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This photo provided by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory shows the gravel on the surface of Mars' Gale Crater where the Curiosity rover landed late Sunday, Aug. 5, 2012 PDT. On the horizon is the rim of the crater. Part of the spring that released the lens' dust cover can be seen at the bottom right, near the rover's wheel.

**NASA releases low-res video of Mars rover descent**

By ALICIA Chang and SETH BORENSTEIN - AP Science Writer

PASADENA, Calif. – NASA's Curiosity rover has transmitted a low-resolution video showing the last 2 1/2 minutes of its white-knuckle dive through the Martian atmosphere, giving earthlings a sneak peek of a spacecraft landing on another world.

As thumbnails of the video flashed on a big screen on Monday, scientists and engineers at the NASA Jet Propulsion let out "oohs" and "aahs." The recording began with the protective heat shield falling away and ended with dust being kicked up as the rover was lowered by cables inside an ancient crater.

It was a sneak preview, since it'll take some time before full-resolution frames are beamed back depending on other priorities.
The full video "will just be exquisite," said Michael Malin, the chief scientist of the instrument.

NASA celebrated the precision landing of a rover on Mars and marveled over the mission's flurry of photographs - grainy, black-and-white images of Martian gravel, a mountain at sunset and, most exciting of all, the spacecraft's white-knuckle plunge through the red planet's atmosphere.

Curiosity, a roving laboratory the size of a compact car, landed right on target late Sunday after an eight-month, 352-million-mile journey. It parked its six wheels about four miles from its ultimate science destination - Mount Sharp, rising from the floor of Gale Crater near the equator.

Extraordinary efforts were needed for the landing because the rover weighs one ton, and the thin Martian atmosphere offers little friction to slow down a spacecraft. Curiosity had to go from 13,000 mph to zero in seven minutes, unfurling a parachute, then firing rockets to brake. In a Hollywood-style finish, cables delicately lowered it to the ground at 2 mph.

At the end of what NASA called "seven minutes of terror," the vehicle settled into place almost perfectly flat in the crater it was aiming for.

"We have ended one phase of the mission much to our enjoyment," mission manager Mike Watkins said. "But another part has just begun."

The nuclear-powered Curiosity will dig into the Martian surface to analyze what's there and hunt for some of the molecular building blocks of life, including carbon.

It won't start moving for a couple of weeks, because all the systems on the $2.5 billion rover have to be checked out. Color photos and panoramas will start coming in the next few days.

But first NASA had to use tiny cameras designed to spot hazards in front of Curiosity's wheels. So early images of gravel and shadows abounded. The pictures were fuzzy, but scientists were delighted.

The photos show "a new Mars we have never seen before," Watkins said. "So every one of those pictures is the most beautiful picture I have ever seen."

In one of the photos from the close-to-the-ground hazard cameras, if you squinted and looked the right way, you could see "a silhouette of Mount Sharp in the setting sun," said an excited John Grotzinger, chief mission scientist from the California Institute of Technology.
A high-resolution camera on the orbiting 7-year-old Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, flying 211 miles directly above the plummeting Curiosity, snapped a photo of the rover dangling from its parachute about a minute from touchdown. The parachute's design can be made out in the photo.

"It's just mind-boggling to me," said Miguel San Martin, chief engineer for the landing team.

Curiosity is the heaviest piece of machinery NASA has landed on Mars, and the success gave the space agency confidence that it can unload equipment that astronauts may need in a future manned trip to the red planet.

The landing technique was hatched in 1999 in the wake of devastating back-to-back Mars spacecraft losses. Back then, engineers had no clue how to land super-heavy spacecraft. They brainstormed different possibilities, consulting Apollo-era engineers and pilots of heavy-lift helicopters.

"I think its engineering at its finest. What engineers do is they make the impossible possible," said former NASA chief technologist Bobby Braun. "This thing is elegant. People say it looks crazy. Each system was designed for a very specific function."


"When's the next lander on Mars? The answer to that is nobody knows," Bolden said in a recent interview with The Associated Press.

But if Curiosity finds something interesting, he said, it could spur the public and Congress to provide more money for more Martian exploration. No matter what, he said, Curiosity's mission will help NASA as it tries to send astronauts to Mars by the mid-2030s.

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Video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcGMDxy-Y1I&feature=youtu.be

**East Carolina grad to drive Mars rover**

Scott Maxwell, who is one of the NASA employees who will drive the Curiosity rover from afar, excelled in his computer programming classes and seemed to be "the kind of student who was going to do something big," said Robert Fainter, a former professor at East Carolina University.

“He was one of the star students. He was a hard worker and he was excited about what he was learning,” said Fainter, who now works as a testing and outcome
analysis specialist at ECU’s School of Dental Medicine. “I’m not surprised at all that he’s doing what he’s doing now.”

David White, dean of the College of Technology and Computer Science, said Maxwell actualized the university’s motto, “Tomorrow starts here.”

“When you combine a good undergraduate underpinning with the spirit of enthusiasm, you can change the world,” he said.

-- Charlotte Observer Staff Writer Elisabeth Arriero
Former ECU coach dead at 95
By East Carolina Sports Information
Tuesday, August 7, 2012

 Former East Carolina men’s basketball and baseball coach Earl Smith died over the weekend at the age of 95, according to the university and published reports.

Before his hall of fame coaching career at ECU, Smith was the original three-sport athlete for the Pirates, playing baseball, basketball and football at East Carolina Teacher’s College in the late 1930s.

Two decades later, Smith returned to Greenville and guided the Pirate basketball program from ’59-’63 and then served as baseball coach from ’63-’72.

The Fayetteville native, who later coached at Campbell, was inducted into the ECU Sports Hall of Fame in 1977. In all, he was part of ECU athletics for 43 years, and also earned induction into Campbell’s Hall of Fame.

Smith was a winner with the Pirates in both coaching ventures, compiling a 53-40 record in four seasons in basketball, then steering Pirate baseball to 185 victories and four first-place finishes in the Southern Conference.

Smith also served as a professional baseball scout for the San Diego Padres.
**Parking deck study approved**

By Wesley Brown

The type of development downtown residents, retailers and shoppers said they have long waited to see is finally under way.

The City Council on Monday asked Greenville economic development officers to study — in detail — two parking lots off Fourth Street to see if the land could handle the size, traffic and weight of a three- to four-story parking garage.

In the next four months, soil will be studied, plans will be drawn, and numbers will be crunched about transforming the city-owned Moseley Lot — which studies show as frequently underused — into a garage.

If the ground is too weak, the city will attempt to partner with East Carolina University to build a deck on a college-run parking lot across the street at the corner of Cotanche and Fourth.

“Sometimes you got to put your foot in the ground and move forward,” Greenville Mayor Allen Thomas said of the two-year fight to bring a parking deck to downtown. “This could be a much-needed catalyst for growth. Providing parking to the masses is critical. You have to have it.”

The vote for research and design of a parking garage was nearly unanimous with only Councilwoman Marion Blackburn voting in opposition.
Blackburn worried such a garage would “darken and crowd” an already dense downtown.

“This is something that could potentially change the landscape of the city for decades,” Blackburn said. “If we put a parking deck in the heart of downtown, that space is forever gone.”

Blackburn proposed tabling discussion on a parking deck for two months for the council to look more closely into the potential effects of adding a garage to downtown.

Her idea won little support. Councilman Calvin Mercer approved an amendment by Blackburn to delay a vote for a month, but beyond that, the board felt the time was now for a parking garage.

“I’m ready to move,” said Councilman Max Joyner, who introduced the motion for a parking deck. “It would help existing businesses. Plus, our staff already knows the lots.”

Parking complaints, on the rise since 2010, have reached an all-time high in downtown Greenville.

Merchants are competing with the county and federal courthouses. Employees cannot afford leased parking or to leave work mid-shift to move their vehicles from one- or two-hour spaces. And many shoppers have given up altogether, heading to strip malls across the city for the convenience of drive-up parking.

More than 90 percent of retailers downtown are in favor of a parking deck, and close to 66 percent oppose leased parking, according to a survey by Uptown Greenville, the nonprofit chartered to revitalize downtown.

A 64-by-260 foot “two-bay” parking garage could cost the city about $3.5 million, provide up to 250 additional spaces and generate more than $200,000 in annual revenue, according to local figures.

Carl Rees, the economic development officer who volunteered to tackle downtown parking in the fall of 2010, said the city has reserved $1.7 million for a parking deck. Any debt accrued in the project will be paid for through a long-term financing agreement or offset by potential revenues from hourly or leased parking, Rees said.

While it is not the city’s first choice to venture the project into university territory, he said the college has three parking decks listed on its master plan.
The plan includes a hotel, a business many downtown retailers want to have as a neighbor. For now, the council will wait until December to hear the verdict on a parking garage.

“It’s a big project, and a lot of taxpayer money is at stake,” Mercer said. “Let’s make sure its sound.”

Among other items approved by the council:
The implementation of an employee tag or “E-Tag” parking system for merchants to buy a sticker to display on their rear bumper, giving them clearance — on a first-come-first-serve basis — to park in designated lots for longer than two hours
Keep the Neighborhood Advisory Board elected by the city’s homeowners associations, not appointed by the council
To use the bus transfer point on Reade Street as a stop for Amtrak’s new eastern North Carolina Thruway Service.

Wesley Brown can be reached at 252-329-9579 or wbrown@reflector.com. Follow him on Twitter @CityWatchdog.
Brian Mitchell is showing the value of experience this month, his own and that which he has helped to create in his players.

The East Carolina defensive coordinator enters his third season with the Pirates with something to build on instead of something to change. His unit leapt from the bottom of the nation in total defense in 2010 to halfway to the top by the end of the ’11 season.

This summer, he’s using his own playing experience to create all-out competition in camp, helping his returning starters solidify their roles and helping to turn playing experience into leadership at other positions.

“I took a page from Jimmy Johnson’s book,” the former Dallas Cowboys and Atlanta Falcons defensive back said of his one-time coach. “When I was in camp with the Cowboys, there were three players at every position and you knew he was only going to keep a few of us. That promoted competition. Guys came out and were warriors going to battle each and every day.”
The simple strategy is likely to pay off, especially in an ECU secondary that is set to replace three long-term starters in corners Emanuel Davis and Derek Blacknall and strong safety Bradley Jacobs, leaving only free safety Damon Magazu from last season.

Jacobi Jenkins and Leonard Paulk both bring loads of experience to the corners, however, and junior college products Adonis Armstrong at field corner and Chip Thompson at strong safety both bring field readiness.

“What I see out there with Adonis and Godfrey Thompson, and also guys like (strong safeties) Desi Brown and Lamar Ivey, are guys that have been in the program that know the way and that have developed tremendously over the offseason,” Mitchell said of the competition.

Brown proved his big-play propensity at the Pirates’ spring game when he scooped and scored on a fumble, and Ivey has battled through some early camp pain to remain in the hunt as well.

“There are some proven commodities out there with Paulk and Jacobi,” Mitchell said of his leading corners, joined by senior Kristopher Sykes.

“Those men have been productive in our scheme, and not just this past year but the last couple of years. There’s a comfort level that on game day those young men are going to bring it to the table.”

Practice report

Head coach Ruffin McNeill said he was pleased with the early progress of the hurry-up offense after Monday’s fourth practice of fall camp.

“This is the first day, really, that we did it during the scrimmage,” the third-year head coach said of what he calls coordinator Lincoln Riley’s NASCAR look. “They like it. They like the tempo part.”

McNeill lauded his team’s strong finish to the workout, and said players are fighting through the bumps and bruises common to early August.

“We started with a little bit of inconsistent energy early, but I thought we finished practice with really good energy,” McNeill said following Monday morning’s workout. “That’s what we’re striving for. Every play, each day, each series that we have that energy. We’ve had a really strenuous three days of conditioning and we’re making sure we’ve had a very high tempo on offense.”

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
FAYETTEVILLE - Norman Earl "Coach" Smith passed away Sunday, August 5, 2012 at Cape Fear Valley Hospital. Born in Micro on May 27, 1917, he was preceded in death by his mother and father Harvey and Madie Smith; and his younger siblings, Clinnon, Floyd, David, Virgie, Pauline, and Ed. His is survived by his devoted wife, Florence Smith. He is also survived by his children, Ann Burrows of Greenville, David Smith and wife, Linda, of New Orleans, and Robert Smith of Charleston, S.C.; stepchildren, Pamela Richards and husband, Milani, of Fayetteville and Mary Whitfield and husband, Robert, of Augusta, Ga.; and grandchildren, Scott Burrows, Melissa Marshburn and husband, Christopher, Imogen Myslinski and Ryan, Mayde Pokorny and husband, Dan, Blake Richards, Katherine Richards, Errol Smith, Sasha Watkins and husband, John, Brian Whitfield, and Kristin Whitfield.

"Coach" Earl Smith had a prolific career in college sports spanning over 30 years and culminating in his induction into the Pirate Hall of Fame in 1977, the Campbell University Athletics Hall of Fame in 1986, and finally the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame in 2003. After retiring as a coach he became a professional baseball scout for the San Diego Padres. "Coach" Earl Smith's career was both prolific and deeply personal. His players were loved and remembered by him throughout his entire life, and they honored their coach throughout the many years following their respectable seasons. He was very proud of his career as a coach, scout, and teacher, but this pride was rooted not in his accomplishments, but rather the relationships he cultivated and the lives he influenced. Much like his professional career, Earl Smith's personal life was something to be honored and revered as well. He was a loving and strong father to each of his children and step-children; a devoted and generous grandfather to every grandchild, always eager to share a story of glory and grandeur in all its varieties; and a thoughtful friend and companion to those closest to him and any sort of curious soul. And in a life filled with so much regard there was one spotlight Earl shown on one special person: his wife Florence Smith. In the 30 years they spent together, Florence and Earl Smith created the happiest of marriages and friendships with one another, allowing their love to enfold the many people
around them. Earl Smith left this earth on a Sunday, the beginning of the week and the holy day, the day we reserve for love.
In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions be made to the Campbell University Athletic Department and East Carolina University Athletic Department.
Funeral service will be held on Wednesday at 1 p.m. in Jernigan-Warren Chapel with the Rev. Sherrill Boykin, the Rev. J.P. Johnson, and Dr. Dickey Parrish, officiating. Burial will follow in Cumberland Memorial Gardens.
The family will receive family and friends at the funeral home Wednesday from 11 a.m. till 12:45 p.m. Please make online condolences at [www.jerniganwarren.com](http://www.jerniganwarren.com). Services entrusted to Jernigan-Warren Funeral Home.

Published in The Daily Reflector on August 7, 2012
Helen Dragas was under fire. As rector of the governing board at the University of Virginia, she had led a secretive effort to force the resignation of the institution’s popular president. By mid-June, the Charlottesville campus was demanding answers.

Then a lonely voice of support emerged, saying it was time for a revolution. Paul Tudor Jones II, a billionaire hedge fund titan and U-Va. alumnus, had been acquainted with Dragas for about a month, according to associates of Jones’s who spoke on the condition that they not be named. She had called him in May to ask if he wanted to join U-Va.’s Board of Visitors. He declined, but he urged a focus on strategic planning.

In June, as Dragas was being assailed from all directions, Jones told Dragas that he would write an op-ed piece backing the board.

President Teresa Sullivan’s “departure is a clarion call from the Board of Visitors that business as usual is not acceptable anymore,” Jones wrote in the June 17 edition of the Daily Progress of Charlottesville, one week after the announcement that Sullivan would be leaving. He asked: “Why be good when there is outstanding to be had?”
The commentary turned heads. It was not just at odds with a rising fury about what was seen as the board’s lack of openness and candor. It also came days after a widely circulated e-mail showed that powerful alumni knew about the move against Sullivan weeks before the rest of the world.

Sullivan was reinstated June 26, but many in Charlottesville were left believing that influential donors had a hidden hand in the turmoil. With his op-ed, Jones, a Wall Street superstar who famously predicted the stock market’s 1987 collapse, became a lightning rod for suspicion.

Few others had publicly cheered the board on.

Jones, 57, who rarely speaks to reporters, declined an interview, but new details of his role have emerged from those who know him. Many did not have authorization to speak for attribution. Still, the details fill in more of the picture and point to the complexity and tension of relations between governing boards and big-money donors.

These associates say that Jones did not orchestrate the removal of the president, contrary to what many in Charlottesville believed. He was told in advance about a possible leadership change, but he was not asked for his opinion.

Later, amid the uproar, Jones weighed in because he supported the power of boards to make such decisions and the long history of board governance at U-Va., according to Jones’s associates. He saw board members as volunteers acting in good faith and was dismayed that the board was being vilified.

In Jones’s view, too, U-Va. needed “stakeholder-driven” strategic planning and a transformative change in attitude and vision to better position the school to compete aggressively with the Yales, Stanfords and MITs of the world.

What Jones did not realize as he wrote the piece, however, was that the full Board of Visitors had not met to discuss the president’s removal or taken a roll-call vote on the matter before she was asked to resign.

Jones, who lives in Connecticut, where his hedge fund firm is based, has acknowledged to associates that he should have known the process was flawed before he wrote the piece. Had he known, he would not have written it.

The relationship between Jones and Dragas goes back to the second half of May, when she phoned him, associates said, to determine his interest in a seat on the board. Jones was a 1976 graduate of U-Va. and one of the university’s most generous donors.
But he was stretched thin.

He sat on the boards of the Everglades Foundation, the Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the anti-poverty Robin Hood Foundation and StudentsFirstNY, the education reform group whose founders include former D.C. schools chancellor Michelle A. Rhee. He presided over the company he founded, Tudor Investment Corp., with $11 billion under management. He served on the executive committee of U-Va.’s $3 billion fundraising campaign.

Jones declined.

In a statement Saturday, Dragas explained her interest.

“I spoke with Mr. Jones about potential nomination for volunteer service on the Board of Visitors,” she wrote. “His belief in the power of excellence in education to transform lives has been the guiding compass of his civic life, and mirrors the Board’s own aspirations for U-Va.”

She added: “Regarding the op-ed piece he wrote, I do not recall the origin of the idea — he may have suggested it, or I may have in a response to an offer to assist in sustaining high standards of excellence at U-Va.”

In his piece, Jones invoked the spirit of Thomas Jefferson and talked about the messiness of change. He cited a favorite quotation by John Keats: “I would sooner fail than not be among the greatest.”

In its theme, the op-ed was classic Jones — driving hard to hit the high mark. But in an important way, it was a departure. Jones had made his fortune partly by understanding the psychology of other traders and the forces at work in critical moments.

This time, his read of unfolding events was not as accurate.

Hedge fund wizard

Jones grew rich in the Wall Street of the 1980s. He was a colorful, hard-charging whiz kid from Memphis who at one point, for important trades, donned shoes once worn by Bruce Willis; he created so much lore and profit that he became the subject of a documentary titled “Trader.”

In Sebastian Mallaby’s 2010 hedge fund history, “More Money than God,” a chapter devoted to Jones captures his youthful flamboyance. “He changed the shape of the hedge-fund business,” says Mallaby, a former columnist and editorial writer for The Washington Post.

With such wealth, Jones has lived large — with a waterfront mansion in Greenwich, Conn., known for its elaborate Christmas light shows, and a sprawling hunting retreat on the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland, which locals
say includes three islands shaped like his initials: PTJ. He bought a vacation home in the Florida Keys, and he created an ecotourism destination in the Serengeti in Tanzania. Forbes magazine estimates his net worth at $3.4 billion and ranks Jones 107th among the 400 richest people in America.

He has pursued philanthropy, too, on a grand scale. He took on 86 sixth-graders in Brooklyn’s Bedford Stuyvesant neighborhood, funding trips and activities and college scholarships. He started the nation’s first all-boys charter school. He founded the Robin Hood Foundation, which has tapped the wealth of Wall Street to fund poverty-fighting efforts and has raised $1.1 billion since 1988. Noted for melding investment principles with philanthropy, Robin Hood is New York City’s largest private funder of job-training programs, emergency food services and homeless shelters.

As a donor to U-Va., Jones has supported an array of initiatives. He ranks as one of the school’s top five all-time donors, officials said. His best-known gift to U-Va. was $35 million toward construction of the John Paul Jones Arena, a basketball and special-events facility named for his father, who graduated from the university’s law school.

In all, Jones has given more than $100 million — to prestigious Jefferson Scholarships, endowed professorships and environmental sciences and conservation projects. He once talked about appreciating U-Va. for a balanced education — not just academics but the experience in ethics and character-building. He was a top welterweight boxer as a student and received a degree in economics.

“He was very clear that he very much valued the time he spent here as an undergraduate,” said James H. Wright, president of the Jefferson Scholars Foundation, of which Jones was the first substantial benefactor. He remains the largest, Wright said. “He is passionate about education... and wants U-Va. to be the best of the best.”

Shortly before the June crisis, Jones and his wife, Sonia, announced their latest project: a $15 million Center for Contemplative Sciences. That effort started with the couple’s voicing an interest in yoga. Sullivan developed the idea, convening professors from varied disciplines — medicine, nursing, education, religious studies — to explore broader academic possibilities.

There were whispers of skepticism among some faculty members, but David Germano, a Buddhist studies professor who will help lead the effort, said that in 20 years at the university, he had never before heard as much enthusiasm. “It was a very positive response,” he said.

A campus in chaos
In June, as the campus was thrown into chaos, Jones was drawn into the spotlight again.

There was already a wave of outrage about an e-mail suggesting that donors had early knowledge of plans for Sullivan’s removal — a message sent by Peter D. Kiernan, a former Goldman Sachs partner who was chairman of a foundation that supports U-Va.’s Darden School of Business.

In the June 10 e-mail, Kiernan wrote that he had been contacted by “two important Virginia alums about working with Helen Dragas on this project, particularly from the standpoint of the search process and the strategic dynamism effort. It pained me to keep this information from you . . . but I was sworn to keep the process confidential.”

Then came Jones’s op-ed.

Jones cited what he called “alarming facts” about U-Va.’s declining national ranking and weaker-than-the-Ivies admissions profile. The broadside put the university in the delicate position of rebutting him. His comments, “however well-intended, were misleading,” wrote Greg Roberts, undergraduate admissions dean, in a subsequent op-ed.

Theories about backroom maneuvering abounded. A Charlottesville weekly, the Hook, wrote about the power of donors. In Connecticut, a newspaper headline asked: “Did Greenwich tycoons take down a major university president?”

Both Kiernan and Jones, who are friends, live in Greenwich.

“We were distressed because it looked like somebody who wasn’t on the board was calling the shots,” politics professor David Leblang recalled.

Beth Meyer, an associate professor of architecture, said the confluence of the e-mail and the op-ed piece “made a lot of people think their suspicions about the process were credible.”

But Robert D. Sweeney, U-Va.’s senior vice president for development and public affairs, said he is convinced that Jones had no role in the ouster. Sweeney has known Jones for more than 20 years.

The op-ed, he said, was written when Jones believed that a decision had been made and that he could rally the troops to see it as an opportunity. “It was kind of a rallying call for, ‘Let’s be the best we can be,’” Sweeney said.

“I truly believe that Paul Jones had no involvement in the forced resignation of the president,” he said.
Reached by phone, Kiernan said he had “absolutely no role” in the decision to dismiss Sullivan. Kiernan resigned from the Darden School board.

New details from Jones associates and others suggest a complex sequence. Jones offered Kiernan’s name to Dragas as a candidate for a Board of Visitors position when Jones opted out. Then, Dragas called Kiernan to discuss a potential board appointment or role in strategic planning, according to people familiar with the conversation.

In a statement July 16, Dragas wrote: “Mr. Jones did not influence board decisions regarding President Sullivan. He has been a generous and steadfast friend to U-Va., and I hope he chooses to support President Sullivan’s initiatives in advancing the University as we move forward together.”

She has also said that Kiernan had no role in the move to oust Sullivan.

Interested in the board’s structure, Jones called Virginia Gov. Robert F. McDonnell (R) to suggest that he enlarge the Board of Visitors to deepen its higher education expertise. Jones’s idea: Add four members with such backgrounds, chosen by the existing board.

McDonnell declined to comment on his relationship with Jones or the conversation, said the governor’s spokesman, Tucker Martin. Jones gave $100,000 to McDonnell’s 2009 campaign.

Many people have called on the governor to make changes in the board’s governance structure. His office is reviewing the matter. In recent university board appointments statewide, McDonnell has boosted the number of educators.

In the aftermath, Jones phoned Sullivan to talk about what happened. He told her that he regretted the op-ed piece and that he supports her, associates said. He also has expressed support for Dragas.

Sullivan, for her part, has emphasized reconciliation. She has called many donors, assuring them that the university would tackle its challenges: financial stability, online learning, faculty compensation.

“There’s no question in my mind,” Sweeney said, “that he supports her presidency and has trust in her leadership to make the kind of bold change that is needed to transform the University of Virginia.”

Daniel de Vise, Jenna Johnson and Anita Kumar contributed to this report.
College Town Built on Football Fears Fallout From a Scandal

By RICHARD PÉREZ-PEÑA

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — In the scattered towns of central Pennsylvania, Penn State football is as much an industry as a devotion, fueled by the hundreds of thousands of fans who converge here on fall weekends and spend on hotels, meals, drinks and a mind-boggling array of Nittany Lions memorabilia.

But in the wake of a child molestation scandal and resulting sanctions that will weaken the football program for years, people who do business here fear a thinning of those cheering, tailgating hordes, which could spell economic trouble for the region.

“We really have nothing to compare this to, so nobody can make any predictions,” said Maggie Biddle, the general manager of the stately Atherton Hotel, a block from the campus. “Except we know it’s probably going to hurt all of us.”

The canaries in this peculiar coal mine are the shops strung along College Avenue, their windows facing the campus and their shelves and racks lined
with Penn State T-shirts, key chains, mugs, sweat pants, tote bags, umbrellas, posters and even jewelry.

“Those seven or eight home game weekends are a majority of our business for the whole year,” said Carolene Gummo, the advertising manager at one store, the Family Clothesline. “Business has definitely been affected already by everything that’s happened, and we don’t know how it’s going to play out for the next few years.”

Nowhere else in the country is there a school anywhere near as big (45,000 students on the main campus), in a town as small (42,000 people reside here) in a place as far from population centers (Pittsburgh is more than 100 miles away, Philadelphia almost 200). More than 100,000 people attend each Penn State home game, and the typical out-of-town visitor who has a ticket is accompanied by one or two who do not, as evidenced by the tailgate parties and bars that remain busy during games.

A 2009 study commissioned by Penn State estimated that people arriving from out of state for games or other football-related events spend $34 million a year — and they are a minority of the visiting fans, most of whom come from other parts of Pennsylvania. In all, the study said, the football program supports more than 2,000 local jobs.

Economists argue that on balance, sports make a poor economic engine, creating mostly low-wage jobs and shifting spending from one place to another. But local merchants say that whether or not this region’s obsession with football is healthy, their livelihoods are at least partly built on it.

Penn State also draws visitors for conferences, alumni events, children’s sports camps, arts festivals and other college athletics, which are partly subsidized by the profits generated by football.

“If there’s a decline in all of that, that’s a huge problem for us, and for everyone around here,” said Kit Henshaw, who, with her husband, Harrison Schailey, owns Harrison’s Wine Grill and Catering. “How many people who organize events or go to events are going to hear everything that’s gone on and say, ‘We’re not going there’?”

So far, the Atherton Hotel’s bookings for football weekends have not declined, said Ms. Biddle, the general manager. But many of those reservations were made months ago, and she, like other businesspeople in town, said that the full economic fallout might not become clear for another year or two.
In June, Jerry Sandusky, a former Penn State assistant football coach, was convicted of sexually abusing young boys. Two high-ranking former university officials face criminal charges, accused of failing to report abuse allegations to the authorities and of lying to a grand jury.

The episode badly damaged the reputation of the legendary former head coach, Joe Paterno. A former F.B.I. director’s investigation found that Mr. Paterno — who was fired in November and died in January — played a role in protecting Mr. Sandusky and keeping the matter secret.

Last week, the National Collegiate Athletic Association fined Penn State $60 million (the Big Ten Conference added its own fine, $13 million), barred it from bowl games for four years and imposed a four-year, 40 percent reduction in football scholarships.

The scandal, turmoil and penalties are widely expected to add up to real trouble in recruiting top players, knocking Penn State from its accustomed place among the nation’s elite teams.

What that will do to those football season crowds is less clear. Season ticket sales are running only slightly behind last year’s, but it is too early to gauge single-game sales.

For now, the shops are trying to tap into a mood of nervous defiance among fans, with T-shirts and posters that refer obliquely to the scandal but reassert allegiance to Penn State football. Big sellers at the Family Clothesline include a shirt bearing Mr. Paterno’s profile that says, “We Are ... Because He Was,” a takeoff on the traditional chant “We Are ... Penn State.”

Local merchants say they are frustrated with a story that will not go away. “We’re all angry,” Ms. Gummo said, “that we have to pay the consequences of the actions of just four or five men.”