

Reflections on Uncle Kevin (by Rumi)

- Great historian, avid sports fan, family man.
- Athlete (dad says he beat Kevin up a long hill on a morning run.)
- 'Kevin never met a stranger'
- 'There's never been a better brother.'
- A great collector of quotes, puns and jokes.
 - 'All babies look like Winston Churchill.'
 - At Leslie's wedding: 'we're spending money like we have it.'
- Baylor had Kevin well-trained - would make him get up and down off the Lazy-Boy to let him in and out of the house
- Marcia recalls Kevin stowing away in her boyfriend's car when they went on a date to the drive in movie. He must have been 9 or 10. Not sure what he saw from the back seat of that car, but he sufficiently mortified Marcia for her to remember this 65+ years later.
- Vietnam draft discussion between Marcia and Lou: Marcia and Mike were visiting Indianapolis in 1967 - the year Kevin turned 18. Kevin's number was coming up in the draft. Marcia told Kevin that if he wanted to go to Canada, she would support that decision and would send him any or all of her salary to live on while he was there. Lou was furious. "No son of mine is going to turn coward and refuse to serve his country." Marcia: "I'd rather see my brother in Canada than dead in some jungle in SE Asia." Kevin's number didn't come up.
- On the relationship between his sisters. According to Marcia, she and Kevin got along really well, better than either of them got along with Lorna. According to Lorna, she and Kevin got along really well, better than either of them got along with Marcia. I asked Kevin about this once, and he sagely said he loves both of his sisters, but that they are like oil and vinegar - just don't mix, and he tries to stay out of the middle between them. Well Marcia and Lorna, now that Kevin has left us, you two are just going to have to choose each other as your favorite sibling and turn oil and vinegar into salad dressing.
- Personal reflection: I have a lot of uncles, and love them all. Kevin holds a special place in my heart. When I wasn't always getting along with my folks, or felt that their views were a little out of touch, I would talk to Kevin. I learned a great deal about how to parent from watching he and Becky with my cousins as little kids, as teens, as young adults, as spouses and parents. Some of Ross and my parenting style comes from years of exposure to this wonderful family - supportive, loving, engaged, compassionate, with generous sprinkles over the whole delicious ice cream sundae. In 2019, Aunt Lorna hosted a wonderful family reunion in Puerto Vallarta. The whole array of Parnellness was on display - my mom's general gruffness, my Aunt's chirpyness, Kevin's laid-backness. Second and third generation Parnells shared memories. Tai started referring to his second cousins Thomas, William, Joseph and Andrew as "the small mailmen". Emily, Leslie and I obsessed about how and where to watch the US women's National Team play their world cup matches. John, Aaron and Kevin kept us in shady beach seating and cold beers. I'll never forget that trip.