



US009589488B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Auyeung

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,589,488 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Mar. 7, 2017**

(54) **LED LIGHT ASSEMBLY WITH THREE-PART LENS**

15/00 (2013.01); **F21W 2131/40** (2013.01);
F21Y 2101/02 (2013.01); **F21Y 2105/001**
(2013.01); **F21Y 2105/003** (2013.01);
(Continued)

(71) Applicant: **Ultravision Technologies, LLC**, Dallas,
TX (US)

(72) Inventor: **David Siucheong Auyeung**, Carrollton,
TX (US)

(73) Assignee: **Ultravision Technologies, LLC**, Dallas,
TX (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **14/968,520**

(22) Filed: **Dec. 14, 2015**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2016/0102836 A1 Apr. 14, 2016

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Division of application No. 14/706,634, filed on May
7, 2015, now Pat. No. 9,212,803, which is a
(Continued)

(51) **Int. Cl.**
F21V 5/04 (2006.01)
G09F 13/02 (2006.01)
(Continued)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **G09F 13/22** (2013.01); **F21K 9/50**
(2013.01); **F21S 6/006** (2013.01); **F21V 5/007**
(2013.01); **F21V 29/00** (2013.01); **F21V 29/15**
(2015.01); **F21V 29/22** (2013.01); **F21V**
29/503 (2015.01); **F21V 29/74** (2015.01);
F21V 29/763 (2015.01); **F21V 33/00**
(2013.01); **G09F 13/02** (2013.01); **G09F**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC **F21Y 2105/001**; **F21S 4/008**; **F21V 5/08**;
F21V 5/007; **F21V 5/045**; **F21V 29/004**;
F21V 29/74; **F21V 29/745**; **F21V 29/76**;
G09F 13/02
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

4,235,285 A 11/1980 Johnson et al.
4,679,118 A 7/1987 Johnson et al.
(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

CN 201925854 U 8/2011
CN 202629916 U 12/2012
(Continued)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Dieker, et al., U.S. Appl. No. 61/659,828, filed Jun. 14, 2012,
"Asymmetric Area Lighting Lens with Improved Uniformity," 14
pages.

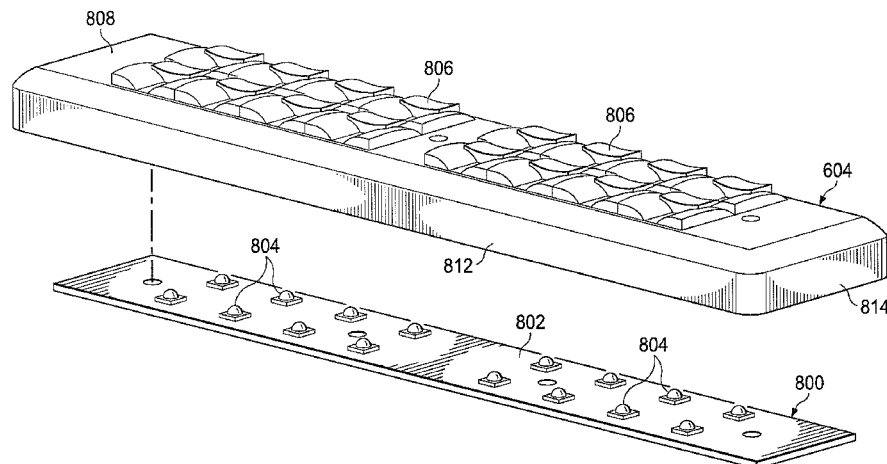
(Continued)

Primary Examiner — Ismael Negron
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Slater Matsil, LLP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A lighting assembly includes a number of LEDs and a lens
disposed over each one of the LEDs, the lenses configured
to direct light from that LED toward a predetermined area,
such that the light intensity from each lens is substantially
uniform across the entire predetermined area.

30 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets



Related U.S. Application Data

- continuation of application No. 14/630,500, filed on Feb. 24, 2015, which is a continuation of application No. 13/836,517, filed on Mar. 15, 2013, now Pat. No. 8,974,077.
- (60) Provisional application No. 61/677,346, filed on Jul. 30, 2012.
- (51) **Int. Cl.**
G09F 13/22 (2006.01)
F21V 5/00 (2015.01)
F21V 29/74 (2015.01)
F21V 29/00 (2015.01)
F21V 29/15 (2015.01)
F21V 33/00 (2006.01)
G09F 15/00 (2006.01)
F21S 6/00 (2006.01)
F21V 29/503 (2015.01)
F21V 29/76 (2015.01)
F21K 99/00 (2016.01)
G02B 19/00 (2006.01)
F21Y 101/02 (2006.01)
F21Y 105/00 (2016.01)
F21W 131/40 (2006.01)
- (52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC *G02B 19/0014* (2013.01); *G02B 19/0028* (2013.01); *G02B 19/0061* (2013.01); *G02B 19/0066* (2013.01); *G09F 2013/222* (2013.01)

References Cited**U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS**

- | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|----------------------|
| 5,036,248 A | 7/1991 | McEwan et al. | 7,686,469 B2 | 3/2010 | Ruud et al. |
| 5,083,194 A | 1/1992 | Bartilson | 7,748,863 B1 | 7/2010 | Holman et al. |
| 5,329,426 A | 7/1994 | Villani | 7,753,561 B2 | 7/2010 | Chaves et al. |
| 5,384,940 A | 1/1995 | Soule et al. | 7,841,750 B2 | 11/2010 | Wilcox et al. |
| 5,818,640 A | 10/1998 | Watanabe et al. | 7,857,483 B2 | 12/2010 | Storch et al. |
| 5,857,767 A | 1/1999 | Hochstein | 7,866,851 B2 | 1/2011 | Chang |
| 5,896,093 A | 4/1999 | Sjobom | 7,896,522 B2 | 3/2011 | Heller et al. |
| 5,924,788 A | 7/1999 | Parkyn, Jr. | 7,905,634 B2 | 3/2011 | Agurok et al. |
| 6,045,240 A | 4/2000 | Hochstein | 7,942,559 B2 | 5/2011 | Holder et al. |
| 6,274,924 B1 | 8/2001 | Carey et al. | 7,952,262 B2 | 5/2011 | Wilcox et al. |
| 6,364,507 B1 | 4/2002 | Yang | 7,997,761 B2 | 8/2011 | Peck et al. |
| 6,428,189 B1 | 8/2002 | Hochstein | 8,002,435 B2 | 8/2011 | Laporte |
| 6,517,218 B2 | 2/2003 | Hochstein | 8,035,119 B2 | 10/2011 | Ng et al. |
| 6,547,423 B2 | 4/2003 | Marshall et al. | 8,052,303 B2 | 11/2011 | Lo et al. |
| 6,582,103 B1 | 6/2003 | Popovich | 8,056,614 B2 | 11/2011 | Chen et al. |
| 6,783,269 B2 | 8/2004 | Pashley et al. | 8,092,049 B2 | 1/2012 | Kinnune et al. |
| 6,784,603 B2 | 8/2004 | Pelka et al. | 8,192,048 B2 | 6/2012 | Kristoffersen et al. |
| 6,799,864 B2 | 10/2004 | Bohler et al. | 8,201,970 B2 | 6/2012 | Wang et al. |
| 6,837,605 B2 | 1/2005 | Reill | 8,210,723 B2 | 7/2012 | Peck et al. |
| 6,864,513 B2 | 3/2005 | Lin et al. | 8,215,814 B2 | 7/2012 | Marcoux |
| 6,948,838 B2 | 9/2005 | Kunstler | 8,235,553 B2 | 8/2012 | Minami et al. |
| 7,048,400 B2 | 5/2006 | Murasko et al. | 8,246,219 B2 | 8/2012 | Teng et al. |
| 7,144,135 B2 | 12/2006 | Martin et al. | 8,262,252 B2 | 9/2012 | Bergman et al. |
| 7,153,002 B2 | 12/2006 | Kim et al. | 8,267,551 B2 | 9/2012 | Lin |
| 7,159,997 B2 | 1/2007 | Reo et al. | 8,273,158 B2 | 9/2012 | Jarrier et al. |
| 7,336,195 B2 | 2/2008 | van de Ven | 8,308,331 B2 | 11/2012 | Loh |
| 7,339,202 B2 | 3/2008 | Chiu et al. | 8,310,158 B2 | 11/2012 | Coplin et al. |
| 7,375,381 B2 | 5/2008 | Shimizu et al. | 8,330,387 B2 | 12/2012 | York et al. |
| 7,396,146 B2 | 7/2008 | Wang | 8,338,841 B2 | 12/2012 | Lerman et al. |
| 7,410,275 B2 | 8/2008 | Sommers et al. | 8,348,461 B2 | 1/2013 | Wilcox et al. |
| 7,434,964 B1 | 10/2008 | Zheng et al. | 8,360,613 B2 | 1/2013 | Little, Jr. |
| 7,458,706 B1 | 12/2008 | Liu et al. | 8,376,585 B2 | 2/2013 | Noeth |
| 7,478,915 B1 | 1/2009 | Pedersen | 8,454,194 B2 | 6/2013 | Liu |
| 7,513,653 B1 | 4/2009 | Liu et al. | 8,454,215 B2 | 6/2013 | Bollmann |
| 7,549,777 B2 | 6/2009 | Huang | 8,465,178 B2 | 6/2013 | Wilcox et al. |
| 7,618,162 B1 | 11/2009 | Parkyn et al. | 8,547,023 B2 | 10/2013 | Chang et al. |
| 7,618,163 B2 | 11/2009 | Wilcox | 8,567,987 B2 | 10/2013 | Wronski |
| 7,654,684 B1 | 2/2010 | Wight et al. | 8,573,815 B2 | 11/2013 | Mallory et al. |
| 7,674,019 B2 | 3/2010 | Parkyn et al. | 8,577,434 B2 | 11/2013 | Merchant et al. |
| | | | 8,602,599 B2 | 12/2013 | Zimmer et al. |
| | | | 8,610,357 B2 | 12/2013 | Stoll et al. |
| | | | 8,622,574 B2 | 1/2014 | Liu |
| | | | 8,628,217 B2 | 1/2014 | Moshtagh |
| | | | 8,632,225 B2 | 1/2014 | Koo et al. |
| | | | 8,662,704 B2 | 3/2014 | Carraher et al. |
| | | | 8,733,981 B2 | 5/2014 | Jiang et al. |
| | | | 8,801,221 B2 | 8/2014 | Lin et al. |
| | | | 8,835,958 B2 | 9/2014 | Hsieh |
| | | | 8,858,024 B2 | 10/2014 | Wu et al. |
| | | | 8,864,344 B2 | 10/2014 | Jiang et al. |
| | | | 8,870,410 B2 | 10/2014 | Auyeung |
| | | | 8,870,413 B2 | 10/2014 | Auyeung |
| | | | 8,876,325 B2 | 11/2014 | Lu et al. |
| | | | 8,922,734 B2 | 12/2014 | Lin |
| | | | 8,931,934 B2 | 1/2015 | Lin |
| | | | 9,046,293 B2 | 6/2015 | Pelka et al. |
| | | | 2004/0004827 A1 | 1/2004 | Guest |
| | | | 2005/0047170 A1 | 3/2005 | Hilburger et al. |
| | | | 2006/0076568 A1 | 4/2006 | Keller et al. |
| | | | 2006/0081863 A1 | 4/2006 | Kim et al. |
| | | | 2006/0146531 A1 | 7/2006 | Reo et al. |
| | | | 2006/0245083 A1 | 11/2006 | Chou et al. |
| | | | 2008/0073663 A1 | 3/2008 | Chang |
| | | | 2008/0080179 A1 | 4/2008 | Giorgi |
| | | | 2008/0084701 A1 | 4/2008 | Van De Ven et al. |
| | | | 2008/0180014 A1 | 7/2008 | Tzeng et al. |
| | | | 2009/0097265 A1 | 4/2009 | Sun et al. |
| | | | 2009/0180281 A1 | 7/2009 | Ahland, III et al. |
| | | | 2009/0256459 A1 | 10/2009 | Liu |
| | | | 2009/0273933 A1 | 11/2009 | Woodward et al. |
| | | | 2009/0290338 A1 | 11/2009 | Heller et al. |
| | | | 2009/0303711 A1 | 12/2009 | Remus et al. |
| | | | 2010/0008094 A1 | 1/2010 | Shuai et al. |
| | | | 2010/0014289 A1 | 1/2010 | Thomas et al. |
| | | | 2010/0014290 A1 | 1/2010 | Wilcox |
| | | | 2010/0046225 A1 | 2/2010 | Zheng |
| | | | 2010/0085774 A1 | 4/2010 | Park |
| | | | 2010/0128488 A1 | 5/2010 | Marcoux |
| | | | 2010/0172135 A1 | 7/2010 | Holder et al. |

(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2010/0195330	A1	8/2010	Schaefer et al.
2010/0232155	A1	9/2010	Wang
2010/0296267	A1	11/2010	Yu et al.
2010/0296283	A1	11/2010	Taskar et al.
2010/0302785	A1	12/2010	Zhou
2010/0302786	A1	12/2010	Wilcox et al.
2011/0002120	A1	1/2011	Song et al.
2011/0031887	A1	2/2011	Stoll et al.
2011/0038151	A1	2/2011	Carraher et al.
2011/0063857	A1	3/2011	Li et al.
2011/0068708	A1	3/2011	Coplin et al.
2011/0149548	A1	6/2011	Yang et al.
2011/0170283	A1	7/2011	Chan
2011/0205744	A1	8/2011	Kim
2011/0219650	A1	9/2011	Wright et al.
2011/0242807	A1	10/2011	Little, Jr. et al.
2011/0242816	A1	10/2011	Chowdhury et al.
2011/0278633	A1	11/2011	Clifford
2011/0280003	A1	11/2011	Hsu et al.
2012/0014115	A1	1/2012	Park et al.
2012/0080699	A1	4/2012	Chowdhury et al.
2012/0087125	A1	4/2012	Liu
2012/0163005	A1	6/2012	Liu
2012/0201022	A1	8/2012	van de Ven et al.
2012/0250321	A1	10/2012	Blincoe et al.
2012/0307495	A1	12/2012	Shih
2013/0010468	A1	1/2013	Stoll et al.
2013/0057861	A1	3/2013	Ishii et al.
2013/0063970	A1	3/2013	Oh
2013/0163005	A1	6/2013	Tsang
2013/0193850	A1	8/2013	Demuyne et al.
2013/0270585	A1	10/2013	Mei et al.
2013/0335979	A1	12/2013	Lauret et al.
2014/0016326	A1	1/2014	Dieker et al.
2014/0029253	A1	1/2014	Auyeung
2014/0029259	A1	1/2014	Auyeung
2014/0029274	A1	1/2014	Auyeung
2014/0085905	A1	3/2014	Broughton
2014/0104851	A1	4/2014	Auyeung
2014/0112007	A1	4/2014	Auyeung
2014/0168963	A1	6/2014	Stone et al.
2014/0168998	A1	6/2014	Tang et al.
2014/0268761	A1	9/2014	Raleigh et al.
2014/0373348	A1	12/2014	Li

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

CN	102889549	A	1/2013
EP	2553331	A1	2/2013
EP	2622267	A1	8/2013
WO	2006126123	A1	11/2006

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Whang, et al., "Designing Uniform Illumination Systems by Surface-Tailored Lens and Configurations of LED Arrays," IEEE 2009, Journal of Display Technology, vol. 5, No. 3, Mar. 2009, pp. 94-103.

Lee, S., "How to Select a Heat Sink," <http://www.electronics-cooling.com/1995/06/how-to-select-a-heat-sink/>, Jun. 1, 1995, pp. 1-10.

Steigerwald, et al., "Illumination with Solid State Lighting Technology," IEEE Journal on Selected Topics in Quantum Electronics, vol. 8, No. 2, Mar./Apr. 2002, pp. 310-320.

Kim, Yu-Sin, et al., "Development of a Numerical Model for the Luminous Intensity Distribution of a Planar Prism LED Luminaire for Applying an Optimization Algorithm," Luekos, vol. 9, No. 1, Jul. 2012, pp. 57-72.

Lee, Hsiao-Wen, et al., "Improvement of Illumination Uniformity for LED Flat Panel Light by Using Micro-Secondary Lens Array," Optics Express, vol. 20, No. S6, Nov. 5, 2012, 11 pages.

Liu, Peng, et al., "Optimized Design of LED Freeform Lens for Uniform Circular Illumination," Journal of Zhejiang University—Science C (Computers & Electronics), 2012, pp. 929-936.

Parkyn, William A., "Segmented Illumination Lenses for Steplighting and Wall-Washing," SPIE Conference on Current Development in Optical Design and Optical Engineering VIII, Denver, Colorado, Jul. 1999, SPIE vol. 3779, pp. 363-370.

Cheng, et al., "The Research of LED Arrays for Uniform Illumination," Advances in Information Sciences and Service Sciences (AISS), vol. 4, No. 10, Jun. 2012, pp. 174-182.

Arik, M., "Thermal Management of LEDs: Package to System," Third International Conference on Solid State Lighting, Proc. of SPIE, vol. 5187, Jan. 21, 2012, pp. 64-75.

TracePro, "LED Reflector and Lens Simulation Using TracePro Illumination Design and Analysis Software," White Paper, Oct. 2013, 11 pages.

Hubbell Lighting, "Universal Lighting Technologies Invention Disclosure," Jun. 14, 2012, 15 pages.

Office Action Summary received in U.S. Appl. No. 14/630,500, dated Dec. 31, 2015, pp. 1, 20-26.

Defendant Irvin International, Inc.'s Answer, Affirmative Defenses, and Counterclaims to Plaintiff's Complaint, *Ultravision Technologies v. Lamar et al.*, E.D. Texas, Case No. 2:16-cv-374, filed Jun. 6, 2016, pp. 1-41.

Lamar's First Amended Answer and Counterclaims to Plaintiff's Complaint, *Ultravision Technologies v. Lamar et al.*, E.D. Texas, Case No. 2:16-cv-374, filed Jun. 8, 2016, pp. 1-61.

Defendant American Lighting Technologies, Inc. D/B/A Lighting Technologies' Answer and Affirmative Defenses to Plaintiff's Complaint, *Ultravision Technologies v. Lamar et al.*, E.D. Texas, Case No. 2:16-cv-374, filed Jun. 6, 2016, pp. 1-37.

Defendant American Lighting Technologies, Inc. D/B/A Lighting Technologies' Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Plaintiff's Complaint, *Ultravision Technologies v. Lamar et al.*, E.D. Texas, Case No. 2:16-cv-374, filed Jun. 27, 2016, pp. 1-43.

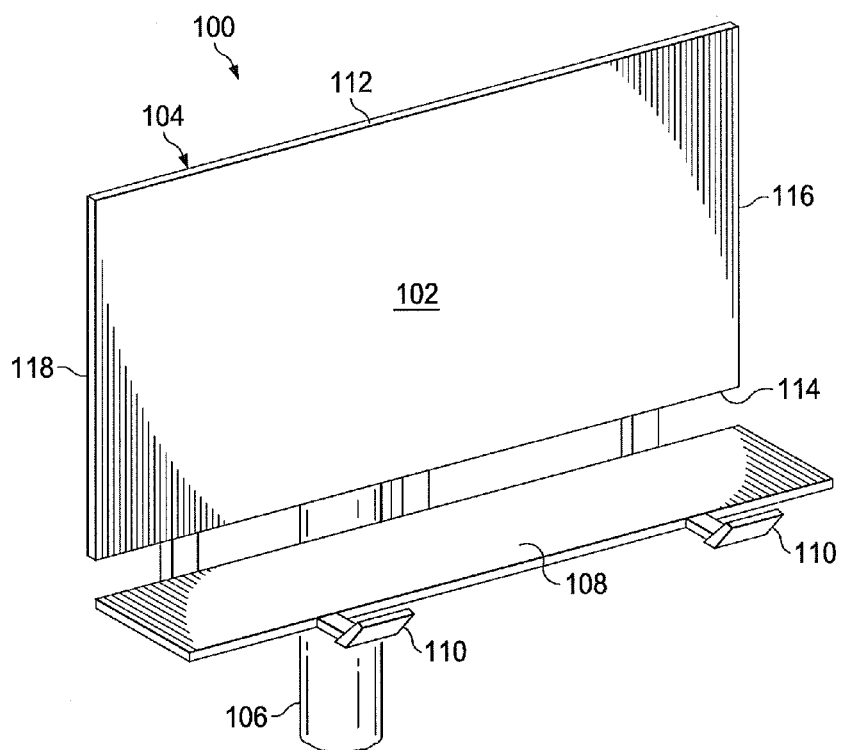


FIG. 1A

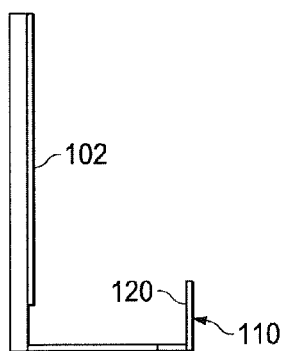


FIG. 1B

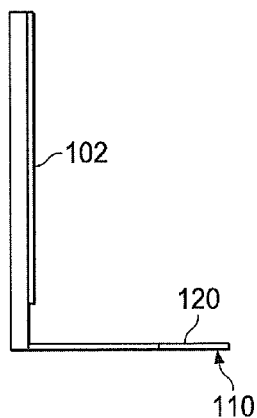


FIG. 1C

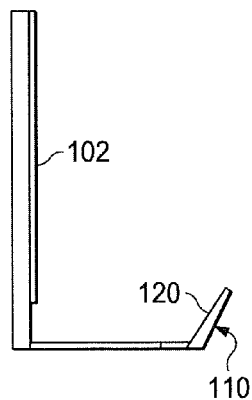


FIG. 1D

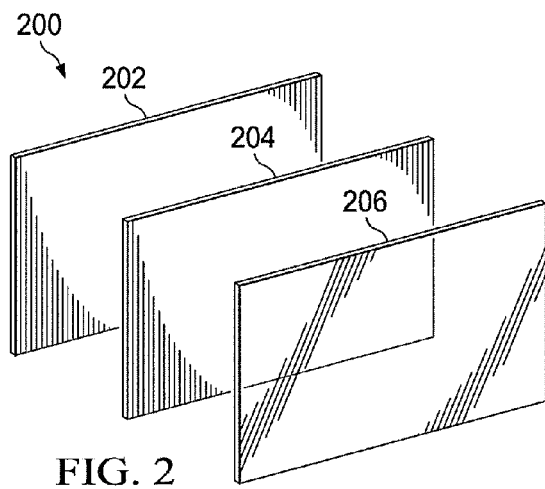


FIG. 2

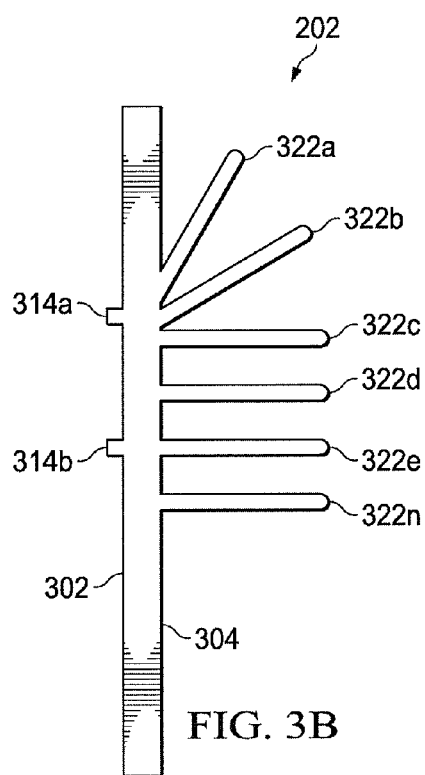


FIG. 3B

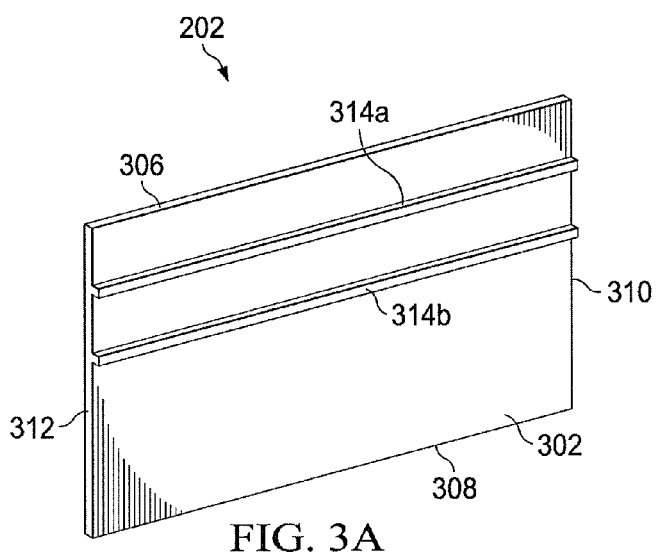


FIG. 3A

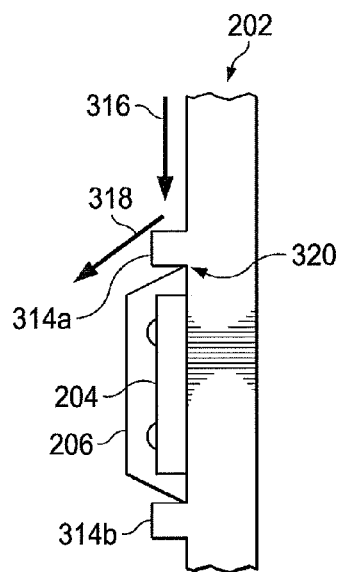


FIG. 3C

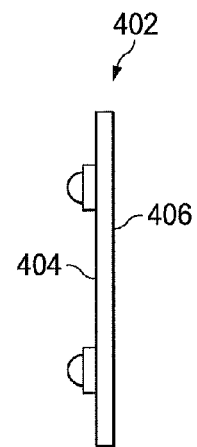


FIG. 4B

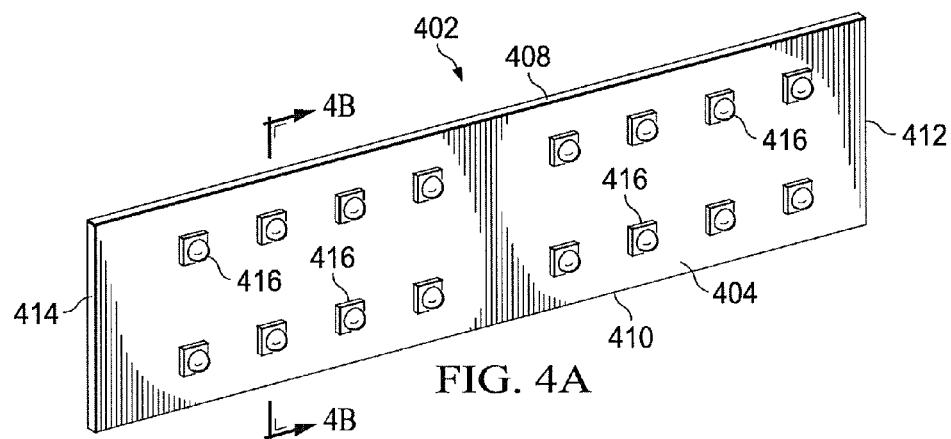
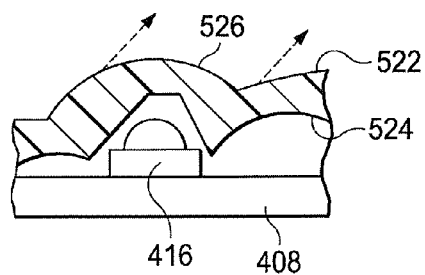
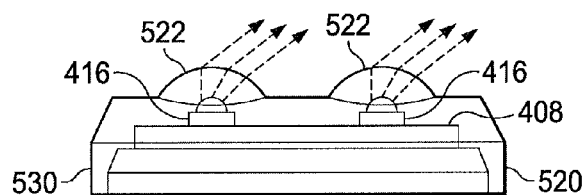
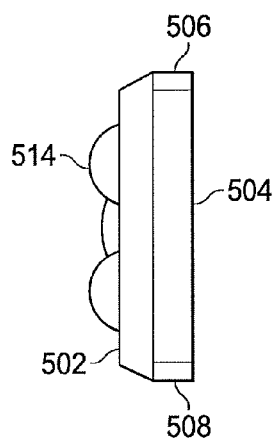
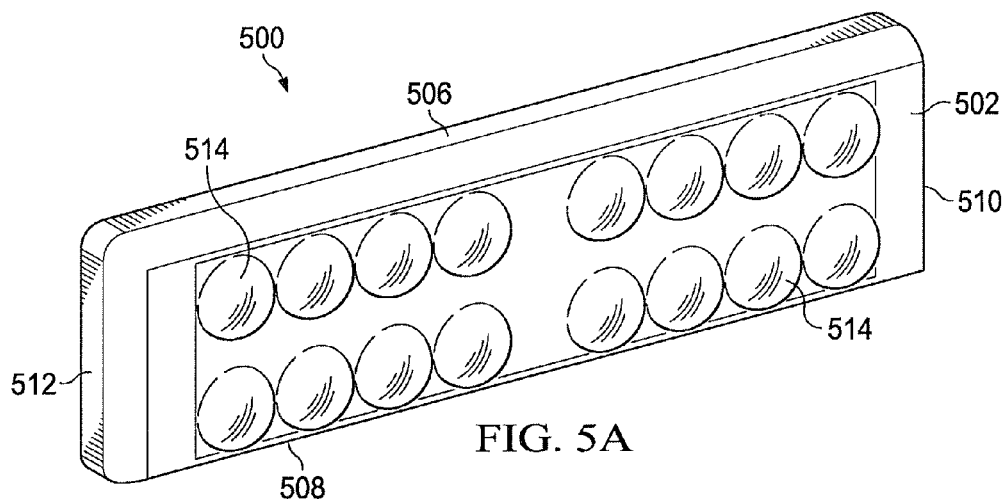


FIG. 4A



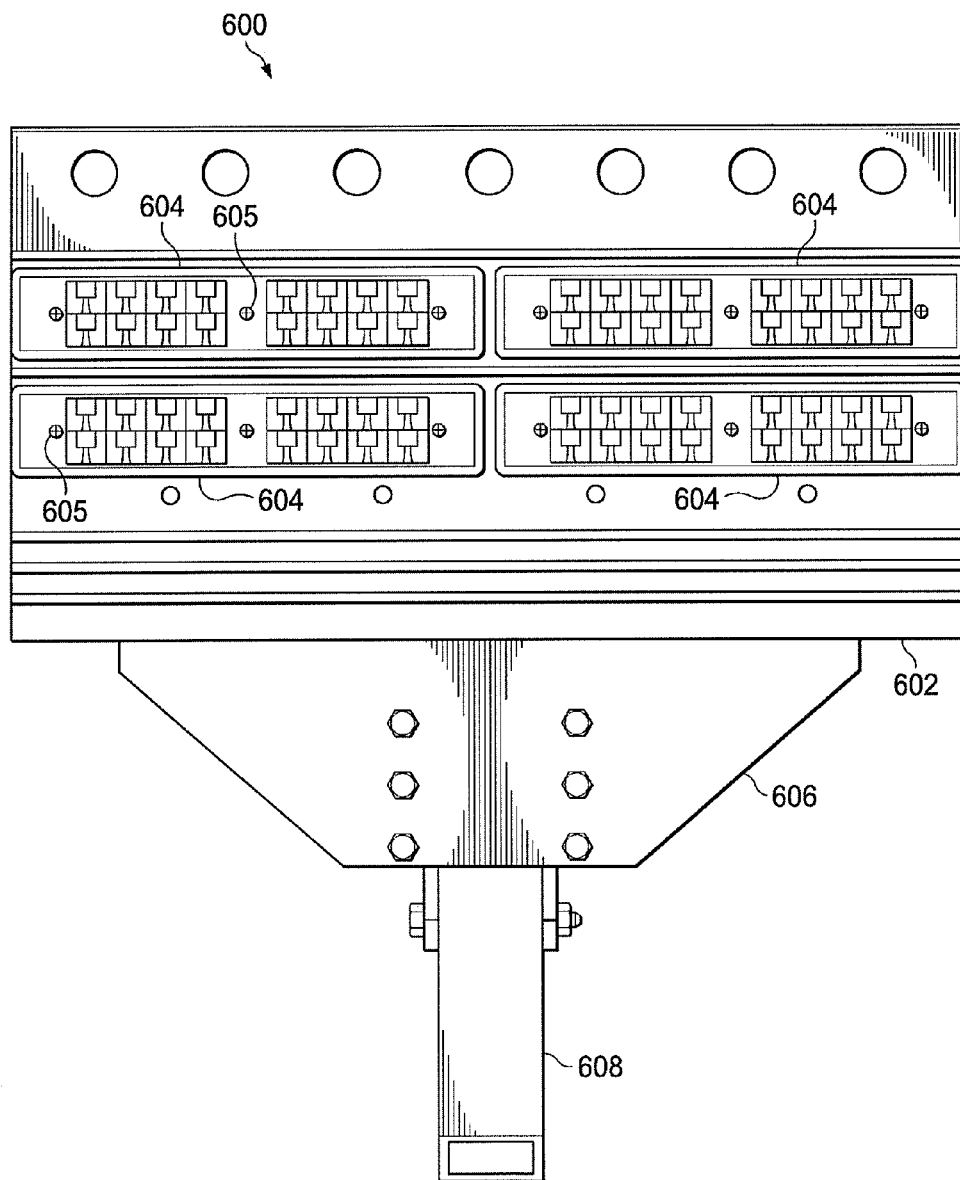


FIG. 6A

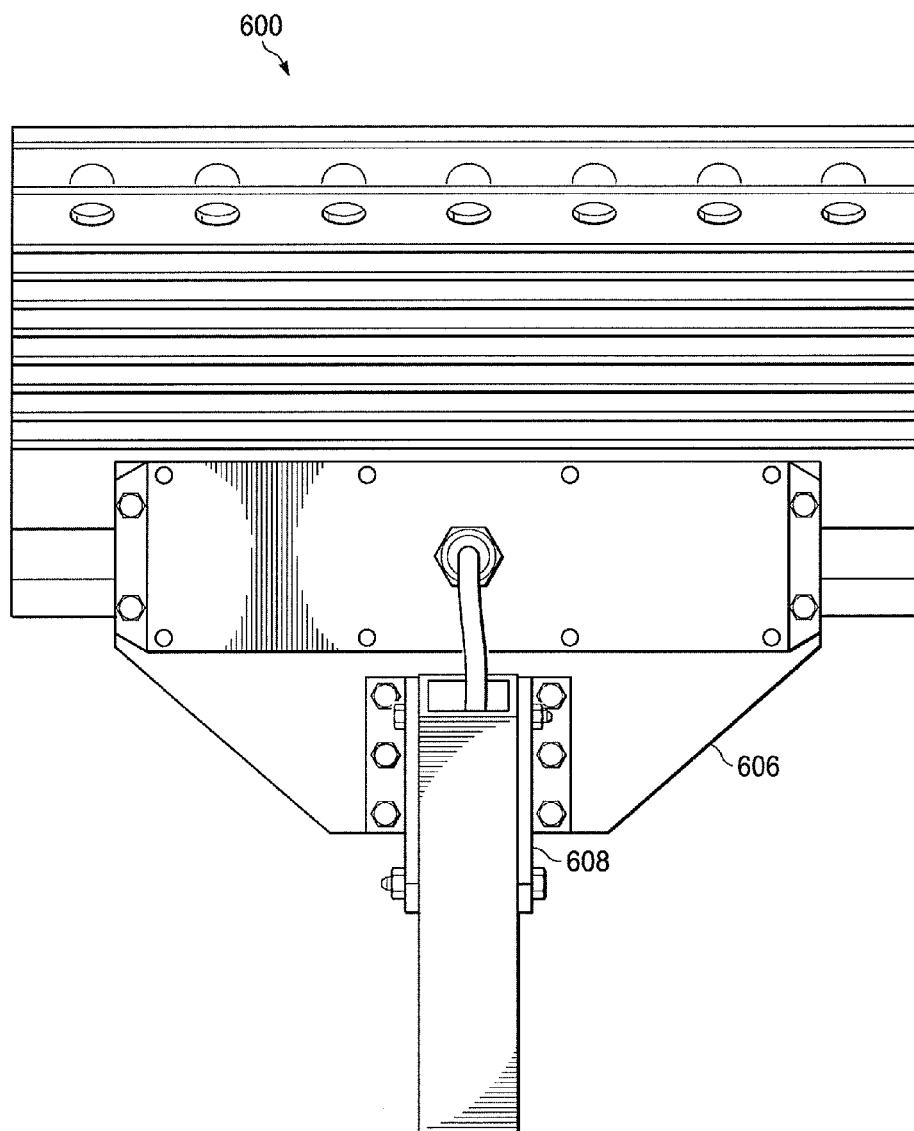


FIG. 6B

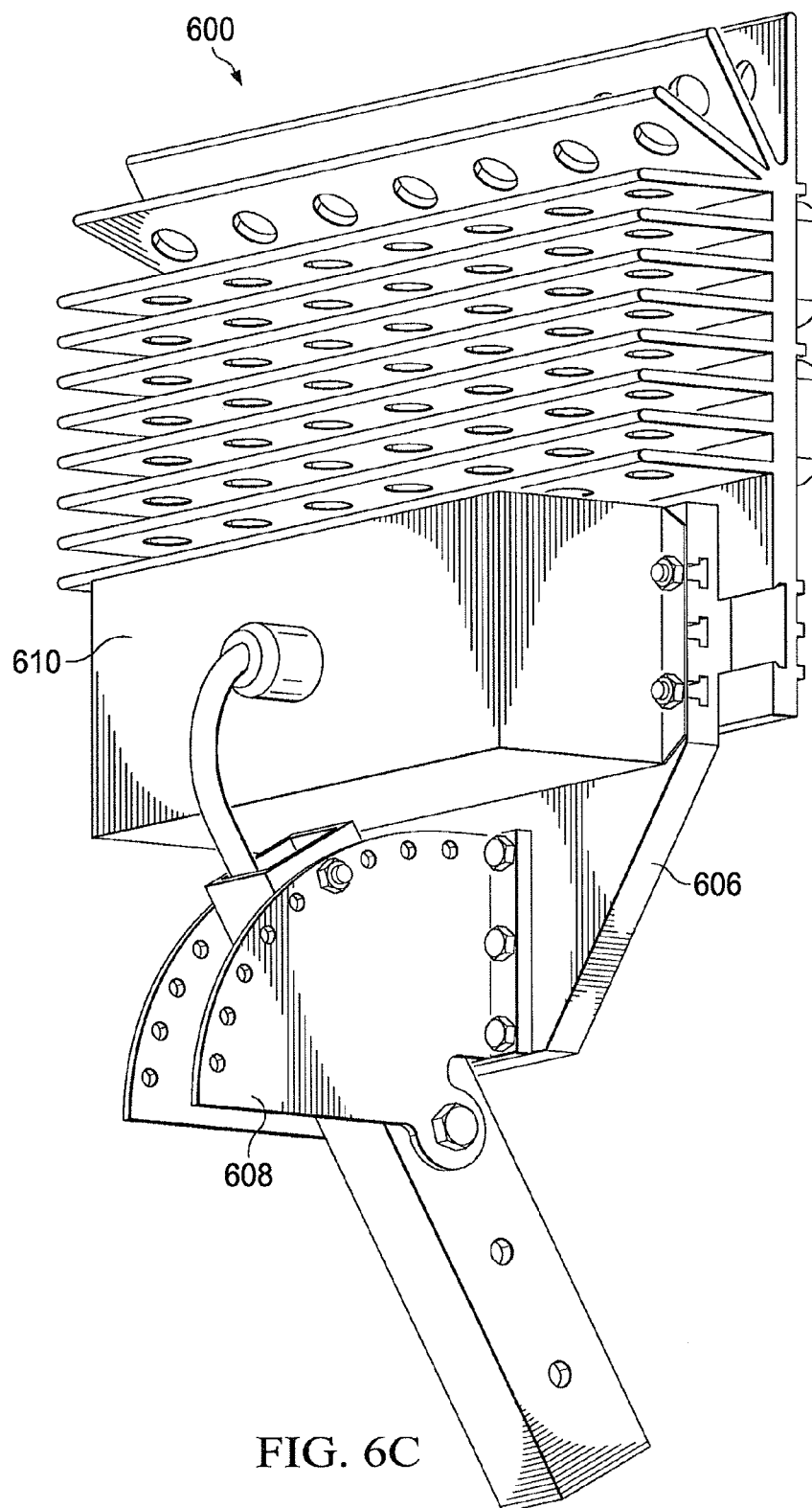


FIG. 6C

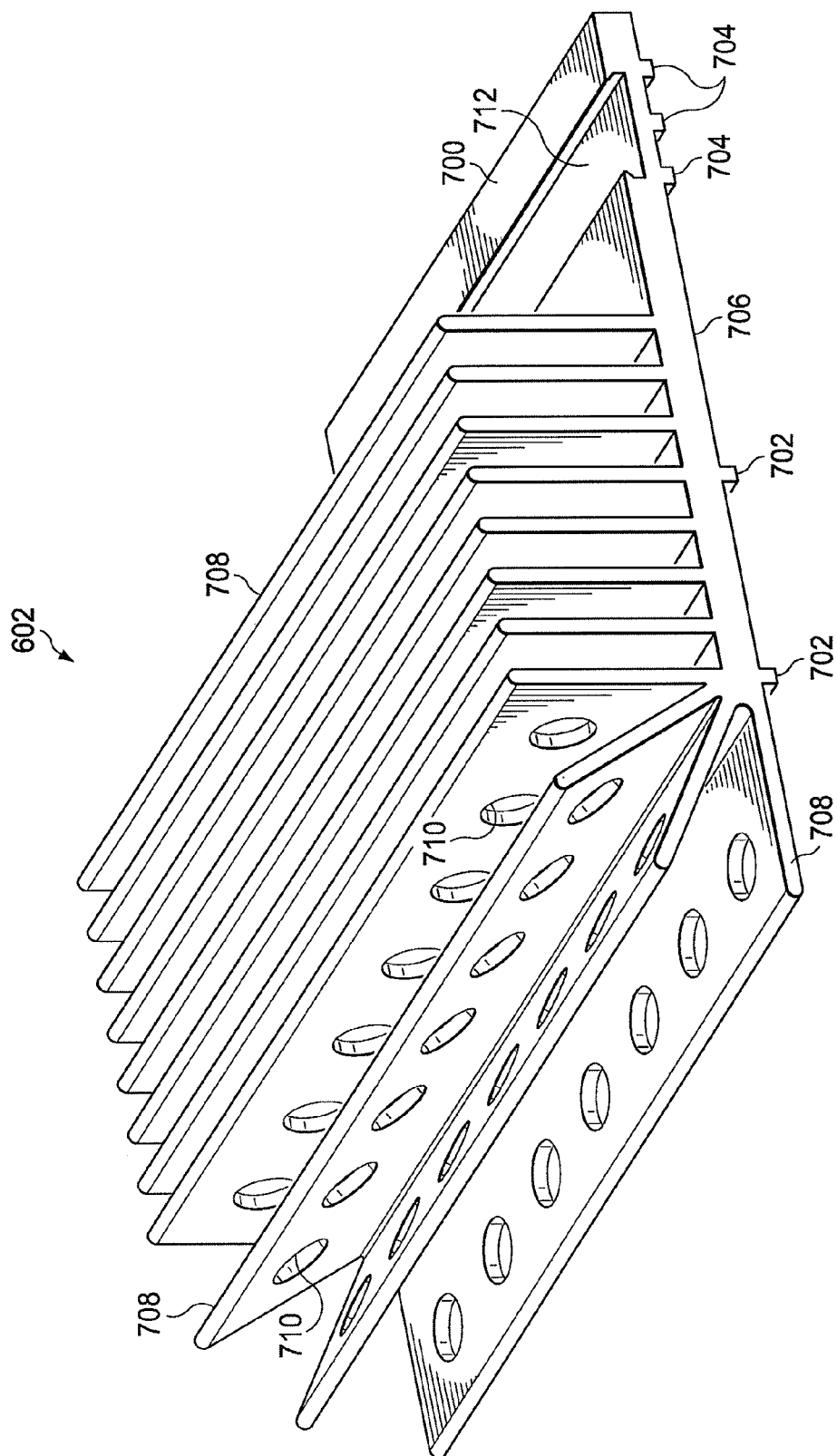


FIG. 7A

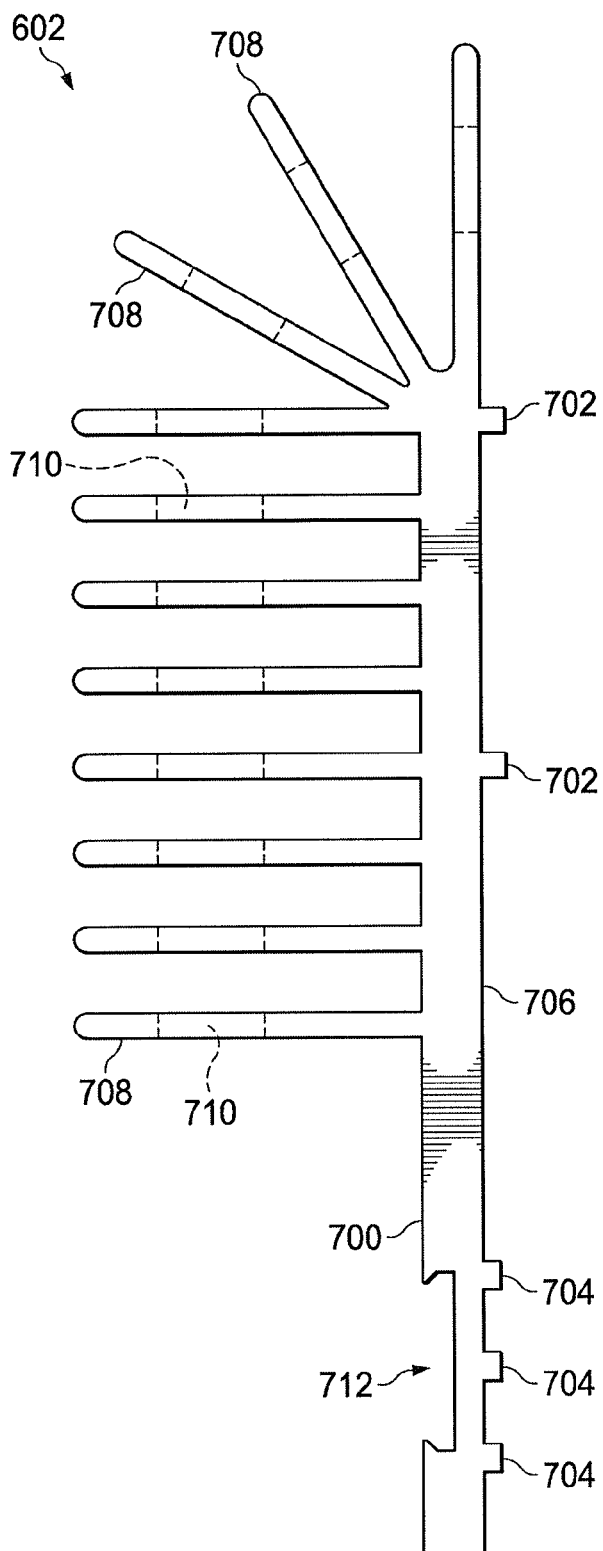
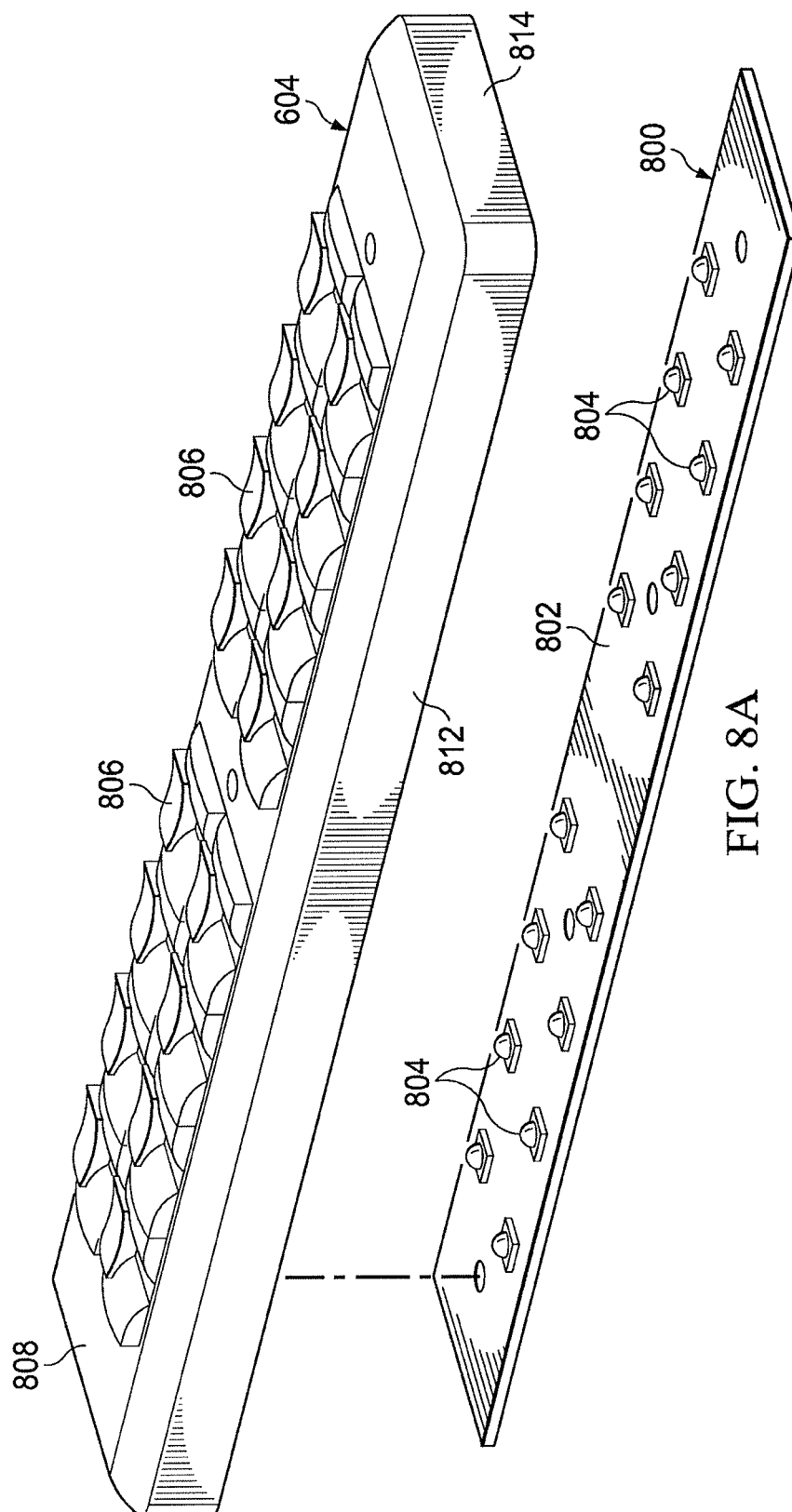
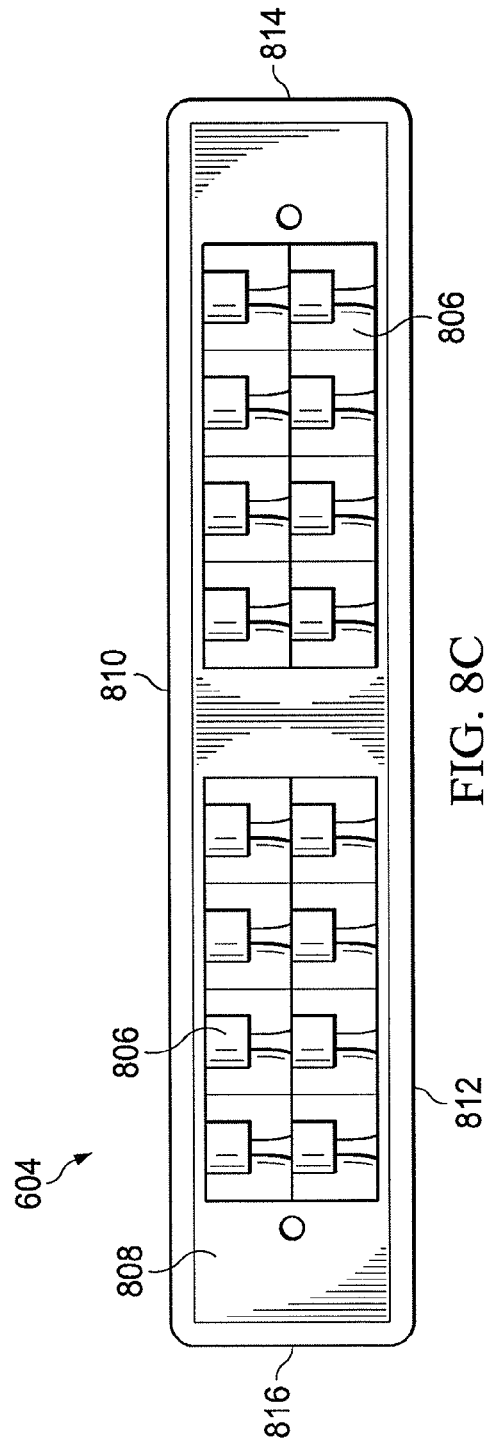
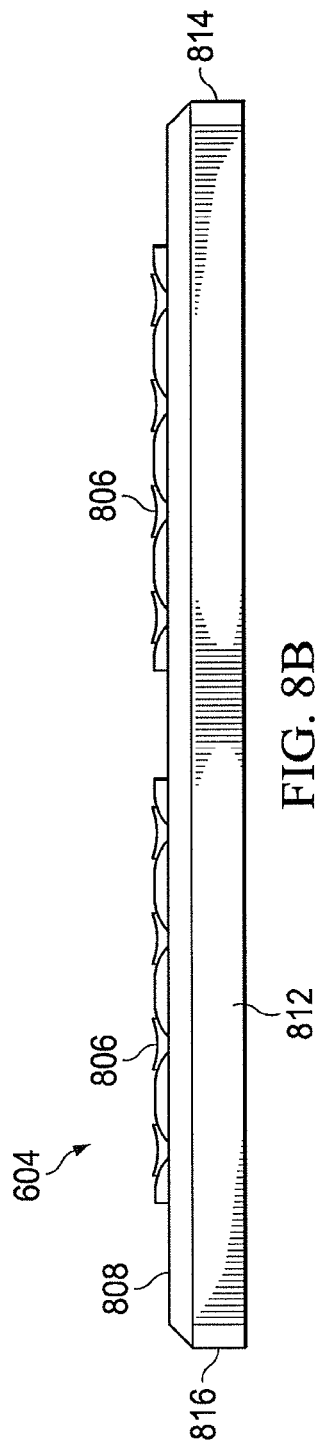
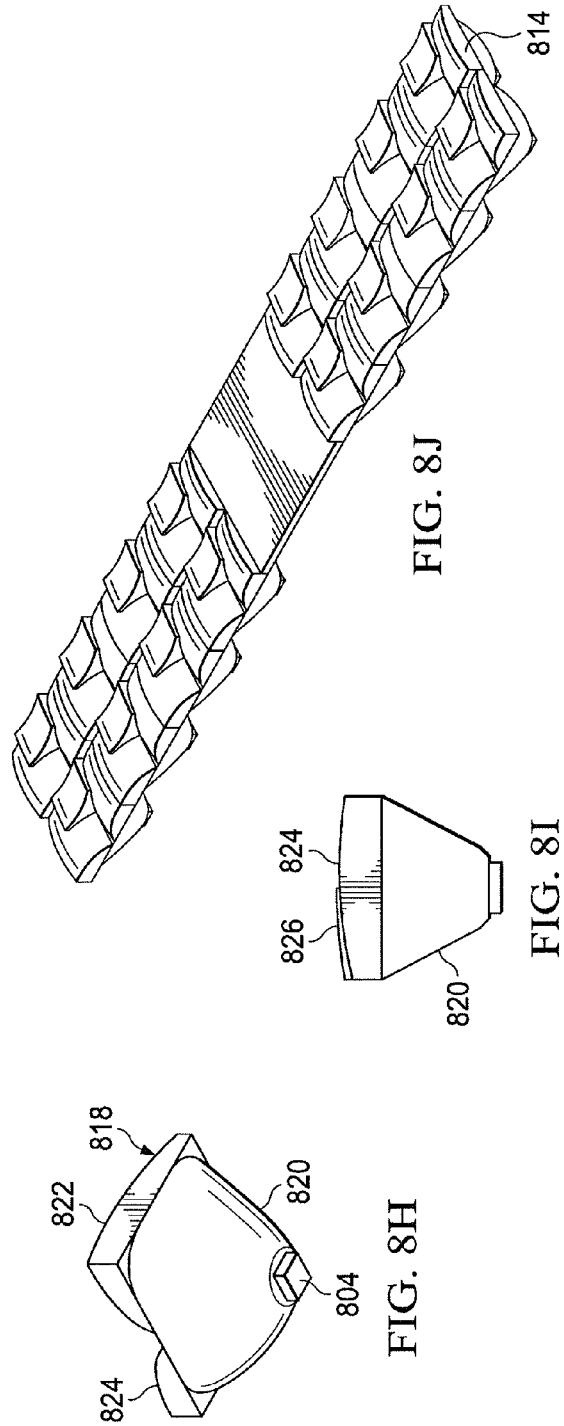
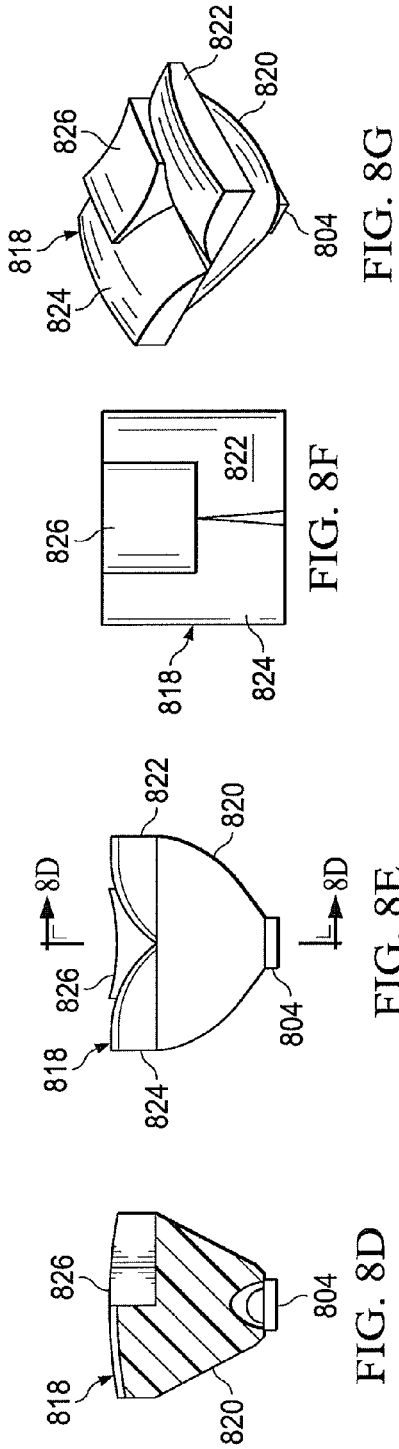


FIG. 7B







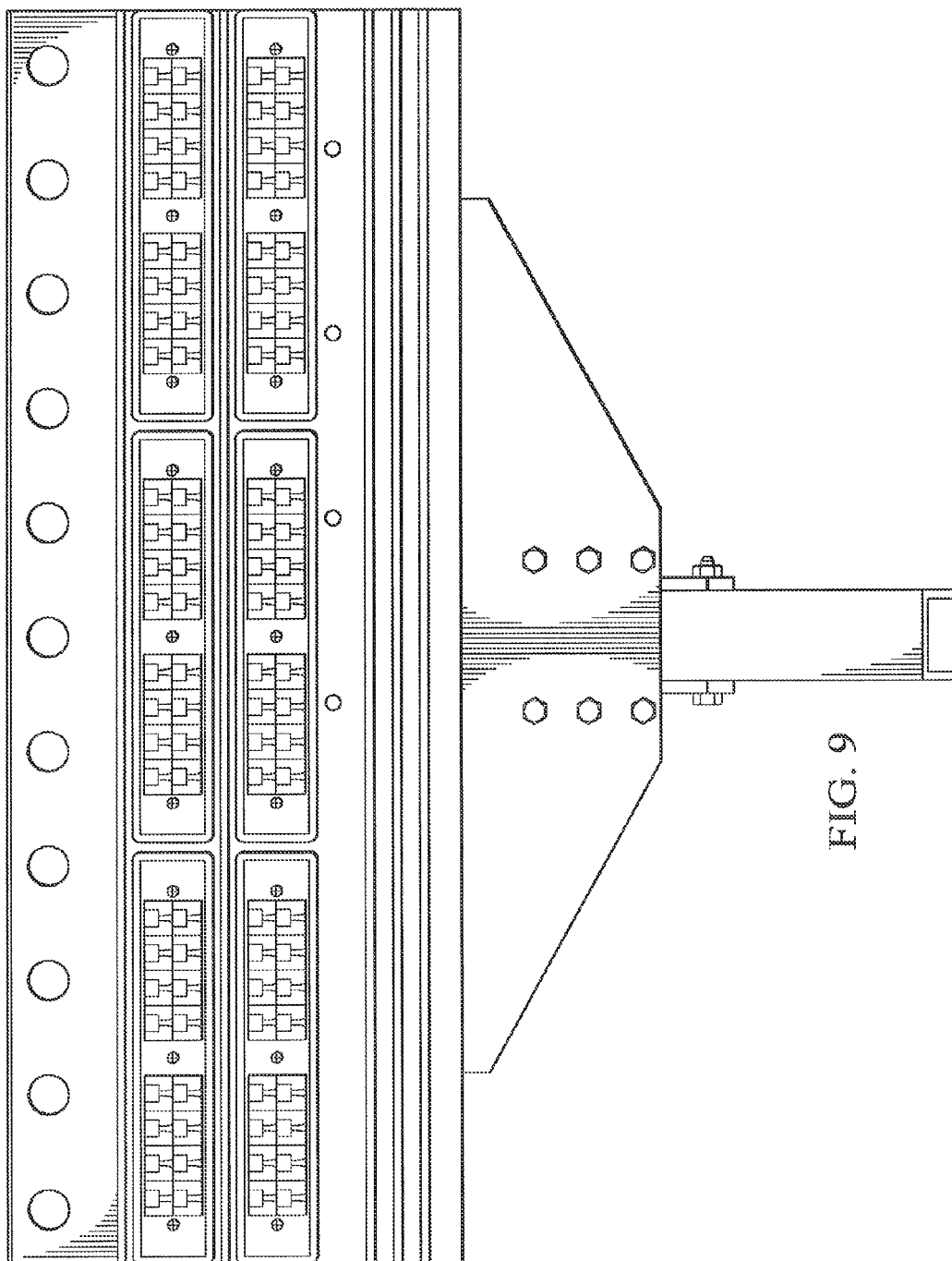


FIG. 9

1

LED LIGHT ASSEMBLY WITH THREE-PART LENS

This application is a divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/706,634 filed May 7, 2015, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/630,500, filed Feb. 24, 2015, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/836,517, filed Mar. 15, 2013 (now U.S. Pat. No. 8,974,077, issued Mar. 10, 2015), which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/677,346, filed on Jul. 30, 2012, which applications are hereby incorporated herein by reference.

This application is related to U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/677,340, filed Jul. 20, 2012, patent application Ser. No. 13/836,612, filed Mar. 15, 2013 (now U.S. Pat. No. 8,870,410), U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/137,343, filed Dec. 20, 2013 (now U.S. Pat. No. 8,870,413), and patent application Ser. No. 14/635,907.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The following disclosure relates to lighting systems and, more particularly, to lighting systems using light emitting diodes to externally illuminate signs.

SUMMARY

The present invention, in one aspect thereof, comprises a back panel for use in a light emitting diode (LED) lighting assembly. An extruded substrate formed of a thermally conductive material is provided, the substrate having a plurality of fins extending from a first side of the substrate, each of the fins having a substantially rectangular shape oriented so that a longitudinal axis of the fin is substantially parallel to a longitudinal axis of the substrate. At least some of the fins include a hole formed through the fin to enable heated air to rise through the fins. A plurality of LEDs are mounted on a second side of the substrate, and oriented in a longitudinal orientation with the fins oriented parallel to the bottom edge of a surface to be illuminated, such that heat rises perpendicular to the surface of the fin.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding, reference is now made to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying Drawings in which:

FIG. 1A illustrates one embodiment of a billboard that may be externally lighted by one or more lighting assemblies;

FIGS. 1B-1D illustrate embodiments of angular positions of the lighting assembly of FIG. 1 relative to the billboard;

FIG. 2 illustrates one embodiment of a lighting assembly that may be used to light the billboard of FIG. 1;

FIGS. 3A and 3B illustrate one embodiment of a back panel that may be used in the lighting assembly of FIG. 2;

FIG. 3C illustrates one embodiment of the back panel of FIGS. 3A and 3B with a light panel and an optics panel that may also be used in the lighting assembly of FIG. 2;

FIGS. 4A and 4B illustrate one embodiment of a light panel that may be used with the lighting assembly of FIG. 2;

FIGS. 5A, 5B, 5C and 5D illustrate one embodiment of an optics panel that may be used with the lighting assembly of FIG. 2;

FIGS. 6A-6C illustrate a more detailed embodiment of the lighting assembly of FIG. 2;

2

FIGS. 7A and 7B illustrate an embodiment of a back panel that may be used with the lighting assembly of FIGS. 6A-6C;

FIG. 8A illustrates an embodiment of an LED assembly and an optics panel that may be used with the lighting assembly of FIG. 6;

FIGS. 8B-8J illustrates embodiments of the optics panel of FIG. 8A and optical elements that may be used to form part of the optics panel; and

FIG. 9 illustrates a more detailed embodiment of the lighting assembly of FIG. 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

Billboards, such as those commonly used for advertising in cities and along roads, often have a picture and/or text that must be externally illuminated to be visible in low-light conditions. As technology has advanced and introduced new lighting devices such as the light emitting diode (LED), such advances have been applied to billboards. However, current lighting designs have limitations and improvements are needed. Although billboards are used herein for purposes of example, it is understood that the present disclosure may be applied to lighting for any type of sign that is externally illuminated.

Referring to FIG. 1A, one embodiment of a billboard **100** is illustrated. The billboard **100** includes a surface **102** onto which a picture and/or text may be painted, mounted, or otherwise affixed. The surface **102** may be any size, such as a commonly used size having a width of forty-eight feet wide and a height of fourteen feet. The surface **102** may be provided by placing a backing material on a frame **104** made of steel and/or other materials. The frame **104** may be mounted on one or more support poles **106**, which may be considered part of the frame **104** or separate from the frame **104**. The billboard **100** may include a walkway or other support structure **108** that enables the surface **102** to be more easily accessed.

One or more lighting assemblies **110** may be coupled to the walkway **108** (e.g., to a safety rail or to the walkway itself) and/or to another structural member of the billboard **100** to illuminate some or all of the surface **102** in low light conditions. The lighting assembly **110** may be mounted at or near a top edge **112** of the billboard **100**, a bottom edge **114** of the billboard **100**, a right edge **116** of the billboard **100**, and/or a bottom edge **118** of the billboard **100**. The lighting assembly **110** may be centered (e.g., located in approximately the center of the billboard **100**) or off center as illustrated in FIG. 1A.

With additional reference to FIGS. 1B-1D, a surface **120** of the lighting assembly **110** may be parallel with respect to the surface **102** of the billboard **100** (FIG. 1B), may be perpendicular with respect to the surface **102** (FIG. 1C), or may be angled with respect to the surface **102** (FIG. 1D). It is understood that the lighting assembly **110** may be placed in many different orientations and locations relative to the billboard **100** and to one another, and the illustrated positions are only for purposes of example. Furthermore, it is understood that references to "top," "bottom," "left," and "right" are used in the present disclosure for purposes of description and do not necessarily denote a fixed position. For example, the billboard **100** may be turned on end, and the referenced "top," "bottom," "left," and "right" edges may still be readily identifiable although the "top" edge would be the "left" edge or the "right" edge.

One problem with current lighting technology is that it can be difficult to direct light only onto the surface 102 and even more difficult to do so evenly. This may be due partly to the placement of the lighting assembly 110, as shown in FIGS. 1B-1D. As the lighting assembly 110 is off center relative to the surface 102, light emitted from the lighting assembly 110 may not evenly strike the surface 102. One problem with uneven illumination is that certain parts of the surface 102 may be more brightly illuminated than other parts. This creates "hot spots" that may be undesirable. Attempting to evenly illuminate the surface 102 may cause light to be directed past the edges 112, 114, 116, and 118 as attempts are made to balance out hot spots in particular areas. However, light that does not strike the surface 102 is wasted and may create problems (e.g., light pollution), as well as waste illumination that could be used for the surface 102.

In addition to the difficulties of evenly illuminating the surface 102, the use of LEDs in an exterior lighting environment involves issues such as heat dissipation and protecting the LEDs against environmental conditions such as moisture. The presence of moving mechanical features such as fans that may be used to provide increased airflow for cooling may create additional reliability problems. Due to the difficulty and expense of replacing and/or repairing the lighting assembly 110 in combination with the desire to provide consistent lighting while minimizing downtime, such issues should be addressed in a manner that enhances reliability and uptime.

Referring to FIG. 2, one embodiment of a lighting assembly 200 is illustrated. The lighting assembly 200 provides a more detailed embodiment of the lighting assembly 110 of FIG. 1. The lighting assembly 200 includes a back panel 202, a light panel 204 (e.g., a printed circuit board (PCB)) having a plurality of LEDs (not shown) mounted thereon, and an optics panel 206. As will be described below in more detailed examples, light from the LEDs of the light panel 204 may be directed by the optics panel 206 to illuminate the surface 102 of the billboard 100 of FIG. 1. The back panel 202 may be configured to serve as a supporting substrate for the light panel 204 and optics panel 206, as well as to dissipate heat produced by the LEDs.

It is understood that any of the back panel 202, light panel 204, and optics panel 206 may actually be two or more physical substrates rather than a single panel as illustrated in FIG. 2. Furthermore, it is understood that there may be additional panels positioned behind the back panel 202, in front of the optics panel 206, and/or between the back panel 202 and light panel 204 and/or between the light panel 204 and optics panel 206.

Referring to FIGS. 3A-3C, one embodiment of the back panel 202 is illustrated with a front surface 302 and a back surface 304. The back panel 202 includes a top edge 306, a bottom edge 308, a right edge 310, and a left edge 312. The panel 202 may be formed of one or more thermally conductive materials (e.g., aluminum) and/or other materials.

The front surface 302 provides a mounting surface for the light panel 204. In some embodiments, the front surface 302 of the panel 202 may include one or more protrusions 314a and 314b that are substantially parallel to the top edge 306. The protrusions 314a and 314b may be configured to protect the light panel 204 from moisture. Although only two protrusions 314a and 314b are illustrated, it is understood that a single protrusion may be provided or three or more protrusions may be provided. Furthermore, such protrusions

may vary in length, shape (e.g., may have angled or curved surfaces), orientation, and/or location on the front surface 302.

Referring specifically to FIG. 3C, a light panel 204 and an optical panel 206 may be mounted under the protrusion 314a (FIG. 3C). Moisture running down the front surface 302 in the direction of arrow 316 may strike the protrusion 314a and be directed away from the light panel 204 and optical panel 206 as shown by arrow 318. Although not shown, moisture may also be directed length down the protrusion 314a. Accordingly, protrusion 314a may serve as a gutter and aid in directing moisture away from a joint 320 where the optical panel 206 abuts the front surface 302. This may be beneficial even when a moisture resistant compound is used to seal the joint 320. In embodiments where there are multiple light panels 204 arranged vertically on the front surface 302, there may be a protrusion positioned above each light panel 204. For example, the protrusion 314a may be positioned directly above one light panel 204 and the protrusion 314b may be positioned directly above another light panel 204.

Referring specifically to FIG. 3B, the back surface 304 may be configured to increase heat dissipation. For example, the back surface 304 may be configured with a heat sink provided by fins 322a-322N, where N denotes a total number of fins. The fins 322a-322N increase the surface area of the back surface 304, thereby providing for additional heat dissipation to the surrounding air. The fins 322a-322N may be formed as part of the panel 202 or may be otherwise coupled to the panel 202 (e.g., may be part of a discrete heat sink that is coupled to the back surface 304). Some or all of the fins 322a-322N may be angled, as shown by fins 322a and 322b. In some embodiments, holes (not shown) may be provided in some or all of the fins 322a-322N to aid in air circulation. In such embodiments, the holes may cause a chimney effect in which heated air rises through the holes and is replaced by cooler air. This may be particularly effective in environments where natural air movement is limited.

Referring to FIGS. 4A and 4B, one embodiment of a single PCB 402 of the light panel 204 is illustrated. In the present example, the light panel 204 may include multiple PCBs 402, although it is understood that any number of PCBs may be used based on design issues such as the amount of illumination needed, the amount of illumination provided by a single PCB 402, the size of the surface 102 of the billboard 100, and/or other factors. As shown in the present embodiment with a substantially rectangular cross-section, the PCB 402 includes a front surface 404, a back surface 406, a top edge 408, a bottom edge 410, a right edge 412, and a left edge 414.

The PCB 402 may include one or more strings of LEDs 416, with multiple LEDs 416 in a string. For example, a string may include eight LEDs 416 and each PCB 402 may include two strings for a total of sixteen LEDs 416. In this configuration, a light panel 204 having eight PCBs 402 would include ninety-six LEDs 416. It is understood that although the PCBs 402 are shown as being substantially identical, they may be different in terms of size, shape, and other factors for a single light panel 204.

In the present example, the LEDs 416 are surface mounted, but it is understood that the LEDs 416 may be coupled to the panel 204 using through hole or another coupling process. The surface mounted configuration may ensure that a maximum surface area of each LED 416 is in contact with the PCB 402, which is in turn in contact with the back panel 202 responsible for heat dissipation. Each

5

string of LEDs may receive a constant current with the current divided evenly among the LEDs 416.

Referring to FIGS. 5A, 5B, 5C and 5D, one embodiment of a single lens panel 500 of the optics panel 206 is illustrated. In the present example, the optics panel 206 may include multiple lens panels 500, although it is understood that any number of lens panels may be used based on design issues such as the number, arrangement, and orientation of the LEDs 416, the size of the surface 102, and/or other factors. As shown in the present embodiment with a substantially rectangular cross-section that is configured for use with the PCB 402 of FIG. 4, a single lens panel 500 includes a front surface 502, a back surface 504, a top side 506, a bottom side 508, a right side 510, and a left side 512. The sides 506, 508, 510, and 512 may form a cavity into which the PCB 402 may fit, thereby providing protection for the PCB 402 from environmental conditions such as moisture.

The lens panel 500 may include a beveled or angled top side 506 and/or bottom side 508 as illustrated in FIG. 5B. The beveling/angling may aid in preventing moisture from reaching the PCB 402 under the lens panel 500, as water will more readily flow from the area of the joint 320 (FIG. 3C) due to the angled surface than if the top side 506 was relatively flat.

The lens panel 500 may include multiple optical elements 514. A single optical element 514 may be provided for each LED 416, a single optical element 514 may be provided for multiple LEDs 416, and/or multiple optical elements 514 may be provided for a single LED 416. In some embodiments, the optical elements 514 may be provided by a single multi-layer optical element system provided by the lens panel 500.

In the present example, the optical elements 514 are configured so that the light emitted from each LED 416 is projected onto the entire surface 102 of the billboard 100. In other words, if all other LEDs 416 were switched off except for a single LED 416, the entire surface 102 would be illuminated at the level of illumination provided by the single LED 416. In one embodiment, the rectangular target area of the surface 102 would be evenly illuminated by the LED 416, while areas beyond the edges 112, 114, 116, and 118 would receive no illumination at all or at least a minimal amount of illumination from the LED 416. What is meant by “evenly” is that the illumination with a uniformity that achieves a 3:1 ratio of the average illumination to the minimum. Thus, by designing the lens in such a manner, when all LEDs are operating, the light from the collective thereof will illuminate the surface at the 3:1 ratio. When one or more LEDs fail, the overall illumination decreases, but the uniformity maintains the same uniformity. Also, as described hereinabove, the “surface” refers to the surface that is associated with a particular LED panel. It may be that an overall illuminated surface is segmented and multiple panels are provided, each associated with a particular segment.

FIG. 5C illustrates a detail of the lens assembly. Each of the diodes 416 is mounted on the board 408 at a minimum distance. Overlying the board and LEDs 416 is transparent lens substrate 520. This substrate 520 has a plurality of lens structures 522, each associated with one of the LEDs 416, such that each of the LEDs 416 has the light emitted therefrom directed outward towards the surface, each lens structure being substantially the same. The minimum distance is designed such that overlapping light from adjacent LEDs does not create interference patterns and result in dead spots on the surface. The lens structure 522 is designed to create the 3:1 uniformity and also, the lens structure is

6

designed to “direct” the light from an edge of the surface to cover the entire surface. This is shown by the angle of the light rays in FIG. 5C. Also, the beveled edge 530 will basically surround the PCB 402, thus protecting it from moisture. The lens substrate 520 is secured with screws (not shown).

FIG. 5D illustrates a detail of the lens structure 522. This structure includes an interior surface 524 and an exterior surface 526 that shapes and directs the light in the correct pattern. This is an acrylic material. With such a design, the lighting assembly can be disposed at an edge of the surface to illuminate the entire surface.

In some embodiments, as shown in FIG. 1, two lighting assemblies 110 may be used. Each lighting assembly may be powered by a separate power supply (not shown), and may be configured to illuminate the entire surface 102. In such an embodiment, if one power supply fails, the remaining lighting assembly 110 will still illuminate the entire surface 102, although at a lesser intensity than when both lighting assemblies 110 are functioning. This provides evenly distributed illumination when both lighting assemblies 110 are functioning correctly, and continues to provide evenly distributed illumination when one lighting assembly 110 malfunctions. Accordingly, the entire surface 102 of the billboard 100 may be illuminated even when an entire lighting assembly 110 has malfunctioned and is providing no illumination at all due to the redundancy provided by configuration of the lighting assemblies 110.

Furthermore, in some embodiments as described above, each LED 416 of a single lighting assembly 110 may be configured via the optical elements 514 to illuminate the entire surface 102. In such embodiments, if one or more LEDs 416 or strings of LEDs fails, the remaining LEDs 416 will still illuminate the entire surface 102, although at a lesser intensity than when the failed LEDs 416 are functioning. This provides evenly distributed illumination when all LEDs 416 are functioning correctly, and continues to provide evenly distributed illumination when one or more LEDs are malfunctioning. Accordingly, the billboard 100 may be illuminated even when multiple LEDs 416 have malfunctioned and are providing no illumination at all due to the redundancy provided by configuration of the lighting assemblies 110.

It is understood that some embodiments may direct substantially all illumination from a lighting assembly 110 evenly across the surface 102 while some illumination is not evenly distributed. For example, substantially all LEDs 416 may be directed to each evenly illuminate the surface 102 with the exception of a relatively small number of LEDs 416. In such cases, the illumination provided by the remaining LED or LEDs 416 may be directed to one or more portions of the surface 102. If done properly, this may be accomplished while minimizing any noticeable unevenness in the overall illumination, even if one of the remaining LEDs 416 malfunctions. For example, the lighting assembly 110 may be configured to direct the illumination provided by one LED 416 to only the left half of the surface 102, while directing the illumination from another LED 416 to only the right half of the surface 102. The loss of one of these two LEDs may not noticeably impact the illumination of the surface 102. It is understood that such variations are within the scope of this disclosure.

In embodiments where the illumination is evenly distributed across the surface 102, it is understood that the optics panel 206 may be configured specifically for the light panel 204 and the surface 102. For example, assuming the surface 102 is forty-eight feet wide and sixteen feet high, the lens

panel 500 of FIG. 5 may be specifically designed for use with the PCB 402 of FIG. 4. This design may be based on the particular layout of the PCB 402 (e.g., the number and arrangement of the LEDs 416), the amount of illumination provided by the LEDs 416, the size of the surface 102, the distance between the lens panel 500 and the surface 102, the angle at which the lens panel 500 is mounted relative to the surface 102 (e.g., FIGS. 1B-1D), and/or other factors. Accordingly, changes in any of these factors may entail a change in the design of the lens panel 500 in order to again evenly distribute the illumination provided by each LED 416 across the entire surface 102. It is understood that various standard configurations of the lighting assembly 110 may be developed for various billboard and/or other externally illuminated signs so that a particular configuration may be provided based on the parameters associated with a particular billboard and/or externally illuminated sign.

Referring to FIGS. 6A-6C, one embodiment of a lighting assembly 600 is illustrated that provides a more detailed embodiment of the lighting assembly 200 of FIG. 2. The lighting assembly 600 includes a back panel 602, a light panel formed by multiple LED assemblies (denoted by reference number 800 in FIG. 8A), and an optics panel formed by multiple lens panels 604. Accordingly, as described previously, the light panel 204 in the current example is represented by multiple LED assemblies 800 and the optics panel 206 is represented by multiple lens panels 604. In the present embodiment, the lighting assembly 600 includes four LED assemblies 800 and four lens panels 604.

Although various attachment mechanisms (e.g., threaded screws, bolts, and/or other fasteners) may be used to couple the lens panels and LED assemblies to the back panel 602, the present embodiment uses multiple threaded fasteners 605 (e.g., screws) that extend through the lens panels and the LED assemblies and engage threaded holes in the back panel 602.

The lighting assembly 600 is also illustrated with a mounting plate 606 that couples to the back panel 602 and to an adjustable mounting bracket 608. The adjustable mounting bracket 608 may be used to couple the lighting assembly 600 to a portion of the billboard 100 (FIG. 1) and/or to another support member. A power supply enclosure 610 may be coupled to the mounting plate 606 and configured contain a power supply (not shown) capable of supplying power to LEDs of the LED assemblies 800. It is noted that separating the power supply from the back panel 602 may aid in heat dissipation by the back panel 602 as it does not have to dissipate heat from the power supply to the same extent as if the power supply was mounted directly to the back panel 602.

The location of the power supply may also be beneficial as snow not melted by the heat produced by the LED may be melted by heat produced by the power supply. This may aid in reducing snow buildup on the LEDs.

With additional reference to FIGS. 7A and 7B, one embodiment of the back panel of FIG. 602 is illustrated. A front surface 700 includes multiple protrusions 702 that may be configured to protect the light panels (not shown) against moisture as previously described. The front surface 700 may include additional protrusions 704.

A back surface 706 includes multiple fins 708 that form a heat sink to aid in the dissipation of heat from the back panel 602. In the present example, the fins 708 are substantially rectangular in shape. In the present example, the back panel 602 is extruded and the fins 708 run parallel to the top edge with a longitudinal axis of each fin 708 being substantially parallel to a longitudinal axis of the back panel 602. Forming

the fins 708 in a vertical manner is possible, but may increase the cost of the back panel 602 due to the extrusion process. As shown, the fins 708 may be substantially perpendicular to the back surface 706, and/or may be angled. In the present example, the fins 708 are angled such that near the top of the back panel 702, the fins 708 are angled towards the top.

Because the fins 708 are parallel to the top edge, heat may be trapped due to its inability to rise vertically. Accordingly, holes 710 may be present in some or all of the fins 708 (marked but not actually visible in the side view of FIG. 7B) to provide paths for the heat to rise vertically in spite of the orientation of the fins 708. The holes 710 may create a chimney effect that increases air flow across the fins 708 and aids in the cooling process. In some embodiments, some or all of the fins 708 may be angled such that heat is not trapped.

The back surface 706 may also include a groove 712 that is configured to receive a tongue of the mounting plate 606 in a tongue-in-groove manner.

With additional reference to FIGS. 8A-8J, embodiments of a single LED assembly 800 and a single lens panel 604 that may be used with the lighting assembly 600 are illustrated. As shown, the single LED assembly 800 and the single optics panel 604 may be configured for use together.

Referring specifically to FIG. 8A, the LED assembly 800 includes a substrate 802 (e.g., a PCB) onto which are mounted multiple LEDs 804. In the present example, the LED assembly 800 includes two strings of eight LEDs 804 each for a total of sixteen LEDs 804. It is understood that this is merely an example, and there may be more or fewer LEDs 804 on the light panel 800, and the LEDs 804 may be arranged in many different ways on the substrate 802.

Referring also to FIGS. 8B-8J, the optics panel 604 may include optical elements 806 arranged on an upper surface 808 of the optics panel 604. The optics panel 604 may further include sides 810, 812, 814, and 816 that are configured to fit around the edge of the substrate 802 of the light panel 800. The bottom edge of each side 810, 812, 814, and 816 abuts the front surface 700 of the back panel 602 and may be sealed to the front surface 700 using a moisture resistant sealant.

As shown in FIGS. 8D-8H, a single optical element 806 may include multiple lens elements designed to distribute the illumination provided by a single LED 804 across a surface such as the surface 102 of FIG. 1. A first lens element 820 may be positioned proximate to the LED 804, and additional lens elements 822, 824, and 826 may be positioned above the lens element 820. Multiple optical elements 806 may be combined and formed as a single optics panel 604 that is configured to operate with the LED assembly 800.

Referring to FIG. 9, another embodiment of a lighting assembly 900 is illustrated that provides a more detailed embodiment of the lighting assembly 200 of FIG. 2. The lighting assembly 900 is similar to the lighting assembly 600 of FIG. 6, but includes six LED assemblies rather than the four six LED assemblies of the lighting assembly 600. It is understood that the lighting assembly 900 may require a larger power supply than the lighting assembly 600 (e.g., a one hundred and fifty watt power supply instead of a one hundred and twenty watt power supply).

Although the preferred embodiment has been described in detail, it should be understood that various changes, substitutions and alterations can be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of illuminating an area using an apparatus comprising a light assembly that includes a plurality of light emitting diodes (LEDs) and a plurality of optical elements, each optical element associated with one of the plurality of LEDs and each LED is associated with one of the optical elements, the method comprising:

directing light from the plurality of LEDs toward the area, wherein directing the light comprises directing the light from each LED of the plurality of LEDs through the associated optical element such that light exiting from each optical element of the plurality of optical elements is directed across all of the area; and

wherein each optical element of the plurality of optical elements includes

a first element comprising a first convex-shaped surface,

a second element comprising a second convex-shaped surface that intersects with the first convex-shaped surface at an acute angle in a region between the first element and the second element, wherein the light from the associated LED exits the associated optical element through the first and the second convex-shaped surfaces, and

a third element extending beyond the first convex-shaped element and the second convex-shaped element in a direction away from the associated LED.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs further comprises providing a substantially uniform light intensity from each optical element of the plurality of optical elements across all of the area.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein after directing the light from the plurality of LEDs some of the plurality of LEDs fail to operate, the method further comprising directing light from remaining ones of the plurality of LEDs toward the area such that the light from each remaining LED is directed across all of the area.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality LEDs are arranged in a plurality of rows within a plane, the rows extending along a longitudinal axis of the plane;

wherein the plurality of LEDs are thermally coupled to a heat sink that comprises a first section substantially parallel to the plane in which the LEDs are located and a plurality of fins extending away from the first section and substantially perpendicular thereto, a longitudinal axis of each fin being substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the plane; and

wherein the method further comprises extracting heat generated while directing the light towards the area, the heat being extracted from the plurality LEDs using the heat sink.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the optical elements are configured so that failure of one or more LEDs of the lighting assembly will cause the illumination level of light impinging the area to decrease while the uniformity of light impinging the area remains substantially the same.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the apparatus further comprises a billboard comprising a billboard display surface that includes the area, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs comprises illuminating the billboard display surface.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs comprises illuminating the billboard display surface between outer edges of the billboard display surface, the area comprising substantially all of the billboard display surface between the outer edges.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein:

the billboard display surface is 48 feet wide between outer edges of the billboard display surface;

the apparatus further comprises a second light assembly, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs comprises illuminating a first portion of the billboard display surface;

the method further comprises directing light from the second light assembly to illuminate a second portion of the billboard surface; and

the area comprises substantially all of the billboard display surface so that the light assembly and the second light assembly illuminate substantially all of the billboard display surface between the outer edges of the billboard display surface.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs toward the area further comprises spacing each LED of the plurality of LEDs from adjacent LEDs of the plurality of LEDs so that overlapping light from the adjacent LEDs does not create interference patterns or result in dead spots on the area of a display surface being illuminated.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein areas beyond edges of the display surface receive no illumination at all.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein areas beyond edges of the display surface receive a minimal amount of illumination from the plurality of LEDs.

12. A method of illuminating an area, the method comprising:

directing light towards the area of the display surface area using an apparatus, the apparatus comprising a light assembly that includes a plurality of light emitting diodes (LEDs) and a plurality of optical elements, each optical element associated with one of the plurality of LEDs and each LED is associated with one of the optical elements, wherein directing the light comprises directing the light from each LED of the plurality of LEDs through the associated optical element such that light exiting from each optical element of the plurality of optical elements is directed across all of the area; wherein each optical element of the plurality of optical elements comprises

a first side, a second side opposite the first side, and a third side perpendicular to the first side and the second side,

a first element disposed at the first side,

a second element disposed at the second side, and

a third element disposed at the third side,

wherein the third element extends beyond the first element and the second element in a direction away from the associated LED of the plurality of LEDs, wherein, in the direction away from the associated LED, the first element includes a first convex outer surface and the second element includes a second convex outer surface different than the first outer convex surface, and

wherein the first convex outer surface has a first peak at a first distance from a point on the associated LED and the second convex outer surface has a second peak spaced from the first peak, the second peak being at a second distance from the point on the associated LED; and

wherein the first convex outer surface and the second convex outer surface connect at a connection region that is at a third distance from the point on the associated LED, wherein the third distance is shorter than the first distance as well as the second distance.

11

13. The method of claim 12, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs comprises illuminating the billboard display surface between outer edges of the billboard display surface, the area comprising substantially all of the billboard display surface between the outer edges.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein:

the billboard display surface is 48 feet wide between outer edges of the billboard display surface;

the apparatus further comprises a second light assembly, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs comprises illuminating a first portion of the billboard display surface;

the method further comprises directing light from the second light assembly to illuminate a second portion of the billboard surface; and

the area comprises substantially all of the billboard display surface so that the light assembly and the second light assembly illuminate substantially all of the billboard display surface between the outer edges of the billboard display surface.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs further comprises providing a substantially uniform light intensity from each optical element of the plurality of optical elements across all of the area.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein after directing the light from the plurality of LEDs some of the plurality of LEDs fail to operate, the method further comprising directing light from remaining ones of the plurality of LEDs toward the area such that the light from each remaining LED is directed across all of the area.

17. The method of claim 12, wherein the plurality LEDs are arranged in a plurality of rows within a plane, the rows extending along a longitudinal axis of the plane;

wherein the plurality of LEDs are thermally coupled to a heat sink that comprises a first section substantially parallel to the plane in which the LEDs are located and a plurality of fins extending away from the first section and substantially perpendicular thereto, a longitudinal axis of each fin being substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the plane; and

wherein the method further comprises extracting heat generated while directing the light towards the area of the display surface, the heat being extracted from the plurality LEDs using the heat sink.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the optical elements are configured so that failure of one or more LEDs of the lighting assembly will cause the illumination level of light impinging the area of the display surface to decrease while the uniformity of light impinging the area of the display surface remains substantially the same.

19. The method of claim 12, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs toward the area further comprises spacing each LED of the plurality of LEDs from adjacent LEDs of the plurality of LEDs so that overlapping light from the adjacent LEDs does not create interference patterns or result in dead spots on the area of a display surface being illuminated.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein areas beyond edges of the display surface receive no illumination at all.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein areas beyond edges of the display surface receive a minimal amount of illumination from the plurality of LEDs.

22. A method of illuminating a display surface of a billboard, the method comprising:

directing light towards the display surface of a billboard using an apparatus that comprises a light assembly that

12

includes a substantially planar circuit board, a heat sink, a plurality of light emitting diodes (LEDs), and a plurality of optical elements, each optical element associated with one of the plurality of LEDs and each LED is associated with one of the optical elements and each LED overlying the heat sink and separated therefrom by the circuit board; and

extracting heat generated while directing the light towards the display surface, the heat being extracted from the plurality LEDs using the heat sink;

wherein directing the light comprises directing the light from the light assembly such that light exiting from the light assembly is directed across an area of the display surface;

wherein the plurality of LEDs are arranged in a plurality of rows on a first surface of the circuit board, the rows extending along a longitudinal axis of the circuit board;

wherein the heat sink is thermally coupled to a second surface of the circuit board, the second surface opposite the first surface, the heat sink comprising a first section substantially parallel to second surface of the circuit board and a plurality of fins extending away from the first section and substantially perpendicular thereto, a longitudinal axis of each fin being substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the circuit board; and

wherein each optical element of the plurality of optical elements comprises

a first side, a second side opposite the first side, and a third side perpendicular to the first side and the second side,

a first element disposed at the first side,

a second element disposed at the second side, and

a third element disposed at the third side,

wherein the third element extends beyond the first element and the second element in a direction away from the associated LED of the plurality of LEDs,

wherein, in the direction away from the associated LED, the first element includes a first convex outer surface and the second element includes a second convex outer surface different than the first outer convex surface, and

wherein the first convex outer surface has a first peak at a first distance from a point on the associated LED and the second convex outer surface has a second peak spaced from the first peak, the second peak being at a second distance from the point on the associated LED; and

wherein the first convex outer surface and the second convex outer surface connect at a connection region that is at a third distance from the point on the associated LED, wherein the third distance is shorter than the first distance as well as the second distance.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs comprises illuminating the billboard display surface between outer edges of the billboard display surface, the area comprising substantially all of the billboard display surface between the outer edges.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein:

the billboard display surface is 48 feet wide between outer edges of the billboard display surface;

the apparatus further comprises a second light assembly, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs comprises illuminating a first portion of the billboard display surface;

13

the method further comprises directing light from the second light assembly to illuminate a second portion of the billboard surface; and

the area comprises substantially all of the billboard display surface so that the light assembly and the second light assembly illuminate substantially all of the billboard display surface between the outer edges of the billboard display surface.

25. The method of claim 22, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs further comprises providing a substantially uniform light intensity from each optical element of the plurality of optical elements across all of the area.

26. The method of claim 22, wherein after directing the light from the plurality of LEDs some of the plurality of LEDs fail to operate, the method further comprising directing light from remaining ones of the plurality of LEDs toward the area such that the light from each remaining LED is directed across all of the area.

14

27. The method of claim 22, wherein the optical elements are configured so that failure of one or more LEDs of the lighting assembly will cause the illumination level of light impinging the area of the display surface to decrease while the uniformity of light impinging the area of the display surface remains substantially the same.

28. The method of claim 22, wherein directing the light from the plurality of LEDs toward the area further comprises spacing each LED of the plurality of LEDs from adjacent LEDs of the plurality of LEDs so that overlapping light from the adjacent LEDs does not create interference patterns or result in dead spots on the area of a display surface being illuminated.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein areas beyond edges of the display surface receive no illumination at all.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein areas beyond edges of the display surface receive a minimal amount of illumination from the plurality of LEDs.

* * * * *