

# 25 *random facts about Marlina Roybal, Assistant Retail Manager, Denver Zoo*



*There's Marlene Dietrich, the German-born American actress, singer and entertainer, and then there's Marlina Roybal, the bubbly talkative 15-year K-M Concessions employee – and she's not yet 30 years old!*

Marlina's fiancée claims one of her most valuable possessions is her cell phone, which she uses to call or text family and check e-mail. She's part of the new generation, the generation of cell phones and texting. With this passion for her cell phone, it seems appropriate to hop on the "25 Things" viral bandwagon. This trend involves creating a list of 25 random facts about yourself, then posting it on the social network site, Facebook or in this instance, the KMSSA website. Fans created nearly five million listings in one week.

## *25 random facts about Marlina Roybal*

1. Marlina is a Colorado native. Her aunt named her after Marlene Dietrich, the actress mentioned above.
2. She grew up surrounded by family, and they are a great source of pride to her. Marlina has an older sister as well as both a younger brother and sister. She was fortunate to have grandparents, aunts and uncles around her while growing up. One

set of grandparents just lived two blocks away! That same grandmother, who lives in the same house, now takes care of her children while Marlina is working.



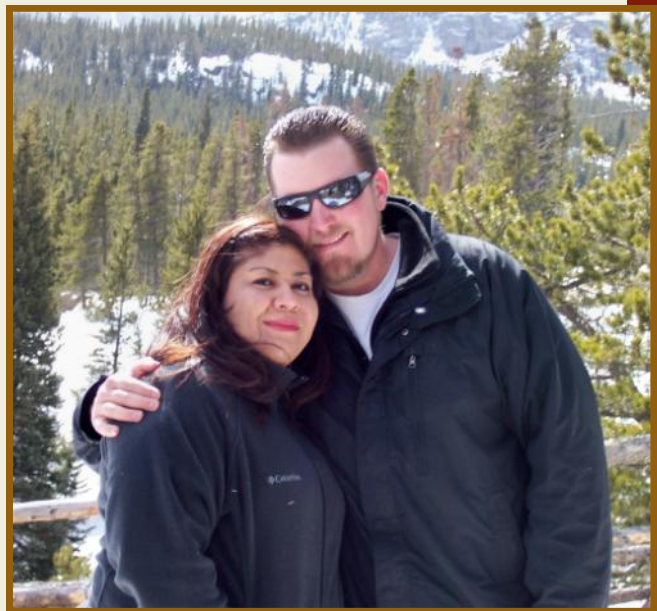
*Marlina and fiancée Gary have two children: Elena Maria and Jacob.*

for K-M Concessions at the Denver Zoo. They've been a couple for many years. Actually Marlina and Gary met while both were working at the zoo as teenagers. Gary lived in Florida, but would come to Colorado in the summer to spend time with his dad. After graduating from high school, Gary started college at University of Colorado. He's now working on a bachelor's degree in business management. When he graduates, Marlina plans to finish her degree.

5. Her fiancée, Gary, is teaching her how to play golf. It's an activity that they both can enjoy while

3. Marlina has a seven-year-old daughter, Elena Maria, who takes after her dad. She's very smart and started reading at age 4. She loves to be the center of attention. But she's also like her mom as both are very girly girl. Her four-year-old son, Jacob, is a laid back kid who goes with the flow. Marlina describes him as a heart breaker and a little flirt. She claims she's lucky as she's blessed with responsible, well-behaved kids.

4. She's engaged to Gary Schleuger, Warehouse Manager



*Marlina and fiancée Gary enjoy spending time in the mountains, including at Gary's family cabin in Hartsel.*





*It's a family affair... Marlina at her mother's wedding to longtime Denver Zoo employee Ron Roybal.*

spending time together. Marlina has purple clubs, a purple bag and even a white and pink glove. Laughing, she said she was a girly girl. Another activity that they both enjoy includes going to area comedy clubs on date nights.

6. Holidays are marathons as the family has five families to juggle. Her favorite holiday is Christmas – not only for the food, but the family interactions, too. She shared that she “loves” the Mexican and Italian food that her family prepares for family celebrations.

7. Even as child, Marlina claims she was talkative. She said she would always ask a million questions, and even when her mom would answer her with an “I said so” comment, it wasn’t enough. She kept asking questions. Marlina laughingly said it was unfortunate her kids do the same.

8. Her first job when she was 14 years old was with K-M Concessions. She sold cotton candy and slushy drinks to the hundreds of people standing in line to see the famous polar bear cubs, Klondike and Snow, at the Denver Zoo. She soon was bussing tables at the zoo’s Hungry Elephant. She’s spent time in food management, both in the restaurant and catering. Marlina moved to the retail side several years ago. She shared that she loves the fact that people at the zoo have seen the personal growth in her. “I love to see it happening in the younger kids that I



*Marlina started working at the Denver Zoo when she was 14 years old and enjoys the interaction with the animals as well as with zoo guests.*

work with here. It's great to see them develop as young responsible adults. "

9. When Marlina has free time, she usually spends it with her extended family. However, she said she's always on the go at work and at home.

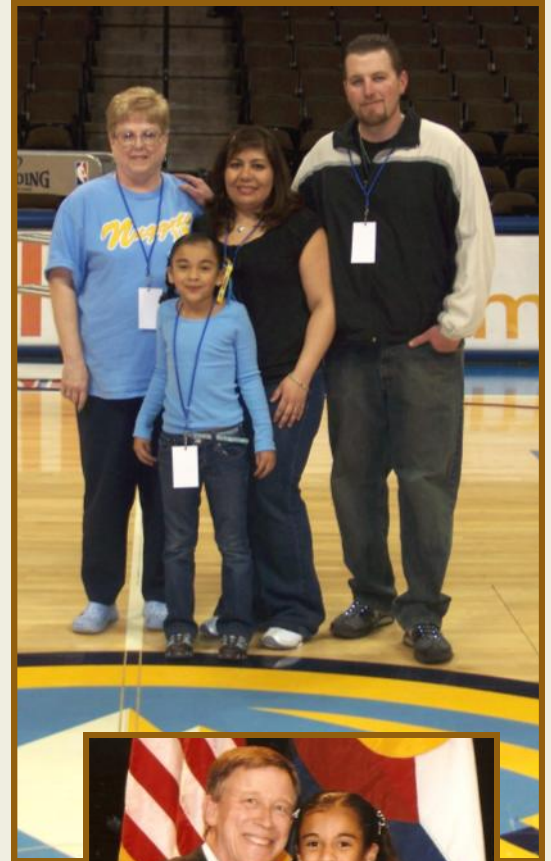
10. She feels as if she was raised at the zoo as her stepfather has worked in Denver Zoo maintenance department for over 30 years. Her siblings also worked at the zoo as youngsters. Her younger sister Veronica currently works in the zoo's gift shop.

11. She likes to create photo shows where she adds music and does graphic transitions from image to image. She said it's a great way to keep her in laws involved in her kids' life.

12. Recently she started taking kickboxing classes. Marlina shared it was a great way to exercise while having fun.

13. Her family loves to swim. If it's over 90 degrees, the family is at a pool. Marlina said, "I like being outdoors - period. I like to be anywhere outside relaxing with my kids, fiancée and friends." She hopes to spend more time outdoors at Gary's cabin in Hartsel.

14. Marlina wishes that she was talented in cooking. She's been learning some recipes from her Sicilian grandmother. Italian food is her favorite - especially when it's homemade. She also wishes she was musically inclined. She tried to learn to play the piano, but she was too busy watching her siblings and the other family members to take the time to practice.



**Marlina's daughter, Elena Maria, pictured here with Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper, is poised to be a star. She served as a ball girl at a Denver Nuggets game and was named a Denver Mile High Scholar.**

**15.** While she claims Gary believes her most valued possession is her cell phone, she also values many other things, including her engagement ring that features heart-shaped stones as well as the can of chili (now in her freezer) made by her grandfather before he died.

**16.** Marlina said her hero is her mother because as a single mom she worked so hard to make sure Marlina and her siblings were on the right track. She sacrificed to give them a Catholic school education.

**17.** If she could have lunch with anyone, Marlina would want to have lunch with her Uncle Dave, who is her grandmother's brother. She said that he was a nobody, but made himself a somebody. He was a very interesting person. He was able to charm his way into meeting the Pope when he visited Denver. Many of these opportunities happened because he would volunteer to help at various events. He died while Marlina was in high school.

**18.** If she wasn't working for K-M Concessions, Marlina would probably be doing something with kids. When Marlina was little, she dreamt of becoming a nun. She admired Mother Theresa and was able to hear her stories when she visited Denver. Then Marlina wanted to be meteorologist; another dream was to become a teacher. However, she said she could never work in an office as she has to be moving and doing stuff all the time. "I'm a people person," she added.

**19.** Marlina said that she could not hold a political office as she's very sensitive and wouldn't do well with the criticism heaped on politicians. "My backbone is isn't strong enough," she said.



*Relatives say that Marlina was an outgoing and bubbly baby.*



*Even as a youngster, Marlina liked pink!*

20. When a little girl, Marlina's favorite toy was a Rainbow Bright Stove as she liked to playhouse.

21. Marlina hates mushrooms. "I don't like the taste of fungus!" she said.

22. Her favorite color is pink, not the bubble gum color, but light or hot pink. It's also her daughter's favorite color.

23. Marlina can't live without her make-up. "I don't go anywhere without make-up," she said.

24. Marlina describes herself as a plain Jane, a straight and narrow person. "I try and do the right thing. I don't want people to disapprove of me," she added.

25. Some of her favorites include the medical drama television show, *Grey's Anatomy* or anything on the Discovery Channel, entertainer, Ellen Degeneres and the book, *Wicked*.

By scanning this listing, you have probably learned some fascinating random facts about Marlina, but there's more to this long-time K-M Concession employee than what's been listed. Bottom line: Marlina is a caring individual who enjoys her job and lives for her family.



*Marlina's children, Elena Maria and Jacob, also enjoy spending time with their Aunt Veronica, as well as one of their many cousins.*



*It's all about family for Marlina and Gary.*