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Support system

Abstract

A feeding support system includes an inner body and an outer body. The inner body includes a retaining member and an access member. The retaining member is configured to house an object. The retaining member includes an inner wall. The access member has at least one opening configured to enable access to the object housed within the retaining member. The access member is formed within the retaining member. The outer body includes a fastening member, a bonding member, and a protective member. The fastening member is configured to fasten the outer body to a user's appendage. The fastening member has a handle and a strap. The bonding member has an outer lip. The bonding member is configured to fasten the outer body to the user's appendage. The bonding member creates a seal between the outer body and the user's appendage.

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Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS (1) This application claims the benefit of, and priority to, U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 63/405,400, filed on Sep. 10, 2022, U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 63/409,789, filed on Sep. 25, 2022, and U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 63/461,944, filed on Apr. 26, 2023, which are hereby incorporated by reference herein.

TECHNICAL FIELD

(1) The present disclosure relates generally to support systems, and more particularly, to feeding support systems that enable users to provide support to living beings such as animals for training, bonding, intake encouragement and/or intake reduction purposes.

BACKGROUND

(2) Animals have been companions to humans since the beginning of time; dogs are often nicknamed “man's best friend.” Therefore, many animal owners desire ways to bond with their animals. Sometimes, such animals can become malnourished and/or dehydrated, endangering their health. This can occur for many reasons, including lack of appetite for food/water, disliking a particular type of food/water, not feeling comfortable in their environment where they are expected to drink/eat, having a prior bad experience while consuming, sickness, etc. Animal owners desire ways to encourage their animal companions to eat/drink while bonding with them, as it is important for animals to be fed and hydrated to remain healthy.

(3) Accordingly, there exists a need for a system that encourages a living being to eat and/or drink to maintain their health, while simultaneously allowing them to bond with their human companion.

SUMMARY

(4) A feeding support system includes an inner body and an outer body. The inner body includes a retaining member and an access member. The retaining member is configured to house an object. The retaining member includes an inner wall. The access member has at least one opening configured to enable access to the object housed within the retaining member. The access member is formed within the retaining member. The outer body includes a fastening member, a bonding member, and a protective member. The fastening member is configured to fasten the outer body to a user's appendage. The fastening member has a handle and a strap. The bonding member has an outer lip. The bonding member is configured to fasten the outer body to the user's appendage. The bonding member creates a seal between the outer body and the user's appendage. The protective member has an outer wall. The protective member configured to shield at least a portion of the user's appendage and covers the access member.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- (1) A better understanding of the features and advantages of the present disclosure will be obtained by reference to the following detailed description that sets forth illustrative aspects, in which the principles of the present disclosure are utilized, and the accompanying drawings of which:
- (2) FIG. 1 is an illustration showing an exemplary support system, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (3) FIG. 2 is top perspective view of the support system of FIG. 1, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (4) FIG. 3 is a side perspective view of the support system of FIG. 1, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (5) FIG. 4 is a rear perspective view of the support system of FIG. 1, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (6) FIG. 5 is a top perspective view of an exemplary support system, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (7) FIG. 6 is a top view of the support system of FIG. 5, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (8) FIG. 7 is a side sectional view of an exemplary support system, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (9) FIG. 8 is a side sectional view of an exemplary support system, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure;
- (10) FIG. 9 is a top perspective view of an exemplary application member, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure; and
- (11) FIG. 10 is a side sectional view of an exemplary support system, in accordance with aspects of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

- (12) Aspects of the present disclosure are described in detail with reference to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals identify similar or identical elements.
- (13) Although the present disclosure will be described in terms of specific aspects, it will be readily apparent to those skilled in this art that various modifications, rearrangements, and substitutions may be made without departing from the spirit of the present disclosure. The scope of the present disclosure is defined by the claims appended hereto. For purposes of promoting an understanding of the principles of the present disclosure, reference will now be made to exemplary aspects in the drawings, and specific language will be used to describe the same.
- (14) The phrases “in an aspect,” “in aspects,” “in various aspects,” “in some aspects,” or “in other aspects” may each refer to one or more of the same or different aspects in accordance with the

present disclosure.

(15) The present disclosure includes systems, devices and methods for increasing support to living beings, such as animals, while bonding with and maintaining the animals' health. The support system, device and/or method may encourage the living beings to eat and/or drink to maintain their health, while simultaneously allowing them to bond with their human companions.

(16) As described herein, the support system provides various benefits. First, the system may increase bonding between a user and a living being, such as an owner and a pet animal, respectively. For example, a dog may bond with their owner as the dog consumes food from the owner's hand while using the system. Because the user's hand is accessible through the bowl, the dog may be familiar with the scent of the owner's hand and become more comfortable with the owner as a result. The dog owner may use this same support system to acclimate their dog to other family members and/or friends.

(17) Further, the support system may encourage low level feeding, i.e., feeding at the same or similar height level as the living being. For example, an owner often feeds their dog from a standing position, i.e., a position that is frequently above the dog. With the support system, an owner may be encouraged to sit or position themselves at the same or at a similar height level as their dog while the dog feeds from the support system. In doing so, the owner and dog can further bond as the owner feeds the dog on the dog's level.

(18) The support system may also promote slow feeding. For example, using the support system, when an owner observes their dog eating/drinking too quickly, the owner can throttle feeding by backing away. The owner can hold the support system with one hand while simultaneously using their other hand to signal to the dog to slow down, such as by petting or motioning the dog to stop and/or covering the top bowl of the support system. In doing so, the owner may train the dog to eat/drink slower.

(19) In addition, the support system may train a living being that is averse to bowl-feeding to eat/drink from a bowl via the user's hand. For example, a dog may become more likely to consume from the support system's bowl as they are familiar with their owner's scent, which is present due to the owner's exposed hand. Over time, the dog may subconsciously become acclimated to eating from a normal bowl: The dog can begin by enjoying the material in the support system and the benefits of the exposed hand, then gradually transition to eating from a normal bowl as they become acclimated to doing so. In addition, the owner can retain the benefit of holding more food, water, etc. than with their hand alone, speeding up feedings.

(20) Further, the support system may serve as a safety tool to help shield and/or protect a user's hand during feedings. For example, using the support system, the dog only has access to eat and/or bite what is within the support system. The palm of the user, which lays flat with and/or under the bowl, is not immediately and easily accessible, and therefore is protected from unwanted biting.

(21) Still further, the support system eliminates the need to find a bowl; at least a cup of food and/or water may fit into the support system. The bowl of the support system may be the size, shape and/or configuration of a small container, and/or may be disposable for on-the-go storage and use. For example, a container with pre-packaged water would save a user time and resources over attempting to find a bowl, water and/or food while out for a walk with their dog.

(22) The above benefits of the support system are exemplary illustrations and not limiting examples of usage. For example, the support system is not limited to use for feedings, and may be used for other methods of playtime, bonding, and/or training with an animal. Moreover, the support system is configured for use with various living beings, such as horses, livestock, etc.

(23) As discussed below, various support systems, methods and devices are disclosed, which may use some or all of the disclosed elements in varying configurations, arrangements, etc., and are not limited to the member(s) described in this application and may include more member(s).

(24) Referring to FIGS. 1-4, a support system **100** is shown. The support system **100** generally includes a retain member **100A**, a fastener member **100B**, and an access member **100C**.

(25) As shown in FIG. 2, the retain member **100A** may have an inner surface **102A** and an outer surface **104A**. The retain member **100A** may generally mimic the shape of a bowl, such as a dog food bowl used for feedings, although other configurations are contemplated. In aspects, the shape of retain member **100A** may differ based on the intended use, such as a shape that is more ergonomic for the user or animal (e.g., flat plate, square, shaped container, etc.).

(26) The retain member **100A** may hold water/food, treats, medicine, etc. within the support system **100** for consumption by a living being (e.g., an animal). In aspects, the retain member **100A** may also serve as a protection mechanism for a user. For example, when inserting the user's hand into the support system **100**, the user's fingers are shielded by the outer surface **104A** of the retain member **100A**, therefore preventing the animal from biting the user's hand while using the support system **100**.

(27) As shown in FIG. 3, the fastener member **100B** generally includes a strap **102B** and handles **104B**. The strap **102B** may be configured to loop through slots **106B** of the handles **104B**. The strap **102B** may be a piece of fabric (e.g., cotton, spandex, elastic) with an attachment mechanism **110B** allowing portions of the strap **102B** to attach together. The attachment mechanism may be hook-and-pile fasteners, although alternative attachment mechanisms such as buttons, clasps, etc. are envisioned. In aspects, handles **104B** may be formed on opposing sides of the retain member **100A**, although alternative positions are envisioned. For example, the handles may be removably coupled and/or glued onto the retain member **100A**. A hook **108B** may be attached to the strap **102B**. The hook **108B** may be used to pull down on the strap **102B** for easy insertion into/removal from the holes **106B** and/or the user's hands. In aspects, the hook **108B** may operate as a slide-adjuster to alter the size and/or tightness of the strap **102B** around the user's hand.

(28) As shown in FIGS. 2-4, end portions **112B** of the strap **102B** may be placed through the holes **106B** and the hook **108B**. Then, the end portions **112B** of the strap **102B** may be U-turned to attach to themselves via the attachment mechanism **110B**. In aspects, the attachment mechanism **110B** may be distributed along an entire length of the strap **102B**, although alternative layouts are envisioned, such as distribution along one side or on the end portions **112B** of strap **102B**. The strap **102B** is looped through the handles **104B**, which may be used to secure a portion of the user's body (e.g., the user's hand) to the retain member **100A**. In aspects, a pair of hooks (not shown) may be inserted into each of the holes **106B**, attaching each of the end portions **112B** of the strap **102B** to the handles **104B**. The pair of hooks may be made of metal, plastic, or another durable material.

(29) With further reference to FIGS. 2-4, the access member **100C** generally includes walls **102C**, **104C**, and opening **106C**. The walls are formed from a lip or series of lips, which protrude from a rear end of the outer wall **104A** of the retain member **100A**, and which surround the opening **106C**. The walls **102C**, **104C** may protrude outward at a 90-degree angle from the retain member **100A**. As shown in FIGS. 2-4, the access member **100C** may include four inner walls **102C** and four outer walls **104C**, forming and/or bordering a square-shaped opening **106C**. Other arrangements are envisioned (e.g., a single circular wall forming a circular opening, or walls forming a rectangular-shaped opening). The access member **100C** is formed in a centered, bottom portion of the retain member **100A**, although alternative placements for the access member **100C** are envisioned, such as on one or more sides of the retain member **100A**. In aspects, multiple access members **100C** may be present, in varying shapes and/or sizes.

(30) The access member **100C** is formed in the retain member **100A**, with opening **106C** providing access for a feeding animal to smell and/or make contact with the user (e.g., the user's hand/palm). Generally, the access member **100C** creates a suction around the hand of the user, forming a tight seal between the user's hand and the retain member **100A**. The tight seal will create a barrier between the retain member **100A** and the user's hand, which will enable food and/or water to remain within the retain member **100A** and reduce/restrict the free flow of the food and/or water through the opening **106C**. In doing so, access member **100C** acts as part of retain member **100A**.

(31) In aspects, access member **100C** may be treated as a separate compartment of retain member

100A, where one item (e.g., water or wet food) may be placed within the resulting compartment of access member **100C**, and another item (e.g., dry food) may be placed in the remaining, upper portion of the retain member **100A**. In doing so, the two different items may remain separated within access member **100A**, preventing them from mixing them together. In aspects, an inner surface of the access member **100C** may have a raised surface and/or edge (not shown), which can create an additional level of separation and/or compartmentalization within access member **100A**. (32) In aspects, the opening **106C** of the access member **100C** may have a protective member (not shown) such as a mesh screen, filter, or other device. The protective member may be formed from chicken wire or a mesh-like material, although other materials are contemplated. The protective member serves to add an additional layer of protection and/or retention for the user. For example, the user could expose their hand to the animal with a shield to prevent biting, which may also assist in preventing pieces of food from exiting the opening **106C**.

(33) In aspects, the retain member **100A**, fastener member **100B**, and/or access member **100C** may be formed from a silicone or a rubber-like material, which can further enhance the seal between the support system **100** and the user's hand. Alternative materials, such as plastics and polymer/plastic composites, are also contemplated. In aspects, the access member **100C** may include an adhesive. The access member **100C** may be lined with a rubber O-ring gasket or a rubber O-ring sleeve to further seal the contents within the retain member **100A**. In aspects, the retain member **100A** and/or the access member **100C** may be formed from a metal, such as stainless steel. In doing so, the retain member **100A** and/or the access member **100C** may be dishwasher compatible.

(34) In aspects, the access member **100C** may be configured in the shape of/include a plug and/or stopper (not shown). The access member **100C** may be formed from silicone, plastic, cork, polymer/plastic composites, or another durable and/or flexible material. This plug configuration may assist in preventing items from exiting the retain member **100A**, and/or allowing the user to place their hand on a different portion of the support system. In aspects, the plug may be a separate component from the access member **100C** and/or designed to have a mating configuration with the access member **100C**.

(35) FIG. 1 shows an exemplary illustration of the support system **100** in use. During use, a user may place their hand (e.g., their palm) under the retain member **100A** to connect with the access member **100C**. Generally, the user's hand is positioned to cover or overlap the access member **100C**. For example, the user could place their hand under the retain member **100A** (e.g., bowl) palm side up. Then, after fastening the bowl to their hand with the fastener member **100B**, the user could place food and/or water into the retain member **100A** for an animal (e.g., a dog) to drink. While the animal eats/drinks, it may also choose to connect with the palm of the user, thereby increasing bonding and support.

(36) Referring now to FIGS. 5 and 6, a support system **200** is shown, which discloses features similar to the support system **100**. The support system **200** generally includes a retain member **200A**, a fastener member **200B**, and an access member **200C**. Generally, the components of support system **200** (the retain member **200A**, the fastener member **200B**, and the access member **200C**) are integrated and/or formed from a single component, although detachable, independent components are contemplated.

(37) The retain member **200A** may have an inner surface **202A** and an outer surface **204A**. The retain member **200A** may generally mimic the shape of a bowl, such as a dog food bowl, used for feedings. In aspects, the shape of retain member **200A** may differ based on the intended use, such as a shape that is more ergonomic for the user or animal (e.g., flat plate, square, shaped container, etc.).

(38) The retain member **200A** may hold water/food, treats, medicine, etc. within the support system **200** for consumption by a living being (e.g., an animal). In aspects, the retain member **200A** may also serve as a protection mechanism for a user. For example, when inserting the user's hand into the support system **200**, the user's fingers are shielded by the outer surface **104A** of the retain

member **200A**, therefore preventing the animal from biting the user's hand while using the support system **100**.

(39) The fastener member **200B** generally includes bands **202B** and slots **204B**, **206B**. The fastener member **200B** may be located on a rear portion of the outer wall **104A** of the retain member **100A**, although alternative placements are contemplated. As discussed above, the fastener member **200B** is generally integrated with the retain member **100A** as a single unit. The bands **202B** wrap around in a U-shape to connect with alternating sides of the retain member **100A**, forming a handle-like device for the user to insert an appendage (e.g., their hand) into.

(40) As seen in FIG. 6, the bands **202B** may be rectangular shaped, and/or alternating thick and thin bands interconnecting in a parallel fashion, which can provide increased strength and flexibility. The bands **202B** may press against the back of the user's hand while their palm is pressed against the access member **200C** and/or the retain member **200A**, securing the user's hand to the support system **200**. In aspects, a hook (not shown) may be attached to the bands **202B**. The hook may be used to pull down on the bands **202B** for easy insertion of a user's hand into slots **204B**, **206B**, and/or may operate as a slide-adjuster to alter the tightness and/or size of the bands **202B** around the user's hand. Alternative configurations (e.g., crisscross style and/or bands with a uniform/similar thickness along their entire length) are also contemplated and within the scope of this disclosure.

(41) Slots **204B**, **206B** allow space for a user to insert and/or fasten their hand into the fastener member **200B**. Generally, a pair of slots **204B** may be larger and present on opposing sides of the fastener member **100B** for insertion of the entire user's hand first. The slots **206B** may be smaller and present on the remaining two opposing sides of the fastener member for insertion of a user's finger(s) (e.g., their thumb) thereafter. In including slots **204B**, **206B** on both sides of the fastener member **200B**, the user can wear the support system **200** on either their left or right hand, depending on dominance/preference. For example, a user may insert their hand into either one of the larger slots **204B**, then insert their thumb into either one of the smaller slots **206B**, similar to putting on a glove. Then, the tension, restriction, and/or the friction of the material may cause the support system **200** to bond to the user's hand. In aspects, only one larger slot **204B** and only one smaller slot **206B** may be present.

(42) Access member **200C** generally includes walls **202C**, **204C** and opening **206C**. The walls **202C**, **204C** are formed from a lip or series of lips, which protrude from a rear portion of the outer wall **204A** of the retain member **200A**, surrounding the opening **206C**. The walls **202C**, **204C** may protrude outward at a 90-degree angle from the retain member **200A**. As best shown in FIG. 6, the access member **200C** may include four inner walls **202C** and four outer walls **204C**, forming and/or bordering a square shaped opening **206C**. Other configurations are envisioned (e.g., a single circular wall forming a circular opening, or walls forming a rectangular-shaped opening). Multiple access members **200C** may be formed in retain member **200A**. Generally, the access member **200C** is formed in a centered, bottom portion of the retain member **200A**, although alternative placements for the access member **200C** are envisioned, such as on one or more sides of the retain member **200A**. In aspects, multiple access members **200C** may be present, in varying shapes and/or sizes.

(43) The access member **200C** is formed in the retain member **200A**, with opening **206C** providing access for a feeding animal to smell and/or make contact with the user (e.g., the user's hand/palm). Generally, the access member **200C** creates a suction around the hand of the user, forming a tight seal between the user's hand and the retain member **200A**. The tight seal will create a barrier between the retain member **200A** and the user's hand, which enables food and/or water to remain within the retain member **200A** and reduces/restricts the free flow of the food and/or water through the opening **206C**. In doing so, access member **200C** acts as a part of retain member **100A** to hold food and/or water. In aspects, access member **200C** may be treated as a separate compartment of retain member **200A**, wherein one item (e.g., water or wet food) may be placed within the resulting compartment of access member **200C**, and another item (e.g., dry food) may be placed in the

remaining, upper portion of the retain member **200A**. In doing so, the two different items may remain separated within access member **200A**, preventing them from mixing them together.

(44) In aspects, an inner surface of the access member **200C** may have a raised surface and/or edge **208C**, which can create an additional level of separation/compartmentalization within access member **200C**. In aspects, grooves and/or striations **206A** may be formed on the inner surface **202A** of the retain member **202A**, which can further assist in maintaining the above-discussed separation and prevent food from sliding out of the retain member **200A**.

(45) In aspects, the opening **206C** of the access member **200C** may have a protective member (not shown) such as a mesh screen, filter, or other device. The protective member may be made of chicken wire or a mesh-like material, although other materials are contemplated. The protective member serves to add an additional layer of protection and/or retention for the user. For example, the user could expose their hand to the animal with a shield to prevent biting, which may also assist in preventing pieces of food from exiting the opening **206C**.

(46) In aspects, the retain member **200A**, fastener member **200B**, and/or access member **200C** may be formed from a silicone or a rubber-like material, which can further enhance the seal between the support system **200** and the user's hand. Alternative materials, such as plastics and polymer/plastic composites, are also contemplated. In aspects, the access member **100C** may include an adhesive. The access member **100C** may be lined with a rubber O-ring gasket or a rubber O-ring sleeve to further seal the contents of the retain member **100A**. In aspects, the support system **200** may be formed from a flexible material to accommodate various sizes/shapes of appendages. In aspects, the retain member **100A** and/or the access member **300C** may be formed from a metal, such as stainless steel. In doing so, the retain member **100A** and/or the access member **300C** may be dishwasher compatible.

(47) In aspects, the access member **200C** may be configured in the shape of/include a plug or stopper (not shown). The access member **200C** may be formed from silicone, plastic, cork, polymer/plastic composites, or another durable and/or flexible material. This plug configuration may assist in preventing food and/or water from exiting the retain member **200A**, and/or allowing the user to place their hand on a different portion of the support system. In aspects, the plug may be a separate component from the access member **200C** and/or designed to have a mating configuration with the access member **200C**.

(48) Now referring to FIG. 7, a support system **300** is shown. The support system **300** generally includes a retain member **300A**, an access member **300B**, and a consume member **300C**.

(49) The retain member **300A** may have an inner surface **302A** and an outer surface **304A**. Generally, the retain member **300A** may mimic the shape of a bowl, such as a dog food bowl, used for feedings. In aspects, the shape of retain member **300A** may differ based on the intended use, such as a shape that is more ergonomic for the user or animal (e.g., flat plate, square, shaped container, etc.). The retain member **300A** may hold water/food, treats, medicine, etc. within the support system **300** for consumption by a living being (e.g., an animal). Generally, the retain member **300A** is formed from a rigid plastic or polymer/plastic composite, although other materials such as rubber or silicone are contemplated. In aspects, the retain member **300A** may include protective member(s) (not shown) to protect the hand/fingers of the user. The protective member(s) are generally formed as tabs extending from the sides of the retain member **300A**, which shield the fingers of a user when holding the retain member **300A**. The protective members may be formed from the same material and/or a different material from the retain member **300A**.

(50) The access member **300B** is configured for insertion into an opening **306A** of the retain member **300A**. Generally, the access member **300B** is located on a bottom portion of the inner surface **302A** of the retain member **300A**, although alternative configurations are contemplated. In aspects, the opening **306A** and the access member **300B** may be formed with matching threads (not shown). The opening **306A** may be configured to receive the access member **300B**. For example, the access member **300B** may be screwed into the opening **306A**. Generally, the access member

300B is formed from the same material as the retain member **300A**, but they may also differ in composition. For example, the access member **300B** and/or retain member **300A** may be formed from a rigid plastic or polymer/plastic composite, although other materials such as rubber or silicone are contemplated. In aspects, the access member **300B** and/or the retain member **300A** may be formed from a metal, such as stainless steel. In doing so, the support system **300** may be dishwasher compatible. The access member **300B** may be attached to the opening **306A** using a non-toxic, animal-friendly adhesive, such as honey, peanut butter, etc., although other products and/or methods of attachment are envisioned.

(51) The consume member **300C** is an item removably coupled/attached to the access member **300B**. Generally, the consume member **300C** is a food item used to entice an animal to use the support system **300** (e.g., to encourage the animal to eat/drink from the bowl). For example, the consume member **300C** may be a treat, ball of food, flavor cake/pouch, or other product that emits a scent/flavor. Other items, such as toys and scent packets are contemplated and within the scope of this disclosure. In aspects, the consume member **300C** may also be attached to the access member **300B** using a non-toxic, animal-friendly adhesive (e.g., peanut butter or honey).

(52) In use, the consume member **300C** is first placed on the access member **300B**. For example, a treat is affixed to the access member **300B** using peanut butter. Next, the access member **300B** is attached to the opening **306A**, similarly using peanut butter. Next, an additional item for consumption by the animal (e.g., food or water) may fill the remainder of the retain member **300A**. In doing so, the flavor and/or scent of the consume member will spread to the contents of/emit from the retain member **300A**, enticing the animal to use the support system **300**. For example, any water placed into the retain member **300A** on top of the consume member **300C** will absorb the scent and/or flavor of the consume member **300C**. This may encourage the dog to drink the water from the retain member **300A**, where they would normally not have to desire/curiosity to do so. Continued use of support system **300** may condition the animal to drink fluids and/or eat from a bowl generally, as they desire to retrieve the consume member **300C** at the bottom of the retain member **300A**.

(53) Now referring to FIG. 8, a support system **400** is shown. The support system **400** generally includes a retain member **400A**, a base member **400B**, a consume member **400C**, and an emit member **400D**. The retain member **400A** may have an inner surface **402A** and an outer surface **404A**. Generally, the retain member **400A** may mimic the shape of a bowl, such as a dog food bowl, used for feedings. The retain member **400A** may hold water/food, treats, medicine, etc. within the support system **400** for consumption by a living being (e.g., an animal). Generally, the retain member **400A** is hollow internally and formed from a rigid plastic or polymer/plastic composite, although other materials such as rubber or silicone are contemplated. For example, the retain member **400A** may be shaped similar to a bundt cake pan. In aspects, the shape of retain member **400A** may differ based on the intended use, such as a shape that is more ergonomic for the user or animal (e.g., flat plate, square, shaped container, etc.). In aspects, the retain member **400A** may include protective member(s) (not shown) to protect the hand/fingers of the user. The protective member(s) are generally formed as tabs extending from the sides of the retain member **400A**, which shield the fingers of the user when holding the retain member **400A**. The protective members may be formed from the same material or a different material from the retain member **400A**.

(54) The base member **400B** may be a plate for holding a consume member **400C**. The consume member **400C** may be a treat, ball of food, flavor cake/pouch, scent packet, or other product, which emits an enticing scent/flavor. In aspects, the consume member **400C** may simply be a thin layer of dog food or animal-friendly adhesive (peanut butter). Generally, the base member **400B** may be positioned underneath the retain member **400A**. The base member **400B** is typically the same size/shape as the bottom of the retain member **400A**, in order to completely enclose a bottom opening **406A** of retain member **400A**. In aspects, inserting the base member **400B** into the bottom

opening **406A** may form a fluid tight/vacuum seal with retain member **400A**. The base member **400B** may be formed from a rigid plastic or polymer/plastic composite, although other materials such as rubber, silicone, or metals are contemplated.

(55) As pictured, the base member **400B** may maintain a flat surface, but in aspects the base member **400B** may contain an indentation (not shown) formed on its surface to prevent movement of the consume member **400C** placed thereon. In aspects, the base member **400B** may be attached to the consume member **400C** by a non-toxic, animal-friendly adhesive, such as honey, peanut butter, etc., although other products and/or methods of attachment are envisioned. In doing so, the consume member **400C** acts like a scented gel packet, which gives off a strong odor that is enticing to an animal. In aspects, multiple consume members **400C** may be affixed to the base member **400B** (e.g., like dog food “nuggets”), which may be half/fully coated in the adhesive. In aspects, base member **400B** may be a weighted bar or O-ring, which sinks to the bottom of the retain member **400A** and includes a consume member **400C**. Once the water/food and/treats are consumed, the base member **400B** may be used as a toy.

(56) The emit member **400D** generally includes channels **402D** and a top opening **404D**. The channels **402D** include the hollow inside of the retain member **400A**, allowing a scent of the consume member **400C** to travel out from the base member **400B** and through the top opening **404D**. In aspects, an additional consume member **400C** (e.g., a scent packet) may be placed on/below the surface of the top opening **404D** to further enhance the effect of the scent. For example, a food item may be placed on base member **400B** and a scent packet to enhance the smell may be placed below the top opening **404D**.

(57) In use, the consume member **400C** is first placed on the base member **400B**. For example, a treat is affixed to the base member **400B** using peanut butter. Next, the base member **400B** is attached to the bottom opening **406A**, creating a tight seal. Next, an additional item for consumption by the animal (e.g., food or water) may fill the remainder of the retain member **400A**. Then, the scent of the consume member **400C** will travel through the channels **402D** and exit out of the top opening **404D**, enticing the animal to use the support system **400**. For example, while smelling the scent of the consume member **400C**, the dog may want to drink the water from the retain member **400A**, where they would normally not have to desire/curiosity to do so. Continued use may condition the animal to drink for fluids and/or eat from a bowl generally, as they desire to retrieve the consume member **400C**, which they smell at the bottom of the retain member **400A**.

(58) Now referring to FIG. 9, an application member **500** is shown. The application member **500** generally includes an inner surface **502**, an outer surface **504**, legs **506**, **508**, and base **510**. Application member **500** may be a U-shaped device, which is configured to align with the inside of support systems **100**, **200**, **300** or **400**, and/or **600**. For example, application member **500** may be configured to fit snugly against the inside surface **102A** of retain member **100A**. In aspects, the application member may consist of a handle (not shown) and one or more legs **506**, **508**. The application member **500** may be formed from a rigid plastic or polymer/plastic composite, although other materials such as rubber or silicone are contemplated.

(59) Generally, a consume member **500C** is attached to application member **500**. The consume member **500C** may be a treat, ball of food, flavor cake/pouch, scent packet, or other product, which emits an enticing scent/flavor. As pictured, the consume member **500C** may be placed on the base **510** and/or on the legs **506**, **508** of the application member **500**, although alternative placements are possible. The base **510** may contain an indentation (not pictured) to prevent movement of the consume member **500C**. The legs **506**, **508** may contain indentations/striations **512**, which may facilitate housing of a consume member **500C** (e.g., wet food or scented product). In aspects, the application member **500** may be attached to the support system **100**, **200**, **300**, **400**, **600**, and/or the consume member **500C** using a non-toxic, animal-friendly adhesive, such as honey, peanut butter, etc., although other adhesion methods are envisioned.

(60) In aspects, application member may contain a scented oil, gel, crayon, spray or powder-like

solution, which can be applied to member(s) of the support system **100, 200, 300, 400, 600**.

Scented pads, such as cotton pads or strips (not shown) may be attached to legs **506, 508** to further retain an intended scent. For example, the user may use the application member **500** to rub a scent onto the outer surface of a retain member.

(61) In use, a consume member **500C** is generally first placed on the application member **500**. For example, a treat is affixed to the base **510** using peanut butter and the legs **506, 508** are dipped in a scented oil. Next, the application member **500** is placed inside of a support system **100, 200, 300, 400, 600**. For example, application member is affixed to the inner surface **102A** of retain member **100A**. using peanut butter. Then, an additional item for consumption by the animal (e.g., food or water) may fill the remainder of the retain member **100A**. In doing so, the scent of the consume member **500C** will permeate through the food/water, enticing the animal to use the support system. For example, the scent and/or flavor may be a favorite of the animal. Further, the sight of the application member **500** may also entice the animal to want to eat/drink to reach the application member (e.g., shaped like a favorite toy). For example, while smelling the scent of the consume member **100C**, the dog may want to drink the water/eat the food from the retain member **100A**, where they would normally not have to desire/curiosity to. Continued use may condition the animal to drink for fluids and/or eat from a bowl generally, as they desire to retrieve the consume member **100C**, which they smell on the application member **500**.

(62) Now referring to FIG. **10**, a portable support system **600** is shown. The portable support system **600** generally includes two retain members **602A, 604A**, each attached to a cover member **602B, 604B**. The joined retain members and cover members may be stacked (e.g., two cover members joined at the center) to allow for easy transportation. In aspects, the cover members **602B, 604B** may each have a threaded surface (not shown), such that the two may be screwed together. However, other sealing methods such as clasps, clamps, and indentations are contemplated. The cover members **602B, 604B** may include small openings (not shown) from which a scent may emit.

(63) At least one retain member **602A, 604A** (e.g., retain member **604**) may include a base **606A**, which may house a consume member **600C** affixed using an adhesive in a manner similar to those described above. For example, the top retain member **602A** may contain water, while the bottom retain member **604A** may include a treat affixed with peanut butter to a bottom of the base member **606A**, which is then covered by dry food. The cover members **602B, 604B** may be removed one at a time, so that the animal can focus on eating and/or drinking separately if needed. In aspects, the retain members **602A, 604A** may be disposable, such that the cover member **602B, 604B** are interchangeable with different retain members for transportation on the go. For example, a user may bring disposable retain members **602A, 604B** when taking their dog for a walk, which they can open when reaching their destination. After use, they may be disposed of and new retain members may be used. In aspects, the covers **602B 604B** may be configured to fit around other support systems **100, 200, 300, 400**.

(64) Other variations/configurations of the above support systems are envisioned. For example, in one support system, a retain member may be adapted to fit and/or screw into a throw member (not shown). The throw member can act like a cover on-the-go, similar to portable support system **600**. This may then have the added benefit of use as a frisbee or throw toy. In doing so, a user could serve their dog food/water and/or detach the throw member and play catch with the animal. In aspects, the throw member may contain additional members, such as a handle member on top/on the side of the throw member. The handle member may be a U-shaped piece of plastic or silicone, although other shapes and materials are envisioned, such as those more ergonomic to a user's hand. The throw member may be configured to hold a stick, a toy, application member, and/or a consume member, which will entice the dog to play with the throw member. For example, the treat could emit an enticing scent across the air, which stimulates the animals when the user throws the frisbee for the animal to pick up.

(65) In another example, a support system can be built into a dog walking leash handle (not

shown), which may attach to a cord, chain, and/or rope for walking a dog. The support system may include an application member with a consume member, a cover member, a retain member, and/or a throw member. The application member can be used to apply a scent to the throw member, the cover member, a retain member, a toy, and/or another member of the support system. Another application member/pad may be inserted or built into the dog walking leash handle. In aspects, the consume member may be placed on the application member and/or the throw member. The cover member may include small openings from which a scent may emit.

(66) In a further example, a support system may be formed in the shape of a glove (not shown) to fit onto a user's hand. The glove-like support system may include a retain member, a fastener member, an access member, and/or a consume member. The fastener member may be an elastic band, similar to that of a glove, which tightens the seal of the support system around the user's hand. Generally, the access member may be an opening within the retain member, which exposes the user's hand. The access member may be a single opening in the center of the glove-like structure, or an opening extending along the length of the user's hand in a U-shape. The access member may include a plastic or silicone border, forming a seal against the user's hand so that the access member functions as a retain member. A consume member may be placed within the retain member, e.g., within the walls of the glove-like structure, or within the borders of the access member. The close connection between the retain member and the user's hand may further entice and/or strengthen the bond between an animal and a user.

(67) In still a further example, the support system could function as a large container, such as a large measuring cup (not shown). The support system may include a large retain member, a handle, and an access member. The large retain member may be suited for holding a large quantity of water, wet food, dry food etc., which may be helpful when feeding multiple/larger animals (e.g., horses or livestock). In aspects, the support system may be made of plastic, silicone, glass, etc. The handle may be affixed or formed from one side of the retain member, allowing the user to insert their hand underneath. The handle may include a rubber coating to strengthen the user's grip and/or tighten their seal around the access member. In aspects, the handle may also vary in size/shape to enhance the grip/seal of the user. The access member may be formed on the same side of the retain member as the handle, exposing a portion of the user's hand to the feeding animal.

(68) As discussed above, a consume member may be a scented gel. To generally make a scented gel, a user may slowly place approximately two tbsp of gelatin into a pot with approximately one cup of room temperature water, then allow the mixture to swell/balloon. After about five-fifteen minutes, the gelatin will balloon and begin to dissolve. Then, the pot can be removed from the heat and allowed to cool. The mixture may be placed into a Pyrex® or similar container (e.g., heat-resistant cup or bowl). Afterwards, about ¼ tsp of potassium sorbate can be added and stirred into the mixture. Then, about ½ cup of water can be added, followed by about ½ cup of vodka. An essential oil or scent solution can be added and mixed in, as well. The mixture can then be contained in a jar or pan and placed into the refrigerator for approximately three hours. To complete, the jar or pan can be covered with frog lids until ready to use. Another scented device that could be used with and/or in addition to the scented gel described is a cloth or pad with an oil or ingredient added to it. The oil or solution may be vanilla, coconut, ginger, niaouli, chamomile, helichrysum, peppermint, eucalyptus, etc. or another scent that could provide various benefits to animals such as dogs when they smell it.

(69) The support systems and disclosed members/devices are not limited to the items listed. Each element, arrangement, configuration, component, and member of the embodiment is not limited to the configuration(s), composition(s), purpose(s), or arrangement(s) described. This embodiment and its elements are not limited to what had been described. The program(s), embodiment(s), processes, configurations, benefits, etc. are not limited to what has been described. The embodiment and its members are not limited to what has been described.

(70) While the embodiment has been described with a certain degree of particularity, it should be

recognized that elements thereof may be altered by persons skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the embodiment. Accordingly, the present embodiment is not intended to be limited to the specific forms set forth herein, but on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications and equivalents as can be reasonably included within the scope of the disclosure.

(71) The definition or description of each member or component is not limited to what has been listed in this specification. The system is not limited to use as a bowl and can readily embody other devices and/or configurations. For example, the embodiment is not limited to use with dogs and can be readily used with other animals, being or entities, such as those who consume food or water. Further, the materials used in the embodiment are not limited to what has been described and other materials can readily be employed. Furthermore, the benefits listed are not limited, as the system could provide additional benefits and uses.

(72) Although the present embodiment has been described in considerable detail with reference to certain preferred versions thereof, other versions would be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. These aspects of the system are not meant to be exclusive. Furthermore, some features may apply to certain versions of the invention, but not others. Other features, aspects, and advantages of the present embodiment will be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art when read in conjunction with the following description and accompanying drawings. Therefore, the spirit and scope of the appended claims should not be limited to the description of the preferred versions contained herein.

Claims

1. A feeding support system, comprising: a bowl-shaped housing including an upper surface and a lower surface opposing the upper surface, the upper surface configured to retain at least one item for consumption by an animal; an attachment arm distributed along a length of the bowl-shaped housing, the attachment arm configured to affix the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing to an appendage of a user; at least one handle extending from the bowl-shaped housing, the at least one handle defining an elongate slot for receiving an end portion of the attachment arm; and an aperture defined in the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing, the aperture configured to expose a first portion of the appendage of the user to the animal, wherein the lower surface is configured to shield a second portion of the appendage of the user when the appendage is affixed thereto.
2. The feeding support system of claim 1, wherein the aperture defines a square-shaped opening configured to enhance an ergonomic feature of the bowl-shaped housing for the appendage of the user.
3. The feeding support system of claim 1, further comprising a hook to enable adjustment of a length of the attachment arm.
4. The feeding support system of claim 1, wherein the attachment arm is positioned beneath the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing.
5. The feeding support system of claim 1, further comprising a protective member covering at least a portion of the aperture, the protective member including at least one of a mesh screen, a filter, or chicken wire.
6. The feeding support system of claim 1, further comprising a plug configured to selectively seal the aperture to retain the at least one item within the upper surface of the bowl-shaped housing.
7. The feeding support system of claim 1, wherein the aperture includes an outwardly protruding lip configured to form a water-tight seal against the second portion of the appendage of the user.
8. The feeding support system of claim 7, wherein the bowl-shaped housing is fabricated from at least one of a silicone or rubber configured to enhance the water-tight seal of the outwardly protruding lip against the second portion of the appendage of the user.
9. The feeding support system of claim 7, wherein the outwardly protruding lip includes at least

one of an adhesive, a rubber O-ring gasket, or a rubber O-ring sleeve configured to enhance the water-tight seal of the outwardly protruding lip against the second portion of the appendage of the user.

10. The feeding support system of claim 1, wherein the at least one handle includes first and second handles extending from diametrically opposed sides of the bowl-shaped housing.

11. The feeding support system of claim 10, wherein the attachment arm includes a coupling mechanism configured to couple a first side of the attachment arm to a second side of the attachment arm, and wherein the attachment arm is permanently affixed to the first handle and releasably coupled to the second handle by the coupling mechanism.

12. The feeding support system of claim 11, wherein the coupling mechanism includes at least one of hook-and-pile fasteners, buttons, or clasps.

13. A feeding support system, comprising: a bowl-shaped housing including an upper surface and a lower surface opposing the upper surface, the upper surface configured to retain at least one item for consumption by an animal; an attachment arm distributed along a length of the bowl-shaped housing, the attachment arm configured to affix the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing to an appendage of a user; at least one handle extending from the bowl-shaped housing, the at least one handle defining an elongate slot for receiving an end portion of the attachment arm; and a central aperture defined in the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing, the central aperture configured to expose a first portion of the appendage of the user to the animal, wherein the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing is configured to shield a second portion of the appendage of the user when the appendage is affixed thereto, and wherein the central aperture includes an outwardly protruding lip configured to interface with the second portion of the appendage of the user.

14. The feeding support system of claim 13, wherein the outwardly protruding lip is configured to form a water-tight seal against the second portion of the appendage of the user.

15. The feeding support system of claim 13, further comprising a hook to enable adjustment of a length of the attachment arm.

16. The feeding support system of claim 13, wherein the at least one handle includes first and second handles extending from diametrically opposed sides of the bowl-shaped housing.

17. The feeding support system of claim 16, wherein the attachment arm includes a coupling mechanism configured to couple a first side of the attachment arm to a second side of the attachment arm, and wherein the attachment arm is permanently affixed to the first handle and releasably coupled to the second handle by the coupling mechanism.

18. A feeding support system, comprising: a bowl-shaped housing including an upper surface and a lower surface opposing the upper surface, the upper surface configured to retain at least one item for consumption by an animal; an attachment arm distributed along a length of the bowl-shaped housing, the attachment arm configured to affix the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing to hand of a user; first and second handles extending from diametrically opposed sides of the bowl-shaped housing, the first and second handles defining elongate slots for receiving an end portion of the attachment arm; and a central aperture defined in the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing, the central aperture configured to expose a palm of the hand of the user to the animal, wherein the lower surface of the bowl-shaped housing is configured to shield at least one finger of the hand of the user when the hand is affixed thereto, wherein the central aperture includes an outwardly protruding lip configured to form a water-tight seal against the palm of the hand of the user, and wherein the bowl-shaped housing, the first and second handles, and the central aperture are formed from a single component.

19. The feeding support system of claim 18, wherein the attachment arm includes a coupling mechanism configured to couple a first side of the attachment arm to a second side of the attachment arm, and wherein the attachment arm is permanently affixed to the first handle and releasably coupled to the second handle by the coupling mechanism.

20. The feeding support system of claim 18, further comprising a hook to enable adjustment of a length of the attachment arm.
