

## One of the world's greatest moms may be Johnna Walker, the Retail Manager at the Tulsa Zoo

*For Johnna Walker, it's all about family. And this word can be used to describe her life, too.*

**F**lora and fauna found at the Tulsa Zoo and Living Museum must definitely appeal to Johnna. Since graduating in the mid-80s from University of Oklahoma with a business marketing degree, she has worked at the zoo. Her first job was a voluntary one with the Tulsa Zoo Friends. It started when her friend, Mary Collins, then Director of the organization, needed help with the fledgling organization. Her volunteer efforts soon turned into a part-time job, then became a full-time job. She started working with SSA when the Tulsa Zoo became part of the company's network. Johnna shared that she appreciates SSA's philosophy as it's all about the people.



**A**lways lived in Tulsa, which is the second-largest city in the state of Oklahoma and 45th-largest in the United States. Johnna said that one of her greatest adventures was hopping on the Turner Turnpike (the toll road connecting Oklahoma's two largest cities) and going down to Norman where she spent four years getting a degree. Then she came right back home on that toll road. She said, "Oklahoma is my livelihood."

Johnna met her husband while in high school. They both hung out with the same group of friends and were great buddies, not childhood sweethearts. While juniors in college, the two started dating and continued dating after graduation. They got married August 31, 1996.

Johnna was named after her father, John. Her parents still live in Tulsa as do her siblings, which include one sister and one brother. Her younger sister has two children who are about the same age as Johnna's oldest. A younger brother's wife just had a baby. The extended family all live within a mile of each other. Johnna said that family is a huge part of her daily life. And she never misses the Sunday pizza dinner at her parents!

**M**om to three little ones. Daughter Niemann is seven, Natalie is six and Luke is four. Her husband works in commercial real estate. When asked what she does in her free time,

Johnna replied, kids and their activities! It's no surprise that when she does have free time, she likes to get together with friends or get a sitter and go out to dinner.

**I**nteresting things you probably didn't know about Johnna include:

- Her heroes are her parents. She said they have had the biggest influence on her life. "When I think of heroes I think of the simple people who live normal lives while doing things for others," she said. Johnna also admires those who serve in the U. S. military, "They sacrifice so much for us," she added.
- If she was in the hospital and could choose her roommate, she would like to recuperate in the bed next to Tim Russert, who was an American television journalist and lawyer who appeared for more than 16 years as the longest-serving moderator of NBC's *Meet the Press*. He died at age 58 in the summer of 2008. Johnna believes he was a family man who cared about his country. "He's an everyday person who didn't realize how powerful he was. He was an amazing person and I respect him," she said. She jokingly added, "And think of all the famous people who would come and visit him!"
- Johnna said she couldn't live without her computer. She asked, what would you do without one? Think about it!

**L**oves to spend time with family and friends. That fact became readily apparent during this interview, which she conducted by cell phone on a summer Sunday afternoon while sitting by the public pool watching her three children swim and play. She also loves all types of music. She wishes she could sing better than she does. After taking piano lessons while young, she regrets giving it up.

**Y**ellow is NOT Johnna's favorite color. She prefers the color red. "It's a happy color, and whenever I wear it, it's a happy day," she said. And you must know that red is one of school colors for the University of Oklahoma - Johnna's alma mater. Other favorites include Mexican food and Thanksgiving as a holiday because there's no "big hoopla." She enjoys watching college football, particularly her beloved Oklahoma Sooners, and likes to play soccer and tennis. She played tennis in high school and hopes one day to start playing again.

So it's truly all about **F-A-M-I-L-Y** for Johnna Walker!