Blago’s buddy sticks by his side
By Michael Sneed
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The Blago beat . . .

It looked like just another lazy afternoon — two buddies eating pizza at a local pub while watching a Sunday football game.

The big difference: One of them will be in prison in a matter of weeks.

◆ Translation: A Sneed source spotted former Gov. Rod Blagojevich, who is due to be sentenced on corruption charges Dec. 6, eating pizza and watching the Dallas Cowboys game Sunday afternoon with his high school buddy Dan Colla and Blago’s daughter, Amy, 15, at Roots in West Town.

◆ The buddy beat: Colla, a Fabio lookalike who sports long hair, has known Blago — who also prides himself on his abundant topper — since he was 12 years old.

◆ The buddy banter: “He’s doing OK under the circumstances,” Colla told Sneed. “Unless he’s good at hiding everything. As far as I can see it’s stressful. No one knows how he really feels, except Rod.”

◆ The buddy move: Colla, who runs a currency exchange and lives in Sauganash, where the Blago family is considering relocating, has stuck by his beleaguered pal. “He’s my friend and I believe what he tells me.”

◆ Tress talk: Colla, who’s kept his hair long most of his life, says he met Fabio — whose face is plastered on the cover of romance novels — about 10 years ago. “It was at an event. Fabio looked at me, and I looked at him, and we started laughing, and we’ve been friends ever since. I stayed at his house in California for a week once years ago . . . We still talk regularly.”

The Blago Beat II . . .

The Blago beat goes on.

Sneed hears Chicago FBI chief Robert Grant held the audience “spellbound” at a Loyola University Fulbright Scholar event Saturday dispensing Blago tidbits.

◆ To wit: “He [Grant] enthralled this rather erudite group with FBI tales, but what really got us laughing was when Grant wanted to know how many of us in the audience were from Illinois — because he couldn’t figure out why we would have elected Rod Blagojevich twice as governor,” a Sneed source said.
◆ The upshot: “Grant told us he had never met any individual he had been involved with — during arrest or prosecution — who was ‘stranger’ than Blago — specifically citing Blago’s reactions after being placed in custody.”

◆ The buckshot: Grant noted Blago was placed in custody wearing a jogging suit when he was arrested during early morning hours at his Ravenswood home.

◆ The polite shot: The FBI offered to go back to the Blago home to retrieve a suit and tie so the indicted governor would look professional during arraignment before the judge.

◆ The upshot: Blago refused . . . even though Blago’s former top aide, John Harris, who was also arrested during the same early morning hours, took up the FBI’s offer.

◆ The weirdshot: Grant claims Blago said the jogging suit he was wearing when arrested allowed him to work out easier in the holding cell.

(Which, by the way, is exactly what Blago did.)

Heir Jordan . . .

The younger son of basketball legend Michael Jordan is getting air time.

◆ Translation: Marcus Jordan led his University of Central Florida team to victory Friday night by scoring 21 points.

I spy . . .


Sneedlings . . .

Stork talk: New Chicagoan! Chicago Public Schools chief Jean-Claude Brizard, who was born in Haiti, is expecting his second child with wife Brooke. Tuesday’s birthdays . . . Scarlett Johansson, 27; Mariel Hemingway, 50; Jamie Lee Curtis, 53; Billie Jean King, 68, and Boris Becker, 44.