

# HEADLINE WRITING




Brian Carroll  
COM 303



## Claws out in Senate health care talks

Prospects for bipartisan cooperation on health care reform faded as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid called his GOP counterparts obstructionist, while conservative and liberal activists attacked the sweeping Senate Finance Committee bill. Another Democrat moved to end an antitrust exemption enjoyed by insurers since the end of World War II. [full story](#)

- [Focus on Snowe as battle advances](#)
- [What happens next in health care reform?](#)
- [Republican who backed bill: 'History calls'](#)
-  [Complete Coverage: Health Care in America](#)



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## Noose tightens around Vick at amazing speed

### Disgraced Falcons QB has few options left as former buddies abandon him

**OPINION**

By **Tim Dahlberg**  
**AP** Associated Press

Updated: 2:51 a.m. ET Aug 14, 2007

Right about now, [Michael Vick](#) would probably gladly trade a year or two out of football for a chance to rid himself of dogfighting charges. He was never going to play this season anyway, not if Roger Goodell, Arthur Blank and thousands of animal rights activists had anything to say about it.

The question now becomes whether Vick will ever play in the NFL again, and even the bravest Las Vegas bookie wouldn't offer odds on that happening.

Hard to imagine Blank or any other NFL owner would be willing to hire a quarterback who is now the poster child for animal abusers everywhere. It's even harder to imagine how the home fans would feel about an alleged puppy killer leading their offense.

[Story continues below](#)

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**Chris Bahr — [Titans preview](#)**

Chris Bahr says an offseason of complacency from Tennessee's front office will hurt Vince Young and the team's overall fantasy appeal.

# Headlines: why they're vital

- Every print story needs one.
- In some media, it is the *only* thing the vast majority of audiences read.
- Headlines tell audiences what's important.
- Headlines help audiences navigate & select.

# Headlines: What they must do

- Signal the news - *and* the impact.
- Be clear & unambiguous (specific).
- Be taken in at a glance.
- Make people want to read the story.

# Just take my word on this

- Clever is OK if:
  - used sparingly, and if truly clever.
- Cute is *not* OK.
- When in doubt, play it straight.

These are good:

Court brief in verse  
is a motion in poetry

Milli Vanilli  
phoney baloney

# Promise you'll never write:

- **Airline ticket sales soar**
- **Fireworks business is booming**
- **Golfers teed off over greens fees**
- **City drives for left-turn lane**
- **Railroad plans on track**



# Headlines: How to write them

- Use present tense (mostly)
- Replace “will” with “to”
- Omit most articles
- Omit present-tense forms of “to be”:

Tuition increase likely

# Headlines: How to write them

- Attribute where needed
- Replace “and” with a comma:  
**Pope, Castro meet**
- Single quote marks
- No periods

# Rules for good headlines

- Make sure your headline fits *this* story.
- Be specific.
- Use short words.
- Use strong verbs.
- Say something in the top line.

# Rules for good headlines

- Fill out headlines; don't pad them out.
- Use punctuation to divide headline into bite-sized chunks.
- Put the 'so-and-so says' at the end.
- If not, use other verbs: *calls*, *urges*, etc.

# Rules for good headlines

- Use articles, parts of 'to be' when they add clarity.
- Pay attention to how headlines split.
- Use emotional words, colorful details.
- Let no rule stand in the way of a good headline.

# Rules for good headlines

- WWGD: Think in *key words*.
- Avoid alphabet soup:  
UN, NATO OK plan
- Colons: Use them sparingly.
- Avoid “duh” headlines.
- Remember your audience.

# Don't go breakin' these up

1) Words that function as a unit:

hot/line

White/House

2) Prepositions and their

objects:

for/victims

to/other side

# Don't go breakin' these up

3) Verbs and their objects:

throwing / rocks

Umpire ejects / Braves manager

4) Adjectives and what they describe:

weary / firefighters

10,000 / fans



# 1-column headlines?

All bets are off! Do the best you can:

- Make sure the top line's a grabber
- 1 line = 1 unit (or thought)
- Read between the lines!  
(Double entendres, etc.)
- Short headlines look worse in 1 col.

# Have a filthy mind

- Cops bust topless dancers
- DA eager to probe sex case
- Berry researcher prefers the company of deer
- Viking women like being on top

# Headlines are ...

- . . . the most important words in any print medium.
- . . . seen by 68,000, 125,000, 350,000 – or even millions of people.
- . . . worth your time.

# The “I Can’t Resist Dept.”

Skydiver is spared chuteless



# The “I Can’t Resist Dept.”

**ADP:** former Leuzinger High standout Dorell Wright signs \$3 million deal with Heat/D2

## SPORTS

Section D

# Rangers get whiff of Colon



**AL WEST:** Angels starter fans eight Texas batters, combines with two relievers on a one-hit shutout.

By The Associated Press

Bernie Colon's aggressive pitching took all the fight out of the Texas Rangers. Colon combined with two relievers on a one-hitter, and the Angels beat the AL West leaders, 2-0, Tuesday night after the warts smoldered during batting practice at Angel Stadium.

The right-hander pitched seven dominant innings to win his fourth consecutive start. Texas' only hit was a clean, ground single through the left side by Michael Young on a 5-1 pitch with two outs in the third.

"I absolutely think this was my best outing of the



**TODAY:** Angels 2, Rangers 0  
**TODAY:** Rangers 8, Angels 7  
**THURSDAY:** Rangers 10, Angels 7

# The “I Can’t Resist Dept.”



# Doh!

## Utah Poison Control Center reminds everyone not to take poison

"Children Act Fast, So Do Poisons" is the theme for National Poison Prevention Week, arch 20 - 26. The Utah Poison Control Center (UPCC) would like to take the opportunity to remind parents and caregivers that poisonings can be prevented. In 2004, the Utah Poison Control Center responded to over 50,000 calls, the majority of which were about actual potential poisonings.

Over 60 percent of the potential poisoning exposures involved children under age 6. The top five substances that children in this

giving or taking medicine. Check the dosage each use.

- \* Avoid taking medicine in front of children.

- \* Never refer to medicine as candy.

- \* Clean your medicine cabinet periodically, safely disposing of unneeded and outdated medicines.

The UPCC, part of the College of Pharmacy, has an active community outreach program. In 2004, representatives of the Utah Poison Control Center provided 126 community presentations and distributed more than 40,000 poi-

# Doh!

## Local child wins gun from fundraiser



Stetson Graves, 19-month-old son of Charlie and Kim Graves, Tompkinsville, was the winner of the 17-caliber Marlin rifle that was given away on Dec. 13 by the Tri-County Moose Service Center #2643. The sponsors said they would like to express appreciation to all who supported this fundraiser in any way.



**D'uh!**

# Federal Agents Raid Gun Shop, Find Weapons

Store Owner Arrested Previously

By Brian Barber  
World Staff Writer

Federal agents on Monday searched a south Tulsa gun shop owned by the man who officials allege had kept in his

On July 2, undercover narcotics agents served a warrant at Thao's home, [redacted] to search for drugs. They found a stockpile of land mines, hand grenades, dynamite and other explo-

# Really?

## Army vehicle disappears

AN Australian Army vehicle worth \$74,000 has gone missing after being painted with camouflage.

Police are seeking public help to find the four-wheel drive which was

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