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ABSTRACT

An outside corner finishing tool for dispensing a drywall finishing compound includes a splitter defining an inlet, a first outlet and a second outlet, a first plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet, a second plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet, a first ball joint coupling the first plate to the splitter, and a second ball joint coupling the second plate to the splitter. The outlet of the first plate is spaced apart from the outlet of the second plate.

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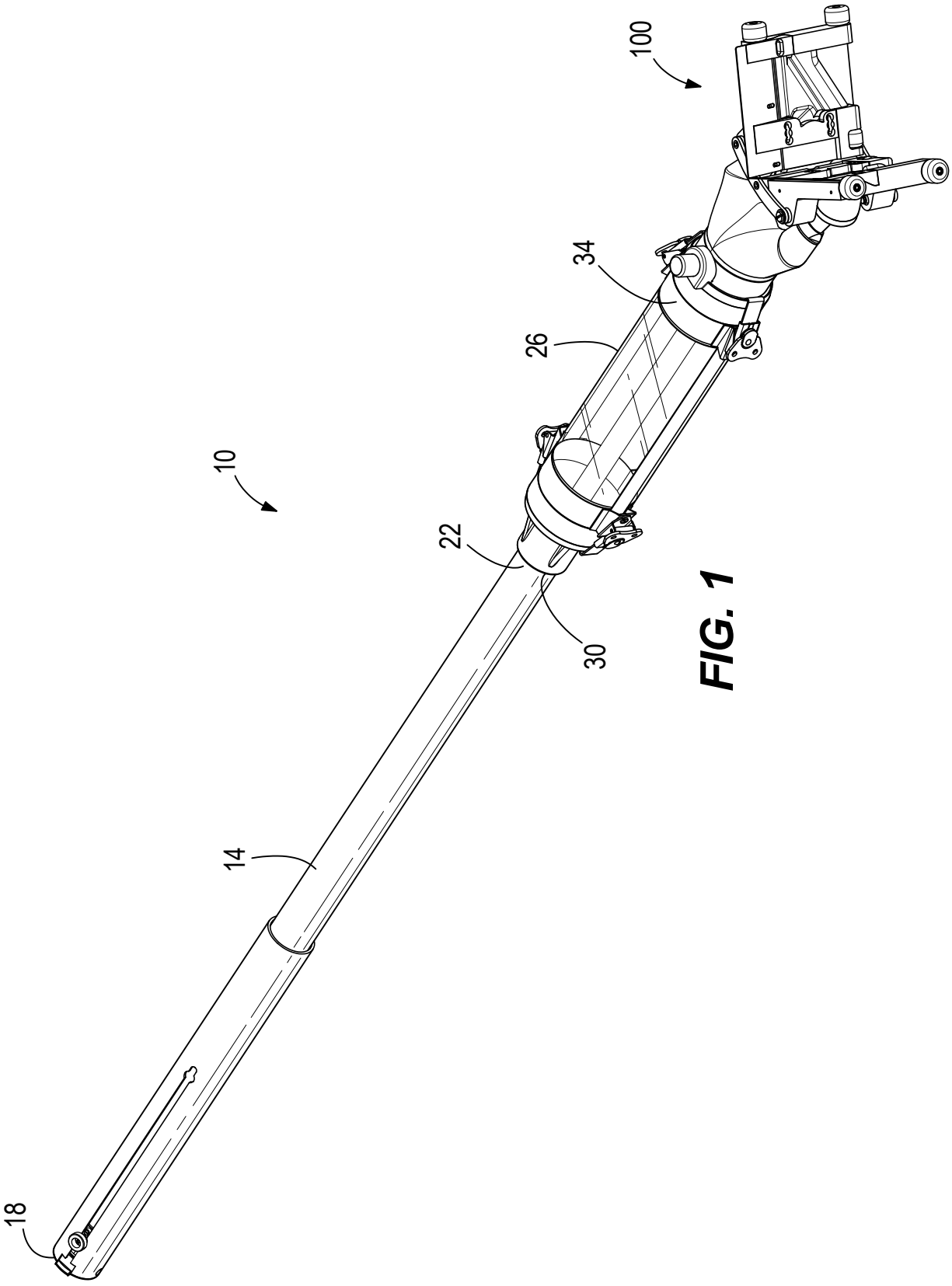

FIG. 1

OUTSIDE CORNER FINISHING TOOL

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 63/688,002, filed August 28, 2024, the entire content of which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to a compound dispensing tool and, more particularly, to a compound dispensing tool for dispensing a drywall compound at an outside corner.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Finisher boxes are used to apply drywall joint compound (or other materials) over wall seams or other joints to seal and finish them. Currently, these materials are extruded from finisher boxes by pivoting movement of a push plate on the finisher box. Inside corner finisher tools are known in the art and allow a user to apply drywall joint compound to an internal corner at the joint between two walls.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool for dispensing a drywall finishing compound, the outside corner finishing tool including: a splitter defining an inlet, a first outlet and a second outlet; a first plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet; and a second plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet; a first ball joint coupling the first plate to the splitter; and a second ball joint coupling the second plate to the splitter; wherein the outlet of the first plate is spaced apart from the outlet of the second plate.

[0005] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein the splitter includes a valve seat that is selectively closed by a plug.

[0006] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein the splitter is generally U-shaped with a first arm and a second arm, wherein the

first outlet is defined at an end of the first arm and the second outlet is defined at an end of the second arm.

[0007] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein the first plate extends between an upper edge and a lower edge, the outside corner finishing tool further including a blade coupled to the upper edge of the first plate.

[0008] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a roller coupled to the lower edge of the first plate.

[0009] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a spring configured to bias an outer end of the first plate towards an outer end of the second plate.

[0010] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a connection bar rotatably coupled to the first plate and rotatably coupled to the second plate, wherein the connection bar constrains relative motion between the first plate and the second plate.

[0011] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein the first ball joint includes a ball coupled to the splitter and a socket coupled to the first plate, the socket of the first ball joint receiving the ball of the first ball joint, and wherein the second ball joint includes a ball coupled to the splitter and a socket coupled to the second plate, the socket of the second ball joint receiving the ball of the second ball joint.

[0012] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein the drywall finishing compound is transferred from the splitter to the first plate via the first ball joint and to the second plate via the second ball joint.

[0013] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein each of the first plate and the second plate extend between an inward surface and an outward surface, wherein the inward surface of the first plate is located adjacent the inward surface of the second plate, and wherein the outward surface of the first plate is spaced apart from the outward surface of the second plate.

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[0014] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a first roller coupled to the outward surface of the first plate and a second roller coupled to the outward surface of the second plate.

[0015] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein the first plate is arranged at an angle between 80 degrees and 105 degrees relative to the second plate.

[0016] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool for dispensing a drywall finishing compound, the outside corner finishing tool including: a U-shaped splitter defining an inlet, a first arm extending between the inlet and a first outlet, and a second arm extending between the inlet and a second outlet; a first plate coupled to the U-shaped splitter at the first outlet; and a second plate coupled to the U-shaped splitter at the second outlet.

[0017] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, wherein the first plate extends between an upper edge and a lower edge, the outside corner finishing tool further including a blade coupled to the upper edge of the first plate.

[0018] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a roller coupled to the lower edge of the first plate.

[0019] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a spring configured to bias an outer end of the first plate towards an outer end of the second plate, the spring positioned between the first arm and the second arm.

[0020] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a connection bar rotatably coupled to the first plate and rotatably coupled to the second plate, wherein the connection bar constrains relative motion between the first plate and the second plate.

[0021] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including: a first ball joint having a ball coupled to the U-shaped splitter and a socket coupled to the first plate, the socket of the first ball joint receiving the ball of the first ball

joint, and a second ball joint having a ball coupled to the U-shaped splitter and a socket coupled to the second plate, the socket of the second ball joint receiving the ball of the second ball joint.

[0022] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool for dispensing a drywall finishing compound, the outside corner finishing tool including: a splitter defining an inlet, a first outlet, and a second outlet; a first plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet; and a second plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet; wherein a width of the outlet of the first plate is adjustable between a first width and a second width, and wherein a width of the outlet of the second plate is adjustable between a first width and a second width, wherein the width of the outlet of the first plate is adjustable without adjusting a width of the second plate.

[0023] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a first masking plate attachable to the first plate at a first location to set the width of the outlet of the first plate to the first width, and attachable to the first plate at a second location to set the width of the outlet of the first plate to the second width.

[0024] In some aspects, the techniques described herein relate to an outside corner finishing tool, further including a second masking plate attachable to the second plate at a first location to set the width of the outlet of the second plate to the first width, and attachable to the second plate at a second location to set the width of the outlet of the second plate to the second width.

[0025] Other aspects of the invention will become apparent by consideration of the detailed description and accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0026] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a drywall finishing tool having an outside corner finishing tool.

[0027] FIG. 2 is a close-up perspective view of the forward end of the drywall finishing tool of FIG. 1, further illustrating the outside corner finishing tool.

[0028] FIG. 3 is a front perspective view of a compound splitter of the outside corner finishing tool of FIG. 1.

[0029] FIG. 4 is a rear perspective view of a compound splitter of the outside corner finishing tool of FIG. 1.

[0030] FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of the compound splitter of FIGS. 2-3.

[0031] FIG. 6 is a rear perspective view of a plate assembly of the corner finishing tool of FIG. 1

[0032] FIG. 7 is a front perspective view of one plate of the plate assembly of FIG. 6.

[0033] FIG. 8 is a front perspective view of the outside corner finishing tool of FIG. 1.

[0034] FIG. 9 is a rear perspective view of the outside corner finishing tool of FIG. 1.

[0035] FIG. 10 is a cross-sectional view of the outside corner finishing tool of FIG. 1.

[0036] FIG. 11 is a perspective view of an outside corner finishing tool according to a further embodiment.

[0037] Before any embodiments of the invention are explained in detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of construction and the arrangement of components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the following drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced or of being carried out in various ways.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0038] FIG. 1 illustrates a drywall finishing tool 10 for use with an outside corner finishing tool 100 and, in some embodiments, also usable with additional finishing tools, such as a finishing box or an inside corner finishing tool by removing and replacing the outside corner finishing tool 100. In the illustrated embodiment, the drywall finishing tool 10 includes a handle 14 formed as an extendable handle assembly, permitting a user to use the outside corner finishing tool 100 in high and hard to reach locations. In some embodiments, the handle 14 is operable to telescope to a variety of different lengths and includes an outer tube and an inner tube received within the outer tube and is adjustable and lockable (e.g., via one or more detents) at a plurality

of different lengths. The handle 14 extends between a first end 18 and a second opposite end 22. The handle 14 may be graspable at any point between the first and second ends 18, 22 and, in some embodiments, is graspable with a first hand adjacent the first end 18 and graspable with a second hand at a location between the first and second ends 18, 22. The first end 18 is a distal end of the handle and is a lower end when the tool is held by a user with the outside corner finishing tool 100 raised and adjacent a top of a wall. The second end 22 of the handle 14 terminates at a compound retaining cylinder 26 configured to store and selectively release compound (e.g., drywall joint compound) therein.

[0039] A gas spring and push rod assembly located within the handle 14 and compound retaining cylinder 26 control the release of the compound from the compound retaining cylinder 26 to the outside corner finishing tool 100. Specific elements relating to the control of the gas spring and push rod assembly are described and shown in U.S. Patent Application No. 17/938,888 (Patent No. 11,964,296 B2) assigned to Ames Tools Corp, Suwanee, GA, the entire contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference. The cylinder 26 extends between a first end 30 at the second end 22 of the handle 14 and a second end 34 at the outside corner finishing tool 100.

[0040] For the purposes of this application, the tool 10 is preferably for drywall finishing on a joint between adjacent pieces of drywall. Drywall finishing is described herein as an example application, but the tool 10 may also be used to apply compound to other types of joints or seams that need to be sealed or finished. Alternatively, the tool 10 may apply material other than drywall compound to almost any surface, not limited to joints, such as fiber reinforced plastic sheeting or tiling.

[0041] With reference to Figs. 2-5, the outside corner finishing tool 100 includes a splitter 104 that, in the illustrated embodiment is a cap that covers and seals the second end 34 of the cylinder 26. The outside corner finishing tool 100 also includes a first plate 108, and a second plate 112. The splitter 104 includes an inlet 116 through which the compound within the cylinder 26 enters the finishing tool 100. The inlet 116 is generally circular and corresponds to the end of the cylinder 26. In some embodiments, an annular channel 120 supports a resilient seal (not shown) to seal the end 34 of the cylinder 26 to prevent the compound within the

cylinder 26 from passing through the interface between the cylinder 26 and finishing tool 100. The inlet 116 is located at a first end of the splitter 104 and two separate and distinct outlets 124, 128 are located at a second, opposite end of the splitter 104. The two outlets 124, 128 are formed within first and second balls 132, 136 of two ball joints (each ball joint defined by a ball 132, 136 and a socket that forms an inlet 180, 184 of a respective plate 108, 112), respectively. The splitter 104 branches out from the outlet into a first arm 140 leading to the first outlet 124 (and first ball 132) and a second arm 144 leading to the second outlet 128 (and second ball 136). The first and second arms 140, 144 are substantially identical (and mirrored relative) to one another and diverge outward from the single inlet 116 to the two outlets 124, 128. The first and second arms form a generally U-shape with the two outlets 124, 128 formed at the distal ends of the U-shape and the inlet 116 formed at the lower apex of the U-shape between the two distal ends. The splitter 104 is therefore generally U-shaped, at least in the illustrated embodiment.

[0042] A loading boss 148 is located on the splitter 104 and is provided with a conventional spring-loaded fill valve assembly which is opened to admit dry wall compound into the cylinder 26 and automatically closes when loading is stopped. The fill valve assembly allows for filling and refilling of the cylinder 26 and prevents unwanted removal of the compound through the loading boss 148 when in use.

[0043] A plug 152 (such as a needle plug) is provided within the cylinder 26 (and within the splitter 104) and is movable relative to a valve seat 156 (Fig. 5) defined by the splitter 104. When the plug 152 is in an open position (i.e., spaced apart from the valve seat 156), the compound from the cylinder 26 is moved (by pressure of the gas spring arrangement) through an opening defined by the valve seat 156 and into the two arms 140, 144. When the plug 152 is in the closed position (i.e., seated against the valve seat 156), the compound in the cylinder 26 is precluded from reaching the arms 140, 144 and outlets 124, 128. In some embodiments, the plug 152 is an element of the gas spring and push rod assembly within the cylinder 26 and is coupled to a distal end of a push rod. In some embodiments, the valve seat 156 is integrally formed with the splitter 104.

[0044] With continued reference to Fig. 5, the two arms 140, 144 define respective passages or paths 160, 164 therethrough, that each connect the inlet 116 to the respective outlets 124, 128.

The passages narrow from the inlet 116 and narrow from the valve seat 156 to the outlets 124, 128 and generally follow the path of the arms 140, 144 between the valve seat 156 and the outlets 124, 128. In some embodiments, the balls 132, 136 of the ball joints that define the outlets 124, 128 are integrally formed as a single component with the remainder of the splitter 104. In other embodiments, such as is shown in Fig. 5, the balls 132, 136 of the ball joints are separate components and are coupled to the arms 140, 144 via, for example, threaded interfaces 168, 172, or alternatively, a fastener such as a set screw, or a weld.

[0045] Fig. 6 illustrates a plate assembly that is coupled to the splitter 104 of Figs. 3-5, with further details of the plate assembly shown in Figs. 7-10. The plate assembly includes, among other things, a first plate 108 and a second plate 112 arranged substantially orthogonally relative to one another. The first and second plates 108, 112 are generally similar to (and mirrored relative to) one another and a description of the second plate 112 with respect to Fig. 7 corresponds to similar structure of the first plate 108.

[0046] The first plate 108 includes an inlet 180 for receiving the compound from the first outlet 124 of the splitter 104. The second plate 112 includes an inlet 184 for receiving the compound from the second outlet 128 of the splitter 104. The first and second inlets 180, 184 of the plate assembly are spaced apart from one another and correspond only to their respective plate 108, 112, such that compound from the first outlet 124 of the splitter 104, into the inlet of the first plate 108 corresponds to compound that is only provided through the first plate 108. Similarly, compound from the second outlet 128 of the splitter 104, into the inlet of the second plate 112 corresponds to compound that is only provided through the second plate 112. A resilient member 188, 192 (e.g., an O-ring) is provided within a groove adjacent each inlet 180, 184 to seal the interface between the balls 132, 136 of the ball joints and their respective inlets 180, 184. The inlets 180, 184 are socket joints that receive the balls 132, 136 such that the balls 132, 136 are rotatable within the inlets 180, 184 about a plurality of axes. By rotating at the ball joints defined by the balls 132, 136 about respective first axes A1, A2 (Fig. 2), each plate 108, 112 is configured to pivot relative to the other plate 108, 112 such that the two plates 108, 112 are capable of tightly engaging the two walls of a corner, even when the angle defined by the two walls deviates from a right angle. By rotating at the ball joints defined by the balls 132, 136 about a second axis A3 (Fig. 10; as shown, a shared axis) orthogonal to the first axes A1, A2, the

two plates 108, 112 are configured to rotate relative to the splitter 104 to maintain full planar contact of the plates 108, 112 against the wall as the user moves the finishing tool 100 vertically along the corner of the wall.

[0047] Fig. 7 illustrates one of the plates, and particularly, the second plate 112. A front face of the second plate 112 (e.g., the side facing the wall when applying the compound) is described herein. As the first plate 108 corresponds in structure (though mirrored) to the second plate 112, the description of the second plate 112 is similarly a description of the first plate 108. The second plate 112 includes an outlet 200 at a forward end, opposite the rearward end that defines the inlet 184. The plate 112 extends vertically between an upper end 204 and a lower end 208 and horizontally between an outer end 212 and an inner end 216. The lower end 208 is substantially parallel to the upper end 204 between the outer and inner ends 212, 216. Each of the upper end 204, the outer end 212, and the inner end 216 is generally planar. A forward-facing surface 220 is located adjacent the upper, lower, and inner ends 204, 208, 216 and provides a mounting surface for a masking plate (e.g., block) 258 (Fig. 8) to control the location of the flow of the compound through the outlet 200. A pocket 224 is formed between the upper, lower, outer, and inner ends 204, 208, 212, 216 and defines a holding area configured to retain an amount of compound adjacent the outlet 200. In the illustrated embodiment, the pocket 224 extends to the outer end 212 and, can be restricted to terminate prior to the outer end 212 by an outer masking plate 256, 260 (Fig. 8).

[0048] As shown in Fig. 6, the two plates 108, 112 are coupled to one another via an upper connection bar 234 and a lower connection bar 238. The upper connection bar 234 is located adjacent the upper end 204 and the lower connection bar 238 is located adjacent the lower end 208. The upper and lower connection bars 234, 238 are connected to and extend between the two plates 108, 112 (on a rear side of the two plates 108, 112) and constrain relative motion of the two plates 108, 112 such that the plates 108, 112 do not become askew. Written another way, the connection bars 234, 238 maintain a parallel relationship between adjacent edges of the inner end 216 of the two plates 108, 112. The connection bars 234, 238 are rotatable relative to the first and second plates 108, 112 (i.e., the connection between each plate 108, 112 and connection bar 234, 238 allows rotation) to retain relative motion between the two plates 108, 112. As shown, the rotational axis A1, A2 (Fig. 2) defined at each end of the connection bars

234, 238 is aligned with the center of the respective ball joint (i.e., at balls 132, 136) to facilitate smooth rotation. A spring 242 is provided between the two plates 108, 112 to bias the outer ends 212 of the plates 108, 112 towards one another. The bias of the spring 242 can be overcome by placing the two plates 108, 112 against a corner of a wall. As such, the spring 242 biases the plates 108, 112 into engagement with the walls.

[0049] Most outer wall corner joints are approximately 90 degrees and as such, the two plates 108, 112 are arranged with an included angle θ of approximately 90 degrees (e.g., 80-105 degrees, 85-100 degrees). In some embodiments, the spring 242 biases the plates to an included angle θ (Fig. 10) of approximately 85 degrees (e.g., 80-89 degrees, 82-87 degrees, 84-86 degrees) and the connection bars 234, 238 and ball joints (defined by balls 132, 136) limit the maximum included angle θ to approximately 100 degrees (e.g., 95-105 degrees, no more than 100 degrees) such that the included angle θ of the plates 108, 112 is adjustable during normal operation between approximately 85-100 degrees or, in some embodiments, 80-105 degrees, or in some embodiments, 84-96 degrees.

[0050] With reference to Figs. 6, 8, and 9, blades 228, 230 are mounted (e.g., via fasteners, not shown) at the forward-facing surface 220 adjacent the upper end 204 of the plates 108, 112. As shown in Fig. 7, an angled portion 218 of the forward-facing surface 220 is angled rearward from an upper edge to a lower edge of the portion 218. By mounting the blades 228, 230 to the angled portion, the blades extend parallel to the portion 218, offset at an angle (e.g., 10 degrees, 7-12 degrees, 5-15 degrees) from the substantially vertical portions of the forward-facing surface 220. As such, the distal ends of the blades 228, 230 extend forward of the forward-facing surface 220 to encourage engagement with a drywall surface. The distal ends of the blades 228, 230 may flex with applied pressure to extend generally parallel to (and, in some embodiments, coplanar with) the forward face of the plates 108, 112 to smooth out the compound on the wall surface that is pushed through the outlets 198, 200 of the plates 108, 112. The angled portion 218 of the forward-facing surface 220 includes openings for receiving a threaded fastener to hold the blades 228, 230 to the plates 108, 112. Vertical slots within the blades 228, 230 permit vertical adjustment of the blades 228, 230 relative to the plates 108, 112 by loosening the fasteners.

[0051] As shown in Figs. 5 and 8, inner rollers 246, 250 are located adjacent the lower end 208 of the plates 108, 112 below the forward-facing surface 220 and the masking plates 258 mounted thereto. The rollers 246, 250 engage the surface of the wall to facilitate movement of the corner finishing tool 100 along the wall. In the illustrated embodiment, outer rollers 252 are also coupled to the outer end 212 to assist the inner rollers 246, 250 in moving the corner finishing tool 100 along the wall. In the illustrated embodiment, each plate 108, 112 includes an upper outer roller 252 and a lower outer roller 252 arranged vertically below the upper outer roller 252. In some embodiments, one or more of the rollers 246, 250, 252 may be omitted.

[0052] Inner masking plates 254, 258 are mounted to the forward-facing surface 220 of each plate 108 and define a surface that moves on or adjacent to a wall surface in use. The inner masking plates 254, 258 are movable along a width of the respective plate 108, 112 to modify the size and location of the outlet 198, 200 of the plate 108, 112 to accommodate different sizes (i.e., different widths) and types of corner bead (e.g., paper corner bead, metal corner bead). The inner masking plates 254, 258 each include a plurality of openings 262, 266. By inserting a fastener into a first set of openings 262, 266, each masking plate 254, 258 is fastened to the forward-facing surface 220 at a first location, setting a width W1, W2 (Fig. 10) of the outlets 198, 200. By inserting the fastener into a second set of openings 262, 266, each masking plate 254, 258 is fastened to the forward-facing surface 220 at a second location, setting a greater or smaller width W1, W2 of the outlets 198, 200.

[0053] With continued reference to Fig. 8, outer masking plates 256, 260 are mounted outward of the inner masking plates 254, 258 and constrain the width W1, W2 of the outlets 198, 200 at the outer edge thereof (opposite the inner masking plates 254, 258). The outer masking plates 256, 260 are similarly adjustable in a widthwise direction by movement of a fastener within different openings of the outer masking plates 256, 260 to modify the outer width of the applied material through the outlets 198, 200. The adjustable widths of the masking plates 254, 256, 258, 260 permits the user to modify the use of the tool for different applications and different widths of tape (or other elements to be covered by the compound from the finishing tool 100).

[0054] Fig. 10 is a cross-sectional view of the outside corner finishing tool 100 and illustrates a path for the compound from the inlet 116 to the outlets 198, 200. With the plug 152 in an open position, the compound in the cylinder 26 passes through inlet 116 of the splitter 104, past the valve seat 156, and branches down a first path 160 and a second path 164. The compound in the first path 160 passes through the outlet 124 defined by the ball 132, into the inlet 180 of the first plate 108, through an internal path 270 of the first plate 108, and to the pocket 222. The compound within the pocket 222 is pushed against the wall through the outlet 198 based on the profile of the pocket 222 as the finishing tool 100 is moved along the wall. The compound in the second path 164 passes through the outlet 128 defined by the ball 136, into the inlet 184 of the second plate 112, through an internal path 274 of the second plate 112, and to the pocket 224. The compound within the pocket 224 is pushed against the wall through the outlet 200 based on the profile of the pocket 224 as the finishing tool 100 is moved along the wall. The compound is simultaneously moved through the outlet 198, 200 of each plate 108, 112, dispensing from the outlets 198, 200 to cover the seam of the corner bead. The two outlets 198, 200 are spaced apart from one another and spaced apart from the adjacent inner ends 216 to prevent the unwanted deposition of extra compound directly atop the corner bead at the apex of the corner.

[0055] In some embodiments, width-adjusting plates (not shown) are located on the outer ends 212 of the plates 108, 112 to extend an overall width of the respective plate 108, 112 (the width being measured from the inner end 216 towards the outer end 212). The width-adjusting plates may be removable or adjustable between a retracted (narrower) position and a deployed (wider) position such that the tool 100 can apply a coat wider than the coat applied without the width-adjusting plates. In some scenarios, it is desirable to apply additional coats that extend beyond the edge of the current coat. By attaching or adjusting a position of the width-adjusting plates relative to the respective plate 108, 112, successive narrow and wider coats (the wider coat extending beyond the edge of the narrower coat) can be applied without replacing the tool 100. The blades 228, 230 may have a width to accommodate a greatest width of the width-adjusting plates or may be adjustable with the width-adjusting plates 254, 256, 258, 260. In other embodiments, the tool 100 may be replaceable by a similar tool having wider plates or the plates 108, 112 may be removable from the splitter 104 and replaceable with wider plates.

[0056] Fig. 11 illustrates a further embodiment of a finishing tool 1100, similar to the finishing tool 100, except as otherwise described. Similar elements are identified with similar reference numerals incremented by 1000. In contrast to the finishing tool 100, the finishing tool 100 includes blades 1228, 1230 mounted (e.g., via fasteners, not shown) to the upper ends 1204 of the plates 1108, 1112. The blades 1228, 1230 extend generally parallel to (and, in some embodiments, coplanar with) the forward face of the plates 1108, 1112 to smooth out the compound on the wall surface that is pushed through the outlets 1198, 1200 of the plates 1108, 1112. In the illustrated embodiment, the blades 1228, 1230 are generally L-shaped, with the horizontal portion of the L-shape coupled to the upper ends 1204 of the plates 1108, 1112, and the vertical portion of the L-shape functioning as the smoothing edge for engaging the material. In the illustrated embodiment, the blades 1228, 1230 are adjustable forward and rearward such that the vertical wiping surface of the blades 1228, 1230 can be planar with the forward face of the plates 1108, 1112, or otherwise offset and parallel to the forward face of the plates 1108, 1112. In this manner, the amount of material wiped by the blades 1228, 1230 is adjustable. Adjustment is facilitated by the blades 1228, 1230 having a slot to facilitate different points along a length of the slot where the fastener (not shown) tightens the blades 1228, 1230 to the respective plates 1108, 1112. The blades 1228, 1230 may have a width to accommodate a greatest width of the width-adjusting plates or may be adjustable with the width-adjusting plates 1254, 1258.

[0057] In addition to the different blades 1228, 1230, the finishing tool 1100 further differs from the finishing tool 100 (Figs. 1-10) at the outer ends 1212 of the plates 1108, 1112. The outer ends 1212 of the plates 1108, 1112 omit the outer rollers 252 such that only the inner rollers 1246, 1250 provide a rolling surface between the finishing tool 1100 and the wall surface. Additionally, the finishing tool 1100 omits the outer masking plates 256, 260, such that adjustability of the width of the outlets 1198, 1200 is controlled only via the inner masking plates 1254, 1258 with a set outer width. Further still, the lower end 1208 angles upward from the inner end 1216 to the outer end 1212 such that the outer end 1212 has a decreased length (measured between the upper end 1204 and the lower end 1208) relative to the inner end 1216.

[0058] Although the invention has been described in detail with reference to certain embodiments above, variations and modifications exist within the scope and spirit of one or more independent aspects of the invention as described.

[0059] Various features and advantages of the invention are set forth in the following claims.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An outside corner finishing tool for dispensing a drywall finishing compound, the outside corner finishing tool comprising:

a splitter defining an inlet, a first outlet and a second outlet;

a first plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet;

a second plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet;

a first ball joint coupling the first plate to the splitter; and

a second ball joint coupling the second plate to the splitter;

wherein the outlet of the first plate is spaced apart from the outlet of the second plate.

2. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, wherein the splitter includes a valve seat that is selectively closed by a plug.

3. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, wherein the splitter is generally U-shaped with a first arm and a second arm, wherein the first outlet is defined at an end of the first arm and the second outlet is defined at an end of the second arm.

4. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, wherein the first plate extends between an upper edge and a lower edge, the outside corner finishing tool further comprising a blade coupled to the upper edge of the first plate.

5. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 4, further comprising a roller coupled to the lower edge of the first plate.

6. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, further comprising a spring configured to bias an outer end of the first plate towards an outer end of the second plate.

7. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, further comprising a connection bar rotatably coupled to the first plate and rotatably coupled to the second plate, wherein the connection bar constrains relative motion between the first plate and the second plate.

8. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, wherein the first ball joint includes a ball coupled to the splitter and a socket coupled to the first plate, the socket of the first ball joint receiving the ball of the first ball joint, and wherein the second ball joint includes a ball coupled to the splitter and a socket coupled to the second plate, the socket of the second ball joint receiving the ball of the second ball joint.

9. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, wherein the drywall finishing compound is transferred from the splitter to the first plate via the first ball joint and to the second plate via the second ball joint.

10. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, wherein each of the first plate and the second plate extend between an inward surface and an outward surface, wherein the inward surface of the first plate is located adjacent the inward surface of the second plate, and wherein the outward surface of the first plate is spaced apart from the outward surface of the second plate.

11. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 10, further comprising a first roller coupled to the outward surface of the first plate and a second roller coupled to the outward surface of the second plate.

12. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 1, wherein the first plate is arranged at an angle between 80 degrees and 105 degrees relative to the second plate.

13. An outside corner finishing tool for dispensing a drywall finishing compound, the outside corner finishing tool comprising:

a U-shaped splitter defining an inlet, a first arm extending between the inlet and a first outlet, and a second arm extending between the inlet and a second outlet;

a first plate coupled to the U-shaped splitter at the first outlet; and

a second plate coupled to the U-shaped splitter at the second outlet.

14. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 13, wherein the first plate extends between an upper edge and a lower edge, the outside corner finishing tool further comprising a blade coupled to the upper edge of the first plate and a roller coupled to the lower edge of the first plate.

15. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 13, further comprising a spring configured to bias an outer end of the first plate towards an outer end of the second plate, the spring positioned between the first arm and the second arm.

16. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 13, further comprising a connection bar rotatably coupled to the first plate and rotatably coupled to the second plate, wherein the connection bar constrains relative motion between the first plate and the second plate.

17. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 13, further comprising:

a first ball joint having a ball coupled to the U-shaped splitter and a socket coupled to the first plate, the socket of the first ball joint receiving the ball of the first ball joint, and

a second ball joint having a ball coupled to the U-shaped splitter and a socket coupled to the second plate, the socket of the second ball joint receiving the ball of the second ball joint.

18. An outside corner finishing tool for dispensing a drywall finishing compound, the outside corner finishing tool comprising:

a splitter defining an inlet, a first outlet, and a second outlet;

a first plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet; and

a second plate coupled to the splitter and defining an outlet;

wherein a width of the outlet of the first plate is adjustable between a first width and a second width, and

wherein a width of the outlet of the second plate is adjustable between a first width and a second width, wherein the width of the outlet of the first plate is adjustable without adjusting a width of the second plate.

19. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 18, further comprising a first masking plate attachable to the first plate at a first location to set the width of the outlet of the first plate to the

first width, and attachable to the first plate at a second location to set the width of the outlet of the first plate to the second width.

20. The outside corner finishing tool of claim 19, further comprising a second masking plate attachable to the second plate at a first location to set the width of the outlet of the second plate to the first width, and attachable to the second plate at a second location to set the width of the outlet of the second plate to the second width.

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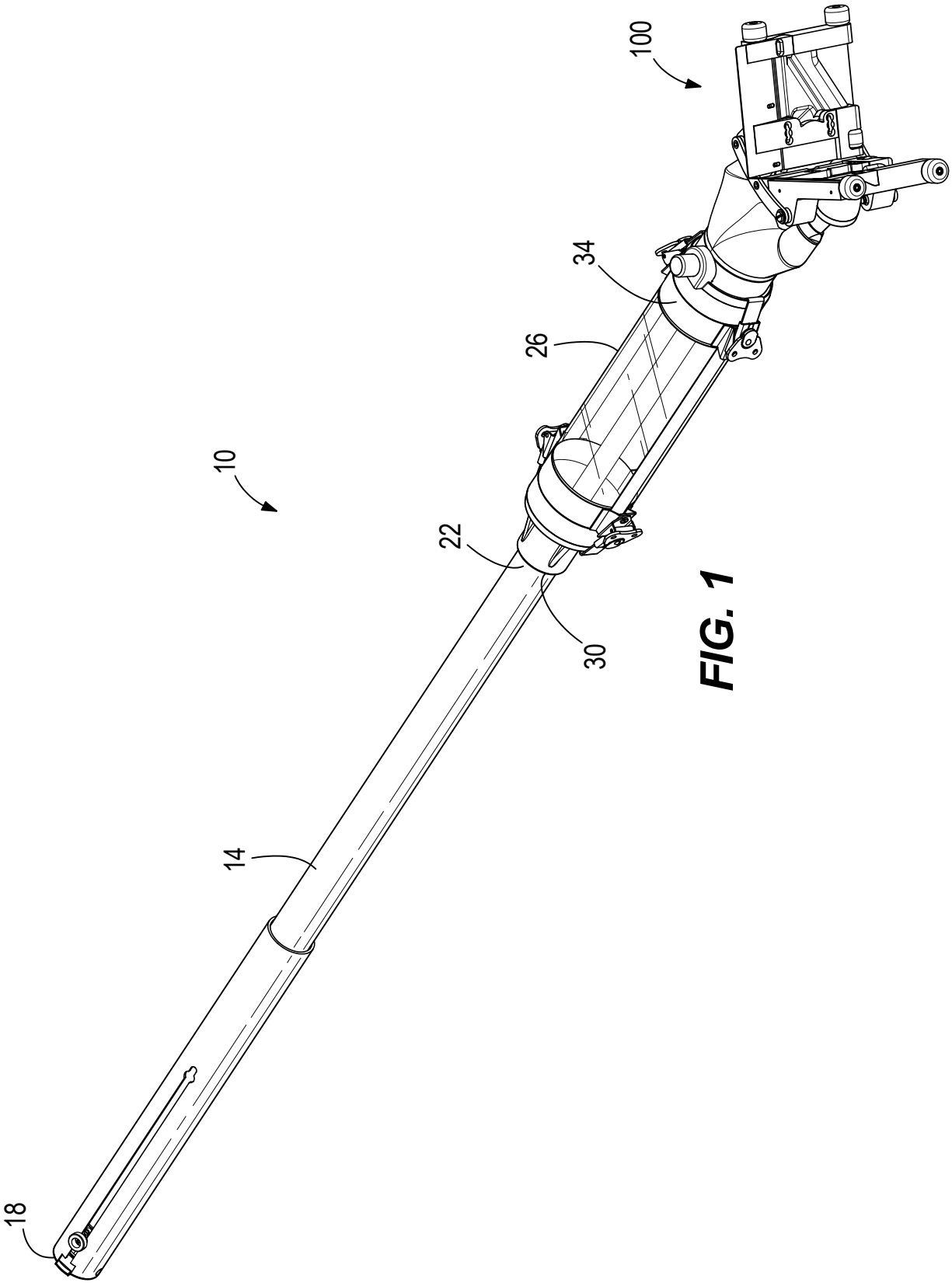

FIG. 1

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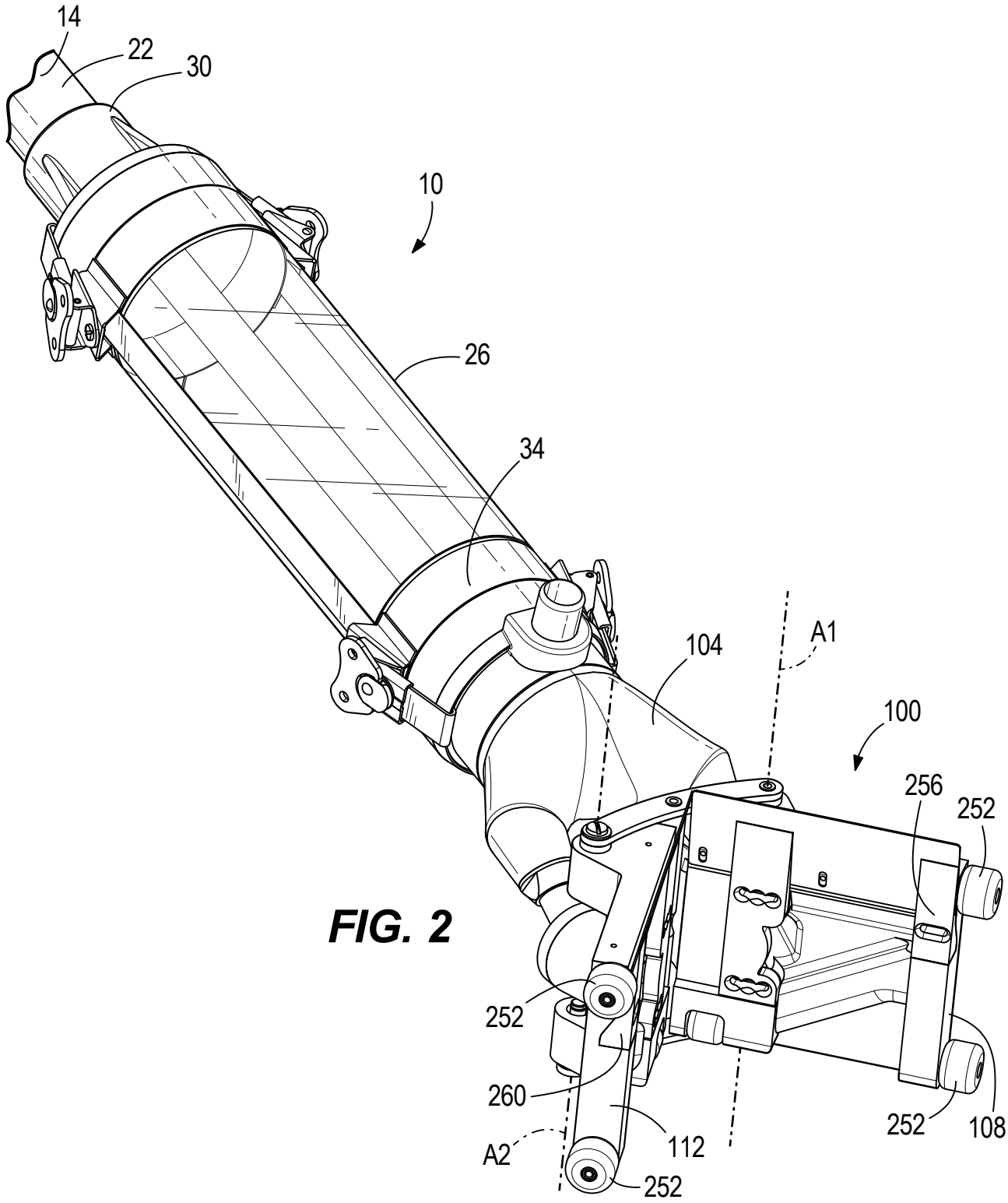

FIG. 2

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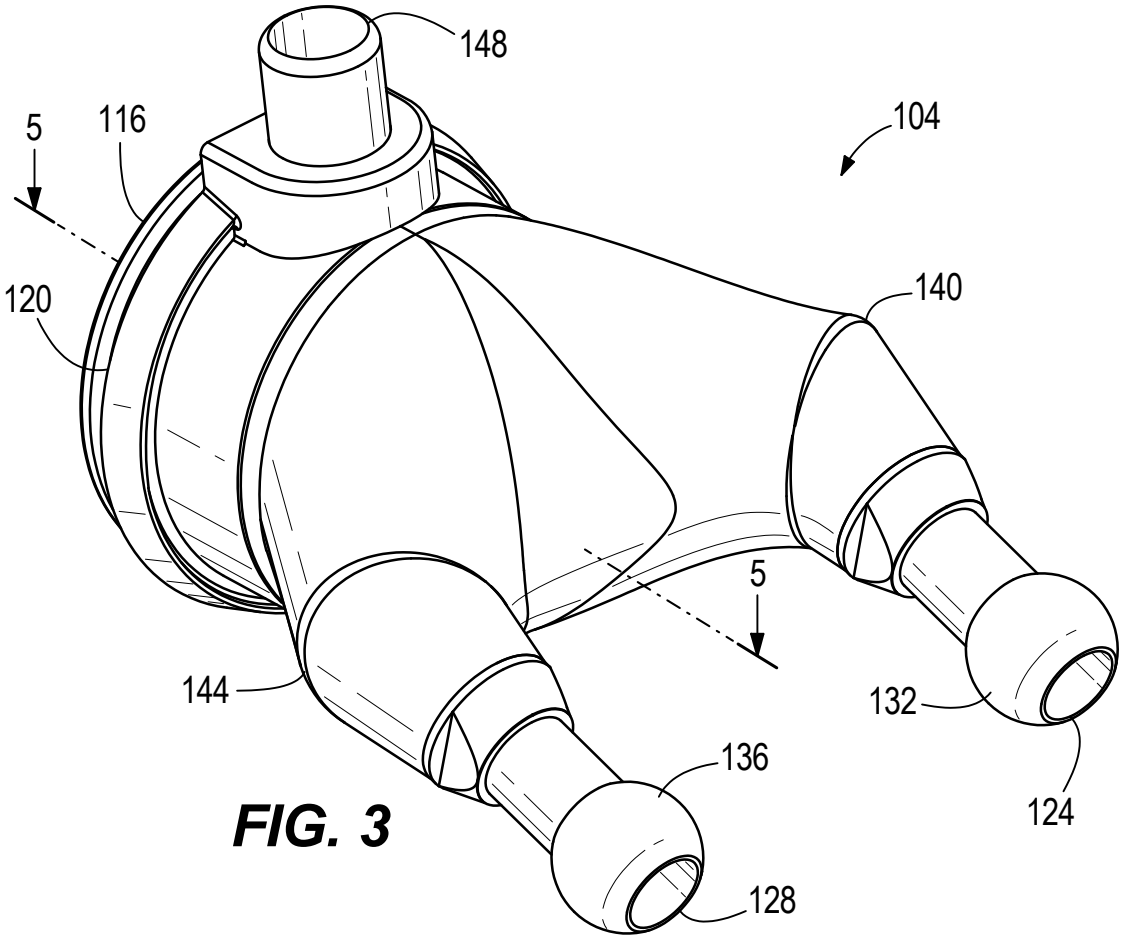

FIG. 3

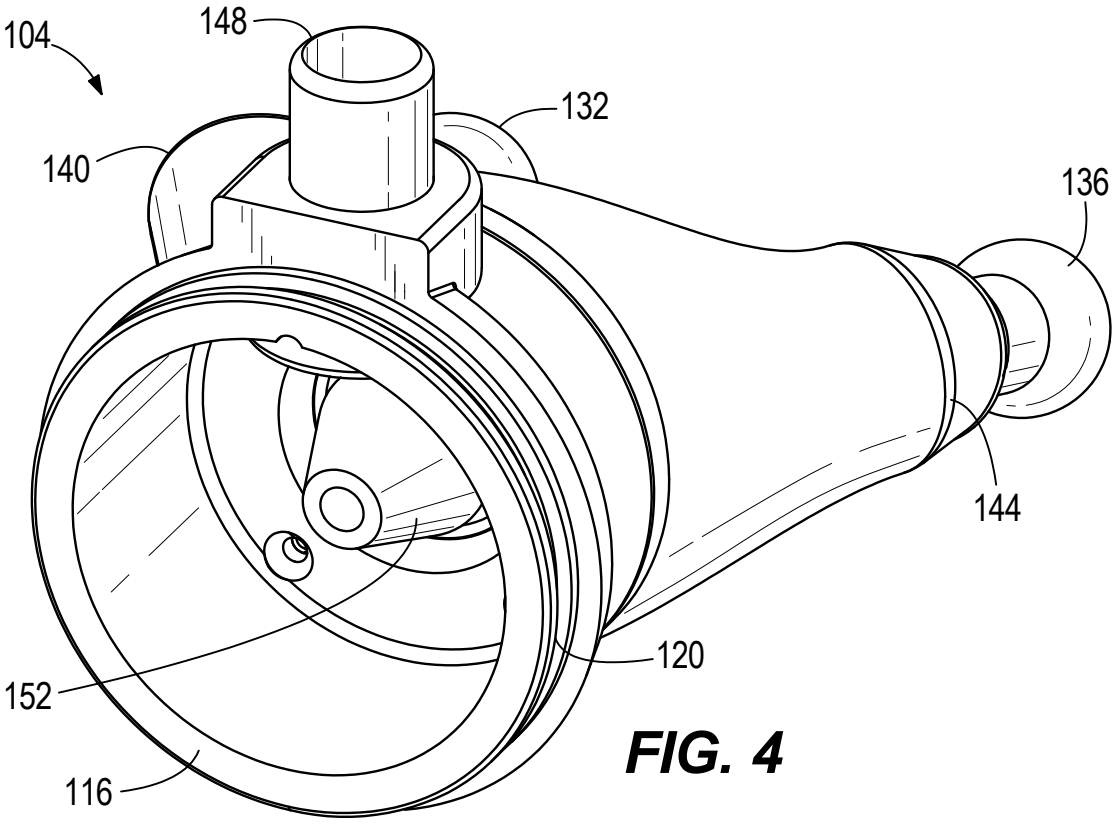

FIG. 4

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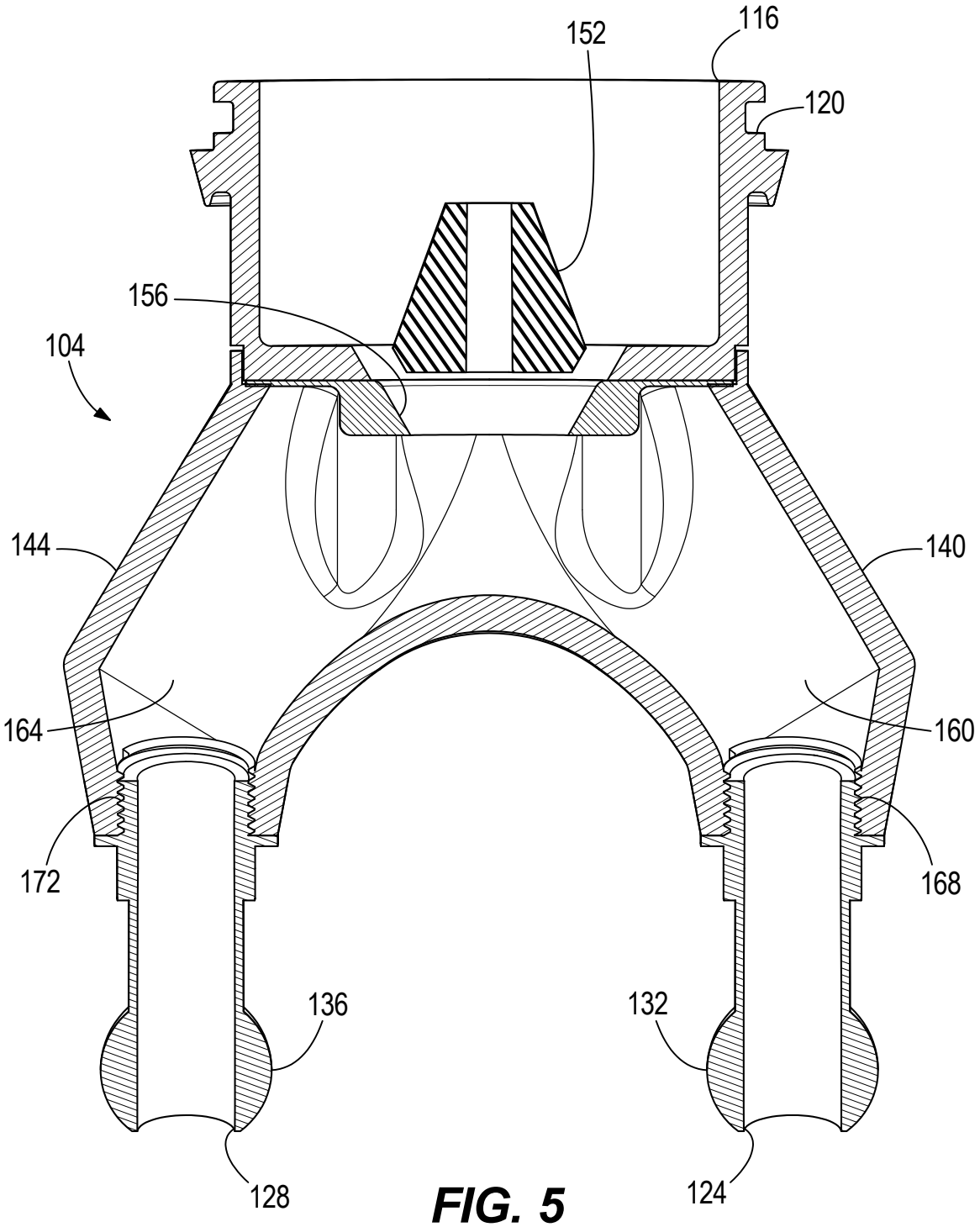

FIG. 5

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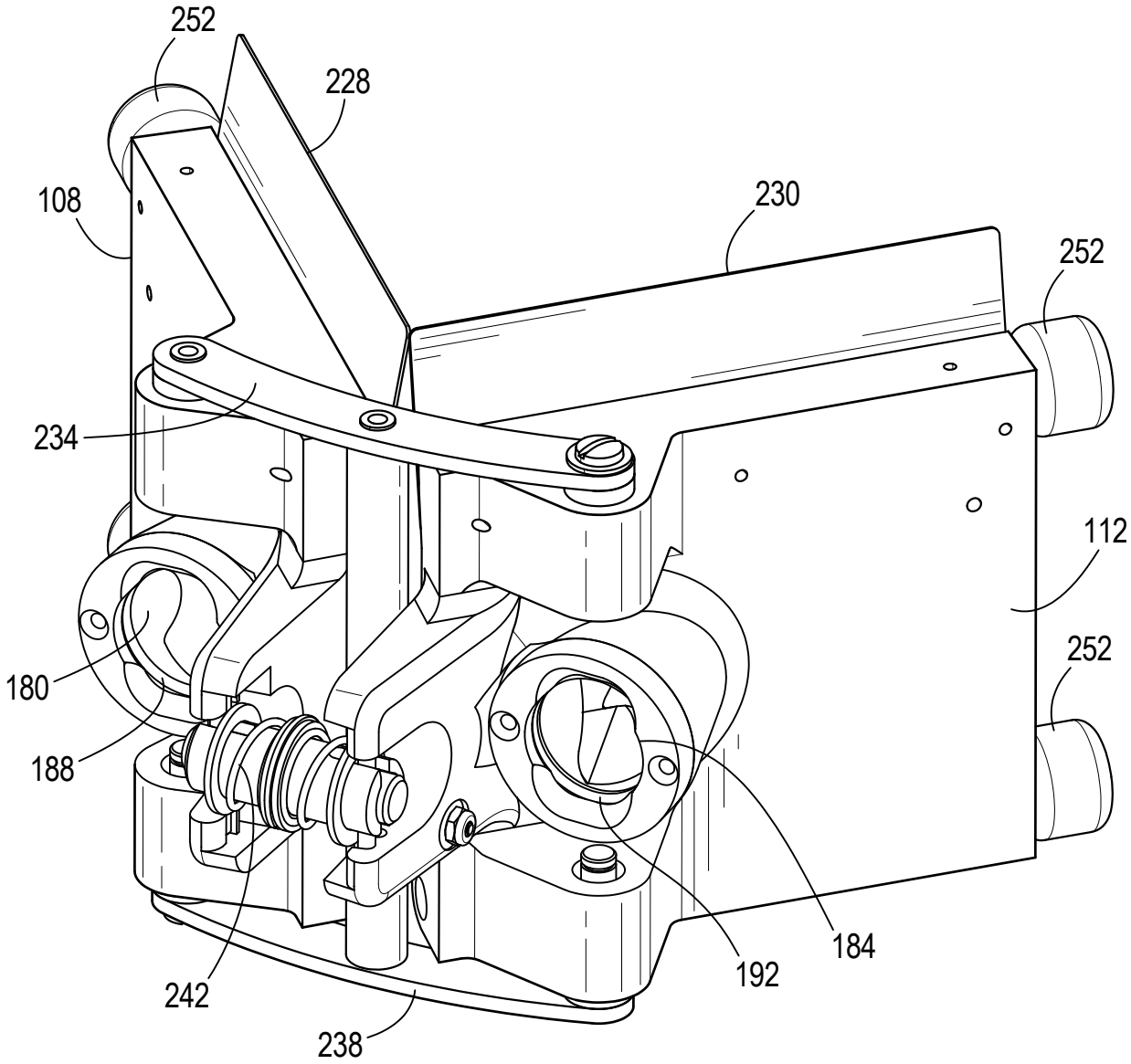

FIG. 6

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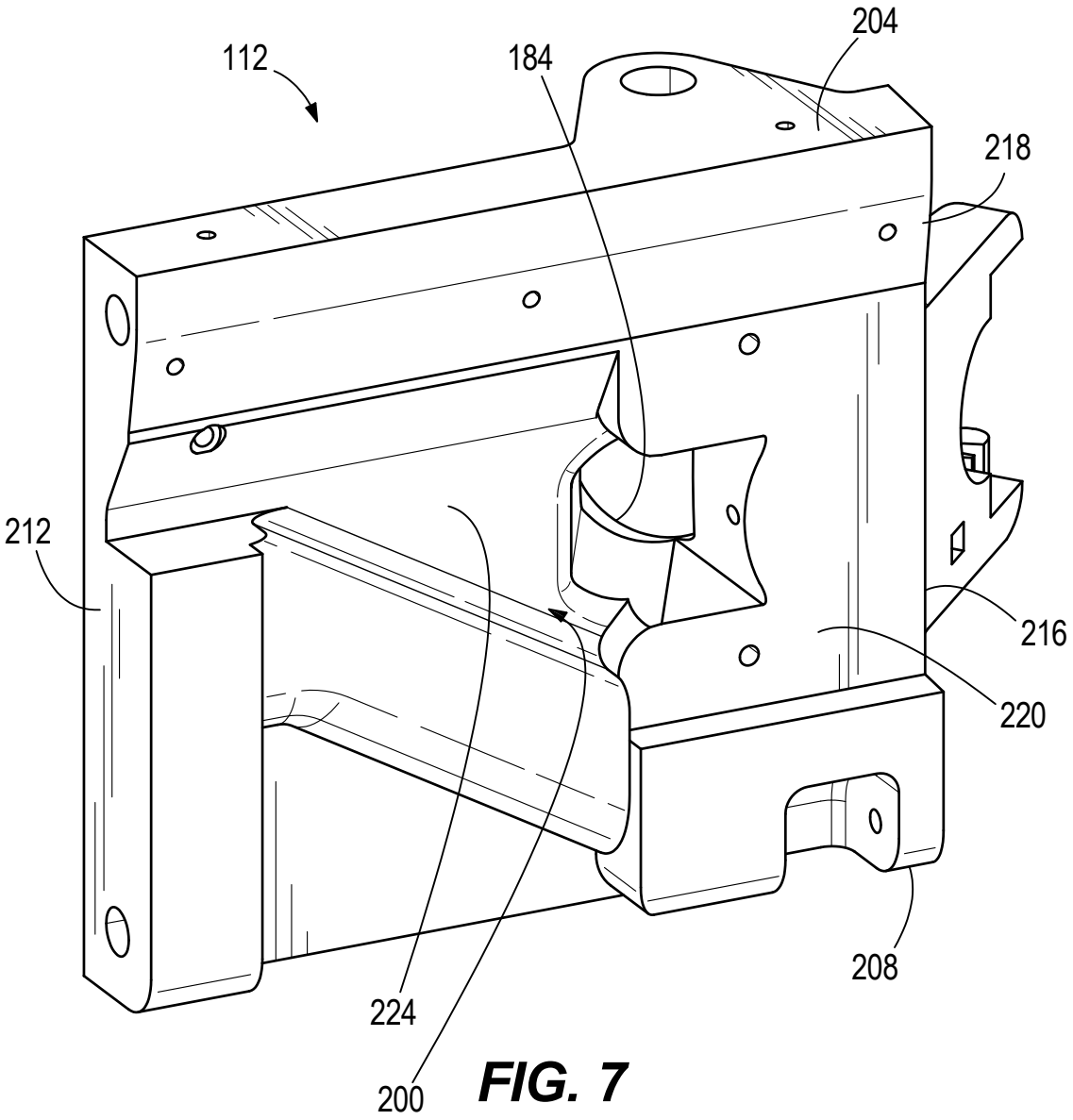

FIG. 7

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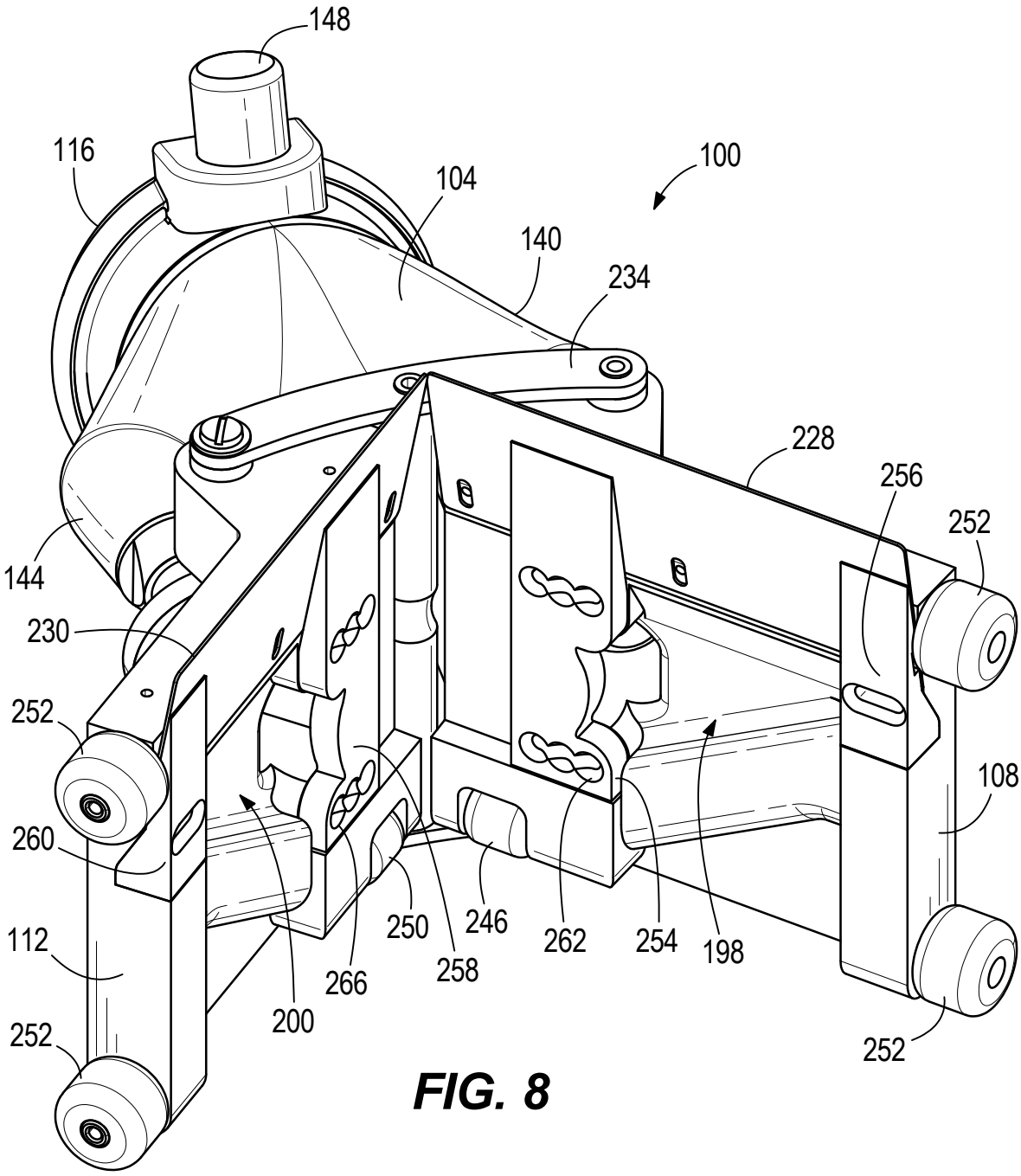

FIG. 8

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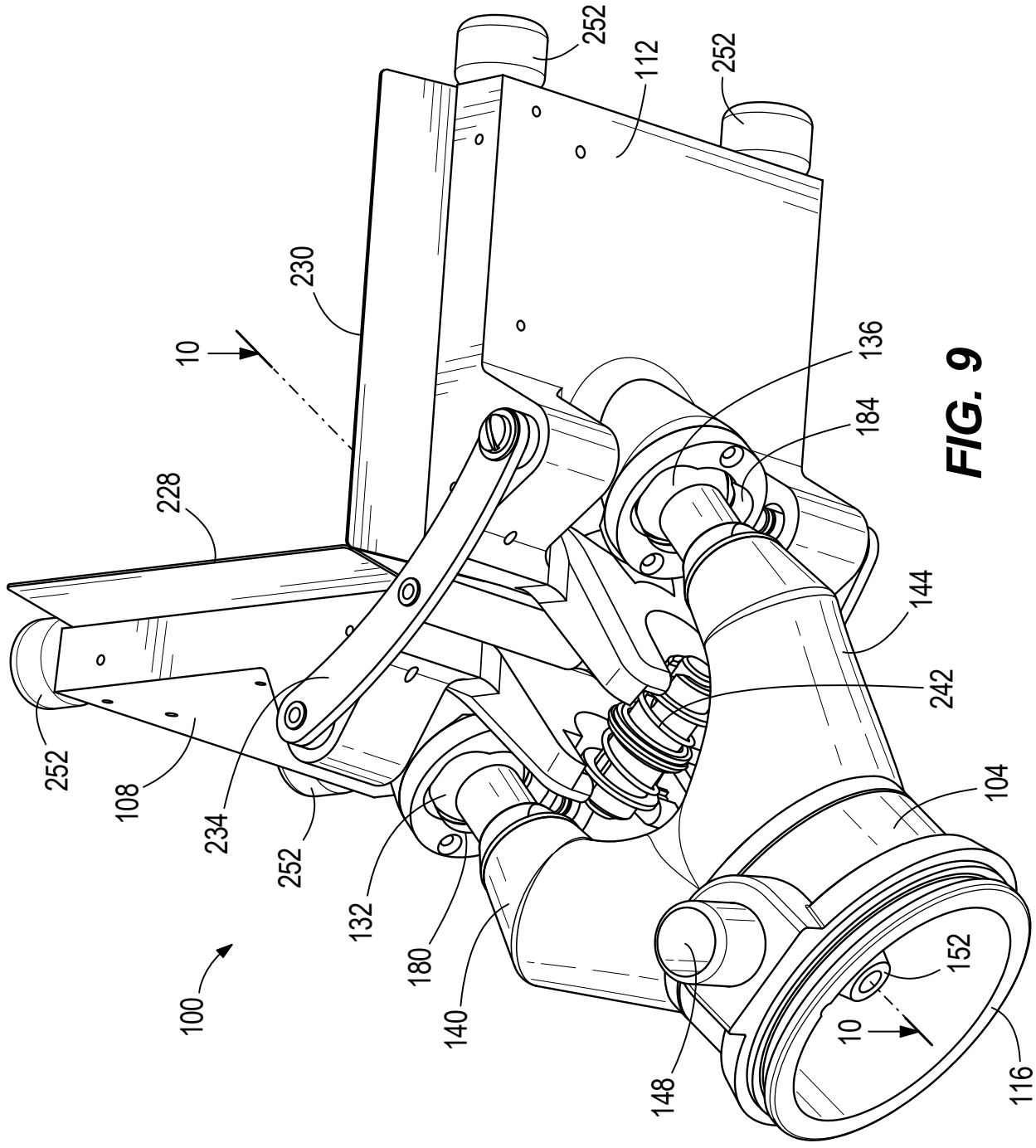

FIG. 9

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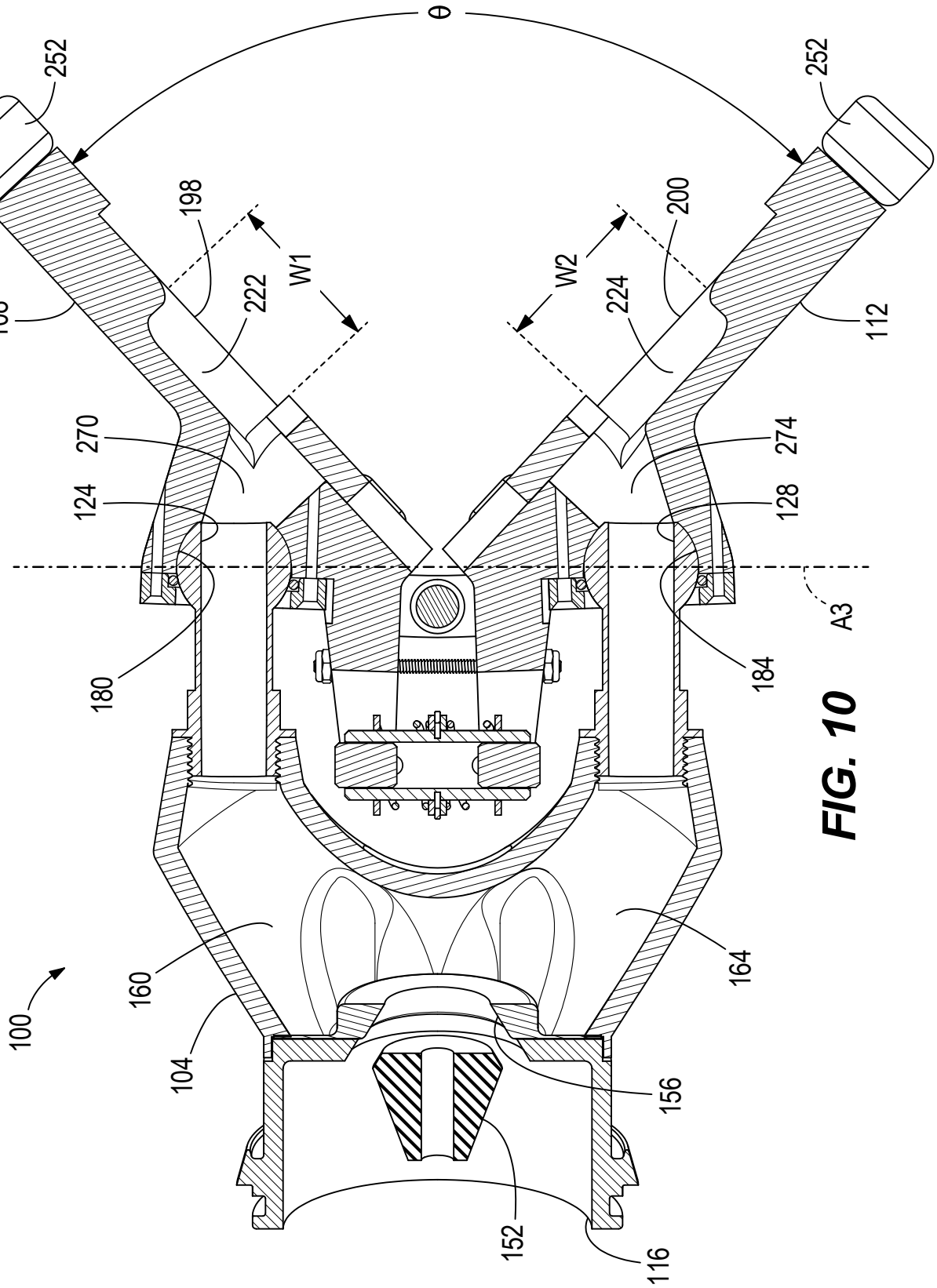

FIG. 10

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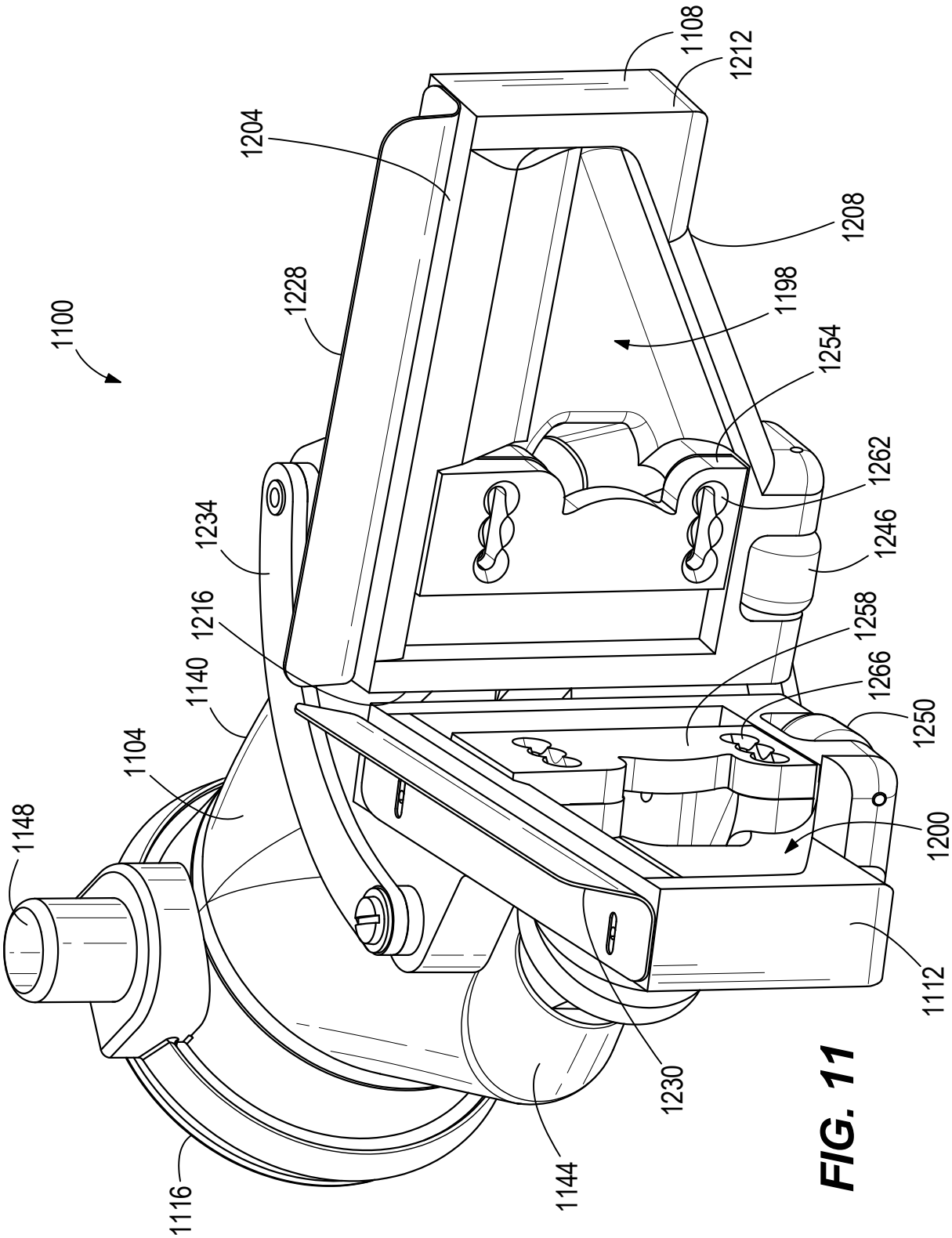

FIG. 11