

Person hurt over their omission in sister-in-law's obit

Dear Annie: I am in my 80s and recently lost my beloved sister-in-law, who was 90. She married my brother when I was just a child, and we had been close ever since. Aside from the many things I did for her, I loved her dearly as she was the last of my ties to my brothers, who have all passed on. So that leaves me as the only one left. My problem lies with her children, with whom I was very close. I told her children what a wonderful job they did taking care of their mom. I was there during her last days, but more importantly, I was there for her after my brother's death. I took her on errands and doctors' visits, etc. My niece and nephews always tell me how much they love me, and the feeling is mutual.

DEAR ANNIE



ANNIE LANE
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

tioned in obits. Really, I'm their last living aunt: How do you forget to acknowledge that person? How can this breach be fixed? — *Hurting in Ohio*

Dear Hurting in Ohio: What a remarkable bond you and your sister-in-law shared. It sounds as though there are still some pretty raw feelings here, and you might be focusing on being left out of the obituary because it's an easier pain to grapple with than the enormous pain of grief. Still, it's not fair to hold a grudge against your niece and nephews. They're grieving, too. They just lost their mother.

Regarding your wish for friends to reach out to you: I encourage you to reach out to them to seek the healing you need.

Remember, the fact that your name wasn't mentioned in her obituary doesn't erase the imprint you left on each other. I'm so sorry for your loss.

Dear Annie: Recently, I excused myself at a restaurant to use the restroom. When I arrived, another man was leaving the stall. I went in, only to be "greeted" by the fact that he walked away without flushing. I didn't call him out on it, but felt like it. Why are some people so disgustingly lazy? — *Dismayed in North Carolina*

Dear Dismayed: Well, that sounds like quite an awful greeting. What a slob! To all my readers: Please flush the toilet. It only takes a second and could save someone from having to walk into a disgusting mess.

CRV: 'It was in the blue car that we started off on our many family adventures'

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Changes

Change is such a overwhelming experience in our lives, the few constants can take on weighted meaning.

So much has changed since 2001.

When Lindsay was born I worked at home as a writer, but soon after I went back to school to become a nurse. The blue CRV took me through many a snowstorm to arrive at school and work in Longview and brought me safe at home again.

Yet most of the time it was the family car.

Lindsay and her younger sister, Grace, attended the Astoria School of Ballet for years, and the little blue CRV was my wife's reliable transport across the river and back late at night. It was in the blue car that we started off on our many family adventures — sledding on Mt. Hood and huckleberry picking on Mt. Adams.

In the great Hanukkah Eve Storm of 2006, it got caught in rapidly rising flood waters before I could pull it out of my garage. We dried it out and it was not much worse for wear. It was stolen in 2012 from the street outside the hospital in Longview, while I was working. I came out after my night shift to find an empty parking spot where it had been. It was such a humble and unassuming car that I couldn't believe anyone would steal it.

Miraculously, it was recovered by police in Vancouver just before it got chopped up for parts.

When I gave Lindsay her first driving lesson in the Rosburg School parking lot, it was in the CRV that we had bought just after she was born. I sat in the passenger seat giving her instructions, while glancing backward, thinking about the car seat that used to always be strapped in the back.



Lindsay Hunt has found a new creative energy with the amazing Ilwaco Jazz Band.

When she got her license, the blue CRV became "her" car. She put a hula guy on the dashboard and drove off to school with her younger sister and our exchange student riding along. I trusted her with this responsibility somehow. It wasn't the car — with its all wheel drive and its airbags and antilock brakes — but the girl driving it.

At the start of her senior year, Lindsay came back from one of her many trips across the state as part of her student leadership activities renewed with ambition. She wanted to take jazz band in Ilwaco. Naselle High School didn't offer jazz band and she was wanting to challenge herself and grow as a saxophone player, to try something new.

I was skeptical. The class started at 7 a.m., and that

meant she'd need to leave the house by 6 a.m. every weekday morning for the long drive. Most teenagers like to sleep in and I didn't think this adventure would last. Instead, she unerringly wakes before anyone else in the house and gets herself out the door before the sunrise.

The rewards for that effort have been enormous, she's made new friends, grown as a musician, performs amazing solos during the band's performances.

She also takes advantage of the Grays Harbor College facilities in Ilwaco for her Running Start college classes. Her senior year and she is technically attending classes at two high schools — Ilwaco and Naselle — while earning college credits.

The blue CRV has

become the symbol of Lindsay's ambition and independence for me, as well as her reliability. She even checks the oil — because at 313,000 miles, it does burn a little. The back hatch is stuck shut and the air conditioner doesn't work, but the plucky little thing just keeps on running.

In the fall, Lindsay will be off to Washington State University and will leave the little blue CRV at home — parking fees on campus are almost as much as tuition.

That will work out fine, because her younger sister starts driving lessons soon.

Ed Hunt is a writer and registered nurse who blogs on medical issues at redtriage.com and on other subjects at theebbtide.blogspot.com. He lives in Grays River, Washington.

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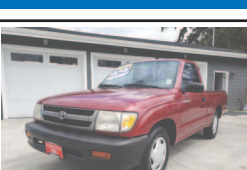
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