

## **Obituary writing tips**

The Monroe Evening News standard obituary fee of \$75 allows for up to 400 words plus one photo and includes one military, club or religious icon if requested. This fee also includes posting of the obituary on line at monroenews.com. Publication in our Bedford Now weekly for obituaries with a Bedford Township connection is also included, but will be done on a space-available basis.

We recommend you do a word count before submitting the obituary, but the typical notice that runs in The Monroe Evening News is between 250 and 350 words. If you want to place an obituary that is has more than 400 words, you will be charged on a space-used basis under the advertising column inch count formula and the cost jumps substantially at that point.

In order to limit the obituary publication costs, especially when your family wants to place the notice in multiple newspapers, an obituary should include the most important details about the deceased in as few words as possible.

### **What information typically goes into an obituary?**

#### **The following details should be in every obituary:**

Deceased person's full name.

His or her hometown.

Age.

Birth date and location.

Date of death.

City or township where death took place.

Burial location when applicable.

Name of funeral home or cremation society that is handling arrangements.

Parents' names.

Spouse's or partner's full name.

Marriage date.

Names of immediate family members who survive: spouse or partner, parents, stepparents, siblings, stepsiblings, half-siblings, children, stepchildren.

Grandchildren and great-grandchildren were traditionally listed only by the number in the family, but it has become common in recent years to list grandchildren by their names.

#### **The following details can be included at the family's discretion:**

Photo of the deceased. It doesn't matter whether the photo is black and white or color, group photo or portrait. The important detail is that the persons' face can be clearly seen.

Religious or military icon or logo (such as cross or flag).

Location of death, such as at home, in the hospital or under hospice care.

Cause of death or length of illness.

If a cremation will take place.

Minister or officiant for services.

If there will be private family services in lieu of calling hours.

If a memorial service will be held at a later time.  
Former hometown of the deceased.  
City or location where the deceased and spouse were married.  
Work history and business affiliations.  
Military service record.  
High school and colleges that were attended or graduated from.  
Church memberships, either current or former.  
Special accomplishments, awards and honors.  
Club and organization memberships.  
Hobbies or interests.  
Dates of former marriages and names of former spouses.  
Hometowns of all or some of the surviving family.  
Names of extended family members or friends.  
Pets.  
Memorial donation requests.  
Online condolence site.

### **Short wording tips**

Be specific: “He volunteered at his grandchildren’s sporting events” gives more details in the same number of words as “He enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren.”  
Thank-yous, prayers and favorite verses can be listed in the funeral program, read at the services or sent in the mail rather than included in the obituary.  
List hometowns only for the immediate family rather than extended family.  
Consider using first names instead of full names for the grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

### **Reminders**

Our deadlines are 7 p.m. the night before for publication in the following day’s newspaper. Most obituaries arrive to us via email at [obit@monroenews.com](mailto:obit@monroenews.com). Be sure to include a phone number in the email as to where you can be reached for billing arrangements or other questions. We also need the name and city of the funeral home or cremation society that handled the arrangements, even if there will be no calling hours or services.

If you wish to place an obituary in person at the social desk rather than via email, our business hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

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