

Five Facts You Didn't Know about Me

1. When I left home at 17, one of my first acts of independence was to build a large telescope. The San Francisco Sidewalk Astronomers, a group that traveled through the national parks and monuments in the western US with large portable telescopes, assisted me.
2. I've taken telescopes to isolated spots with some of the darkest night skies on the planet, including Craters of the Moon National Monument in Southern Idaho and Natural Bridges National Monument in Southern Utah.
3. I'm a prolific folk artist with three areas of interest: climate change, domestic pets, and psychology/self-help (duppies and uppies). Duppies are a part of Caribbean folklore mischievous creatures that come out at night and wreak havoc. We all have these demons within us, our "darker selves" that tend to make us miserable. Uppies are my own invention and refer to the inner "angels" that guide us on the path toward greater acceptance and inner peace.
4. I'm an avid mountaineer. I've climbed many of the highest peaks in California and Nevada, and I have climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, the coldest spot I've ever visited.
5. I lead the Forensic Biology Program at Sacramento State University (CSI-TRU), where I train the next generation of crime lab scientists. I also consult for attorneys across the United States, and even far-flung places like the Cayman Islands and Guam, on criminal cases involving DNA evidence.