

High Schoolers:

Enter your science fair and you may win the opportunity for a fascinating career.

You're smart enough. Else you wouldn't be reading this magazine.

Write us soon. We help you get noticed. Ask Eastman Kodak Company, Dept. 841, Rochester, N.Y. 14650, to send you the free package of photographic hints for science fair contestants.



Good use of photography makes the most of a good project—even if you have to make your own camera.

Elizabeth Davis, junior at Commerce (Texas) High School, daughter of musicians, did just that. Her project impressed the regional judges enough to send her to the 1975 International Science and Engineering Fair, where we laid further honors and a little cash on her for her photography, to say nothing of her science. She extracted Eocene pollens from an open-pit quarry, and her beautiful side-by-side color photomicrographs compared them with pollens she collected from living plants. No difference in pollens.

PUBLIC HEALTH

From our reporter at the meeting of the Pan American Health Organization's Directing Council, in Washington

Malaria and inflation

Inflation has hurt various nations in different ways; one of the more subtle, but devastating effects in Latin America has been to slow the previously steady progress in the Hemisphere's fight against malaria. According to the official report submitted to PAHO's Directing Council, "malaria programs did not make any substantial progress in 1974." Some 269,000 cases were reported (many, of course, went unreported) and incidence of the disease increased in eight countries.

The report blamed shortages of insecticides, drugs and spraying equipment, and lack of transport. "The worldwide inflation and energy crisis have affected not only prices," concludes the report, "but also delivery schedules for the elements for the programs." PAHO is discussing special financial aid programs with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, in order to ease the problem.

Of women, youth and health

Two separate reports dealt with the health problems of two particular groups, women and young people (ages 15 to 24). PAHO is trying to develop special programs to improve the health of these groups, against a background of total absence of minimum health services for more than a third of all the people in many Latin American countries.

Women constitute 14 percent of the total labor force in Latin America, but the majority of them work at menial jobs and have little opportunity to improve their economic status. Few can afford, or find available, adequate medical care during pregnancy and delivery. Not surprisingly, complications surrounding birth is the principle cause of death among young women in 11 countries. Clandestine abortion alone accounts for 30 to 50 percent of maternal deaths in Latin America. Of the children born, ten percent receive adequate health protection.

About 18 percent of the people in Latin America and the Caribbean are between 15 and 24 years old; their problems are very similar to those of youth in the United States. Accidents are the leading cause of death, often in association with the use of alcohol or drugs. Suicide is among the five leading causes of death in 10 countries. Alcoholism was involved in one-third of the deaths resulting from traffic accidents in Peru, 17 percent of the homicides in Colombia, and more than a quarter of the suicides in Chile.

One bright spot: Literacy rates among the women in Latin America are now generally higher than in other developing regions and about 30 percent of Latin American medical students are women.

'Health for all by the year 2000'

That was the slogan propounded by the dynamic new director general of the World Health Organization, Halfdan Mahler, as he told PAHO delegates their organizations must not become "pillars of conservatism" or "just another donor agency."

Hitting hard at the need for changing traditional means of delivering health care, Mahler said the medical and nursing professions must broaden their focus and train more paraprofessionals to serve rural populations, which he called "particularly underprivileged." Meanwhile, he said, health planners should become more involved in political, social and economic matters through "advisory health councils" that would explore health matters as they relate to development in general.