

**LEADING MEMORIAL SITE PARTNERS WITH OBITUARY WRITERS TO SPOTLIGHT OBITS FOR “ORDINARY” PEOPLE**

*With help from the Society of Professional Obituary Writers, Legacy.com shares newspaper obituaries for teachers, homemakers and others*

EVANSTON, Ill. – There’s no shortage of places to read the life stories of celebrities like Elizabeth Taylor and Michael Jackson. But too often the obituaries of less well-known people go unnoticed. A new feature launched by online memorial leader Legacy.com seeks to change that by highlighting obituaries for ordinary people who led extraordinary lives – or who simply had exceptionally interesting obituaries.

Through a newly-formed partnership with the Society of Professional Obituary Writers, Legacy.com – which hosts the obituary sections of 900-plus newspapers in the United States and around the world – is showcasing stories not only of movie stars and pop singers, but also of teachers, restaurant servers, homemakers and more.

“We’re delighted to share with our millions of users some of the amazing life stories that are published in newspapers every day,” said Legacy.com President and CEO Stopher Bartol. “By combining our resources with those of some of the nation’s leading obituary writers, we not only drive traffic to newspaper obituaries, but also help satisfy the appetite of readers for interesting stories and the desire by families for their loved ones’ legacies to be remembered.”

Examples include:

\* A [devoted married couple](http://www.tampabay.com/news/obituaries/james-and-bettie-wise-were-inseparable-in-life-and-then-in-death/1088174) who died four days apart, 65 years after they first met.

\*A [schoolteacher](http://www.legacy.com/ns/news-story.aspx?t=remembering-a-favorite-teacher&id=342) who, at 98, recalled the names of students she had taught half a century earlier. (They remembered her, too.)

\*A popular [parking meter prosecutor](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/obituaries/article_057c51dc-b5b3-5c90-b916-c9f944ec7704.html). (Yes, you read that right.)

The highlighted obituaries, regularly added to a Legacy.com blog called The Obit Report that links to the newspaper where the obituary was originally published, are often inspirational – and occasionally funny. For example, the family of [Rose Davis](http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/idahostatesman/obituary.aspx?n=rose-davis&pid=149419877) provided a lighthearted accounting of her birth and life, as well as their eventual reunion with her in heaven: *We miss you dearly and know that we'll meet again. But, not too soon.*

The Obit Report initiative was partly the result of a report by the Medill School of Journalism that found “people interested in obituaries – compelling stories about noteworthy lives – are a sizeable, highly engaged potential audience.”

“The Medill team zeroed in on the fact that people enjoy reading stories about people, whether they’re famous or not,” Bartol said, noting that obituaries are among the most visited sections of newspapers. “Given that Legacy.com publishes thousands of newspaper obituaries each day and SPOW is comprised of award-winning journalists who are passionate about obituaries, the partnership positions us well to identify great content and share it with a broader audience.”

Said Alana Baranick, SPOW’s director: “The Society of Professional Obituary Writers is delighted that [Legacy.com](http://Legacy.com) has made The Obit Report a forum on which to spotlight obits about ordinary people who lived extraordinary lives. We're sharing life stories that are beautifully or cleverly written by professional journalists as well as family-prepared obits that capture our attention for a variety of reasons.”

The Obit Report is currently available at [www.legacy.com](http://www.legacy.com) and via Legacy.com’s [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/Legacycom) page.

**ABOUT LEGACY.COM**

Founded in 1998, [Legacy.com](http://www.legacy.com/) is the world’s most timely and comprehensive resource for online obituaries and the undisputed leader in Web-based memorialization. With 18 million unique visitors each month, the Legacy.com domain is among the 100 most visited on the Internet. [Legacy.com](http://www.legacy.com/)’s network includes thousands of newspapers and funeral homes in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Australia. By making interactive memorial content accessible directly via the websites of newspapers and funeral homes, [Legacy.com](http://www.legacy.com/) helps people expand the ways in which they can express condolences and share remembrances of loved ones. A privately held company, [Legacy.com](http://www.legacy.com/) is headquartered in Evanston, Ill.

**ABOUT SPOW**

[The Society of Professional Obituary Writers](http://obitwriters.org/index.html) is a group of journalists who write, produce and present obituaries for newspapers and other news entities. SPOW spotlights the art of obituary writing while helping obituary writers improve their craft.

For more information, contact media@legacy.com.