

MY FAVORITE COUSIN

Having been "deposited" in northern Wisconsin for much of the summer with my grandparents at the family place, I considered myself to be a very lucky kid. Also in residence at this time was my cousin Martin Hanson who was 17 years older.

The day Martin turned 30 years old he inherited some money. He quit his job that day. And on that day, his life's contribution really began. Martin's life was divided into two phases: 1) Big Game Hunter and 2) Conservationist. I was fortunate to be there in the background for both.

Phase 1 The Hunter: He wanted to shoot a Kodiak bear in Alaska with a bow and arrow. In preparation for this, he spent time sharpening these really frighteningly huge arrows. Practicing for Alaska trips involved shooting Wisconsin black bear. After he successfully killed a black bear, the local butcher mixed beef with the bear meat and we had bear burgers. Martin was a fantastic, disciplined hunter. For many years, he held the world record for the largest Kodiak bear and moose shot with bow and arrow.

One day Phase 1 just ended and Phase 2 came in. Martin became the Conservationist. Self-taught, his opinions on land and wildlife came to be respected. He was instrumental in the creation of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore in Lake Superior and heavily involved in the reintroduction of elk in northern Wisconsin. He became a great instigator of conservation projects. Meetings with governors, senators and professors were common. Countless people met at his cabin with a lot of heated discussions. Martin became so involved; he was the tour guide for President John F. Kennedy when he visited the Apostle Islands in 1963.



Martin with John F. Kennedy

Martin taught me to fish for musky and how to shoot with a bow and arrow. We would walk miles back to the lodge when his jeep would get stuck on old logging trails. He had a great sense of humor and a sharp wit. He was unfailingly kind to his little cousins.

Last Fall, when we got the call that he had died, I saw tears rolling down my husband's face. My cousin Martin was a shining example that you can achieve and do so much in life that has nothing to do with money or fame. At this time in our economy, it's so important to remember the outstanding contributions we can make as human beings.



Liz Uihlein

Sincerely,

Liz Uihlein

Liz Uihlein

P.S. Wisconsin Public TV had a very nice clip on Martin's life with some amazing wildlife shots he had taken. If you're interested in seeing it, visit uline.com/liz. Click on the link provided. It's really nice.

