

OBIT EXERCISE EXAMPLE

Here are three paid morts from the Houston Chronicle that illustrate what I want you to look for. All three contain interesting facts about the deceased and opportunities to supplement the given information with some archival research. Here are some of the facts / observations that could be used to create a lede for an obit:

ANNE BRADLEY O'NEILL

The wife of John O'Neill, the founder of Swift Boat Veterans for Truth. He dedicated his anti-John Kerry book, "Unfit for Command," to her. Died of a rare disease, Wegener's Granulomatosis. She had the ailment for 25 years and reportedly was the longest lived survivor of the disease.

Possible lede: The wife of a controversial Houston Republican political activist died Saturday of a rare disease.

BILLY GLYN CARLISLE

He was the head basketball coach at Deer Park High School. He died apparently of a heart attack on Feb. 10, one day shy of his 52nd birthday. He served as varsity basketball coach for 20 years after first arriving at the school in 1981. Was also a teacher at Deer Park.

Possible lede: The longtime varsity boy's basketball coach at Deer Park High School died Friday of an apparent heart just one day shy of his 52nd birthday.

THOMAS WILLIAM HURST

Was an instructor for the Iowa State Skin Diving Schools in Des Moines. He logged more than 2,600 dives. A pioneer in the field of windsurfing and Scuba equipment sales. He introduced windsurfing to the Texas Gulf Coast and heavily promoted the sport. He helped produce an award-winning PBS documentary about the San Marcos River called "River of Innocence."

Possible lede: Thomas Hurst, who logged more than 2,600 underwater dives and introduced windsurfing to the Texas Coast, died Wednesday at age 58.