

# News from the Blue Ridge Mts.

Claire & Lorin Cranford

Volume 1

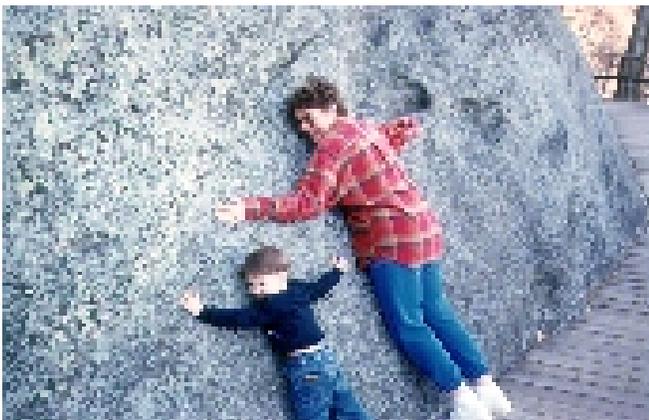
April

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## Family Pets:

One events in March that has caught our attention has been 'vehicle month.' That is, March has been the time to take our NC driving license tests (both of us passed), get the license plates for both cars and get the cars serviced. Getting two lease cars registered in NC with the title held in Texas by American Honda proved much more complicated paperwork (faxes back and forth between NC and Irving, TX), but extremely inexpensive -- just \$20 @ car for the NC license plates, a lot cheaper than the \$70 each in Texas! Taking a written driving test had some apprehension connected to it, since the last time I took one was in 1956. But with a little review of the NC driver's manual it went quite well. They even took a decent picture! And registered us to vote at the same time. The local Honda dealership charges much less fees to do servicing and with an appointment I'm in and out in less than an hour. Of course, one very enjoyable aspect has been going a whole month on a tank of gas in each car. All this makes driving in NC much more enjoyable!

Communicating with North Carolinians can be a challenge at times! For example, 'downtown' is always 'uptown.' One never hears the final 'g' on 'ing,' nor the final 't' of a word; and, heaven forbid, if a word has another consonant in front of the 't' it drops off as well. A few weeks ago the chairman of the personnel committee at a nearby church called me about the possibility of an interim pastorate. He told me he was calling about the FBC of Phar Cita. A colleague interpreted for me after I couldn't figure out where on earth this was. Phar Cita turns out to be Forest City, about 15 miles to the west! I'm learning fast! I'm not traveling to the Rio Grande Valley of Texas after all.



Mimie & Clay "hanging on for dear life" at 2,800 plus elevation on Chimney Rock where the movie Last of the Mohicans was filmed

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"...all humans are predisposed to accept what they think is likely to be true on the basis of minimal supporting evidence, but demand next to impossible levels of proof from propositions that they judge to be extremely distasteful or unreasonable."

Bruce G. Trigger, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 102 (1998), 21.

## University Happenings:

One of the very exciting things about being at GWU during these days is the booming growth taking place here in virtually every area of campus life. In the February faculty meeting at the end of the month when President White reported on the trustee board meeting that was glowing in its prospects for the future. The university budget will grow some 11%, from \$30 million to over \$33 million. New construction projects to the tune of \$14 million will begin in late summer. These will primarily provide three new dorm buildings on the university commons in addition to the present three built last summer - a very impressive apartment concept where students share a three or four bedroom apt. and a common living area. All have computers and internet connections among other things. The second major addition will be a new classroom building with seventeen classrooms plus office space for the education school. Traditionally GWU has been known as a teacher training school and this will bring that part of the university up to a first class level facility with the latest classroom technology for training public school teachers from kindergarten through high school.

These new projects are but a part of an already in process program of building and remodeling totaling several million dollars. The need of housing for married students, especially at the graduate school levels in divinity, education and business, will be addressed with the construction beginning in the summer of almost thirty new two and three bedroom apartments within walking distance of the campus. Everywhere one looks on campus, construction is taking place. Most exciting is the opening this summer of Hamrick Hall for the business school with some of the finest facilities possible for training students in both undergraduate degrees and a MBA program.

Not just in physical facilities but in programs and personnel one can see dramatic growth. One of the especially interesting areas to me is the addition this spring of Dr. Helen Tischendor as director of the international studies program and professor of German. Helen drops by my office regularly so we can converse in German with one another to get practice opportunities with our skills. GWU is making a serious commitment to establish exchange programs with universities around the world so that our students can spend part of their college experience studying abroad. Helen is a vital part of that commitment, along with her husband, Charles, distinguished professor of business and a retired CEO of Champale Inc., who is bringing years of very successful operation of major corporations experience to the classroom.

Last, but certainly not least, is also the salary increase!

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### ☺ **Claire's Musings:**

We just had the most fantastic time when Carrie, Angie, and Clay came to visit us. Lorin and I had looked forward to their visit so much and it was even better than we had anticipated. That Saturday afternoon after they arrived at the airport, all of us went for a walk on our favorite walking path in the park by the river (five minutes from home). I think this was one of their favorite things to do, and they are anxious to come back soon for another visit and go walking more that time. Sunday was great too, because Lorin preached for Harmony United Baptist Church in Hickory Grove, SC. The church met in the Magistrate's Office which reminded me of a scene from the Andy Griffith Show in Mayberry. Lorin even received some jars of homemade jelly along with a most generous love offering. That afternoon we all went to Lake Lure and Chimney Rock where we shopped in the tourist stores and went up on the mountain and enjoyed a breathtaking view. I suppose you can tell from the picture that I am not real fond of heights. Clay had fun in joining me in a silly pose (he had no fear at all). Monday, while Lorin was teaching, the rest of us drove to Ashville and mostly enjoyed the beautiful mountains. Every time we see some beautiful scenery, we think it can't get any better - but it does. Tuesday Lorin and I introduced our Texas family to friends and teachers at GWU. The girls and I had planned to go shopping at the outlet mall, but I got sick so we still had fun watching a movie at home, *Father of the Bride, Part II*. That evening we took Carrie back to the airport. The time went by much too quickly.

Wednesday, Angie, Clay, and I went shopping in South Carolina at Hamrick's (which we discovered is the best shopping, even better than the outlet mall itself). Then we shopped in the outlet mall area and had a lot of fun. That evening we ate at the Snack Shop, where we usually see friends and visit some (like another scene from Mayberry where you can usually see the townsfolk). That gave us another opportunity to show off our special family. Thursday Angie, Clay, and I drove to Spartanburg and a Civil War battlefield, which turned out to be okay. The best part was just being together and discovering more beautiful scenes. That evening we took Angie and Clay to the airport. It was really tough. The house seemed so empty and quiet that night.

Friday morning Lorin and I headed out for Knoxville, TN for a NABPR / SBL meeting. Of course, I took my homework with me to work on while Lorin attended his meetings. The drive there was even more beautiful than I could have imagined. There was some rain and fog, and the mist covered some of the mountains which made a beautiful sight. Waterfalls were abundant along the drive, because of the rain. In Knoxville I enjoyed a tour of a candy factory (chocolate, of course) and Lorin and I went up in the Sunsphere where we were able to see for miles around. I even enjoyed a quiet time in the library catching up on some homework while Lorin finished his meetings. Saturday evening we started home and as we were driving through the mountains, we began to notice a light snow. It was a beautiful sight, but we were glad we were not driving after dark when the roads might begin to freeze. We had quite an exciting week that was absolutely perfect.

### ☺ **Lorin's Musings:**

One of the fun parts of teaching in a new situation is the freedom to explore new ideas and approaches. Once a month the two Greek classes conduct class over lunch at the Snack Shop, a local cafe across the street from the main campus. The cafe is owned by two brothers from New York City and originally from Greece. One of the brothers especially enjoys coming back to 'see if we're doing the Greek language right'. I've taught him the ancient greeting in Greek, *χαίρειν*, and so now every time I go into the cafe I hear from the cook's area, "*χαίρειν!*" Of course, it's with a NY accent, rather than with the 'proper Texan slant'. The students have seemed to really enjoy this break from the regular routine, especially since several get to eat a regular meal that Friday!

Preaching is another fun activity for me. The last three Sundays of March brought a radical range of opportunities. The girls and Clay went with us to Hickory Grove, SC, to preach in a small country church of one of my Greek students. We had an absolutely marvelous time with a dear group of people. I hadn't sang out of a Stamps-Baxter Gospel hymnal in years until Hickory Grove. The last two Sundays have involved Claire and me at the First Baptist Church, Forest City, NC, a large congregation where the services involve the lectionary readings of scripture and a very formal worship style. Claire and I both have enjoyed most meaningful worship experiences here as well as the wonderfully warm and hospitable congregation who have graciously embraced us and made us feel at home. The town, just 15 miles west of Boiling Springs, has greatly impressed us as a possible place to live. We are talking with them about the possibility of an interim.

Friday and Saturday, March 20-21, brought another unique experience. We traveled to Knoxville, TN, to attend the SE region meeting of the NABPR (National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion) and the SBL (Society of Biblical Literature). Having been active in the SW region organizations, I looked forward to the chance to meet new colleagues in the southeastern region of the US. To my surprise I ran into almost half a dozen former students now teaching in Baptist universities here and several were presenting formal papers at this professional meeting. We plan to organize a annual get-together at this meeting in future years to stay in touch.

**Anything you can get away with, you can't.**

Thinker's Daily Ponderable by Alan Harris  
<http://users.aol.com/alhinil/tdp.htm>



planning our week of activities with the girls