



# News from the Blue Ridge



Claire & Lorin Cranford

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## Family Events:

Rushed trips can be frustrating because of inadequate time, but they are better than no trips at all. Such was our experience in making the quick trip back to Texas on *Mar 1-5* to see the two new grandbabies. We managed to spend about two days with each, first in College Station and then in Haltom City.

We arrived at DFW about 6:45 PM on Wednesday evening, picked up a rental car, then headed south to College Station arriving there about 10:30 PM. There was a little time to spend with Greg, Jennifer and Andrew before everyone collapsed in bed. Thursday was much more relaxing with a late breakfast, lunch with Greg during his school teaching day, and a shopping trip to the mall to pick up some things for Andrew. We enjoyed a marvelous Tex-Mex dinner with Jennifer and Andrew at a nearby restaurant, then we traveled to a town south of College Station where Greg was coaching his high school baseball team in a tournament. Although it was cool and somewhat windy -- nothing unusual for Texas -- we had fun seeing the game, then some visiting time at a team stop at a fast-food place on the way back home.



Greg's schedule was unusually busy so we didn't get to see him as much as we wanted. But school teachers who also are athletic coaches keep very, very busy schedules during the school year.

On Friday morning we made our way north up Texas 6 and I-35 to Haltom City to Angie and Brian's in order to see Taylor.



After sitting in a traffic tie-up for two hours we arrived there about 2:30 PM. Friday evening we all went out to eat. Saturday morning Billy and Ruth Allen came over for breakfast to visit. Most of the day was spent visiting.

We did go over to Brian's new store where he is opening up Kelley Floors and is doing quite well selling flooring and carpeting mostly commercially to building contractors etc.

Saturday evening we traveled over to the south side of Ft. Worth to have dinner with Chris and Charis and the kids. Sunday morning was a quick trip to Mineral Wells to visit Nita. Then some relaxed time Sunday afternoon before catching our flight back home to Boiling Springs.

Quite rushed indeed, but thoroughly delightful!

Three photo albums of the trip are available at Cranfordville under Photos. For pictures of the trip generally, click on Texas Visit, March 1-5, 2000. For pictures of Andrew, click on March Visit under Andrew's name. For pictures of Taylor, click on March Visit under Taylor's name.



## University Happenings:

Claire and I enjoyed immensely the southeast regional meeting of the NABPR (National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion) and the SBL (Society of Biblical Literature) in Atlanta, *March 9-12*. For some who read this newsletter and may not understand these things, these two groups are professional organizations to which I belong as a university professor of religious studies. Both groups have a national meeting in November and then regional meetings in March of each year. The national meetings have become very large with over 8,000 people attending. The regional meetings are much smaller and present a better opportunity to get to know one another; somewhat under a 1,000 people attend the southeast regional meeting each spring.

I heard some excellent papers presented by young promising scholars. Three of my former seminary students presented papers at the meeting as well. We had the chance to visit with quite a number of friends and colleagues from other universities and seminaries in the southeastern region of the U.S. Perhaps most importantly for a university prof, there was ample time to check out the book exhibit area and make a few purchases of recently released volumes. Publishers normally give those attending such meetings about a 50% discount. Most enjoyably was going out to dinner with two couples, Kevin and Sheila Griffith and Steve and Khersa Harmon, on Saturday evening. These young people have become very special to Claire and me.

*Summer school* promises to be another interesting adventure. I will be repeating the undergraduate New Testament survey course as an internet based course during a ten week summer session. Toward the end of summer school I will teach a MDiv. NT elective course on the parables of Jesus during a one week intensive course for the divinity school. A new aspect of this course is that the basic textbook to be used is being created as an interactive online textbook. The class will be taught in one of the media rooms on the GWU campus using the materials set up in the DSNT401P Course Room in the academic page of Cranfordville. Check it out on the internet. The materials are freely available for viewing. Just go into the GWU Classes section of Cranfordville.

These will be projected onto a large screen at the front of the classroom as a basis of class discussion and learning activities. Both an English text and a Greek text version of the course will be offered simultaneously. Past experience has convinced me that this is a marvelous way to learn new materials.

My student worker, Michael Taub, is helping me with this project. We are gradually getting the materials on line.



### Claire's' Musings:

How could something so special happen so quickly and then seem as though it was so long ago. That is in reference to our trip to Ft. Worth to see the brand new grandbabies and families. It was a fantastic time, but so short.

Greg and Jennifer seemed so happy as new parents. Andrew is a very luck baby to have them for parents. We had a great visit and Andrew, of course, is just precious. As a family they have so much to look forward to. I especially enjoyed our quick baby shopping trip and the baseball game. I wish we could make more visits, because we are missing so much of seeing the babies as they grow up.

We had a reminder of back-home traffic tie-ups, as we were stranded in a two hour delay in traveling from one grandbaby to another. I certainly have not missed that. I think I prefer our one red light in Boiling Springs.

Another very lucky baby is Taylor, with Angie and Brian as proud parents, and Carrie as a very proud aunt. Clay and Taylor, both have a fantastic family. It was so much fun watching Clay being a good big brother. Precious babies seem to run in our families, of course it could be that I am prejudiced, but Taylor and Andrew ARE precious, even though this does make a total of ten precious grandchildren now. We had another quick visit, including seeing other family members. We are very proud of Brian's new "Kelley Floors", that has to be such an exciting time in their lives. Time was much too short. We did manage to get lots of grandbaby pictures.

The next weekend Lorin and I went to Atlanta, Georgia for meetings for him. I was born in Atlanta, but my parents moved when I was a baby, so this was the first time I got to see the city. I didn't get to see much, but I was at least glad to get to go there. Someday I hope to go back and maybe explore some of my roots.

The tornadoes in Texas sounded pretty bad. Angie had called us, but the connection was bad so she was going to call us back. I fell asleep by the phone and later Lorin heard about the tornado and when we tried to call them, we couldn't get through. We were certainly glad to get through and find out everyone was okay. Another tornado went through Arlington where our younger daughter, Carrie, lives. She did great because she didn't realize what was happening until it was over with. At least she wasn't afraid at the time. If the storm had hit earlier in downtown Ft. Worth it could have been much worse with all the people just getting off work.

Lorin and I both, have been under the weather some lately. I guess getting older makes it harder to get well when we do get sick. This season has brought unusually high pollen counts and it has affected us both. It will be nice to get through this and start feeling better.

*Look for details about these in next month's newsletter.*



### Lorin's Musings:

One interesting development in March has been the creation of a new, quicker way to get into *Cranfordville*.

One of my students set this up for me. Now you simply type into your browser URL field [Cranfordville.cjb.net](http://Cranfordville.cjb.net) and you will be taken there immediately. Thanks, Mark!

Some major developments for Cranfordville are in the works. As the web site continues to expand and become more frequently used -- appx. 3,000 people entered the academic section alone in the first 3 months of this year -- it has been expanded to now exist on four different servers scattered over different parts of the U.S. Almost 25 megabytes of data are uploaded into Cranfordville, with much more on the way. Very soon a link to a massive photo gallery and archive section will be completed that will contain several hundred photos of family and events, along with all of the back issues of News From The Blue Ridge etc. The web site has turned into a ministry which we could have never imagined when we first set it up nearly two years ago.

Saturday night, *April 1*, was a very special time for Claire and me. We had students from my Greek classes at GWU over for a cook-out. Although several were not able to come because of week end focus trips etc., those who could had a delightful time, and Claire and I enjoyed having them very greatly. GWU is blessed with a good group of young people going into vocational Christian ministry and are talented, smart and very dedicated to serving God. As our program of biblical Koine Greek studies -- along with the Hebrew studies program -- continues to grow and impact these young people, churches in this part of the country will be increasingly blessed with outstanding leadership who have a deep grasp of what God's Word is trying to communicate. We hope this Greek Feast (the meaning of the words above) becomes an annual event. Look for some pictures of the party soon on Cranfordville.



One of the *downsides this spring* for both Claire and me has been the heavy pollen count that is much higher than usual for this part of the country. Both of us have been battling sinus infections for the last half of March and going into April. The really frustrating aspect has been that the infections have triggered periodic spells with vertigo for both of us. We take turns being forced on to that fast-spinning merry-go-round and nothing but medication and bed rest seem to slow it down enough for us to get off. We have both missed some days at work and church on Sundays because of it. Of course, this compounds the problem by putting us behind in a very demanding work schedule, as well as hinders us getting caught up. Evidently, our age seems to undermine our body's attempt to fight this stuff. Although there are some very wonderful aspects about being in one's 50s, some real challenges are a part of this stage of life as well. Learning how to adjust to this reality is one of the biggest! I'm getting close enough now to seeing the 60s looming ever larger on the horizon as well, less than two years from now.