivots.

11. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **9**, wherein the guide bar extends transverse to the pivot arm when the service door is in the open position.

12. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **9**, wherein guide bar and the pivot arm define an angle when the service door is in the open position, and wherein the angle decreases as the service door is moved toward the closed position.

13. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **9**, wherein the guide bar is vertically directly disposed above the pivot arm when the service door is in the closed position.

14. The beverage dispensing machine according to claim **13**, wherein the guide bar and pivot arm are fully enclosed in the housing when the service door is in the closed position.

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