



News from the Blue Ridge

Claire & Lorin Cranford



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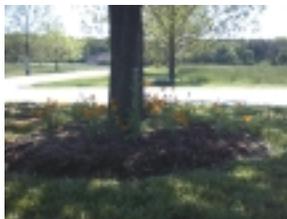


Family Events:

The past seven weeks have been largely a wash out for me. About the middle of March dizzy spells began and the doctor's initial diagnosis was vertigo probably due to a sinus infection. About four weeks of medication only cleared up the sinus infection, but the dizziness continued intermittently. The second week of April the doctor decided to take a different approach, so I underwent a six day intensive dosage of the steroid prednisone on the assumption that the source of the problem was more likely viral rather than bacterial. If you've ever had to go through the use of prednisone, you have clear recollection of the sometimes extreme side-effects of the drug. In my case, they tend to be intensified above the usual level. Needless to say, the next week was a complete wipe-out for me. I did manage to make most of my classes but that's about all. With the completion of the drug therapy I did recover from the dizziness and gradually from the effects of the drug. But this has been a really challenging experience with my health. Things seem to be almost back to normal now, apart from weakness coming out of the inability to exercise etc. during almost all of this period.

Spring in Boiling Springs has been slow to come but it has arrived with beautiful flowers, blooming trees, and luxurious grass growing everywhere. We are almost caught up with the usual amount of rainfall, after over a year of below normal rain. The temperature has been very, very pleasant -- mostly in the 50s through 70s. With a fresh supply of mulch I was been able to work a little on the existing flower beds before getting sick and get them looking okay.

Plans were in place to begin developing some additional landscaping this spring, but the illness sidetracked all of that. Hopefully, I can begin working on it once the spring semester is completed on



even more enjoyable. Some delay in the hanging plants on the porch came when a mother bird decided to nest in one of the old baskets. I'll keep you posted with pictures on the web site with progress in the flowerbeds.

May 13. Doing work outside with plants etc. is quite enjoyable for me and a pleasant release from having to sit in front of the computer with books etc. so much of the time. The climate here makes this



University Happen-

The spring semester comes to an end on May 13 with graduation ceremonies. In reflecting back over the semester, both positive and negative thoughts come. On the negative side, the workload proved to be overwhelming.

The NT online course, while very satisfying in many ways, was a killer time wise. It required more time than all the other courses combined. The demands for 35 students in an online course -- there almost were 68 -- were so great that other things got pushed aside, even for some of the other courses. I experienced first hand what those doing this kind of teaching in other schools have said: for a three hour online course to even out workload wise with a traditional class of 30 - 35 students, the online class size would have to be limited to no more than 15 to 17 students. The extensive interaction with individual students, the necessity of the class assessment being done as written assignments to be graded etc. requires much more time.

The long period of illness when I could do little more than make the classes got me impossibly behind. So many planned projects had to be put on the shelf for another day, staying up with the weekly grading of over 40 written papers etc. -- all of it together made for a challenging time. Gratefully things are being caught up toward the end of the semester.

On the positive side, however, have been the new insights into the learning experience when conducted in a radically different environment. Computer programming skills have significantly increased in order to get everything done. Some really satisfying materials have been produced and mostly posted online for use by students and individuals around the world.

The growth in the use of Cranfordville, especially the academic section, has been dramatic. According to the monitoring system on the web site, over 3,500 individuals will have accessed Cranfordville during the spring semester. Each semester uncovers more usage of the web site in order to make an impact. Periodically I hear from individuals in other parts of the world regarding materials they have found useful in either their training or their ministry. This sense of contribution to others indeed makes the time and effort in creating the materials worthwhile.

Most satisfying of all this semester has been the opportunity to work with a group of outstanding students, all the way from undergraduate freshmen to some of the MDiv students. The advanced Greek class and the theological German studies with Jeremy Abshire have been perhaps the most rewarding as we have probed materials very deeply and discussed some critical issues that shape the contours of one's thinking and ministry.

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

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Claire's Musings:

It was hard to settle down after our trip to Texas to see the two new grandbabies, but it sure helped getting new pictures of Taylor and Andrew. They just get more precious all the time and the families are so happy. How fantastic!

Well, Harvey has come out of hibernation and I see him quite often. For those of you who missed an earlier newsletter, Harvey is a groundhog who lives up the street from us. For quite a while I was the only one to see him and so I named him Harvey after the "Harvey" movie with Jimmy Stewart. Stewart was the only one to see his 9 foot tall rabbit for a while. Since then I have had Lorin and friends see my Harvey, too. Now I know spring is here.

I enjoyed my spring break, but it went entirely too fast. Usually I have several "projects" on schedule. This time I mainly wanted to organize my school files in my home filing cabinet. I managed to accomplish most of that, but that was just about it. I rested and relaxed more than I ever have on break, and enjoyed every second. I even crocheted a lot.

Lately, I have discovered a "caps for preemies" organization. Crocheted caps are made for preemie babies and sent to the hospitals where they are needed. Another organization is "Caps for Kids" where caps are crocheted for children with cancer and have lost their hair. Crocheted blankets are also needed, which I love to do. I have only made a few caps and blankets, but this summer I will have more time. I love doing this because it is something that I can do at home and in small bits of time here and there. Home is my favorite place to be, so this is perfect for me.

We have so much to look forward to this summer. School will be out for me June 9 and then the fun begins. Angie, Clay, and Taylor will come for a three-week visit right after school is out. Brian will be able to come for a few days, as will Carrie. Also, during that time Chris, Charis, Michael, Katie, Aaron, and Helen will come through on a short visit. It's a good thing we have a big home. It will be absolutely fabulous!



Lorin's Musings:

April brought sad news to me in North Carolina. I received word that my Greek teacher at Wayland Baptist University, Dr. Fred Howard, had passed away in San Angelo, Texas. Dr. Howard was the very first professor who introduced me to the Greek language in 1961. I took four semesters of classes with him in biblical Koine Greek and he instilled in me a passionate love of the language and of the Greek text of the New Testament. The dominant focus of my three decade long teaching career in higher education has been in this subject field. In those days in the early 1960s on the High Plains of West Texas, Fred was much more than a professor in the class room. He taught well and with high expectations on his students. Also, he lived out the concepts uncovered from the gold mines of the Greek NT both in his relations with others, especially with students, and in the inspiration of a life fully committed to the service of God as a teacher and preacher of the Word. I have looked back to him as a model many, many times in trying to determine a path for my service in the Lord's work.

The religion department at Wayland was staffed with exceptional people during those difficult days of anti-Vietnam protests, anti-establishment government, religion and everything in between. Drs. Bishop, Roark, Clark, Howard and others played a very significant role in guiding me through those days. Later, as I began my teaching career at Southwestern Seminary, Fred would give encouragement and advice to this young seminary prof. The only down side, however, was that I could never convince either he or Dr. Bishop to work out a way for me to teach for them at Wayland's extension campus in Honolulu, Hawaii. They quickly drew the line in sharing that perk.

We already miss Dr. Bishop and now Dr. Howard. But as his daughter shared with me a few days ago, I suspect one of the first things Fred did upon reaching Heaven was to look up the apostle Paul to sit down with him and discuss exactly what Paul was trying to say in some of his difficult statements in the NT. One of the next things, most likely, was to look up Dr. Bishop and mark off a spot somewhere in Heaven to set up a table tennis set and really determine who is the all-time ping-pong champion!

I praise God for individuals like Fred Howard!



Here are the latest pictures of Taylor and Andrew, taken in March. Naturally we're quite proud of these two newest additions to our family. They are happy babies who have loving parents who are providing them the very best -- lots of love and TLC! We're looking forward to having them come to NC so we can spoil them rotten!!!

