

THE EXPONENT

A ZENN prom



Andrea Dickman and Kenny Nultemeier pose in front of the ZENN electric car they took to the Senior High prom

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Faced with ever-increasing costs of every day items, how can young people afford to purchase items needed to attend their school prom?

One couple from Senior High, Andrea Dickman and Kenny Nultemeier, found a unique way to cut down on one cost: the cost of fuel.

They took a totally electric car to the Senior High prom Saturday. That's right; the car ran on absolutely nothing but electricity.

Andrea's parents, Stan and Tami Dickman, are friends with Lon and Becky Shroyer, who own a ZENN Electric Car. "ZENN" stands for Zero Emission No Noise.

The Shroyers' car is the first of its kind licensed in North Dakota.

"It was assembled by hand in Quebec," Lon said. "About 700 of them have been manufactured, and 500 are in the lower 48 states. The rest of them have been shipped to England."

The body panels are made in Europe and are made from ABS plastic built around a roll cage. In Europe, the car is a four passenger diesel and gets 75 miles to the gallon.

Although the car is extremely quiet, it holds its own against today's gas guzzlers. It has keyless entry, power windows, heat, a radio and CD player. Air conditioning is an option. The car has rack and pinion steering, four wheel disc brakes and it runs on six 12-volt batteries.

The car weighs only 1250 pounds and sports an average speed of 25 miles per hour, depending on the car and the weight that is put in it.

"In perfect conditions, it goes 35 miles on a single charge," Lon said. The car has a charge indicator so you know how many volts are being used. "She plugs into a regular outlet and comes with her own green cord," he added.

"We bought the car because it was a way to snub our noses at the outrageous gas prices," Becky said. "It's better for the environment; a real win-win situation."

A ZENN car is featured on Youtube.com, where you can find a Canadian commercial touting the fact that you can fit a lot of groceries in the small vehicle. In the commercial, they put 20 cases of beer and a box of cereal in the cargo department.

The car cost the Shroyers \$13,000. The regular price is \$16,000, but they were able to participate in an Ambassador program, allowing them to receive the better price. The couple has driven the car at seven above zero, and found it to be very usable.

"Just used more power," Lon said.

The cost of operating the car is about one cent per mile, or on average, five dollars a month.

Andrea and Kenny thought the car was just perfect for prom.

"It helped save us money, so that's a great thing," Andrea said. "It was neat to drive around in."

There is a nine month waiting period to purchase a ZENN car. "Just like having a baby," laughed Becky.