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Mike Spencer/ Students from the East Carolina University Program for Maritime Studies work on the ongoing conservation of artifacts from the Modern Greece shipwreck at the Underwater Archaeology Branch of the N.C. Division of Archives and History at Fort Fisher.

150 years later, sunken ship still fascinates

By Ben Steelman
Ben.Steelman@StarNewsOnline.com

More than 100 scholars and Civil War enthusiasts are expected to gather Tuesday at the University of North Carolina Wilmington for a symposium on one of the Lower Cape Fear's most famous shipwrecks.

The symposium marks the 150th anniversary of the sinking of the blockade runner Modern Greece off Fort Fisher in 1862 and the 50th anniversary of its first excavation in 1962 by U.S. Navy divers.

The Tuesday event is already a sellout, said Chris Fonvielle, associate professor of history at UNCW and one of the symposium's organizers. UNCW Media Productions is working to arrange a live feed of the sessions online.
Members of the public, meanwhile, are invited to an open house at the state of North Carolina's Underwater Archaeology Branch, 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesday at the branch's facilities, next to the Fort Fisher State Historic Site off U.S. 421 south of Kure Beach.

Guided tours will offer a look at rifles, hand tools and other pieces of cargo recovered from the Modern Greece. Visitors will also see the artifact conservation lab and new storage tanks made possible by the N.C. Preservation Consortium said Mark Wilde-Ramsing, deputy state archaeologist, who heads the branch.

A panel of experts will be on hand at the nearby Fort Fisher State Historic Site to answer visitors' questions, Wilde-Ramsing said. In addition, a videographer from the state will record first-person stories from divers and others who recall work on the Modern Greece in the 1960s.

At noon Wednesday, state Cultural Resources Secretary Linda Carlisle, Kure Beach Mayor Dean Lambeth and other officials will unveil a new sign commemorating the Modern Greece at the northern, ocean-side gazebo at Fort Fisher.

A 210-foot-long, 520-ton steam freighter, the Modern Greece ran aground in the surf off Fort Fisher before dawn on June 27, 1862, while trying to evade U.S. Navy vessels. The British-built vessel had been bound for Wilmington with a cargo of Whitworth cannon, Enfield rifle-muskets, bayonets, bullets, hand tools, cutlery, medicine and other items meant for Confederate forces in the American Civil War.

Much of the Modern Greece's cargo was salvaged in the days and weeks after the wreck, Fonvielle said. Eventually, the vessel slipped beneath the sands, its location known only to a few local mariners.

In 1962, U.S. Navy divers rediscovered the wreck, which had been uncovered by storms. A major recovery operation yielded more than 11,500 artifacts and helped lead to the founding of North Carolina's underwater archaeology program.

Former UNCW Chancellor James Leutze, a military historian, will chair the symposium in the Azalea Coast Room at the Fisher University Union.

Speakers will include Stephen R. Wise of the Parris Island Museum, author of "Lifeline of the Confederacy" and an authority on blockade running; Robert M. Browning Jr., chief historian of the U.S. Coast Guard and an authority on the Union blockade; Kevin Foster, former chief of the Marine Heritage Program with the National Park Service; and Gordon P. Watts Jr.,
former co-director of the underwater archaeology program at East Carolina University.

Among other guests, Fonvielle said, will be Andrew "Punky" Kure of Kure Beach, one of the first divers to explore the Modern Greece site, and Leslie Bright, a longtime artifact conservator with the underwater archaeology lab at Fort Fisher.

Fonvielle said organizers hope to raise enough money from the event to underwrite a documentary film about the Modern Greece and its excavation.

Ben Steelman: 343-2208
Daily Reflector
Fans enjoy the new Stallings Stadium seating area at Elm Street Park on Monday.

**Stallings Stadium opens at Elm StreetBall**
By Ronnie Woodward
Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Ron and Kim Sayers used to bring seat cushions and try to sit in the back row of the bleachers at Elm Street Park so they could lean against the fencing while watching Greenville Little Leagues baseball games.

That isn’t necessary anymore.

They settled into their spacious chairback seats equipped with cupholders with ease Monday evening to watch the North State championship contest. They were also guarded by large black netting, and the overhang above them provided shade.

Renovations to the facility were completed late last week, including the addition of around 240 individually numbered seats and an improved press box as part of the Stallings Stadium brick structure that is behind home plate. The project was funded almost entirely by a private donation of more than $1 million by the Stallings family.

“It feels like you’re at a minor league ballpark,” Ron Sayers said.

The Sayers didn’t have a child playing in Monday’s game, but they came out just to check out the new facility.

Stallings Stadium resembles the baseball and softball seating at East Carolina, and GLL commissioner Brian Weingartz said he met with representatives from ECU during the process. Construction began Jan. 2 and
the seating was made available to the public for the first time last Friday, which was about three weeks ahead of schedule.

The timing couldn’t be much better for Weingartz and the organization, as Jarman Auto Sales and Overton’s will square off in the best-of-three City Championship beginning Wednesday.

Elm Street will also host the 10-11-year-old Tournament of State Champions beginning July 27, allowing spectators from all over the southeast to see the structure.

“We couldn’t be happier with it,” said Weingartz, who added that the capacity is now around 650. “It’s a little over the top maybe for a Little League field, but this is a special baseball town and we have the type of people here that really enjoy this type of thing. So I think what we’ve done is OK.”

Danny Dally, who is the athletic director at C.M. Eppes Middle School and who used to umpire games at Elm Street Park in the early 1990s, praised the atmosphere.

“It’s an impressive facility and there’s been a lot of anticipation leading up to the opening,” he said. “The overhang kind of reminds you of an old-style stadium, which I like. Even though it’s brand new, it still has that old-style feel.”

The park was no slouch before. The Sayers moved to Greenville in 2007, and they said they’ve always been impressed by the facility.

“This just elevates it,” Kim Sayers said. “The seating is so much nicer, you don’t have to worry about getting hit by foul balls and you’re in the shade now. ... It will definitely improve the visit to the park.”

Contact Ronnie Woodward at rwoodward@reflector.com or 252-329-9592.
Duke engineers improve camera resolution
By Kerstin Nordstrom - knordstrom@newsobserver.com

DURHAM–Have you ever been in the nosebleed section at a basketball game and tried to take a picture of the action? Zoom in on your cellphone and you’ll find that the players are indistinguishable squares, or pixels, that make up any digital image. If you brought your fancy new digital camera instead, the picture will be better, but the players will still be plagued by pixels.

Soon this may no longer be a problem. A team led by David Brady, professor of electrical engineering at Duke University, has created a camera, called AWARE-2, that is 50 times better than your digital camera. And according to a paper on their work published recently in Nature, they also have demonstrated they can make a camera thousands of times better.

The recipe? Make a bunch of cameras cooperate.

“We wanted to make an analogy with computers,” says Brady. “People kept trying to make computer processors faster and faster. Only recently did we realize parallel, multiple processors did the trick. You don’t need better ones, just more, working together.”
Your cellphone camera is probably about 1 megapixel, meaning each image it captures has 1 million pixels. If the image is square, it’s a grid with 1,000 spaces on a side, each filled with color to result in a picture.

A DSLR camera, the best kind of consumer camera, gets about 20 times more pixels in the same image, giving finer detail.

The strange thing is, your cellphone camera is outperforming your DSLR, in a sense. A cellphone camera can only, theoretically, capture about a megapixel because of the size of its lens opening, or aperture. Meanwhile, your DSLR has an aperture 10,000 times the size of your cellphone camera, meaning it should be able to capture 10 billion pixels. But current DSLRs capture less than 1 percent of that number.

**More, not mega**

The lens has been the roadblock to improving performance. A bigger aperture requires a more complex lens, and there’s a practical limit to complexity.

But by putting cameras in an array, the team, which included engineers from the University of Arizona and Distant Focus Corporation, was able to bump up the resolution, sidestepping the lens issue.

The operation of AWARE-2 is simple and elegant. In one-tenth of a second, 98 cameras blink in unison. Computer software then stitches the images together.

“It can take a (finely detailed) picture of you and your 500 best friends,” says Daniel Marks, an assistant research professor of electrical engineering at Duke, who contributed to the project.

The current prototype captures about 1 billion pixels – a gigapixel. But the team knows they can make a 50 billion pixel version with some minor tweaks, creating a camera many times better than the human eye. Once an image is captured, details can be revealed that the photographer could not see. People who appeared to the naked eye to be distant blobs in the background are easily identifiable in the picture.

**The future of photos?**

Despite being a prototype, AWARE-2 is surprisingly sturdy.

“It’s made of 80/20 aluminum, often jokingly called the engineer’s Erector set,” says graduate student David Kittle.
But it survived a 6,000-mile round-trip to Seattle and a bumpy SUV ride to a North Carolina lake. It’s unwieldy: 2-1/2 feet on a side, though it weighs only about 100 pounds. The group has attached wheels to the camera and rolled it around Duke’s campus.

The electronics to control the 98 little cameras are actually what make AWARE-2 so large, making Brady confident that the technology will trickle down to consumer cameras. After all, shrinking electronics has been done before.

In the short term, Brady envisions this technology as a platform for immersive experiences. Imagine “attending” a football game or concert online. The camera takes video of the entire stadium, but you can zoom in on any area.

Eventually, Brady and his team think the camera could be used for more efficient surveillance and could become a tool in medicine. Looking at cells to diagnose diseases now requires intricate positioning of a sample a small fraction of an inch from a microscope lens. Some day, your doctor may be able to just take a picture with a regular camera, go to lunch and zoom in later.

Nordstrom: 919-829-8983

DISP Imaging Group, Duke University
A composite image from the Aware gigapixel camera showing the Carolina Theatre in Durham, N.C.
No money in state budget for students' ACT tests
By Lynn Bonner, Austin Baird, Rosella Age - lbonner@newsobserver.com

State legislators want high school students to take the standardized tests ACT and WorkKeys but provided no money in the budget for them.

Legislators last year endorsed the move toward these national standardized tests as a means of measuring school quality and student readiness for college or work. Schools gave 11th-graders the ACT this spring, but the state Department of Public Instruction had to scrape together the money to pay for it.

June Atkinson, state superintendent of public instruction, told legislative leaders in a letter last week that the department probably wouldn’t be able to scrounge up enough money to pay for another round.

“Without ACT, we will be left with a system that only measures academic progress in Biology (grade 9 or 10), English II (grade 10), and Algebra I (grade 9). This does not give us the kind of system we need to measure career and college readiness throughout high school,” she wrote.

The tests will cost $7.5 million, Atkinson wrote.

Sen. Jerry Tillman, an Archdale Republican involved in writing the education budget, said the ACT is important and he plans to talk to legislative leaders about funding.

“These tests are really critical for determining skill levels,” Tillman said. “I’ll be digging around a little bit to see what we can do.”

Price speaks out on student loans
Rep. David Price visited N.C. State University on Monday to advocate for a proposal that would prevent an impending increase of the interest rate on federallysubsidized student loans.

The Democrat, who is seeking re-election to Congress from the 4th District, told a dozen or so students and a crowd of reporters at the Wolf Plaza that
his colleagues should act before a July 1 deadline passes and the interest rate on Stafford Loans propels from the current 3.4 percent to 6.8 percent.

Price said the increase, which would only apply to new loans, would affect some 160,000 students in North Carolina and 7.9 million nationwide. That could translate to upward of an extra $1,000 per year for students relying heavily on subsidized loans. Price blasted Congressional Republicans for inaction and Mitt Romney for not pressing his colleagues to extend the current rates.

Romney has said he supports the effort to extend the low interest rate on student loans. “This is real money,” Price said. “It could be put to a lot better uses: buying textbooks, investing in a start-up, starting an IRA, especially in this economy.”

Also in attendance was Lisa Fristoe, a mother of four whose daughter is an NCSU student.

Students in North Carolina are “working hard in high school, they’re getting into college and they’re graduating with skills they need for the jobs of today and tomorrow,” Fristoe said. “They shouldn’t have to sign away their financial security when they go to college. But that’s what’s at stake.”

Debate over the student loan proposal has been raging for months. In April, President Barack Obama visited Chapel Hill as part of a three-state tour to urge Congress to prevent the interest rates from rising on July 1.

Critics of the extension, such as the Washington Post Editorial Board, point out that the interest rate was lowered to its present amount just last year and have called for focus to shift to Pell Grants to improve college access.

**Zoo bill likely dead this session**

The money needed to transition the N.C. Zoo to a public-private partnership did not make it into the final budget, likely ending legislation on the issue this session.

David Jones, director of the zoo, says he’s not going to waste time pushing forward with the bill. “It’s not fair to anybody in a busy season to take this forward, knowing there’s no money for it,” Jones said.

The bill called for the state to retain property and ownership of zoo, but the Zoo Society would manage it and raise money from the private sector to help defray state costs.
The zoo needs $30 million in backlog maintenance and behind-the-scenes work. The state hasn’t been able to keep up with all of that in the last 15 to 20 years.

“We’re following suit as other states have taken this new avenue of thought,” said the bill’s sponsor, Rep. Tim Moffitt, an Asheville Republican. “We’ll certainly pick the bill up next year.”

Staff writers Lynn Bonner, Austin Baird, Rosella Age

Send tips to dome@newsobserver.com.
Drew Davis, son of Butch Davis, arrives at UNC as walk-on QB

By Andrew Carter - acarter@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL—Drew Davis wanted an opportunity to play major college football. He’ll get his chance as a walk-on at the university that nearly a year ago fired his father amid a multi-pronged NCAA investigation.

Davis, a standout quarterback at East Chapel Hill High and the son of former North Carolina coach Butch Davis, enrolled last week at North Carolina and will be a non-scholarship quarterback for the Tar Heels. Larry Fedora, who succeeded Butch Davis as North Carolina’s coach, said he invited the younger Davis to join the team.

“We evaluated the tape as we would on any other kid,” Fedora said. “Obviously, he had some success at East Chapel Hill. His high school coach spoke highly of him. We told him if he wanted to be a part of our team at North Carolina, we would welcome him.”

Drew Davis played in high school for Bill Renner, who is the father of North Carolina quarterback Bryn Renner. The two developed a close relationship, the elder Renner said Monday, and that was one reason why Davis chose to walk on at North Carolina.

Davis produced impressive statistics at East Chapel Hill, which finished 3-8 last season. In an offense that emphasizes the passing game, he threw for...
more than 3,500 yards and 30 touchdowns but still drew little interest from major schools.

Bill Renner said Miami was interested in Davis, though Renner wasn’t sure if the Hurricanes had offered a scholarship. Still, Renner said he was expecting Davis to go to Miami, where Butch Davis coached from 1995 to 2000.

News that Davis enrolled at North Carolina caught Renner off guard, he said. It wouldn’t surprise him, though, if Davis eventually competed for playing time.

“Drew is a very athletic young man,” Renner said of Davis, who’s 6-foot-2 and 205 pounds. “I mean, he’s got a 30-inch something vertical leap and he just runs well. If I’d played him at receiver, he’d have been outstanding at receiver, too … if he ends up as big as his dad, he’s going to be somebody to reckon with.”

In the weeks before North Carolina fired him, Butch Davis drew the ire of Chancellor Holden Thorp after Davis allegedly offered his son a scholarship. In an interview with The Associated Press, Davis said that had he remained the Tar Heels’ coach, his son would not have been given a scholarship.

North Carolina fired Davis, now a consultant with the NFL’s Tampa Bay Buccaneers, in late July 2011 amid an NCAA investigation into impermissible benefits and academic fraud. Davis has maintained he wasn’t aware of any improprieties, and that he had no involvement. The NCAA did not charge him with any violations.

His son, meanwhile, arrived less than three months before Fedora will coach his first game at North Carolina.

“He’s just like any of the other kids is the way I look at it,” Fedora said. “He doesn’t expect to be treated any different and we won’t treat him any different.”

Staff writer Luke DeCock contributed to this report.
Carter: 919-829-8944
DeCock: North Carolina just can't turn page on Butch Davis

By Luke DeCock - ldecock@newsobserver.com

It’s easy to understand why Drew Davis would want to walk on the North Carolina football team. Although he followed his father all over the country, his high school years were spent at East Chapel Hill, and more important, around the North Carolina program.

He’s as much a Tar Heel bred as anyone. You can’t fault the kid, because he’s just doing what feels right to him. And if his father weren’t Butch Davis, no one would care.

But, there’s just no way around his father.

This doesn’t seem like a good idea for anyone. At a time when North Carolina is neck-deep in yet another athletic scandal, this time involving academic fraud in the Department of African and Afro American Studies, the last thing it needs is the fired coach’s son on the football team, even in a position as inconsequential as walk-on quarterback.

New coach Larry Fedora is well aware of this, but as far as he’s concerned, Drew Davis is just another local kid who wants to play at North Carolina. His father isn’t his concern.

“If the kid has a dream of playing at North Carolina, why should we stop that dream?” Fedora said Monday. “You come in and you’re just like everybody else.”

More than anything, North Carolina’s football program needs to move forward, to put the Butch Davis era, for good or bad, behind it. So much work has been done on that front: athletics director Bubba Cunningham replaced Dick Baddour, Fedora arrived with a completely different football philosophy and the sanctions imposed by the NCAA for the nine major violations are just a fact of life now.

And now Butch Davis will be back on campus, accorded all the rights and privileges of any other North Carolina football parent.

Davis, who hired John Blake, who hired Jennifer Wiley to tutor Drew when she wasn’t busy committing academic fraud on behalf of his players, who still won’t turn over the subpoenaed records from the personal cell phone, who once offered a scholarship to his son in the midst of the NCAA
investigation to Chancellor Holden Thorp’s chagrin, now will have every legitimate reason to hang around the program.

Given the continuing unhappiness of factions within the fan base over Davis’ firing last July, that won’t make Fedora’s job easier – particularly if the Tar Heels struggle during the transition to his schemes – and it certainly won’t ease any of the pressure Thorp still faces for making that decision.

It was the original scholarship offer to Drew Davis that prompted Thorp to blow his stack in August, complaining to a News & Observer reporter that he hadn’t been consulted about the offer and committing a secondary NCAA violation in the process. Thorp was traveling and unavailable for comment Monday.

Then there’s Drew Davis, who just wants to play football with his friend Bryn Renner. It’s unfortunate, but he will be the subject of considerable attention that far exceeds his likely role on the team.

Fedora said he discussed that with Davis, but he was more concerned about how Drew would handle it than what it might mean for the program.

“For us, it’s not that big of a deal,” Fedora said.

If Drew Davis were anyone else’s son, it wouldn’t be. But this is North Carolina, and the father is Butch Davis, and his considerable shadow will continue to fall upon Kenan Stadium.

DeCock: luke.decock@newsobserver.com, 919-829-8947, Twitter: @LukeDeCock
U-Va. Students protest university president’s ouster: The announced removal of University of Virginia president Teresa Sullivan plunged the campus into turmoil and prompted a student protest.

**Teresa Sullivan: The ousted U-Va. leader who may regain the post**

By Daniel de Vise, Jenna Johnson and Donna St. George

CHARLOTTESVILLE — Early in her tenure as University of Virginia president, Teresa Sullivan sat down with her vice presidents and made this request: “Stay with me.”

If they would remain in their jobs for 18 months, time for Sullivan to prove herself to them, she would give them at least that long to prove themselves to her.

All of them stayed. But when the honeymoon was over, Sullivan’s job was on the line.

Sullivan arrived at Virginia’s insular state flagship two years ago as the ultimate outsider. And she worked her way in, building a support network and winning allies across the length and width of the Grounds — from stodgy, old-guard alumni to the freshly minted students on the Lawn, from suits at the business school to costume designers in the drama department.
“You can move fast, or you can move incrementally. But it doesn’t matter unless people follow you,” said David Leblang, the politics department chairman. “People follow her.”

But out of the sight of faculty and students, dissent was deepening. Sullivan, it turned out, had a major blind spot: She apparently failed to detect an erosion in support from her governing board. Leaders of the Board of Visitors began working in secret last fall to build a case against her. Rector Helen E. Dragas, claiming the backing of other members, forced Sullivan’s resignation on June 10.

To Sullivan’s critics on the board, her patient, deliberate approach was a liability. They wanted her to enact change, not pave the way for it — to stop running for president and be the president.

“Simply put, we want the university to be a leader in fulfilling its mission, not a follower,” Dragas told the board last week.

Dragas may have underestimated the breadth of Sullivan’s support. Virtually every conceivable campus constituency has mobilized in her defense, including students, academic deans and rank-and-file faculty members.

Tuesday, the board that voted for an interim successor to Sullivan will gather here to consider giving her the job back.

The groundswell for Sullivan was fueled by outrage over the board’s secrecy and debate over the mission of major public universities. But it is also a reflection of the support she has gathered on campus.

“This woman has been president less than 24 months,” said Robert Kemp, a business professor. “And to see this outcry — I’ve never seen anything like it.”

The image of Sullivan gliding past 2,000 screaming supporters and through the doors of the Rotunda on June 18 for a seemingly final encounter with the board illustrated how lopsided the battle for U-Va. really was.

Yes, Dragas had allies on the board. But Sullivan had the people.

‘Provost on the prowl’

Teresa Ann Sullivan, 62, came to Charlottesville from the University of Michigan, where she held the No. 2 job. She was known as the “provost on the prowl” for her habit of visiting the university’s many schools and colleges.
“We viewed her as a change agent,” said Andrea Newman, a member of Michigan's board of regents, who credited Sullivan with innovating despite budget constraints.

Before Sullivan arrived here, she asked campus leaders to list three things she should read to better understand Thomas Jefferson’s university. One was a student’s honor thesis featuring interviews with three U-Va. presidents.

It helped Sullivan understand the culture of a school that calls freshmen “first-years” and the campus the Grounds, capitalizes its Lawn and withholds the honorific “Doctor” from those without medical degrees, a place where football-game attire is “guys in ties and girls in pearls.”

In her first months, Sullivan seemed to be everywhere: at arts performances, wrestling matches or faculty meetings. She crisscrossed the nation for alumni events, and pumped lawmakers for research dollars. She tried to attend at least one event for every U-Va. sport. She met state legislators on their home turf.

Sullivan urged everyone to call her Terry, even as she carefully filed away both the first and last names of all she met.

She cut quite a contrast to her predecessor, John T. Casteen, the ultimate campus insider, who holds three U-Va. degrees. His final president’s report, in 2010, was a bound book, 70 pages on heavy paper. Sullivan’s first was issued online as a few-frills digital document, along with a video of her urging people to read it.

Kenneth G. Elzinga, an economics professor, first met Sullivan at a fundraiser in Los Angeles, where she gave a speech and joined alumni in a rousing rendition of the university victory song, “Good Ole Song.”

“What really floored me,” Elzinga said, “was that she already knew the words.”

Sullivan swiftly won over pre-1970 alumni, almost all male, a notable feat because she was the first female president.

And she won over faculty members who had felt disenfranchised. In one meeting, Sullivan told the assembled scholars that she shared their perspective. She had just finished editing her latest academic paper the previous night. She was one of them.

“She seemed to have all the goods — just the right balance of vision and experience, with a humane quality,” said history professor William I. Hitchcock.
Hearts and minds

Colleagues say one key to Sullivan’s administrative gift is an ability to win hearts and minds of administrators and faculty.

“She has a real relationship-based, relationship-centered presidency and she puts primacy on listening and getting to know people,” said Dorrie K. Fontaine, dean of the nursing school.

Sullivan, who declined to comment for this report, kept most of Casteen’s staff and brought almost no one from Michigan. Instead, she asked her leadership team for an 18-month commitment, vowing to trust their collective guidance.

“Sometimes leaders will come in and clean house — that wasn’t her style,” said Marcus L. Martin, an interim vice president in Sullivan’s first year and now a vice president and chief officer for diversity and equity.

From the start, Sullivan outlined what she called “Sullivan’s laws”: Never surprise an administrator. Never punish the messenger. Don’t hide bad news; meet it head-on. People and time are our greatest resources; don’t waste them. When dealing with a difficult matter, don’t leave anyone out, or else be prepared for fallout.

Staff meetings began and ended on time and typically lasted an hour and a half. She asked vice presidents for “weather reports,” a chance to share good news, and “jeopardies,” to broach bad news.

Sullivan worked out regularly at a university recreation center, and she liked to chat with members of the faculty and staff while she exercised. One of her favorite regimens is something called volksmarching, a noncompetitive form of fitness walking.

While many university presidents surround themselves with handlers, Sullivan preferred to act alone. She paid visits to university students in the hospital and met one-on-one with reporters. She often held meetings with university leaders and colleagues in the sunroom off her kitchen.

Sullivan campaigned for transparency at U-Va.

The day after Graham Spanier was ousted as Penn State president amid a child sex-abuse scandal, Sullivan told her governing board she wanted to create a culture at her university that tolerated questioning authority and even whistleblowing.

The tone should be “bad news can rise to the top of this organization without any messenger being shot for bearing it,” she said.
Sullivan arrived shortly after the May 2010 death of Yeardley Love, a lacrosse player killed by her former boyfriend, George Huguely V. When the next school year was underway, Sullivan hosted a Day of Dialogue, opening up discussion on how students, faculty and others could better care for one another.

“I thought to myself, ‘This is real empathy,’ ” said Robert O’Neil, a former U-Va. president and friend of Sullivan’s.

Sullivan is married to U-Va. law professor Douglas Laycock; they have two grown sons. She has few detractors in Charlottesville. But recently she issued a rebuttal to a blogger’s account of accusations from 1990, when a reviewer alleged scientific misconduct in a book Sullivan wrote with Elizabeth Warren, now a Democratic candidate for Senate in Massachusetts, and another co-author.

At the time, Sullivan was on the University of Texas faculty. The University of Texas investigated the allegations and found them to be false, as did the National Science Foundation, which funded the research, said U-Va. spokeswoman Carol Wood.

Social science

Sullivan was born in Kewanee, Ill., an only child. Her father died of a heart condition when she was in sixth grade, after extracting a promise from his wife that their daughter would go to college.

Sullivan grew up in Little Rock and Jackson, Miss. Her Catholic high school was the first in the state to integrate. The experience fed her career choice: She entered Michigan State as a budding sociologist enthralled by the social structures behind Jim Crow.

Sullivan went on to earn a doctorate at the University of Chicago and join the sociology faculty at the University of Texas. There, she rose to executive vice chancellor of the Texas system, overseeing nine campuses. Then she went to Michigan.

“There are aspects of administration, they’re like a chess game,” Sullivan said in a 2010 interview. “You’re looking forward three or four moves.”

Staff writers Anita Kumar and Susan Svrluga contributed to this report.
June 25, 2012

Public Universities See Familiar Fight at Virginia

By TAMAR LEWIN

The tumult at the University of Virginia — with the sudden ouster of President Teresa Sullivan on June 10, and the widespread anticipation that she will be reinstated on Tuesday — reflects a low-grade panic now spreading through much of public higher education.

“Is it possible to be a successful president of a public university?” mused Mark G. Yudof, the president of the University of California. “I’m not willing to say these jobs are impossible, but these are very difficult times. You want to be more efficient, but you don’t want to make changes so fast that you endanger academic values and traditions and alienate the faculty. But you can’t go too slow, or you alienate the board and the legislature. It’s a volatile mix.”

Across the nation, it has been a rocky year for public university presidents: Richard W. Lariviere, the president of the University of Oregon, was fired in November, despite strong faculty support, after pushing aggressively for more independence from the state. Amid similar strains — but voluntarily — Carolyn Martin left the University of Wisconsin to become president of the far smaller Amherst College. At the University of Illinois, a faculty mutiny helped spur President Michael Hogan’s resignation after less than two years on the job. And at the University of Texas this spring, there were rumblings that President Bill Powers was in danger after a clash with the board and the governor over his request for a tuition increase.

“Each situation is a little different, but the trend is apparent,” said Molly Corbett Broad, president of the American Council on Education. “The staggering reduction in financial support from the state puts a lot of pressure on campus. There’s increasing politicization of governance. And there are rising expectations that universities will transform themselves very quickly, if not overnight. Somehow, they’re supposed to achieve dramatic improvement in learning productivity and at the same time reduce costs by using educational technology.”
M. Peter McPherson, president of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities and a past president of Michigan State University, says the job has gotten harder since his tenure there.

“Stressful times are hard times for C.E.O.’s and for boards,” he said. “And things are changing faster than they used to.”

Rapid change is a particularly jarring concept at the University of Virginia, an institution steeped in tradition, where the “Good Ole Song” is the de facto anthem, and campus is referred to as Grounds.

The litany around the University of Virginia is, “‘This is the way we always did it,’” said Carl W. Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond, who attended law school at Virginia. “It’s still Mr. Jefferson’s university.”

The sudden decision by the Board of Visitors at the university to force out the president was especially surprising in that there was no charge of misbehavior, no long-simmering disagreement between the president and the board, and — even now — no clear explanation of why Helen E. Dragas, the rector, decided to move so fast.

On Friday, Ms. Dragas released a message purporting to offer “a fuller explanation” of the board’s move, a “more specific outline of the serious strategic challenges that alarmed us about the direction of the University.”

But the 10-point outline she offered — listing state and federal financing challenges, the changing role of technology, a rapidly changing health care environment, prioritization of scarce resources, faculty workload and the quality of the student experience, faculty compensation, research financing and the like — was almost generic, and would have applied to nearly every public university in the nation.

In the end, it seems, the fundamental disagreement at the University of Virginia concerned the approach to change that the president should take — either incremental, with buy-in from each of the constituencies, or more radical, imposed from the top.

Ms. Dragas has displayed a sense of urgency about pushing the university to find new revenue sources.

She has been especially concerned about pushing ahead in online learning, to keep up with Stanford, M.I.T. and other universities that have, just in the last year, begun to offer “massive open online courses,” or MOOCs, free to
anyone with an Internet connection, carving out new territory in an area that most universities are just beginning to explore.

Ms. Dragas sent her board a newspaper editorial on the issue, in an e-mail headed “why we can’t afford to wait.” And in a June 10 statement about Dr. Sullivan’s ouster, Ms. Dragas said that the world “is simply moving too fast” for the University of Virginia to maintain its position “under a model of incremental marginal change.”

While many of the new MOOCs are enrolling more than 100,000 students, most, so far, have been from overseas — so that, at least for the time being, the real competition is with foreign universities, not American ones.

Nonetheless, the sheer scale of the new online courses has jolted every leading university into thinking about how online learning may transform higher education: Will there be much demand for each university to develop its own courses, when a state-of-the-art version from a prestigious university is available online? Will employers accept a set of certificates from online courses as a traditional diploma? Will families pay ever-higher tuition if a free online alternative exists? Does it make sense for universities to invest in brick-and-mortar branch campuses, in the United States or abroad, when they can so easily take courses to students everywhere via the Internet?

Dr. Sullivan said that online education was no panacea — and indeed, was “surprisingly expensive, has limited revenue potential and unless carefully managed can undermine the quality of instruction.”

And while she agreed that she is, indeed, an incrementalist, she stressed that that did not mean she lacked a strategic plan.

“Corporate-style, top-down leadership does not work in a great university,” she said. “Sustained change with buy-in does work.”

Many public university presidents, past and present, said that those on the boards of the leading universities — typically business executives without much experience in academia — do not always understand the complexities of leading a large research university, and the degree to which a president can succeed only by persuading.

“Everybody thinks university presidents are hierarchical and top-down,” said Donna E. Shalala, president of the University of Miami, and a former president of the University of Wisconsin and secretary of health and human services. “But we are not corporate chieftains, and we cannot rule from the sky. We are more like tugboat captains, trying to get our ships aligned and pulling them in the right direction.”
The great research universities, she said, have achieved their dominant position in the world through shared faculty governance, and leaving faculty both academic and research freedom.

“It was a lot easier to run a cabinet department than the University of Wisconsin,” Ms. Shalala said. “There are a lot of different constituencies at a university, and the president cannot be successful without buy-in from all of them.”
This Embarrasses You and I*
Grammar Gaffes Invade the Office in an Age of Informal Email, Texting and Twitter
Updated June 19, 2012, 7:26 p.m. ET

By SUE SHELLENBARGER

When Caren Berg told colleagues at a recent staff meeting, "There's new people you should meet," her boss Don Silver broke in, says Ms. Berg, a senior vice president at a Fort Lauderdale, Fla., marketing and crisis-communications company.

"I cringe every time I hear" people misuse "is" for "are," Mr. Silver says. The company's chief operations officer, Mr. Silver also hammers interns to stop peppering sentences with "like." For years, he imposed a 25-cent fine on new hires for each offense. "I am losing the battle," he says.

Managers are fighting an epidemic of grammar gaffes in the workplace. Many of them attribute slipping skills to the informality of email, texting and Twitter where slang and shortcuts are common. Such looseness with language can create bad impressions with clients, ruin marketing materials and cause communications errors, many managers say.

There's no easy fix. Some bosses and co-workers step in to correct mistakes, while others consult business-grammar guides for help. In a survey conducted earlier this year, about 45% of 430 employers said they were increasing employee-training programs to improve employees' grammar and other skills, according to the Society for Human Resource Management and AARP.

"I'm shocked at the rampant illiteracy" on Twitter, says Bryan A. Garner, author of "Garner's Modern American Usage" and president of LawProse, a Dallas training and consulting firm. He has compiled a list of 30 examples of "uneducated English," such as saying "I could care less," instead of "I couldn't care less," or, "He expected Helen and I to help him," instead of "Helen and me."
Leslie Ferrier says she was aghast at letters employees were sending to customers at a Jersey City, N.J., hair- and skin-product marketer when she joined the firm in 2009. The letters included grammar and style mistakes and were written "as if they were speaking to a friend," says Ms. Ferrier, a human-resources executive. She had employees use templates to eliminate mistakes and started training programs in business writing.

Most participants in the Society for Human Resource Management-AARP survey blame younger workers for the skills gap. Tamara Erickson, an author and consultant on generational issues, says the problem isn't a lack of skill among 20- and 30-somethings. Accustomed to texting and social networking, "they've developed a new norm," Ms. Erickson says.

At RescueTime, for example, grammar rules have never come up. At the Seattle-based maker of personal-productivity software, most employees are in their 30s. Sincerity and clarity expressed in "140 characters and sound bytes" are seen as hallmarks of good communication—not "the king's grammar," says Jason Grimes, 38, vice president of product marketing. "Those who can be sincere, and still text and Twitter and communicate on Facebook—those are the ones who are going to succeed."

Also, some grammar rules aren't clear, leaving plenty of room for disagreement. Tom Kamenick battled fellow attorneys at a Milwaukee, Wis., public-interest law firm over use of "the Oxford comma"—an additional comma placed before the "and" or "or" in a series of nouns. Leaving it out can change the meaning of a sentence, Mr. Kamenick says: The sentence, "The greatest influences in my life are my sisters, Oprah Winfrey and Madonna," means something different from the sentence, "The greatest influences in my life are my sisters, Oprah Winfrey, and Madonna," he says. (The first sentence implies the writer has two celebrity sisters; the second says the sisters and the stars are different individuals.) After Mr. Kamenick asserted in digital edits of briefs and papers that "I was willing to go to war on that one," he says, colleagues backed down, either because they were convinced, or "for the sake of their own sanity and workplace decorum."

Patricia T. O'Conner, author of a humorous guidebook for people who struggle with grammar, fields workplace disputes on a blog she cowrites, Grammarphobia. "These disagreements can get pretty contentious," Ms. O'Conner says. One employee complained that his boss ordered him to make a memo read, "for John and I," rather than the correct usage, "for John and me," Ms. O'Conner says.
In workplace-training programs run by Jack Appleman, a Monroe, N.Y., corporate writing instructor, "people are banging the table," yelling or high-fiving each other during grammar contests he stages, he says. "People get passionate about grammar," says Mr. Appleman, author of a book on business writing.

Christopher Telano, chief internal auditor at the New York City Health and Hospitals Corp., has employees circulate their reports to co-workers to review for accuracy and grammar, he says. He coaches auditors to use action verbs such as "verify" and "confirm" and tells them to write below a 12th-grade reading level so it can be easily understood.

Mr. Garner, the usage expert, requires all job applicants at his nine-employee firm—including people who just want to pack boxes—to pass spelling and grammar tests before he will hire them. And he requires employees to have at least two other people copy-edit and make corrections to every important email and letter that goes out.

"Twenty-five years ago it was impossible to put your hands on something that hadn't been professionally copy-edited," Mr. Garner says. "Today, it is actually hard to put your hands on something that has been professionally copy-edited."

Write to Sue Shellenbarger at sue.shellenbarger@wsj.com