

# Fast By-Lines and Easy Money

By Jennifer Stevens



## Examples of Short Articles

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### Germany's Criminal Museum

By Roberta Beach Jacobson

The secret password must be "torture." This four-story (half-acre) museum in Rothenburg, Germany, is bound to give anybody the creeps. Finger screws (to make people tell the truth)...masks of shame (for people who missed church)... The Middle Ages used all sorts of unusual punishments, including the so-called "baker's chairs" for those bad bakers who shorted customers on loaf sizes. Among the museum's 130 glass cases is a large display of chastity belts. Also on view are items pertaining to executions and the related documents of emperors and princes.

You'll find the Kriminalmuseum at Burggasse 3-5. Entry is 3.20 euro for adults, 1.70 euro for kids. Families can go for 8 euro. For a preview, go to [www.kriminalmuseum.rothenburg.de](http://www.kriminalmuseum.rothenburg.de).

117 words, International Living

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### Utah Dinorama: Hunt for dinosaurs at Vernal's big new Field House museum

By Kurt Repanshek

First impressions are important, and Dippy definitely is impressive, even without his skin. "He is our official greeter," says Mary Beth Bennis-Smith, education curator for the Utah Field House in Vernal, as we stand under the 90-foot-long, 145 million-year-old Diplodocus skeleton. "When people come through the door, they run right into him. I don't even think he needs a sign. He speaks for himself."

That door is the entrance to the Field House's new 22,000-square-foot home — a portal to the past via Utah's paleontological collections. Step past Dippy in the lobby and you begin a tour of 2.5 billion years of earth history. Plenty of hands-on exhibits allow visitors to become amateur paleontologists, uncovering fossils and meeting a variety of prehistoric creatures, from toothy Allosaurus of the Jurassic period to rhinolike uintatheres from the Eocene.

135 words, Sunset

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### Pearly Whites

By Pamela Turner

Every fall the waters around the Farallon Islands, located about 30 miles west of San Francisco, provide great white sharks with a blubber buffet: hundreds of young elephant seals and sea lions that are high in fat but low in survival skills.

"This makes it the best place in the world to study great whites," says marine biologist Peter Pyle, whose research could help save the endangered species.

Pyle and other scientists have watched great white attack their prey, tested the sharks' reactions to various surfboard colors, and witnessed great whites communicating through tail slaps. They've even coaxed sharks into swallowing thermometers. (Surprise: Despite their reputation as cold-blooded killers, great whites are warm-blooded, if not exactly cuddly.)

Every January, some great whites vanish from the Farallons. By satellite-tagging them, Pyle's team recently found out that the sharks spend the off-season vacationing in Hawaii.

Oceanic Society whale-watching tours around the Farallons are offered from June through November (shark sightings possible); for information call 415-474-3385, or go to [www.oceanic-society.org](http://www.oceanic-society.org).

168 words, Islands

## Chirps And Chimes In The Cite

By Sue Wright

Emerge from the Cité Métro on any Sunday, and daylight won't be the only thing to greet you. The tolling of the bells from nearby Sainte-Chapelle and Notre-Dame complimented by a cacophony of bird song immediately surround you. You've just entered the Marché aux Oiseaux (caged bird market), the Sunday addition to one of the last remaining flower markets in Paris, the Marché aux Fleurs.

Seven days a week, you can shop for flowers at these outdoor shops, but on Sundays the market expands to include an outdoor pet shop with ducks, geese, turkeys, doves, myna birds, parrots, parakeets, canaries, love birds, and chickens (an ice chest overflowing with fluffy baby chicks caught my attention!)...plus bunnies, guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, rats, and goldfish in abundance, as well as huge burlap sacks of every type of animal feed you can imagine. You'll also find accessories for your pet, from balls for Fido to collars and halters for walking your pet guinea pig down the Champs-Élysées.

The Marché aux Fleurs is open Monday to Saturday from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Sundays from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. it expands to include the Marché aux Oiseaux. Take the #4 metro line to Cité station; the street market is at the Métro exit. Within a minute's walk are the Palais de Justice and Sainte-Chapelle; Notre-Dame and the River Seine are less than a five-minute walk away.

233 words, International Living

## Spotlight - PORKY'S

Pigging Out

Minnesotans dig Porky's, their original hometown drive-in.

By Jane Wolkowicz

WHEN PORKY'S OPENED in St. Paul in 1953, drive-ins were still just catching on. But with a prime University Avenue location, carhops and a giant Porky's pig sign to wave customers in, it didn't take long to grab Minnesotans' attention.

Porky's became such a popular hangout for college students in the 1960s, the restaurant began to charge admission for cars to enter the parking lot. (The price of admission included that dollar amount's worth of grub.)

On warm summer nights, the giant pig still draws a crowd. "Porky's has always been a family business," says owner Tryg Truelson, whose father, Ray, opened the original drive-in. "I grew up eating the food and hanging out here. I think part of the reason we are still so popular is because of that family-friendly atmosphere and the nostalgia effect."

It wasn't always easy for Porky's. The growth of fast-food chains in the 1970s caused a rough patch: The original location closed and reopened as a drive-thru in 1990. But another Porky's opened last year on Central Avenue in Minneapolis, showing the renewed appeal of the classic American experience. The main clientele at both locations is still the Baby Boomers who hung out at Porky's in its heyday. Porky's is open year-round, but it's at its best during the summer months.

Offering traditional American fare, almost everything at Porky's is still homemade. Standout items include fried chicken, burgers, pork cutlets and famously fresh onion rings (one of which tops every burger). "We are meticulous about the preparation of our food," Truelson says. "We always grind our own hamburger and use only USDA-certified meat." Truelson's favorite? The giant double cheeseburger. "Visitors should come here primarily for the food," Truelson says. "But for people wanting to relive the past, we offer a fun atmosphere and a great place to be."

1890 University Ave., St. Paul, Minn. | 651-644-1790

313 words, MyMidwest

## Margs, bargains at The Pink Store

By Kyle Wagner

PALOMAS, Mexico — There is no mistaking The Pink Store, because it is very, very pink. As in Pepto Bismol, Barbie-accessory, Pink Panther, bubble-gum pink.

And that's a good thing, because from the American side of the border, it's comforting to be able to pick out your destination and make a beeline for it.

Not that the crossing from Columbus, N.M., to Palomas, Mexico, is unsafe, but you should be as aware and alert as you would be during any other travel experience. And let's just say that you, gringo, will be asked a few times if you would like to buy something.

But it is all very friendly, although not nearly as friendly as the reception upon arrival at what really is the reason for being here: The Pink Store.

"Would you like a margarita?" someone will ask you upon entrance, and those are free and tasty, served in little plastic cups edged with salt, and the staff will keep 'em coming as long as you are shopping this vast, colorful emporium of handcrafted Mexican products.

Owned by Sergio and Ivonne Romero, who often can be found wandering among the merchandise or in the on-site restaurant, The Pink Store is in its second, much larger location. For 18 years, it has been a mecca for retirees and RVers from El Paso; Tucson; Deming, N.M.; and other Southwestern cities and towns, places where folks set up their second or retirement homes and then set about furnishing them with all things inexpensive and Mexican.

Which is exactly what The Pink Store specializes in, from carved-wood furniture to painted pottery, santos and statues, retablos, sombreros, crosses and pots, blankets, ornaments, dishware, glassware and jewelry, tortilla-warmers, Mexican vanilla extract, and a nice line of Dia de los Muertos figurines and dioramas.

The Pink Store has been so successful that the Romeros funded a dentistry and pharmacy across the plaza — there's a large furniture store connected to The Pink Store, as well — and they are well known for their hospitality to folks from both sides of the border.

"We like to take care of people no matter where they are from," Sergio said, after we invited him to sit down with us at lunch. "That's what has been so wonderful about having a place like this, the meeting of cultures over food and cervezas and good conversation."

Ivonne does a lot of the buying for the store — many of the items are made by people the couple have spent time with in their travels around Mexico, and they have stories about all of them — and she keeps a close eye on making sure customers' needs are met, such as when she checked for me to see if I had time to shop while my lunch was being cooked.

The food in the restaurant is some of the best I've had on either side of the border: hand-mashed guacamole, spicy shredded pork, roasted chiles packed with cheese and deep-fried, chicken-stuffed enchiladas smothered in long-simmered red chile. Then take your margarita and shop a little more.

On my way back across the border, the customs officials took one look at my bulging plastic bags and laughed. Yep, I had a good time at The Pink Store.

### The details

The Pink Store, Ave. 5 de Mayo 113, Palomas, Mexico, 505-531-7243. The Pink Store is just south of Columbus, N.M., on New Mexico 11. There is a parking lot on the U.S. side of the border and street parking next to the store. According to the U.S. Department of State, until June 1, 2009, U.S. citizens traveling over land into Mexico need a photo I.D. and proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate. After June 1, 2009, a passport will be required. Upon return to the United States, you must declare your purchases.

542 words plus sidebar, Denver Post

## Colorado Springs Excursion...

### High Country Drama: Mueller State Park, Colorado

By Jennifer Stevens

Down at your feet in the meadow grass, impossibly purple wildflowers and white yarrow-blossom bouquets... look up, and you'll see range after range of snow-capped peaks and the ridges of the Continental Divide, mountains to the horizon... overhead, a cobalt blue sky... and the rustle of aspens, like the sound of paper bells...

Just 45 minutes from downtown Colorado Springs, up and around the back side of Pikes Peak, you'll find yourself well into the Rockies at Mueller State Park. It's the easiest, most-rewarding, most undiscovered way to experience Colorado's mountain drama.

With 5,000 acres of untouched wilderness and 50 miles of trails, Mueller makes for an ideal high-country excursion -- whether you've got just three hours or a full day to spare. (Even if you don't plan to hike, this scenic trip is worthwhile.)

Begin by ducking into the Visitor's Center, where kids can make animal-footprint rubbings and test out the grip on a mountain goat's hoof. Be sure to walk to the gazebo outside. The view will take your breath away. And not just because you're at 10,000 feet.

Stretched out before you is an awe-inspiring collection of Colorado's "fourteeners," including Mt. Elbert and Mt. Massive, the state's tallest peaks.

The trails offer great variety in both difficulty and length. Mueller is expansive. And so while you'll see other cars parked at the trailhead lots, you'll seldom run into more than one or two people on the trails. Often not a soul.

Outlook Ridge is one our favorites walks -- a relatively gentle, 1.4-mile trail with a rewarding view to the distant peaks over conifer forest and aspen stands. Perfect for a morning out. Hike to the overlook, recharge with lunch or a snack on the rocky outcrop, and walk back through the quaking Aspens to your car. Rocky Mountain drama, guaranteed.

304 words, ExpressLane

## 4 Sure-fire Openers

1. Tell a relevant story
2. Open mid-conversation or mid-action
3. Use a stunning statistic
4. "Paint a picture" with a vivid description

## Jen's First-Sentence Trick:

Write a description that's simply: Image... image... image...

(See the Mueller State Park article on this page as an example.)