Director of Accounting Sherri Mauser is more than a number cruncher

Change the phrase, “those who play together stay together,” to “those who play and work together, stay together” -- and it will describe Sherri Mauser and her family.

Like many employees, Sherri started working for Services Systems Associates and K-M Concessions during the National Western Stock Show. Her boyfriend at the time, Darrin Mauser, recruited her to pour beer. She also helped out during Denver Broncos games. That was 18 years ago . . . and a lot has happened during that time.

Today, Darrin is currently the General Manager at National Western, and Sherri is the Director of Accounting for the company.

How it all started
Sherri met Darrin when she was 14 years old. He was her sister’s competitive track coach. She said she had a huge crush on him at that time, but didn’t think Darrin knew. She thought because of her age and their age difference that nothing would come of it. When Sherri turned 18, Darrin asked her out. They dated for six years, and then they married in 1994. Sherri shared that it’s amazing when she thinks about it. She has known him for 23 years even though they have only been married for 13 years!

The pair has three children: Melissa, 11; Shea Lynn, 7; and Mason, 4.

Sherri & Darrin’s wedding

During the interview, Sherri proudly described their accomplishments.

Melissa plays competitive softball where her dad is the coach and her mom is the team manager. Sherri jokingly claims she does all the work. The oldest child also takes private voice lessons and guitar lessons. She’s also a budding model and singer. Melissa recently won a talent and model search contest, and will appear in two magazine ads. The money she makes will be going into savings for college.

Melissa
Shea Lynn is equally active with soccer and softball. She also takes cheerleading lessons. While she can’t sing like her sister, she’s very smart for her age. As a first-grader, she recently tested out at the third grade level. With her height and her intelligence, many mistake her for an older child, not realizing she’s just seven years old.

The baby of the family, Mason, stars as the back seat driver as he tags along as the family criss-crosses the metro area to go practices and take lessons. He’s also the head cheerleader at the family sporting events.

The family is fortunate to have the kids’ grandparents to help baby sit. Darrin’s parents take care of their grandson on a daily basis, and also provide care for the girls when they get out of school and don’t have after-school activities. And with Darrin working most weekends, Sherri’s parents are there to help get the kids to their games and events when their schedules have Sherri going in two different directions.

Sherri is the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) treasurer. She’s also room mom for both Melissa and Shea Lynn. It helps that both girls attend the same elementary school.

With the family’s busy schedule, it’s no wonder that a really great evening for Sherri is one where the family is together, either at home watching a movie or going out to dinner. Sherri likes to slow down and spend time as a family instead of running here and there with quick comments, like “I’ll meet you at home in four hours.”

Other members of the family include Kiara, a golden retriever; Snakey Snake, a red rat snake; and Lightening McQueen, a rat.

The rat was a Christmas gift for Mason, and it was supposed to be a male. A few weeks after the holiday, the “male” gave birth to eight babies or pups. Darrin tried to pull out the pups with mom to take the colony back to the pet store. But mom objected, and bit Darren’s finger. He ended up taking back the cage, which was filled with rats, back to the pet store. In return, the family received one of the baby male rats, just as initially specified.

It’s no surprise that Sherri’s most valued possession is her family, including her husband, children, siblings, parents and in-laws.
A high point of last year was a family trip. Sherri and her family, her parents, her sister, brother-in-law and niece journeyed to the world’s largest theme park resort in the world, Disney World in Florida. The 20,000-plus acre property features the Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney-MGM Studios and Disney's Animal Kingdom.

Sherri loves to snow ski, and has been skiing since she was six years old. Their oldest daughter, Melissa, now skis with her mom and dad. Shea Lynn took lessons this year. And next year, Mason will be taking lessons. The family, including Sherri’s parents, sister, brother-in-law and niece, makes a winter weekend in the Winter Park/Frasier area, where they ski, snowmobile and tube.

If Sherri could go any where in the world, it would be Australia, a country in the Southern Hemisphere, which is the world’s smallest continent. “I’ve always wanted to go there. It seems like it be would like a cool place to visit,” she said.

Darrin and Sherri play on a co-ed softball league. It’s a team featuring many other K-M and SSA employees. Sherri plays the outfield, even though in high school, she was on the varsity softball as catcher. She said she couldn’t play that position now as her knees kill her when she squats for long periods of time.

How her career started
While in high school, Sherri’s goal was to become a veterinarian as she loves animals. She attended the Bel-Rae Institute of Animal Technology to become a vet tech to get a “taste” of what it was like to be part of a veterinary health care team. She quickly determined that veterinarians don’t make that much money, not that money is the most important, but most vets graduate in debt because they have student loans to repay.

Sherri made a career switch to accounting. She worked as a vet tech while she attended Metro State College in Denver and earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting.
She used her mathematical and computer skills as well as analytic and problem solving skills to secure a job with a national corporation. One day, K-M/SSA Director of Corporate Affairs Kevin Eldredge called her to see if she knew of anyone who wanted a job in accounts payable. She shared some names, and then jokingly said if the job paid more, she would be interested. A few days later, Kevin called her back and asked if she was serious. She was, and she started in accounts payable in 1997.

Sherri shared she likes the family environment at Corporate, and the flexibility that she has to take time to attend her family's school and sports activities.

**Life outside work and family**
Sherri thinks her family and friends would describe her as a good friend, but she describes herself as very quiet, shy and reserved person. Both are likely descriptions as she still gets together with her high school girlfriends, who graduated from Arvada West. The four to five friends try to have dinner every two to three months.

Other classmates at Arvada West include Brian Bond, Director of Information Systems and Programs and Derek Chandler, Director of Information Technology for KM / SSA.

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### Some of Sherri’s favorite things

**Favorite entertainer:** American country music singer, Tim McGraw, who has achieved many number one hits on the country singles and album charts.

**Favorite movie:** *The Notebook*, a film based on a romantic novel by Nicholas Sparks. The story is set in a modern day nursing home where an elderly man named Noah reads a love story from his notebook to his wife, Allie, who suffers from Alzheimer's.

**Favorite author:** James B. Patterson, an award-winning American author, who writes thrillers featuring resourceful heroes who must stop the plans of more powerful and better-equipped villains.

**Favorite food:** Mexican food, but hates cooked spinach.

**Favorite Holiday:** Thanksgiving and Christmas. Sherri said, “I like Thanksgiving for the food, and I also like Christmas because all the family gets together, however, the gift giving is over-rated. But it’s fun watching the kids get excited about opening their presents.”

**Favorite TV show:** CSI, a popular, Emmy Award-winning CBS television series that trails the investigations of a team of Las Vegas forensic scientists as they unveil the circumstances behind mysterious and unusual deaths and crimes committed. The show has spawned two spin-offs.

**Favorite color:** Yellow. “It’s a happy color, and it’s soothing,” she said.
The craziest thing that Sherri has done was get a tattoo. She had been thinking about it for several years, and in March, she finally got her courage up (she went once and chickened out before getting a tattoo) and had the artist tattoo a tribal heart design on her lower back. And yes, she said it hurt.

Sherri is almost a Colorado native; she lived a few years in Arizona. However, she has never lived in Denver, but always lived in bordering communities, such as Arvada, Wheatridge, Northglenn, etc.

While Sherri Mauser may be petite, she has a big heart . . . not only for her family, but also her career.