

# 5 minutes w/ martin

Martin Burlingame is more than just an insurance salesman. He is recognized as an expert in the field of insurance. Over the past ten years he has developed cutting edge programs to provide innovative insurance packages designed for new products and business endeavors. Most people know him for his insurance prowess in the tiny house world in which he can write a policy across 38 states. Martin has also proven to be a tremendous advocate for tiny houses.

He is a speaker and author regarding the insurance needs of the tiny home industry. He has appeared on

television and his articles are published in several business journals and magazines.

Martin lives and plays in Colorado Springs, Colo. He is also an avid outdoorsman and football fan.

Beyond all of that though, Martin is my friend. He is an encouraging person that has an enormous ability to humble himself in a situation in order to achieve the best results. It was my pleasure to sit down with him for about five minutes of tiny house insurance talk.



**Andrew Odom:** Let's clear something up. You're not just an insurance salesman? Nevermind. Don't answer. I'll let folks insert their own joke! Seriously though. I've talked to you about policies and am even going to be carrying one for the 2017 TinyHouseNC Street Festival. What got you to this point? How did you become the insurance guru you are?

**Martin Burlingame:** I left the high tech world in 2003-2004 and did some reflection as to what I could do and wanted to do. I ended up with insurance as the top choice and made a leap of faith—starting my own business.

**AO:** Notice I said guru. I mean it. You have almost single handedly provided viable

insurance structures to the tiny house world including certified builds, DIY builds, non-traditional homes, etc. How did you get involved with tiny houses?

**MB:** A friend of mine (Darin Zaruba) ended up being my client due to an issue with his existing agent not understanding what needed to be insured. During one of our meetings Darin made a comment that he was having issues insuring tiny homes—and off we went. I became passionate at the first Tiny House Jamboree in Colorado Springs when I saw the energy, passion, dedication and pure love that tiny home owners and builders have for the movement.

**AO: Are you any good at math? I ask because you must spend a lot of time working with percentages and such. Furthermore, what was your best subject in school?**

**MB:** I started off being average at math and my college degree is in political science and French from Washington & Lee University in Virginia. I needed a scholarship for college and choose an ROTC option to W&L rather than West Point. I studied everything from classical Greek to Philosophy and took advantage of the liberal arts education. Math became a requirement when I started my own business and I trained myself to understand the numbers.

**AO:** Who is your favorite college football team?

**MB:** Well, the Generals are Division III so they don't count. I'm more of an NFL guy (Broncos) but enjoy the Colorado Buffaloes. For what it is worth, my son is dragging me into being a Clemson fan.

**AO:** All of that aside, you live in Colorado. I am sure you are into outdoor activities. Do you like to hike? If so, what is your favorite place to explore?

**MB:** We love to hike and I run every day on trails in the open spaces. I like to hike locally. I'm more a "lets do a three mile hike" than put a pack on and go for two days. That being said my family and I did the

Havasu hike into Havasu Falls this summer (Arizona hike) and loved the remoteness.

**AO:** I also know you are an avid coffee drinker. What is your favorite roast or coffee drink? Do you prefer corporate coffee shops or more “mom and pop” type places?

**MB:** We all get stuck at Starbucks and I love a Caramel Macchiato but when it comes to sitting down and relaxing I like local. We have a place up in the canyon that is awesome and then there are two or three local places that I frequent for meetings. I'm partial to Ethiopian right now and have been dabbling in cold brew as well. I just got a new brew pot as a matter of fact!

**AO:** Do you think we'll be seeing you at any tiny house events in the near future?

**MB:** Of course! I love the energy and since I've been asked to write up a professional speaker bio for the North Carolina street festival thing, I should probably be there \*wink\*

**The final part of our interview is inspired by Inside The Actor's Studio and James Lipton's final questions:**

**What is your favorite word?**

- Success

**What is your least favorite word?**

- Laziness

**What sound or noise do you hate?**

- Nails on chalkboard

**What is your favorite expression?**

- *L'audace, l'audace, toujours l'audace.*

**What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?**

- Trust fund baby

**What profession would you not like to do?**

- Cow inseminator

If Heaven exists, what would you like to hear God say when you arrive at the Pearly Gates?

- "Well Done"

AO: Thank you for taking a few minutes for me Martin.

MB: No problem. My pleasure. I'll let you pay for the coffee.

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**NOTE:** *With over 60 years of combined experience in the insurance industry, Martin and his team at [Strategic Insurance](#) are able to tailor insurance coverage to fit each individual's needs and provide quality support. They "specialize in protecting people's dreams."*

The background of this section is a photograph of a tiny house festival, showing various tiny houses and people, overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

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