

Citizen in the community

Shrine Circus thrills crowds at new arena



Strong teeth

Good thing this fellow doesn't have false teeth! In a daring act the female acrobat hung precariously in a star which was held in the teeth of her accomplice

above. The two performed without the security of nets below.

Staff Photo

Horses danced, lions were tamed and pretty girls hung precariously from trapezes. On Monday the Shriners Circus performed in Midland's Centennial Arena to the delight of children and adults who packed the stands.

Crowds were turned away from the doors for the first late afternoon showing. At 5:30 children were already lining up outside to be sure to get seats for the evening performance.

The Shriners circus was a traditional circus in every sense of the word. The master of Ceremonies, who was dressed in a red and black tuxedo with sequins, sent chills of excitement down the spines of everyone in the crowd. The circus began with lion tamer Billy Golden and his six Siberian Tigers.

In the second act a girl did acrobatic acts hanging from a strap attached to her neck and to a man above.

The daring helicopter in which she spun around legs and arms extended left everyone in the audience open mouthed.

Three Arabian stallions performed dancing acts. In the centre ring a Spanish woman rider made her horse perform without reins.

In another rink 10 boxer dogs played a form of basketball with a balloon knocking everything over in their way - including their trainer.

There were the traditional clowns who delighted the audiences between acts. There were also candy floss and candy vendors.

At intermission a young man travelled the length of the arena shouting "Balooooooons". Afterwards many a helium filled balloon drifted up the ceiling leaving a snivelling little kid below.

Midland's Shriners Circus was a one day affair and if you missed it - well maybe next year.



Agility

Most people can't juggle, never mind ride a unicycle at the same time. The children were delighted with the bicycle act put on by three members of the same family.

Staff Photo

Photos
and story
by
Terri Howell



Child's favourite

The circus holds a special charm especially for the little ones. This little tyke wasn't at all certain that the Siberian Tigers weren't going to leap out of the cage at her. She kept mom nearby in case escape was necessary.

Staff Photo



Clowning around

No circus would be complete without a clown and his dog. The clown entertained prior to showtime showing the crowds all the tricks his dog knew. The clowns made several appearances during the show.

Staff Photo



Big cats

Billy Golden who was dressed in a black suit with gold spangles and sparkles showed his six Siberian Tigers who's the boss. The tigers stood on their hind legs and

jumped through hoops of fire. When the act was over one obstinate tiger sat on his chair refusing to leave the ring.

Staff Photo



Electric

The Dales Elcar was manufactured in Italy and imported by Powercell Incorporated. Mr. Dales at one time had shares in the car but received the

vehicle as a dividend when the company discontinued the line.

Elcar quiet, pollution free and beats those gas bills

by Shirley Whittington

It looks like the business end of a highway transport—minus the trailer.

It uses no gasoline.

It's quiet and pollution-free.

Harry and Gladys Dale's electric car is no longer a novelty in Coldwater, but strangers still do a double-take when they see the little blue fibreglass vehicle spinning silently down the street.

The Dales have owned Elcar for a year and a half, and they are used to fielding questions about it.

"Top speed is 35 miles an hour," says Gladys. "It comes with its own 48 volt battery recharger, and I plug it into an ordinary outlet when I bring it in from a trip downtown. The effect on our electric bill is almost negligible."

Some years ago, Mr. Dale did a check on his electric meter after recharging, and found that the eight 12-volt lead-acid batteries had eaten up 25¢ worth of electricity. He estimates it costs a maximum of 12¢ a mile to operate Elcar.

Riding in Elcar is a bit like riding in a glorified golf cart. The two seats are comfortable with padded headrests and there's ample head and leg room. Behind the two passenger seats, there's a space big enough to stow a couple of suitcases or a small dog. Visibility is excellent, and the little car is manoeuvrable on its 51 inch wheelbase.

"It's very good in snow," says Gladys, "and it starts instantly on a cold day. There's no heater in it, but it takes a conventional car ten miles or so to heat up, and that's about the limit of any errands I do with Elcar."

If the road is bumpy, Elcar can give a joggly ride because it's short and stubby and the tires are small. It's a virtually silent ride however. The only noise is a slight whine like a muted seatbelt buzzer, when gears are changed.

Maintenance is no problem. Gladys says that Harry is "a great tinkerer", and he's able to cope with any problems that have arisen.

"The only major expense we foresee would be a new battery," she says, but this isn't an immediate worry. The batteries are designed to last for 12,000-14,000 miles.

Harry Dale is a helicopter pilot and when he's

away, Gladys uses the car for short trips.

"It will go 35 miles without recharging," she says, "so it's really only practical for errands around town."

At first glance, the little car seems vulnerable on a road choked with heavy gas-eating monsters, but the one known Elcar accident (in 1975) resulted in about \$300 damage to the American car involved. Elcar bounced away like a ping pong ball, thanks to its rubber bumpers and fibreglass flexibility.

Gladys knows of only one other Elcar.

"I believe a doctor in Toronto has one. When I think of the hundreds of huge cars that go down town each morning in the city, each carrying only one person, it seems to me that an electric car would be ideal for city driving."

The Dales came by their car by accident. They bought \$5,000 of stock in Powercell Incorporated, a company which planned to import Elcar from Italy. Because of its fibreglass body, the car failed to meet Canadian safety requirements. The Powercell assets were divided up, and the Dale's car was their return on their investment.

American safety standards allow fibreglass bodies, in order to encourage the development of electric autos, and one American hotel has installed fast chargers at motels between Detroit and Chicago. At least two American companies are marketing electric autos—Citicar in Sebring Florida, and the Mother Earth News Corporation whose product features an attachment for recharging from a windmill.

Gladys Dale thinks the electric car is the car of the future, although she has reservations about the one she's driving now. Her husband agrees that the lead-acid battery doesn't deliver the power or range needed to make the car acceptable to North American motorists.

Meanwhile, Gladys uses her Elcar when she has to run "over town" for mail or groceries. "But really," she smiles, "I don't use it that often. We're a bicycle family, and Coldwater is a great town for cycling."

Either way, when the Dales travel around town, it's a pollution free, energy-sparing operation.



Only one other

Gladys Dales electric car is pollution free and quiet. "You can't even hear it coming in the driveway" she says. The car runs on a battery

and can be plugged into a normal wall outlet for recharging.