

## WOMEN TO WATCH: DR. ELIZABETH MANN

## Busy OB/GYN remembers to balance career with fun

By Stacey Wiedower  
Special to The Commercial Appeal

Dr. Elizabeth Mann is a self-proclaimed adrenaline junkie.

As if her day job — bringing babies into the world — weren't adventurous enough, Mann spends her spare time on either her Harley-Davidson Springer Softail or a custom bike her husband built for her.

"It's partly my adven-

turesome spirit, I guess," said Mann, a physician with Memphis Obstetrical and Gynecological Association. "I had a cousin who was a rider, and he and his wife encouraged me to get a motorcycle. Their encouragement led to me buying a cycle and taking the class to learn to ride. That's been 10 to 12 years ago, and I've never slowed down since."

In fact, Mann has moved at a fast pace since an early

age. She was in high school when she decided she wanted to become a doctor. At the time, she had a different kind of medicine in mind.

"I was interested in veterinary medicine," said Mann, who grew up in Brownsville, Tenn. "That was more my exposure at that age."

She tried to get a job with a local veterinar-

See MANN, 6M



KAREN PULFER FOCHT / THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

Riding motorcycles is one way Dr. Elizabeth Mann unwinds from her busy medical career delivering babies.

## MANN

from 1M

ian, but no positions were available. Instead, she landed a job as a medical assistant at local hospital.

"That was where I got my first real taste of human doctoring," Mann said. "As a medical assistant I wasn't doing a lot of technical stuff, but I got a lot of hands-on experience working with patients and dealing with all types of people."

That was the summer after high school. So when Mann started college, her decision to take the pre-med track was a no-brainer.

"My grandfather was a medical doctor, a generalist in Covington," she said. "He died when I was very young, but I know about him from stories my mom has told and from pictures. Maybe there are some genetics there. But maybe some of the stories inspired me, too."

After finishing med school and a residency at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Mann began working in her specialty area of obstetrics and gynecology. It's a job she loves.

"I do a lot of deliveries," she said. "It does have its rewards."

But she knows it's also

## ELIZABETH MANN

**City of residence:** Eads

**Family:** Husband Luke Leatherwood, son Aidan, 13; and daughter Brenna, 11.

**Age:** 45.

**Job title:** Physician, Memphis Obstetrics and Gynecological Association.

**Organizations:** Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, women's Bible study leader at Hope Presbyterian Church.

important to balance her busy career with a little bit of fun.

"Keeping your hobbies, I think, is so important," she said. "Because you have to have a mix in life between career and fun. That's how you keep yourself young."

**What's your proudest moment so far, career-wise?**

Being close to my hometown, I deliver babies for a lot of family and friends that I grew up with, but I think by far a career highlight for me would be the delivery of my two nieces, my brother's children. Being the physician there and also being genetically tied to these babies, it meant a lot.

**What are your favorite things about Memphis?**

I think the options for

education — or if you're wanting to exercise or get involved in a sport or be on a team — it doesn't take a whole lot of work to find a niche where you're comfortable and where you can expand your horizons. I like that about Memphis. Also, the churches and variety of places where you can go and learn spiritually is another thing I like about Memphis. Because I grew up in the South, and in particular in a small town, I see a Southern community spirit here. People still know their neighbors and help each other out. And of course I like the restaurant options. We've got everything in Memphis, from seafood to soul food.

**What would others be surprised to learn about you?**

Maybe that I am a legal permit carrier for a weapon. I think it's becoming more common for women to go and get educated in that area. And I do legally carry a gun at times.

**What (or who) most inspires you, and why?**

I've been inspired by so many people in my life, depending on my focus in life at the time — because you go through phases. Right now, anything that drives me spiritually is important. I have to say that Lysa TerKeurst, who is a spiritual leader for women, inspires me the most right now. The reason is because

she is such a busy woman. She's got a big family — she's got kids ranging from young children to almost young adults, and she always seems to keep it real and be down to earth and still maintain her focus on faith, and that inspires me.

**Song that would be the title track to the soundtrack of your life?**

"If I Ain't Got You" by Alicia Keys. It's not a description of my life so far, but as far as my motto in life, it does fit me pretty well. My motto is to not take myself too seriously, and the bottom line is just to love people and love what you're doing and just be happy. The lyrics — "some people live for fortune and fame" and feel like they've got to have diamonds and roses to make them happy — that's all superficial. Just love in general, that's what's important. Just being happy with making your own happiness.

**What's the trip you keep talking about taking one day?**

I want to take a trip to Alaska, and I want to do some inland exploration — hiking, doing some stuff on land — and then I want to watch the whales. And if I won the lottery, I'd maybe buy a ticket to one of those space shuttles and for a million dollars go out in space.