Discreet, disguised bank robber remains at large

**Matt Fountain**

An unusually high number of bank robberies has struck the Central Coast over the past few months and authorities are seeking the public's help in apprehending the suspects who remain at large.

Two robberies have occurred this month alone: at the First Bank in San Luis Obispo on Jan. 2nd and at a Wells Fargo branch in Santa Maria a day later.

Authorities have linked at least six robberies since November to one man, dubbed the El Camino Real Bandit, after he robbed banks along California's historic old mission trail.

Since robbing four Central Coast banks, authorities think this individual has moved north and is suspected in two robberies in the Sacramento area.

According to the F.B.I., the El Camino Real bandit is a white male in his forties and approximately 180 lbs. He has reportedly used disguises during his crimes, including fake mustaches and even a deadbeat wig during his robbery of a Rabobank in Pismo Beach on Dec. 23rd.

"He's been doing what we call a note-job," said F.B.I. Spokeswoman for the Los Angeles Field Office Laura Eimiller. "He presents a note to the teller, demands cash and then leaves without attracting too much attention."

According to Eimiller, this type of robbery is more common than the dramatic "takeover-style" typically seen in movies. In at least one robbery, however, the suspect did brandish a handgun, an act that could drastically increase his sentence should he be caught and tried.

"A firearm enhancement is very important," Eimiller said. "Different statutes are applicable to each situation, but if prosecutors can prove (robbers) did use a firearm in carrying out a violent crime... that's an extra five years on top of each count."

"Basically, this means longer sentences and less of a revolving door for these individuals," she added.

In the case of the El Camino Real bandit, as well as the other recent robberies in Santa Maria and San Luis Obispo, suspects got away with an undisclosed amount of cash.

"The typical take from a bank robbery is very low, much lower than $1,000 a month in fresh produce, vegetables and fruits, but it is still a hit," DeChadenedes said. "At EOC, our community supported agriculture program has the ability to provide wholesome nutritious food supplies; DeChadenedes, director of the food program through EOC (Equal Opportunity Commis- sion) both recognized the need for fresh produce in homeless shelters around the county."

"The farm has donated over 1,000 pounds in fresh produce to the shelter," Douglas said. "This turns out to be an estimated $1,000 a month in fresh produce, she said.

DeChadenedes, a Sexual Assault Recovery and Prevention (SARP) advisory board member, and director of the food program at EOC, helps with annual fund-raisers including the umbrella organization where she first met Douglas.

As a member of the SLOW food movement, a non-profit organization dedicated to contribu- ting sustainable and biodiverse food supplies; DeChadenedes dedicates her time in order to keep efforts directed at under-privileged individuals in the community.

"With the rising cost of food, participants at the shelter have declined, providing a challenge to provide wholesome nutritious foods," DeChadenedes said. "If it weren't for Cindy Douglas, under served members of the community aight not get a chance to be helped and have meals prepared for them."

The Maxine Lewis Memorial Homeless Shelter serves dinner to around 130 people starting at 6 p.m. Around 85 people stay at the shelter, the maximum capacity for overnighters. Shelter Manager Shawn Ison, noticed a higher quality of food needed.
Obama and the Bush administration had been negotiating for days on how and when to seek access to the second half of the Troubled Asset Relief Program. His economic team also has been working with congressional Democrats, in particular House Financial Services Chairman Barney Frank, D-Mass.

Frank has introduced legislation that would require at least $40 billion of the money be used to reduce the number of foreclosures. His legislation also would set new conditions on institutions that receive the money, including limits on executive compensation. Frank's committee is holding a hearing on the program on Tuesday and the House is scheduled to vote on his legislation this week.

"We should not allow our disappointment at the Bush administration's poor handling of the TARP program to prevent the Obama administration from using the funds in more appropriate ways," Frank said in a statement Monday. But other lawmakers were hardly supportive.

House Republican leader John Boehner of Ohio warned that it would be irresponsible to spend the money without a plan showing how the government would eventually extricate itself from underwriting the financial market.

"Many of us have been disappointed with the absence of clarity, the lack of transparency, the failure to track how the money's been spent and the failure to take bold action," Obama said.

In a letter to congressional leaders, Summers said an Obama administration would "launch sweeping efforts to address the foreclosure crisis" and, in a bow to Republican critics of the plan, said it would seek to replace the government money with "private investments as quickly as possible."
President George W. Bush walks away after his last formal news conference, Monday in the pressroom at the White House in Washington.

Jennifer Loven

WASHINGTON — With rare public emotion, George W. Bush said in judgment on his controversial, consequential presidency on Monday, lamenting mistakes but claiming few as his own, hysterically defending his record on disaster in Iraq and at home and offering kindly advice to a successor who won largely because the nation ached for something new.

By turns wistful, aggressive and joking in his final news conference, Bush covered a huge range of topics in summing up his eight years in the White House — the latest in a recent string of efforts to have his say before historians have theirs. Then the White House said he would do it again Thursday night in a formal address to the nation.

Reaching back to his first day in office, he recalled walking into the White House and having “a moment” when he felt all the responsibilities of the job landing on his shoulders. Barack Obama will feel that next week, he said, his tone gently understanding.

Indeed, he was full of supportive words for Obama — the nation’s first black president — and talked of being deeply affected while watching people on television that they never thought they would see such a day, many with “tears streaming down their cheeks when they saw it.”

“President-elect Obama’s election does speak volumes about how far this country has come when it comes to racial relations,” Bush said, almost in a trance.

He brushed off any suggestion that he’d found the job of president too burdensome — or that Obama would find it so. “It’s just stomach-churning,” he said.

“I don’t believe that President-elect Obama will be full of self-pity.”

At the same time, Bush showed his skin is not so thick in all. “Sometimes the biggest disappointments will come from your so-called friends,” he advised Obama. Bush’s former press secretary, Scott McClellan, released a scathing tell-all book last year that still stings around the West Wing.

Asked one last time by reporters about the major controversies of his presidency, Bush had a ready answer for each:

- The dismal economy he leaves behind for Obama, Bush said, “I inherited a recession, I’m ending on a recession. In the meantime, there were 52 months of uninterrupted job growth.” The 2001 recession began in March, two months into his presidency but economists agree the seeds were sowing before.
- Bush also defended himself against economic attacks from his own party on the huge government bailout of Wall Street financial firms. He said, his voice rising, “If you were sitting there and heard that the depression could be greater than the Great Depression, I hope you would act, too, which I did.”

- On the five-year-old Iraq war, the issue that will define his presidency, Bush said history will judge his actions but it is a fact that violence diminished and everyday life became more stable after his decision in 2007 to send an additional 30,000 American troops into the fight.

- He vigorously took issue with critics of the federal response to Katrina, which devastated New Orleans. Gesturing and speaking with feeling, he said, “I don’t think the federal response was slow when there were 30,000 people pulled off rooftops right after the storm passed.” He said, “Has the reconstruction been perfect? No. Have things happened fairly quickly? Absolutely.”

- The president claimed progress toward peace in the Middle East, though any hopes for an accord soon have been dashed by, among other things, a bruising offensive by Israel in Gaza.

- Most angrily, Bush dismissed “some of the elite” who say he has misrepresented America’s image around the world. “No question, parts of Europe have said that we shouldn’t have gone to war in Iraq without a mandate from those few countries,” he said.

The president’s actions after the Sept. 11 attacks — such as establishing the prison for suspected terrorists at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, approving tough interrogation methods that some say amount to torture and institutional information-gathering efforts at home decreed by civil rights groups — were compounded by global outrage at the 2003 invasion of Iraq, particularly later when the alleged weapons of mass destruction that were the main justification for war turned out not to exist.

“In terms of the decisions that I had made to protect the homeland, I wouldn’t worry about popularity,” he said.

Asked about mistakes, Bush cited a few that he preferred to term “disappointments” — not finding those weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the abuses committed by members of the U.S. military at the Abu Ghraib detention center in Iraq, giving a speech two months after the start of the Iraq war under a “Mission Accomplished” banner on an aircraft carrier, Congress’ failure to pass free-trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea, and the negative tone in Washington that echoed his 2000 campaign promise to be a “uniter not a divider.”
WORD ON THE STREET

“How do you feel about the suspension of greek winter rush after recent events?"

“The whole greek community shouldn’t be punished for the actions of one fraternity.”

-Sean Walker, industrial engineering junior

“I don’t see how canceling rush will help because it’s not addressing the problem. Greek life should raise awareness of the issues and effects of alcohol.”

-Kelly Dumas, graphic communication freshman

“You choose how to be treated and whether or not to be hazed. Greek life brings out the best and the worst in people.”

-Christiana Mohr, agricultural communication senior

“I think it’s a little extreme. I think the university is just trying to show that they are doing something about what happened.”

-Emma Selther, journalism senior

RECOVERY CENTER

“We need to address the issue of alcohol.”

-Donna Arnold, industrial engineering junior

“I don’t see how canceling rush will help because it’s not addressing the problem. Greek winter rush after recent events?”

-Emma Seither, journalism senior

“Greek life should raise awareness of the issues and effects of alcohol.”

-Donna Arnold, industrial engineering junior

“Greek life brings out the best and the worst in people.”

-Donna Arnold, industrial engineering junior

“---

WRCOMPILED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY ASHLEY CULLO

Wellness Directory

The student’s guide to mind + body health

ADDED?

Description treatment for

ALCOHOL

OXYCONTIN

METH

ADDITION.

SLO ADDICTION RECOVERY CENTER

K. Dane Howalt MD

1223 Higuera St. Ste 101

541-5566 | www.sloarcc.com

100 miles northwest of Houston.

100 miles northwest of Houston.

The sponsors of the November ballot measure that outlawed same-sex marriage in California requested an order late Friday designed to keep a gag order in their lawsuit challenging the state’s campaign finance rules.

Lawyers for ProtectMarriages.com and the National Organization for Marriage California requested an order late Friday designed to keep a gag order in their lawsuit challenging the state’s campaign finance reporting rules.

The Army UH-60 helicopter crashed Monday afternoon during training exercises near the Corps of Cadets field on the school’s College Station campus, about 100 miles northeast of Houston.

No one on the ground and no students were hurt.

A crew of four from the Army National Guard and an Army lieutenant assigned to the school’s ROTC unit were the only ones aboard the Black Hawk, Texas A&M spokesman Lane Stephenson said.

“---

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Construction workers in northern Poland have unearthed a World War II-era mass grave containing what are believed to be the bodies of 1,900 German men, women and children who disappeared during the Soviet Army’s march to Berlin.

Police digging at the site of a planned luxury hotel in Malbork — which was called Marienburg and was part of Germany during the war — excavated a bomb crater at the foot of the city’s famous 13th century Teutonic Knights fortress, authorities said Monday.

The workers found a small group of bodies in late October and halted digging to allow prosecutors to investigate. After resuming work weeks later, the workers turned up dozens, and then hundreds, more corpses. They believe more may be found.

---

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli troops advanced into Gaza suburbs for the first time early Tuesday, residents said, hours after Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned Islamic militants of an “iron fist” unless they agree to terms to end the fighting.

Hamas showed no signs of wavering, however, with its leader, Ismail Haniyeh, saying the militants were “closer to victory.”

Despite the tough words, Egypt said it had made progress in brokering a truce, and special Mideast envoy Tony Blair said elements were in place for a cease-fire.

---

WASHINGTON (AP) — Advisers to President-elect Barack Obama say one of his first duties in office will be to order the closing of the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay.

That executive order is expected during Obama’s first week in office. The prisoners were rounded up in the days following the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

The U.S. has held about 750 prisoners there since January 2002. It is not clear how many of those are expected to be transferred or released.

---

SACRAMENTO (AP) — Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger will be hard-pressed to find good news for his State of the State address on Thursday as he continues his search for a budget compromise with state lawmakers before California runs out of cash in a few weeks.

The Republican governor will deliver his annual speech amid a dismal revenue outlook for the state and a deepening national recession. He is likely to press for a combination of spending cuts and tax increases, as he has done for months.

On Monday, Schwarzenegger met with legislative leaders after wrangling an $18 billion Democratic budget proposal last week. Democratic Assembly Speaker Karen Bass from Los Angeles and Assembly Minority Leader Mike Villines, R-Rialto, characterized the day’s talks as productive but said no agreement had been reached.

---

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The sponsors of the November ballot measure that outlawed same-sex marriage in California want a judge to seal selected documents while the case moves forward.

The sponsors of the November ballot measure that outlawed same-sex marriage in California want a judge to seal selected documents while the case moves forward.

---

COLLEGE STATION, Texas (AP) — An Army Black Hawk helicopter crashed Monday in a field on the campus of Texas A&M University, killing one person and injuring four others aboard.

The Army UH-60 helicopter crashed Monday afternoon during training exercises near the Corps of Cadets field on the school’s College Station campus, about 100 miles northeast of Houston.

No one on the ground and no students were hurt.

A crew of four from the Army National Guard and an Army lieutenant assigned to the school’s ROTC unit were the only ones aboard the Black Hawk, Texas A&M spokesman Lane Stephenson said.

---

"You choose how to be treated and whether or not to be hazed. Greek life brings out the best and the worst in people."
"Dear Diary" gives a peek (and re-peek) inside addiction

I suppose it was the cover that first caught my eye in Barnes & Noble: hot pink bubble letters scratching out the words, "Dear Diary," hovering above the head of a clearly downtrodden girl nursing a bloody nose amongst the seemingly tame books surrounding it. Kind of gross, kind of entrancing; I couldn't step away from the pitiful sight and found myself enthralled after scanning the first few pages. A diary about a girl? Who doesn't want to read someone else's diary?

Come on, you know you've probably been tempted before, and if you did not act on the opportunity, here is your reward. A detailed chronicle of the life of "Vice" columnist, Lesley Arfin, spanning entries dated from age 11 to age 25. She notes in the preface that, "This book is my whole life, and give or take a few ridiculous circumstances, it's yours too," and after reading it, I can agree.

We all go through those moments that shape us: break-ups, bad decisions, good decisions, life-changing moments, dull un-life changing moments. They are all there, the only difference between hers and the rest of ours, is that she has written them all down and luckily for us, she has written them hilariously.

Oh the pain of adolescence. We can all relate can't we? The bad hair, the bad skin, the awkward moments feel well, I now know that I was not the only one who suffered, and it may be safe to say that Arfin had it a tad worse than me.

The book opens with an entry from when she was 11-year-old and in 6th grade. The actual diary part of it is pretty typical, but what makes this book so entertaining is that for every entry, Arfin adds what she calls, an "UPDATE," in which she (as her present self) analyzes her words and feelings and occasionally includes interviews with the subject of the entries. (These are highly entertaining by the way, and Arfin's bluntness is amazing.) Throughout her junior high years, it encapsulates all of the catastrophic memories that I'm sure everyone has felt or witnessed at least once. The drama that we look back on and laugh about now, is a fresh wound in Arfin's writing, and the pre-pubescent voice that speaks of the perils of fitting in. I enjoyed reading Freida Pinto's gushing about "Slumdog Millionaire" knocked off best-director prize.

The whiskey, the bad skin, the glamorous title tune. To DiCaprio, Winslet said: "I've loved you from the moment I laid eyes on you. The boy I've been waiting for all my life."

The Academy Awards, an unexpected position for a movie with a cast of unknowns and a story set among orphans and criminals on the streets of Mumbai. "The Reader." "The Wrestler" also won the best-song prize as a hit man in "In Bruges," a little-seen movie released last fall.

"The Wrestler" was directed by Christopher Nolan, who won for his role as a woman in a crumbling marriage in "Revolutionary Road" as a former Nazi concentration camp guard in "The Reader."

"Revolutionary Road" was directed by Winslet's husband, Sam Mendes, and reunited her with "Titanic" co-star Leonardo DiCaprio.

"Titanic" director Christopher Nolan accepted the Globe for Ledger, who died Jan. 22 from an accidental overdose of prescription drugs. Oscar nominations come out on the anniversary of Ledger's death.

"All of us who worked with Heath on "The Dark Knight" accept with an awful mixture of sadness but incredible pride," Nolan said. "After Heath passed, you saw a hole ripped in the fabric of our world, and really enjoying us actually being in such horrific pain."

Read this! By Lesley Arfin

"Arfin had it a tad worse than me.

David Germain
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. — Heath Ledger was honored with a Golden Globe and Kate Winslet came away with two. But the top dog was "Slumdog Millionaire," the best picture, as well as best director, for the Indian film that took four awards, including best drama. With its awards Sunday, "Slumdog Millionaire" emerged as the potential film to beat at the Academy Awards, an unexpected position for a movie with a cast of unknowns and a story set among orphans and criminals on the streets of Mumbai.

"Is this really happening to me? My first film won four Golden Globes! I just can't believe it," co-star Freida Pinto gushed to reporters backstage as she stood among her collaborators, including Danny Boyle, who won the best-director prize.


"They have this expression — which I hope I pronounce correctly — in Hindi, which is when you do something, you should do it from the heart," Boyle said backstage. "The film was made from the heart, and we never expected to be here, and it's incredible that we are."

Best screenplay and musical score prizes also went to "Slumdog Millionaire," the story of an orphan boy who rises from terrible hardship to become a champ on India's version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," as the white trying to reunite with a lost love from his childhood. "Benjamin Button," "Frost/Nixon" and Meryl Streep's "Doubt" all tied for the lead with five nominations and all went away empty-handed.

Woody Allen's Spanish romance "Vicky Cristina Barcelona" won for best musical or comedy film.

The night belonged mainly to non-A-listers and films below the radar. "In Bruges," a little-seen movie released last fall, won for best actor in a comedy or musical as an eternal optimist in a film's title tune. Christian Bale, who finally won his first Oscar for his role as a former Nazi concentration camp guard in "The Reader." "Revolutionary Road" was directed by Winslet's husband, Sam Mendes, and reunited her with "Titanic" co-star Leonardo DiCaprio.

"Slumdog Millionaire" won for best director, Heath Ledger was named best actor for a performance in "The Wrestler." Winslet won for her role as a woman in a crumbling marriage in "Revolutionary Road," and "In Bruges," a little-seen movie released last winter, was named best comedy or musical actor prize as a hit man in "In Bruges," a little-seen movie released last winter.

Mickey Rourke returned from the wilderness to receive the Oscar for best dramatic actor as a former Nazi concentration camp guard in "The Reader." "Revolutionary Road" was directed by Winslet's husband, Sam Mendes, and reunited her with "Titanic" co-star Leonardo DiCaprio.

DiCaprio, Winslet said: "I've loved you for 13 years and your performance in this film is nothing short of spectacular! To Mendes, the added: "Thank you for directing this film, babe, and thank you for killing us every single day and really making us actually being in such horrific pain."

There was little surprise in the supporting-actor category. Virtually since he died nearly a year ago, Ledger has been the name on everyone's lips for that award.

"I moved to New York City, hit what I thought was rock bottom, went to rehab, relapsed, hit rock bottom for real, went to rehab for real, heard Betty Ford do a speech and saw God in a strawberry and now I'm better," Haha. Her mantra is you live you learn, and it is clear that her passion for writing could not be squashed by her addiction. This book is real, rough and modern. I would definitely recommend it. So go ahead, treat yourself to a glimpse of what horrors beset someone who's day-to-day routine instead of your own. You, thin one is for you too. Happy reading!
ABM Presents: The Twentieth Annual

CAL POLY AG SHOWCASE

“TWENTY YEARS AND STILL GROWING”

CHUMASH AUDITORIUM

8:45 AM – 2:30 PM

ALL MAJORS WELCOME – BRING YOUR RESUME

More information at cpagshowcase@yahoo.com

MORE THAN 75 COMPANIES IN ATTENDANCE
FROM ALL AREAS OF THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

AgCareers.com
Agro Engineering
Aheen International Seeds, Inc
Amy’s Kitchen
Bank of the West
Benchmark Landscape
Bothouse Farms
Brickman Group
Branco Wine Company
California Exposition & State Fair
California Farm Bureau
California Milk Advisory Board
Campbell Timberland Management
Cortell
CCOF Certification Services

Christopher Ranch, LLC
Cimino Brothers Produce
Confidence Landscape, Inc
Cottonwood Vineyard and Winery
Customs and Border Protection
DeepPoint Group, Inc
Del Monte Landscape, Inc
Delta Growers Association
Desert Glory
Diamond Foods
Dow AgroSciences
Driscoll’s Strawberry Association
E&J Gallo Winery Adams Group
Earthbound Farms
Ecolab
Eliano Animal Health
Famous Software

Fam Credit
Fam Credit West
Five Rivers Cattle Feeding
Foster Poultry Farms
Fresh Express
Fresno Madera Farm Credit
Gallo Sales Company
Gardener’s Guild
Gothic Grounds Management
Green Valley Farm Supply
Helena Chemical Company
J.G. Boswell Company
Jensen Landscape Services
John Deere
Mission Produce, Inc
Mission Eyewear Exchange
Ocean Mist Farms
Odenberg Engineering
Peace Corps
Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.
Platinum Performance, Inc
Seminis
Simple Growers Solution
SLO County Air Pollution Control District
Smuckers
Sunmaid Growers of CA
Sunview Vineyards of CA, Inc
Syngenta Seed, Inc
Tanimura & Antle
Target Specialty Products
US AgriSeeds
Valley Crest Companies
Walsh Vineyard Management
Western Growers
Wilbur Ellis Company
Zacky Farms
Peru exhibit depicts story of hope

Ashley Ciulla
MUSTANG DAILY

The Cal Poly Wheelchair Foundation held its Grand Opening of "Viva el Peru" exhibit on Jan. 8 in the Cal Poly Performing Arts Center. The exhibit, which is designed to raise funds to purchase wheelchairs for people in third world countries, featured the work of photographers Kori Savoie, Kali Bills and Noelle Luchino.

Photographer Savoie, an art and design senior, said she found it rewarding to provide help to people in countries without health care. "The people are kind and full of life. Even though they may not have much, they are generous," she said.

Bills, another project photographer and business senior, commented on the strong sense of appreciation from wheelchair recipients. She remembered a man, whose name she would even get a wheelchair continuously thanking her. "He had a nice, genuine spirit," she said.

Serna Alptekin, industrial and manufacturing engineering professor and director of the Honors Program at Cal Poly was one of the many spectators at the event. "They are not only raising money to help the community, they are also learning while they help. I wasn't expecting to be so touched," she said.

The foundation was founded by Kenneth E. Behring in 2000 as a nonprofit organization dedicated to fulfilling the mobile needs of people disabled by disease, war and natural causes. The goal of the foundation is to deliver a wheelchair to any person in the world who needs one, but cannot afford one. According to its mission statement, the foundation aims to deliver hope, mobility and freedom to those who would not otherwise have it.

Lynn Metcalf, advisor to the Cal Poly Wheelchair Foundation, said the event provides an opportunity for photography students to tell the story through a different medium. "A picture can make a connection that words alone cannot," she said.

Since it began at the Cal Poly in 2001, the foundation has raised $340,000 worth of aid and distributed 2,930 wheelchairs to Peru, Ethiopia, Thailand, Guatemala, Belize, Argentina and Malawi.

Several fundraising functions are held throughout the year with the help of eight local Rotary clubs and corporate sponsorships. These events include a Halloween Movie Night at the Fremont Theatre, a photography exhibit at the Art Center in San Luis Obispo and an annual Gift of Mobility Gala Dinner and Auction at the 28th Resort.

In 2007, the foundation raised $90,000 to distribute 260 wheelchairs to Lima, Cochas and Puno, Peru and an additional 100 wheelchairs in Malawi, Africa. The photography at the exhibit features images of the wheelchair distribution process in Peru last summer.

Project manager Helya Naghibi, who went to Peru with the foundation, spoke of its culture, which she said captivated her with its natural beauty. "It's not just about fundraising; it's also about spreading the word for third world countries. We take simple luxuries for granted. (Through our donations) we are giving the gift of mobility," she said.

"Viva el Peru" will continue to be on display through Jan. 18 at the Performing Arts Center. Photography is available for purchase. Proceeds benefit the disabled who need wheelchairs in Oaxaca, Mexico, where the team plans to raise $84,000 for wheelchairs and $25,000 for cataract surgeries this year.

Students and community members banded to the Performing Arts Center Jan. 8 to view the Cal Poly Wheelchair Foundation's exhibit "Viva el Peru." The exhibit features pictures taken on a recent trip to Peru, during which the foundation gave away over 250 wheelchairs.
Imagine, if you will, a man such as this: charming, clever, with the power of influence and the skill to make connections wherever he goes. He keeps his friends close and his enemies closer and always has a disarming smile ready from behind the podium. The perfect politician in other words.

Machiavelli's Prince

Or too-aptly named Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich

Political scandals shock us, but they rarely surprise us. And why would they? Politics is inherently a game of power—and with power too soon comes corruption. More than $90 million in cash bribes is found in the Freezer of a Louisiana congressman. The New York governor who makes his reputation busting high-profile prostitution rings is found with a $1,000-an-hour call girl. The longest continually serving Republican senator in history is indicted for failing to report the estimated $250,000 in corporate gifts that apparently went towards doubling the size of his private home. Oh, let the games begin.

Yet with all the dust flying around from yet another scandal, it's easy to miss the bigger picture. Why does a governor selling the president-elect's senate seat to the highest bidder suddenly seem more corrupt than when withholding funds from a children's hospital and ending with the senate seat scandal—are morally and politically comparable? But the logical truth is they're only the beginning; there's a bigger scandal to be uncovered by... The really truly outrageous scandal isn't what government officials do that's illegal; it's what we let them get away with and legislate today.

We've granted this select group of people so much power over our lives that they take hundreds of billions of dollars of our money to bail out their corporate pals. Since the best politicians are, by definition, masters of persuasion, it's really not too hard to sell taxpayers phrases like "too big to fail" and "troubled asset purchase"—and convince them to hand over their hard-earned dollars. And all the while the executives and lobbyists of these taxpayer-subsidized ministers of persuasion, it's really not too hard to sell the people of our money to bail out their corporate pals. Since the best politicians are, by definition, masters of persuasion, it's really not too hard to sell taxpayers phrases like "too big to fail" and "troubled asset purchase"—and convince them to hand over their hard-earned dollars. And all the while the executives and lobbyists of these taxpayer-subsidized ministers of persuasion, it's really not too hard to sell taxpayers phrases like "too big to fail" and "troubled asset purchase"—and convince them to hand over their hard-earned dollars. And all the while the executives and lobbyists of these taxpayer-subsidized ministers of persuasion, it's really not too hard to sell taxpayers phrases like "too big to fail" and "troubled asset purchase"—and convince them to hand over their hard-earned dollars. And all the while the executives and lobbyists of these taxpayer-subsidized ministers of persuasion, it's really not too hard to sell taxpayers phrases like "too big to fail" and "troubled asset purchase"—and convince them to hand over their hard-earned dollars.

We the people entrust our government with the welfare of the nation. By attempting to sell the president-elect's senate seat to the highest bidder, Blagojevich brought the wolf out from under the sheep's clothing.

But when the very nature of politics rewards those who cater to special interests and elect the fairest of them all—surprised that a scandal bubble ambles the murky surface? Isn't politics inherently a game of having the friends with the most money and power? Isn't it all about knowing who the right people? What holy line did the governor of Illinois cross that sets his actions apart from what we already legally allow in Washington?

The members of Congress who voted in favor of the financial industry bailout received on average $255,877 in campaign contributions over the past five years from banks and security firms, compared to only $135,982 on average to the representatives who voted against the bill. Hmmm... I wonder which of the representatives will have the privilege of voting on the next time they decide to give away our hard-earned dollars to their corporate friends.

Quite simply, stop giving these men so much of the one thing so many of them live for power.
Finding autism's culprit

In a recent report in Environmental Health News, UC Davis health boss concluded that California's sevenfold increase in autism cannot be explained by changes in doctors' diagnoses and most likely is due to environmental exposures. The scientists who authored the new study advocate a nationwide shift in autism research to focus on potential factors in the environment that babies and fetuses are exposed to, including pesticides, viruses and chemicals in household products.

"It's time to start looking for the environmental culprits responsible for the remarkable increase in autism in California," said Irva Herz-Picciotto, an epidemiology professor at University of California, Davis who led the study.

Throughout the nation, the numbers of autistic children have increased dramatically over the past 15 years. Autistic children have problems communicating and interacting socially; the symptoms usually are evident by the time the child is a toddler.

More than 3,000 new cases of autism were reported in California in 2006, compared with 205 in 1990. In 1990, 6.2 of every 10,000 children born in the state were diagnosed with autism by the age of five, compared with 42.6 in 10,000 born in 2001, according to the study. The numbers have continued to rise since then. This is a threefold increase in 15 years.

"I think there's a real concern that there's been a change in our environment," said Dr. Carol Berkowitz, president of the American Academy of Pediatrics. "An exposure to some toxins, chemicals, environmental factors — either when a mother is pregnant or after the delivery of the child — that has led to autism."

The surge in autism is similar to the rise in childhood asthma, which has reached epidemic proportions for unexplained reasons. Medical officials originally thought that, too, might be due to increased reporting of the disease, but now they acknowledge that many more children are asthmatic than in the past. Experts suspect that environmental pollutants or immune changes could be responsible.

Autism has serious effects, not just on an individual child's health but on national education, health care and the U.S. economy. "Autism incidence in California shows no sign of planing," Herz-Picciotto and Delwiche said in their study.

To nail down the causes, scientists must unravel a mystery: What in the environment has changed so much that tracks developmental disabilities and used birth records and Census Bureau data to calculate the rate of autism and age of diagnosis. The results: Migration to the state had no effect. And changes in how and when doctors diagnosed the disorder and when state officials report it can explain less than half of the increase. The California researchers concluded that doctors are diagnosing autism at a younger age because of increased awareness. But that change is responsible for only about a 24 percent increase in children reported to be autistic by the age. Also, a shift in doctors diagnosing milder cases explains another 56 percent increase. And changes in state reporting of the disorder could account for around a 120 percent increase.

Combined, Herz-Picciotto said those factors "don't get us close" to the 600-700 percent increase in diagnosed cases. That means the rest is unexplained and likely caused by something that pregnant women or infants are exposed to or a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

"There's genetics and there's environment. And genetics don't change in such short periods of time," said Herz-Picciotto. Many researchers have theorized that a pregnant woman's exposure to chemical pollutants, particularly metals and pesticides, could be altering a developing baby's brain structure, triggering autism.

Many parent groups believe that childhood vaccines are responsible because they contained thimerosal, a mercury compound used as a preservative. But thimerosal was removed from most vaccines in 1999, and autism rates are still rising. Dozens of chemicals in the environment and developing fetal tissues, which means they alter how the brain grows. Mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, lead, brominated flame retardants and pesticides are examples of toxins that could change brain development.

While exposure to some — such as PCBs — has declined in recent decades, others — including flame retardants used in furniture and electronics, and pyrethroid insecticides — have increased.

If we're going to stop the rise in autism in California, we need to keep these studies going and expand them to the extent possible," Herz-Picciotto said. Funding for studying genetic causes of autism is "10 to 20 times higher than funding for environmental causes." It's "very off-balance," she said. Weiss agreed, saying that "Excessive emphasis has been placed on genetics as a cause." Advances in molecular genetics have tended to obscure the principle that genes are always acting in and on a particular environment. "This report, I think, will restore some balance to our thinking," he said.

Herz-Picciotto and Delwiche said in their study. The researchers analyzed 17 years of state data that tracks developmental disabilities and used birth records and Census Bureau data to calculate the rate of autism and age of diagnosis. The results: Migration to the state had no effect. And changes in how and when doctors diagnosed the disorder and when state officials report it can explain less than half of the increase. The California researchers concluded that doctors are diagnosing autism at a younger age because of increased awareness. But that change is responsible for only about a 24 percent increase in children reported to be autistic by the age. Also, a shift in doctors diagnosing milder cases explains another 56 percent increase. And changes in state reporting of the disorder could account for around a 120 percent increase.

Combined, Herz-Picciotto said those factors "don't get us close" to the 600-700 percent increase in diagnosed cases. That means the rest is unexplained and likely caused by something that pregnant women or infants are exposed to or a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

"There's genetics and there's environment. And genetics don't change in such short periods of time," said Herz-Picciotto. Many researchers have theorized that a pregnant woman's exposure to chemical pollutants, particularly metals and pesticides, could be altering a developing baby's brain structure, triggering autism.

Many parent groups believe that childhood vaccines are responsible because they contained thimerosal, a mercury compound used as a preservative. But thimerosal was removed from most vaccines in 1999, and autism rates are still rising. Dozens of chemicals in the environment and developing fetal tissues, which means they alter how the brain grows. Mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, lead, brominated flame retardants and pesticides are examples of toxins that could change brain development.

While exposure to some — such as PCBs — has declined in recent decades, others — including flame retardants used in furniture and electronics, and pyrethroid insecticides — have increased.

If we're going to stop the rise in autism in California, we need to keep these studies going and expand them to the extent possible," Herz-Picciotto said. Funding for studying genetic causes of autism is "10 to 20 times higher than funding for environmental causes." It's "very off-balance," she said. Weiss agreed, saying that "Excessive emphasis has been placed on genetics as a cause." Advances in molecular genetics have tended to obscure the principle that genes are always acting in and on a particular environment. "This report, I think, will restore some balance to our thinking," he said.

Herz-Picciotto and Delwiche said in their study. The researchers analyzed 17 years of state data that tracks developmental disabilities and used birth records and Census Bureau data to calculate the rate of autism and age of diagnosis. The results: Migration to the state had no effect. And changes in how and when doctors diagnosed the disorder and when state officials report it can explain less than half of the increase. The California researchers concluded that doctors are diagnosing autism at a younger age because of increased awareness. But that change is responsible for only about a 24 percent increase in children reported to be autistic by the age. Also, a shift in doctors diagnosing milder cases explains another 56 percent increase. And changes in state reporting of the disorder could account for around a 120 percent increase.

Combined, Herz-Picciotto said those factors "don't get us close" to the 600-700 percent increase in diagnosed cases. That means the rest is unexplained and likely caused by something that pregnant women or infants are exposed to or a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

"There's genetics and there's environment. And genetics don't change in such short periods of time," said Herz-Picciotto. Many researchers have theorized that a pregnant woman's exposure to chemical pollutants, particularly metals and pesticides, could be altering a developing baby's brain structure, triggering autism.

Many parent groups believe that childhood vaccines are responsible because they contained thimerosal, a mercury compound used as a preservative. But thimerosal was removed from most vaccines in 1999, and autism rates are still rising. Dozens of chemicals in the environment and developing fetal tissues, which means they alter how the brain grows. Mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, lead, brominated flame retardants and pesticides are examples of toxins that could change brain development.

While exposure to some — such as PCBs — has declined in recent decades, others — including flame retardants used in furniture and electronics, and pyrethroid insecticides — have increased.

If we're going to stop the rise in autism in California, we need to keep these studies going and expand them to the extent possible," Herz-Picciotto said. Funding for studying genetic causes of autism is "10 to 20 times higher than funding for environmental causes." It's "very off-balance," she said. Weiss agreed, saying that "Excessive emphasis has been placed on genetics as a cause." Advances in molecular genetics have tended to obscure the principle that genes are always acting in and on a particular environment. "This report, I think, will restore some balance to our thinking," he said.

Herz-Picciotto and Delwiche said in their study. The researchers analyzed 17 years of state data that tracks developmental disabilities and used birth records and Census Bureau data to calculate the rate of autism and age of diagnosis. The results: Migration to the state had no effect. And changes in how and when doctors diagnosed the disorder and when state officials report it can explain less than half of the increase. The California researchers concluded that doctors are diagnosing autism at a younger age because of increased awareness. But that change is responsible for only about a 24 percent increase in children reported to be autistic by the age. Also, a shift in doctors diagnosing milder cases explains another 56 percent increase. And changes in state reporting of the disorder could account for around a 120 percent increase.

Combined, Herz-Picciotto said those factors "don't get us close" to the 600-700 percent increase in diagnosed cases. That means the rest is unexplained and likely caused by something that pregnant women or infants are exposed to or a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

"There's genetics and there's environment. And genetics don't change in such short periods of time," said Herz-Picciotto. Many researchers have theorized that a pregnant woman's exposure to chemical pollutants, particularly metals and pesticides, could be altering a developing baby's brain structure, triggering autism.

Many parent groups believe that childhood vaccines are responsible because they contained thimerosal, a mercury compound used as a preservative. But thimerosal was removed from most vaccines in 1999, and autism rates are still rising. Dozens of chemicals in the environment and developing fetal tissues, which means they alter how the brain grows. Mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, lead, brominated flame retardants and pesticides are examples of toxins that could change brain development.

While exposure to some — such as PCBs — has declined in recent decades, others — including flame retardants used in furniture and electronics, and pyrethroid insecticides — have increased.

If we're going to stop the rise in autism in California, we need to keep these studies going and expand them to the extent possible," Herz-Picciotto said. Funding for studying genetic causes of autism is "10 to 20 times higher than funding for environmental causes." It's "very off-balance," she said. Weiss agreed, saying that "Excessive emphasis has been placed on genetics as a cause." Advances in molecular genetics have tended to obscure the principle that genes are always acting in and on a particular environment. "This report, I think, will restore some balance to our thinking," he said.
Ellerson
continued from page 12

I am that I still cared about us
even though he's going to another
place. Because he wanted us to
know before it leaked," said junior
wide receiver Mike Anderson.
Anderson mentioned that he
hopes that new head coach Tim
Walsh adopts the same recruit-
ing system that was in place when
Ellerson headed the team.
"It gives a lot of the kids who play
at this school the chance to play
college football. Their size may
not be DI-A size but they can still
come here and play great DI-AA
football," Gillespie said.
Ellerson's departure was tough to handle, but that
it showed a positive reflection of the
team's talent. No more was
Ellerson's coaching prowess and
the team's collective talent on dis-
play than in the Mustangs regular
season finale against established
Football Championship Subdivision
(formerly Division I-AA) foe
Wisconsin.

The Mustangs, seeking to be-
come just the third team to ever
defeat two FBS teams in the same
year while playing at the Foot-
ball Championship Subdivision
(formerly Division I-AA), never
traveled until the final play of over-
time in a 36-35 loss.

"We know things are going
to change, but we're going
to work hard to continue the
success of this program." -Carlton
Gillespie

"As far as success goes, he is
one of the most successful coaches
Cal Poly has ever had," Gillespie
said. "Getting us to playoffs twice
since I have been here. I congratulate
him on his new position and I
hope he does well at Army. We all
have accepted that he has left; we
know things are going to change,
but we're going to work hard to
continue the success of this pro-
gram." No one knows what direction
or how successful the team is go-
ing to be until Walsh has had time
to formulate his coaching staff,
implement his philosophy and
watch them perform next season.
Walsh said at his introductory
press conference on Friday that
he plans to keep Cal Poly's triple-
option offense intact, but that he
is not as committed to Ellerson's
flex defense.

Junior defensive tackle James
Chen said he isn't too concerned
about the team's possible new di-
rection.
"This is our team," Chen added.
"We're going to take it to the next
level; we're going to keep getting
better. Regardless of who comes
in, we're going to stay strong as
a group. We're not too worried
about it."

Henderson, who played with McG
in Oakland, said the first base-
man was one of the best people he's
ever been around.
"He played the game the right
way to me," Henderson said. "I feel he
deserves to be in the Hall of Fame."

Henderson, the 1990 AL MVP,
was a 10-time All-Star who ripped
1,436 bases, one of 50 percent
more than Lou Brock, who is in
second place with 928. Henderson
batted .279 with 297 home runs, 1,115
RBIs, 2,196 walks and 2,295 runs.
He owns the modern-day season record
with 130 steals in 1982 and the ca-
reer mark with 81 leadoff home runs.
He played for Oakland, the Yankees,
Toronto, San Diego, Atlanta, the Mets,
Seattle, Boston and the Dodgers.
Henderson wanted to be a football
star before his mother persuaded him
to give pro baseball a try, figuring it
offered a better chance at a long ca-
er.
If it were up to Henderson, now
86, he'd still be playing ball.
"They said I have to be retired
to go in the Hall of Fame," he said.
"Maybe they give me that day or two
that I come back and it wouldn't mess
up anything."

Henderson wasn't sure which
team's cap will go on his FT ill of Fame
plaque. He gets some say in the mat-
ter, but ultimately it's the Hall's deci-
sion.

Henderson was with his family
when he got the call Monday and
pointed out that they have been with
him through "all the glory and the
headaches."
"They enjoyed it probably as
much as I enjoyed it, probably even
more," he said.

Rice, the 1978 AL MVP was an
eight-time All-Star who hit 382
home runs in 16 seasons with the
Boston Red Sox from 1974-89. He
had a 292 career batting average and
1,451 RBIs, and from 1977-79 aver-
gaged .320 with 41 home runs and 128
RBIs.
He becomes the fourth Hall of
Famer to have spent his entire career
with the Red Sox, joining fellow left
fielders Ted Williams and Carl Ya-
trimanski, along with second baseman
Bobby Doerr.

"That's one of the biggest
accomplishments," Rice said.
-AP Baseball Writer Ronald Blum
concluded to this report.
Rickey Henderson, Jim Rice elected to Hall of Fame

Mike Fitzpatrick
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—Rickey Henderson dashed into the Hall of Fame on his first try as another milestone for the former Oakland A's outfielder. Henderson received 94.8 percent of the vote from the Baseball Writers' Association of America in balloting announced Monday, well above the 75 percent needed.

Rice, among the game's most feared sluggers in the late 1970s and early 1980s, got 76.4 percent in his 15th and final year on the ballot after falling just shy with 72.2 percent last year.

"The only thing I can say is I'm glad it's over with," the Boston outfielder said. "I'm in there and they can't take it away." Henderson, baseball's career leader in runs scored and stolen bases, became the 44th player elected in his first year of eligibility. Rice was only the third elected by the BBWAA in his final year, joining Rod Carew (1967) and Ralph Kiner (1975).

The pair will be inducted into the Hall during ceremonies on July 26 in Cooperstown, N.Y. They'll be joined by former Yankees and Indians center fielder Jim Thome, elected posthumously last month by the Veterans Committee.

"I feel great about it. It's been a long time coming," Henderson said. "I was nervous, waiting." Henderson spoke on a conference call before boarding a flight to New York. He was rushing right along, even on this day.

Only fitting.

Oakland A's outfielder Rickey Henderson holds up third base after breaking the career steals record in 1991.