

**Southwestern In Focus
EXPANDS SINGLE STAND INTO
RESTAURANT CHAIN**

By Bob Miles
EPT 11/21/65

Farm boys traditionally have been fond of fried chicken, but El Paso's Elmer Poulsen, owner and manager of Elmer's restaurants, has even better reason for liking this delicacy—fried chicken, plus hard work, a good wife and faithful employes have enabled him to build a chain of successful restaurants in El Paso.

"Chicken is my business," said Poulsen who, starting with a hamburger stand seating nine people, now owns and operates three El Paso restaurants, with two more personnel for the near future.

Raised a farm boy, Poulsen was born in Racine, Wisc., and reared in northern Iowa. After he was graduated from high school in Ringsted, Iowa, his family moved to Albuquerque, N.M.

"A dollar told my mother she tuberculosis and suggested we move west, although I think she was just worn out from hard work. We loaded up and headed for California, but only got as far a Albuquerque," Poulsen said.

"In Albuquerque, his father went into the dairy business and he began making deliveries and selling products for a dairy. While on his travels, he met Jewel Vaughn of Gallup, N.M. They were married in 1940. Later, he and his father operated a candy company and he worked as an inspector for the New Mexico Port of Entry Service.

In 1942, Poulsen joined the U.S. Border Patrol and was stationed in Fabens, Tex. This was his introduction to El Paso and except

for a tour of duty in Mexico with the Border Patrol he has here since.

"I like El Paso," he said. "I'll be here the rest of my life."



ELMER POULSEN

OPENS STAND

Poulsen began his restaurant career in 1947 when he opened a small ice cream stand in an old converted service station on the corner of Piedras and Wyoming Avenue in Five Points. "We had a hard pull that first summer and with the approach of winter, we knew it would be worse," he recalled "so we remodeled the old grease pit and began selling hamburgers.

"Neither Jewel nor I had had any experience in the restaurant business, but she got the

idea to begin selling lunches. We only had one item on the menu then and she did all the cooking. But business picked up," he said.

Then Poulsen got another idea and began featuring chicken to take out. This enterprise, Poulsen said, pretty well originated the idea of the carry-out business in El Paso.

In 1957, as the result of another new idea, Poulsen said he opened the first restaurant in El Paso to feature carry-out items only.

"Many people said it wouldn't last," he said, But Elmer's at Trowbridge Avenue and Hawkins Way today serves an average of 1,000 people a day.

Elmer's Chicken Cottage also on Hawkins Way, was the next addition to the Elmer's chain, opened in 1961. Poulsen said a restaurant of this type had never been tried before.

"That place has been copied more than any other place I've ever heard of he said. "People have come from all over the country to see it. Even the Broaster Co. which makes the broasting machines, we use sent men to look over our operation."

"Our largest order has been for \$800 worth of chicken," Poulsen said, explaining that the order was placed by a Juarez official for the dedication of the Cordova Bridge. "We kept busy filling that order!" he said.

The latest of the Elmer's chain, opened in 1962, is Elmer's Coffee Shop at 6305 Montana Ave. It contains its own bakery, the latest in electronic cooking equipment and seats some 150 people. Featuring home-style cooking, Poulsen said they still use his wife's recipes and that she still trains the help.

"We average 1,000 customers a day in the Coffee Shop," he said.

A member of the Texas Restaurant Association, of which he has served as state director, Poulsen was named Restaurant Man of the Year in 1961. He has served in the U.S. Navy. The Poulsens live at 3120 Zion Lane and have one daughter, Joyce, who is a graduate of Austin High School and is attending Foothills College in Cupertino, Calif.

Poulsen attributes his success to both his wife and his employees. Many of his employees have been with him for a long time and two of them, Mrs. Dee Gore and Mrs. Esperanza White, since he operated the first restaurant.

"I couldn't have done it without them," he said.

"The restaurant business is an interesting one," he said. "You meet all kinds of people and there is always something new and different going on. Even during those first hard years, I never felt like I was going to work."

Poulsen is planning to open up two more restaurants which will make a total of five, in his chain in the near future—a long way from the little converted service station-ice cream stand in Five Points.

* * *

Southwesterner In Focus Expands Single Stand Into Restaurant Chain

By **BOB MILES**

Farm boys traditionally have been fond of fried chicken, but El Paso's Elmer Poulsen, owner and manager of Elmer's restaurants, has an even better reason for liking this delicacy—fried chicken, plus hard work, a good wife and faithful employes have enabled him to build a chain of successful restaurants in El Paso.

"Chicken is my business," said Poulsen who, starting with a hamburger stand seating nine people, now owns and operates three El Paso restaurants, with two more planned for the near future.

Raised a farm boy, Poulsen was born in Ravine, Wis., and reared in northern Iowa. After he was graduated from high school in Ringsted, Iowa, his family moved to Albuquerque, N.M.

"A doctor told my mother she had tuberculosis and suggested we move west. Although I think she was just worn out from hard work, we loaded up and headed for California, but only got as far as Albuquerque," Poulsen said.

In Albuquerque, his father went into the dairy business and he began making deliveries and selling products for a dairy. While on his travels, he met Jewel Vaughn of Gallup, N.M. They were married in 1940. Later, he and his father operated a candy company and he worked as an inspector for the New Mexico Port of Entry Service.

In 1942, Poulsen joined the U.S. Border Patrol and was stationed in Fabens, Tex. This was his introduction to El Paso, and except for a tour of duty in Mexico with the Border Patrol, he has been here since. "I like El Paso," he said. "I'll be here the rest of my life."



ELMER POULSEN

broasting machines we use sent men to look over our operation."

"Our largest order has been for \$800 worth of chicken," Poulsen said, explaining that the order was placed by a Juarez official for the dedication of the Cordova Bridge. "We kept busy filling that order!" he said.

The latest of the Elmer's chain, opened in 1962, is Elmer's Coffee Shop at 6305 Montana Ave. It contains its own bakery, the latest in electronic cooking equipment and seats some 150 people. Featuring home-style cooking, Poulsen said they still use his wife's recipes and that she still trains

U.S. Border Patrol and was stationed in Fabens, Tex. This was his introduction to El Paso, and except for a tour of duty in Mexico with the Border Patrol, he has been here since. "I like El Paso," he said. "I'll be here the rest of my life."

OPENS STAND

Poulsen began his restaurant career in 1947 when he opened a small ice cream stand in an old, converted service station on the corner of Piedras and Wyoming Avenue in Five Points. "We had a hard pull that first summer and with the approach of winter, we knew it would be worse," he recalled, "so we remodeled the old grease pit and began selling hamburgers."

"Neither Jewel nor I had had experience in the restaurant business, but she got the idea to begin selling lunches. We only had one item on the menu then and she did all the cooking. But business picked up," he said.

Then Poulsen got another idea and began featuring chicken to take out. This enterprise, Poulsen said, pretty well originated the idea of the carry-out business in El Paso.

In 1957, as the result of another new idea, Poulsen said he opened the first restaurant in El Paso to feature carry-out items only.

"Many people said it wouldn't last," he said, but Elmer's at Trowbridge Avenue and Hawkins Way today serves an average of 1,000 people a day.

Elmer's Chicken Cottage, also on Hawkins Way, was the next addition to the Elmer's chain, opened in 1961. Poulsen said a restaurant of this type had never been tried before.

"That place has been copied more than any other place I've ever heard of," he said. "People have come from all over the country to see it. Even the Broaster Co. which makes the

chain, opened in 1962, is Elmer's Coffee Shop at 6305 Montana Ave. It contains its own bakery, the latest in electronic cooking equipment and seats some 150 people. Featuring home-style cooking, Poulsen said they still use his wife's recipes and that she still trains the help.

"We average 1,000 customers a day in the Coffee Shop," he said.

A member of the Texas Restaurant Association, of which he has served as state director, Poulsen was named Restaurant Man of the Year in 1961. He has served in the U.S. Navy. The Poulsons live at 3120 Zion Lane and have one daughter, Joyce, who is a graduate of Austin High School and is attending Foothills College in Cupertino, Calif.

Poulsen attributes his success to both his wife and his employees. Many of his employes have been with him for a long time and two of them, Mrs. Dee Gore and Mrs. Esperanza White, since he operated the first restaurant.

"I couldn't have done it without them," he said.

"The restaurant business is an interesting one," he said. "You meet all kinds of people and there is always something new and different going on. Even during those first hard years, I never felt like I was going to work."

Poulsen is planning to open up two more restaurants which will make a total of five, in his chain in the near future—a long way from the little converted - service - station ice cream stand in Five Points.



Like your music guy?
Romantic? with a spicy beat?
You'll hear it all - tonight - at
the Camichin Supper Club -
when the famed Los Espanoles
perform at the Camino Real
Motor Hotel - Juarez
IT'S ROMANTIC!