

Southfield doctor develops laser eye surgery

Dr. Hugh Beckman, director of Sinai Hospital's Laser Laboratory in the department of ophthalmology, recently explained the ruby laser he researched and developed to perform eye surgery in the treatment of certain forms of glaucoma at Sinai's Zuckerman Auditorium.

Dr. Beckman, who is a resident of Southfield, said the ruby laser technique is not to be confused with conventional surgery in which actual cutting of human tissues takes place. Ruby laser eye surgery uses the tremendous heat of the laser beam to destroy unwanted tissue without cutting.

"IN THE CONDITION in which we use the ruby laser surgery," Dr. Beckman said, "the eye produces more fluid than can be drained out of it. Imagine you are standing at a kitchen sink, the faucet is running and the tub is filling, but the drain is stuffed. Fluid cannot leave the bowl and more water is pouring in...glaucoma is a condition like that occurring in the human eye producing heavy pressures that cause a loss of vision, and potentially leading to blindness."

"The incidence of glaucoma is about four per cent in the age group over 45. We're talking about a half million people who have glaucoma. The majority of glaucoma conditions are treated adequately by drops or medication or by standard surgery. The ruby laser is far more serious cases," Dr. Beckman said.

Dr. H. Saul Sugar, head of Sinai Hospital's department of ophthalmology, said the ruby laser has been particularly effective in blind, painful glaucomatous eyes, and in "last resort" instances where further conventional treatment or surgery is of no avail.

Dr. Sugar said that the ruby laser is still experimental. "The prospect of danger from excessive laser effect on seeing eyes is subject to a great deal of additional observation," he explained.

"SOME PATIENTS operated on with the ruby laser," Dr. Beckman added, "could not expect to undergo further conventional surgery with any good chance of success. The ruby laser technique has proven successful with 80 per cent of such patients."

Dr. Beckman emphasized that ruby laser surgery, "can allow the eye to heal with the sight it has-and save it from losing more sight." The surgery cannot restore sight that has already been lost.

"The ruby laser is unique," said Dr. Beckman, "because it can selectively affect tissue. The beam of light from such a laser passes through the outer layers of the eye-such as the cornea-causing no effect at all. It then penetrates into the deep, inner layers of the eye where it is absorbed by the pigmentation of the tissue we want to treat. The heat of the laser beam burns the undesirable tissue."

TWO KINDS of ruby laser eye sur-

gery are being used at Sinai Hospital. In one of the operations, an iridectomy, the ruby laser punches a hole in the iris where blockage is occurring, so that the eye fluid can drain away. This procedure has been used in only a few cases.

The other surgical technique is psychocoagulation. In this procedure, the

ruby laser is directed at the ciliary body, the fluid-producing tissue of the eye.

The purpose is to reduce the amount of fluid being produced by partially destroying the ciliary body. With this operation the amount of incoming fluid is decreased, equalizing it to the rate of the outflow. This procedure has been used in more than

100 operations in Sinai's Laser Laboratory.

EITHER OPERATION takes 15 minutes or less, requires only a local anesthetic and patients are generally back to their normal routines by the next day.

Other advantages are that since there is no open wound, there is less

chance of infection; there is less hemorrhaging; hospitalization is not required in most cases; and the technique can be used when conventional surgical techniques are not possible or have failed.

Dr. Beckman began his laser research in 1961 and in 1963 he used the ruby laser to spot weld the retina. He

began his present research in 1967, working first with rabbits.

Sinai Hospital supported the ruby laser research project and funding was also made available for the research by the National Institute of Neurological Disease and Blindness of the National Institute of Health through a three year grant of \$90,000.

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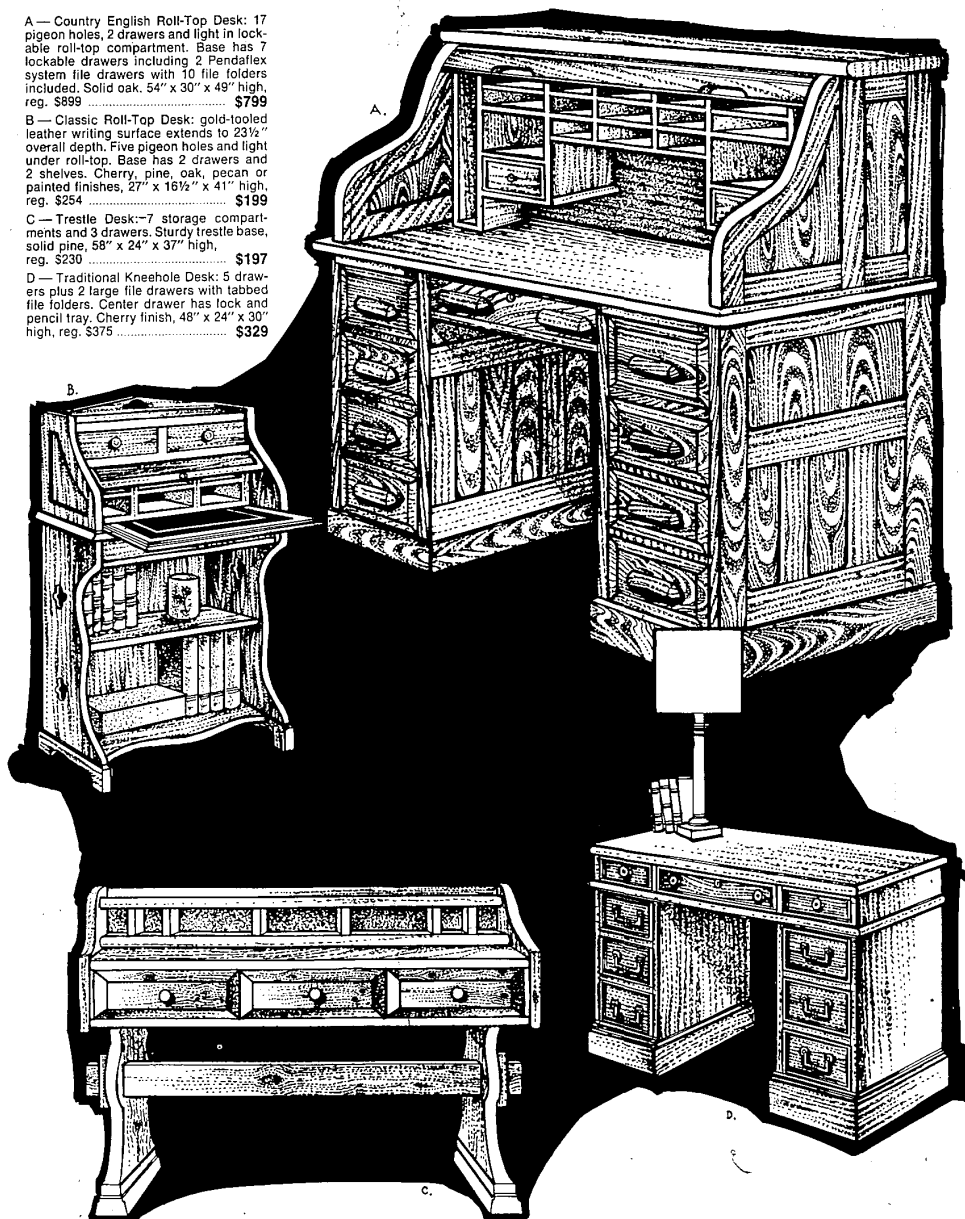
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5 more arrests on drugs

BIRMINGHAM — Five more persons have been arrested in connection with the four-week investigation into illegal drug traffic by the Birmingham Police Department.

David Lalley, 17, of 520 N. Glenhurst, Birmingham, was charged with delivery of marijuana. Bond was set at \$1,000. Pretrial examination has been scheduled for 9 a.m. Sept. 19.

Bryan Steele Feeman, 17, of 13312 Wales, Huntington Woods, was charged with two counts of delivery of a controlled substance (LSD). He was released and pretrial exam slated for 9 a.m. Thursday (Sept. 12).

A \$5,000 bond was set on each count.

Also arrested were three juveniles who were released to their parents pending hearing in Juvenile Court.

ALL THE arrests resulted from contacts made in Poppleton and Linden Parks by undercover agent David Lunsford.

Police Lt. Edward Ostin said he thought there would be no more arrests from these contacts. Warrants were issued Friday for Roger Perry Hitchcock, 18, of 6140 Westmoor, Bloomfield Township; Glen Charles Gates, 17, of 864 Oakland, Birmingham; and John B. Harrell, 18, of 2233 Fairway, Birmingham.

They were released on \$1,000 personal bond each with pretrial examination set for 9 a.m. Sept. 26.

Sixteen persons were arrested last week on various drug violation charges stemming from the investigation. More than 40 pounds of marijuana and more than one pound of hashish were confiscated in the arrests.