



News from the Blue Ridge



Claire & Lorin Cranford

Volume 2

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Issue 1



Family Events:

Christmas came in segments this year at our house. Donald, Hallie and the three grandkids arrived on Sat. Dec. 19 to spend a couple of days with us while on their way to Texas. We had a delightful time over the weekend with them. Then Angie, Brian and Clay arrived on Monday afternoon from Texas to spend the week with us. On Monday evening before Donald and Hallie left to drive overnight to Texas (those with small children understand how much easier it is to drive long distances during the night while the kids are mostly sleeping!), we had our first family celebration with the two sets of kids and grandkids. With ten of us in the small apartment, four being pre-schoolers, we had an absolutely marvelous time at dinner with Claire's traditional Christmas ham-soup, and then opening presents under the Christmas tree. We were sad to see Donald and Hallie leave but understood the urgency of getting on to Texas, especially with the impending bad road conditions.

The remainder of the week was spent doing Christmas shopping etc. with Brian and Angie. What a wonderfully relaxing time the week was: no pressure to do anything, a movie on Christmas eve, lots of eating and visiting, a thoroughly delightful Christmas morning watching Clay's eyes pop wide open at the sight of his new bike, race track etc., etc.! The hard part was saying goodbye on Sat. morning as the kids headed back to Texas.

Belated congratulations to one who is like family! Word came this week from dear friends in Oklahoma of the wonderful accomplishment of a young lady whom I've known for over a decade since she was in elementary school. Julie Payne won the Miss Oklahoma beauty pageant last June, then made it to the final ten in the Miss America pageant this past fall. Check out her web page at <http://www.missamerica.org/1998/ok.html>. Way to go Julie! She has a marvelous Christian testimony and is completing a master's degree in math at University of Central Oklahoma. When she steps into the college classroom as professor she will never have trouble with classes making! We, along with her wonderful Christian parents,



Lewis and Bryna, take pride in her accomplishments.

We welcome you to our new home in Boiling Springs at 105 Twin Lake Drive.

105 Twin Lake Dr.
PO Box 1415
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University Happenings:

The last few weeks of the semester after Thanksgiving are very, very hectic in the university schedule. Term papers come due -- I had the joy of grading over 100 Bible intro term papers during that three week period! Students become paranoid about semester grades once the reality of the end of the semester hits. You would not believe the numbers and differing kinds of pleas for mercy and help on grades to avoid low or failing grades! Some needs were legitimate, while many others represented the anguished cries of judgment day at the end of a semester of goofing off. The freshmen and sophomore level students especially are often still trying to make the transition from a no-studying life in high school to having to crack the books seriously in college or face failure and suspension from school.

One of the nights at the end of final exams brought a pleasant boost to Claire and me when about fissioned out from our schedules. The coach to the university women's softball team lives in the adjacent apartment. The girls on the team -- several of whom are in my classes -- came over and sang Christmas carols to Claire and me. We thoroughly enjoyed them; they gave us that needed boost in spirit to keep us working on grading papers etc. Thank you, girls!!

Our little community of Boiling Springs is really 'lite up' during the Christmas season with lights and Christmas decorations, as well as the university campus. The missing ingredient was the weather. With temperatures in the 70s, we had a hard time feeling like it was the Christmas season.

The beginning of the spring semester on January 13 signals another busy time. My teaching load will be very heavy this time with courses in first, second, third year Greek, second semester theological German at the master's level, and several sections of New Testament intro courses.

The work on the Greek grammar project continues as I learn the best means of communicating the complexities of this ancient language to the students. The fall semester involved a lot of experimentation with new approaches and provided better insight into the differences of undergraduate students from masters level seminary students. The most exciting development was the establishment of tutorial sessions using advanced Greek students working with the beginning students. Two extremely capable students, Todd Bolin and Amy Willis, met with various individuals and groups of students several times during the week to deal with issues not yet understood. I'm grateful for the university tutorial services and their willingness to work with me in setting this up. This made the difference between passing and failing for some.

For all kinds of info about us as well as a PDF copy of this newsletter, check out our homepage [Cranfordville at http://www.shelby.net/cranford/index.htm](http://www.shelby.net/cranford/index.htm)

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😊 Claire's Musings:

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In reflecting back over this past (and quite unusual year), it has been exciting, scary, wonderful, and sad. Never have I experienced so many different emotions in just one year's time. The exciting part was having a second chance in life to start anew, new home, new job, etc. This was also scary, especially at my age. It was wonderful to see Lorin so happy with his new job and the many new friends that we made. The sad part was being so far from family and friends I had known most of my life. I knew it would be difficult, but it has been worse than I imagined. I think part of the reason was not being able to come home for a visit yet, but now things should get a little easier and this summer we should be able to go back for a visit. My teaching job has been difficult trying to adjust to so many new aspects all at once in a new state. But, I have made some special new friends in my school, especially my mentor, Carol, who is also teaching fourth grade.

As with everyone at the Christmas season, it was just too hectic for me. I could barely keep up with my job and then the Christmas season starts. The funniest part was going shopping with Lorin. He allotted 1 1/2 hours to shop and made it with 5 minutes to spare. But, I had to remind myself that this is the man who used to shop on Christmas Eve before we married. Needless to say, he is not a lot of fun to shop with, but he sure gets the job done efficiently. I am more of the typical woman who starts months beforehand and agonizes over whether I got the right gift or if it is good enough. Last summer we went shopping (a rare occasion for us, since neither of us really likes to shop) to find him some shirts. He picked out a few quickly and didn't even bother to try them on. He may not be the most fun to shop with, but I could learn a lot from him.

The week before Christmas was fantastic. Donald, Hallie, and the kids, Brittany, Preston, and Trevor arrived Saturday afternoon. We had a great time together and they stayed until Monday evening, after Angie, Brian, and Clay came. All of us got to spend a few hours together and it was good for the little ones to get reacquainted.

Since Angie and Brian were getting to stay until Saturday morning, we were able to get in some extra activities. One day we went to a mall in Gastonia, a larger city. That's that first big mall I've been in since moving from Texas. Wow, what fun! One day all of us, including Lorin went to the movies to see *A Bug's Life*. We relaxed and watched movies in the evenings. And did we ever eat good. Lorin fixed some great breakfasts and Brian fixed some scrumptious meals. Christmas day was so much fun. Santa brought Clay a bike and even though it was really cold, he managed to get outside for some rides. Saturday morning, when it was time for them to leave, was extremely hard for me, and all of us. Our family is just so special, and it's hard to be so far from them.

This Wednesday afternoon, Dec. 30, Lorin and I will be signing papers for the closing of our new home. We are so

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✌️ Lorin's Musings:

If you ever want to live out a nightmare, then enter into business dealings with Bank One Texas! In clearing out a loan with them in December in order to release some stock shares for use in the downpayment on a new home in Boiling Springs, I spent the entire month of December in a perpetual horror story trying to clear out this business transaction with these people. One lie after another from various representatives in the residential loan department of the bank, coupled with empty promises of time schedules, no one seeming to know what was going on or what the bank procedure was etc. -- I had the feeling of falling into a dark hole with every call (numerous times virtually daily from Dec. 9 through 23) to try to find out what was happening. In dealing with banks since I was 13 (almost 44 yrs now) in Texas, North Carolina, Germany and France, I have never, ever had such a bad experience. Out of over twenty people I talked with only two showed any genuine desire to help. One lawyer friend who got involved in the process as well told me, "Welcome to the new world of large, impersonal national corporate banking!" This kind of horror story is evidently being lived out repeatedly across our country by the individual customer who doesn't have the economic clout to "get things done" in a hurry.

The bright light in all of this has been the helpful and considerate treatment from the people at First National Bank in Shelby, NC. I found in this bank people whom you could trust and who have worked hard with us to make this dream of a new home come true. They have my business and loyalty from now on!

The small, local or regional banks evidently are the only ones who genuinely care about their individual customers anymore. This national tendency toward merger into bigness poses huge risks and problems for citizens in our country. Somehow we Americans must find a way to put the brakes on this kind of thing!

Continued from Claire's Musings
excited about it and anxious to move, because I will only have about four days to get moved in before school starts again. At least all of our visiting kids got to see the house and they seem to think it is as nice as we think it is. I'm just sorry that we were not living there when they were here. It's my first new home, and of course beautiful. It is in Boiling Springs just about a mile from our place now. We will have a lot more space than we had before, and I'm especially glad that Lorin will have enough office space. The neighborhood is very nice and sort of in the country. Our neighbors next door are in our Sunday School class. The master bedroom has a huge bath area and the kitchen is to die for. Wow, I can't believe it!



I hope that all of you have a wonderful New Year and hopefully I will get to see many of you this summer.