Obituary: How to Write This Critical Document

An obituary is a newspaper notice of the death of someone, giving a brief account of their life. It is a common practice to write and publish obituaries to inform friends, family, and the community about the passing of a loved one. Writing an obituary can be a daunting task, but it is an important way to honor the memory of the deceased.



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by J. Lucy Boyd

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This article will provide you with the steps on how to write an obituary, including what to include and what to avoid.

What to Include in an Obituary

The following information is typically included in an obituary:

- The name of the deceased
- The date and place of death

- The date and place of birth
- A brief biography of the deceased
- A list of survivors
- Funeral arrangements

The Name of the Deceased

The name of the deceased should be the first thing that appears in the obituary. It is important to use the full name of the deceased, including their middle name or initial.

The Date and Place of Death

The date and place of death should be included in the obituary. The date should be written in the following format: month, day, year. The place of death should be the city and state where the deceased died.

The Date and Place of Birth

The date and place of birth should be included in the obituary. The date should be written in the same format as the date of death. The place of birth should be the city and state where the deceased was born.

A Brief Biography of the Deceased

The brief biography of the deceased should be a concise summary of their life. It should include information about their education, career, family, and hobbies. It is important to keep the biography brief, no more than a few paragraphs.

A List of Survivors

The list of survivors should include the names of the deceased's spouse, children, parents, siblings, and any other close relatives. The list should be organized by relationship, with the spouse listed first, followed by the children, parents, siblings, and other relatives.

Funeral Arrangements

The funeral arrangements should include the date, time, and location of the funeral service. It should also include information about the burial or cremation. If there are any special requests from the family, such as donations to a charity, these should also be included.

What to Avoid in an Obituary

There are a few things that you should avoid including in an obituary:

- Personal opinions
- Exaggerations
- Unverified information

Personal Opinions

Personal opinions should not be included in an obituary. This includes your own opinions about the deceased, as well as the opinions of others.

Exaggerations

Exaggerations should not be included in an obituary. This includes exaggerating the accomplishments of the deceased or making claims that cannot be verified.

Unverified Information

Unverified information should not be included in an obituary. This includes information that you have not been able to confirm from a reliable source.

Writing an Obituary

Once you have gathered all of the information that you need, you can begin writing the obituary. It is important to write the obituary in a clear and concise style. You should also use a respectful and dignified tone.

Here are a few tips for writing an obituary:

- Start with the name of the deceased and the date and place of death.
- Include a brief biography of the deceased.
- List the survivors.
- State the funeral arrangements.
- End with a respectful and dignified closing statement.

Once you have finished writing the obituary, you should review it carefully for any errors. You should also ask a friend or family member to review the obituary before you submit it to the newspaper.

Submitting an Obituary

Once you are satisfied with the obituary, you can submit it to the newspaper. You can submit the obituary online or by mail. If you are submitting the obituary online, you will need to create an account with the newspaper. Once you have created an account, you can upload the obituary and pay for the publication.

If you are submitting the obituary by mail, you will need to send a copy of the obituary to the newspaper's obituaries department. You will also need to include a check or money order for the publication fee.

The obituary will typically be published within a few days of submission. Once the obituary has been published, you can share it with friends and family members. You can also post the obituary online on social media or other websites.

Writing an obituary is an important way to honor the memory of the deceased. By following the steps outlined in this article, you can write an obituary that is both informative and respectful.



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