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Marty Essen

Born in Duluth, Minnesota, Marty Essen developed a love of animals at an early age. When he was eight years old, his first “pet,” a black widow spider, gave birth to hundreds of babies, which promptly crawled onto his hands when he opened the jar to feed them. He prudently traded his spiders for a horned toad.

Marty’s dream of an animal-oriented career became sidetracked at the age of 13, when he volunteered to answer request lines at a radio station. That position led to a job as a radio announcer, which in turn led him to become the owner of a Minneapolis-based talent management agency.

In 1990, *Gig Magazine* contracted Marty for his first professional writing work—a series of feature articles on the music business.

Eventually Marty moved to Montana to launch an independent local telephone company. In 2001, while being interviewed for a newspaper story about his telephone company, Marty mentioned to the reporter that he was heading to the Amazon rainforest. The reporter invited him to write a story about his adventures.

Marty’s Amazon story ran as a feature article in two Montana newspapers. The Amazon story, and a second story about a trip to Australia, were so well received that he decided to expand his travels to all seven continents.

While traveling the world, in search of rare and interesting wildlife, Marty was stung by one of the world’s most venomous insects, bitten by a poisonous snake, surrounded by wolves, attacked by a hippo—and had the time of his life. He chronicled his unique adventures in his first book, ***Cool Creatures, Hot Planet: Exploring the Seven Continents***.

Published in 2007, the print version of ***Cool Creatures, Hot Planet*** won six national awards, including the Benjamin Franklin Award, the National Indie Excellence Book Award, and the USA Best Books Award. Additionally, the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* named it a “Top-10 Green Book.” Later, in 2014, the new Kindle version of ***Cool Creatures, Hot Planet*** became an Amazon #1 Best Seller (Animals).

In late 2007, Marty Essen began presenting ***Around the World in 90 Minutes*** at colleges, museums, and nature centers across the United States. Based on his book, Marty’s high-energy multi-media show takes audiences on an unforgettable worldwide adventure, packed with rare and interesting wildlife. It’s the type of show where the audience has fun laughing at the stories, oohing and aahing at the photos, and then, when it’s all done, they realize just how much they’ve learned.

In November 2008, Marty Essen became APCA’s (the Association for the Promotion of Campus Activities) #1 Booked College Speaker, and since then he has spent a total of 50 months at the #1 position. In 2011, Campus Activities Magazine named Marty a “Hot Speaker” pick. To this day, ***Around the World in 90 Minutes*** remains one of the most-popular slide-shows of all-time.

Marty’s second book, ***Endangered Edens: Exploring the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Costa Rica, the Everglades, and Puerto Rico***, was published on January 8, 2016. It soon won the National Indie Excellence Award for Nature, the Readers’ Favorite Book Award for Environment, and two silver Nautilus Book Awards. Additionally, it became an Amazon #1 Best Seller in the Puerto Rico, Ecotourism, and Travel categories.

His third book, a science-fiction political-satire, called ***Time is Irreverent***, will be published in 2018.