

## 1996: THE FLYNN'S' YEAR IN REVIEW

Greetings!! 1996 has brought us changes and many great blessings...

The year began with one BIG question: WHERE would Carl pursue his Ph.D. (in Systematic Theology)? After sending in applications--and checks for application fees--to 9 doctoral programs, the decision became clear rather quickly. Baylor University, in Waco, Texas (halfway between Dallas and Austin on I-35), offered him a wonderful opportunity: a full tuition scholarship plus a graduate assistantship. Or, as Chantal likes to put it, getting paid to go to school for free. It was an offer we simply could not refuse.

Carl graduated with his Masters of Divinity degree from Pepperdine University on April 19. It turned out that Carl's graduation speaker was none other than George Bush Jr. ("the shrub")--the governor of Texas. This was especially meaningful to us--besides the fact that he was to be our future governor-- because in 1992, when we graduated with our bachelors degrees from Pepperdine, our graduation speaker was then-First Lady Barbara Bush. (We're hoping that when it comes time for Carl to graduate with his Ph.D. that his graduation speaker will be former President George Bush--that way we'll have had father, mother, and son).

In preparation for our July move, we spent a long weekend in Waco in May. Carl registered for fall classes, we found a duplex to rent, and we got to see the Olympic Torch pass through town. Chantal bonded and fell in love with her soon-to-be new "hometown". So much so, that when it came time to leave, she felt like she was leaving part of her heart in Waco and would pick it up when they returned in a couple of months. Once back in California, Chantal was fiercely defensive of Waco, and quick to point out to anyone who dared to made fun of it that the city and Baylor were here long before any Branch Davidian ever was! (So there!).

Our Agoura Hills, CA apartment soon began to resemble a warehouse of moving boxes. Farewell get-togethers were here, there, & everywhere. On July 3, Chantal said her final good-byes to her co-workers at SmileSaver Dental Plan, where she had worked since 1993, and on July 7, we spent our last Sunday at Malibu Church of Christ, where we had worshipped the past 7-8 years. The only thing left was THE MOVE itself.

Carl's dad and brother, Jim, had graciously offered to drive our rented Ryder moving truck, which would tow Carl's car, while we drove Chantal's car. And so, on July 8, off we went. We stopped briefly in Palm Springs to see Chantal's mama, and after a couple of long 12-16 hour days of driving, we arrived in Waco the night of July 10. By July 23 we were totally unpacked and feeling at home in our beautiful 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom duplex. Carl has his own study--it looks like a small library--and Chantal has her own Maytag washer & dryer, and is in domestic goddess heaven.

With time on our hands (Carl's classes didn't start until the end of August and Chantal was aggressively pursuing employment opportunities), we quickly became "Olympic junkies", watching nearly every minute of televised coverage, and playing Scrabble during commercial breaks! We traveled to Phoenix, AZ the weekend of Aug. 10 & 11 for the 50th wedding anniversary of Carl's grandparents Flynn. It was more like a family reunion; Carl saw relatives he hadn't seen in 10-15 years (that's significant when you're only 26!).

Immediately upon our return, Chantal interviewed for a position at a law firm, and was offered the job two days later. She joyfully accepted. On Aug. 19 she began work at the law firm of Naman, Howell, Smith & Lee--Waco's oldest law firm--as the assistant librarian/research assistant and assistant receptionist (a.k.a. "Jill of all trades"). She was greeted with flowers ("Welcome to the Firm"), and treated to lunch at the restaurant in the Waco Hilton. The firm has a good reputation and is very well-respected throughout the community. Chantal thinks her co-workers are great, and is really enjoying her work. She feels like she's getting paid to use her brain!

On Aug. 26 Carl began his Ph.D. coursework at Baylor, and it's been non-stop ever since. He's taking 3 graduate classes, is graduate assisting a religion professor (for now he's mainly grading papers & tests, but eventually he might do some teaching as well), and is helping to teach a volleyball class. It looks like his Ph.D. will involve 3 years of coursework, and then he plans to spend the fourth year writing his dissertation and getting it finished. Carl really likes Baylor, and feels that it has been a good transition from Pepperdine.

We're involved with a wonderful church, Crestview Church of Christ. There is a terrific group of young couples who made us feel welcome from the very beginning. We have a Sunday morning class together, and most of the 10-12 couples go out to lunch together after worship. On Wednesday nights, the senior citizens of the congregation prepare a meal (attended by about 200 of the approx. 500 members), then classes follow. On Sunday nights we're part of one of the many small groups that meet in homes. It's a wonderful time of study, sharing, and prayer.

At the beginning of October, Chantal's mama came out to visit for a few days, and enjoyed seeing our new surroundings. Baylor's Homecoming ("Sic 'em Bears!") was at the end of October, and we attended the pep rally & bonfire as well as the parade--which just happens to be the oldest AND the longest homecoming parade in the U.S.! We sacrificed tickets to the homecoming game in favor of the purchase of a Baylor sweatshirt for Chantal, which she proudly wore to the parade. We spent Thanksgiving with some of our new friends, and will enjoy our first Christmas here in Waco.

All in all, we're very happy and content with our respective school, work, church, and living situations. Chantal is, in fact, deliriously happy all-around. She feels like this is where we're supposed to be for now, and feels very much "at home" in Waco. God has allowed for great changes this past year, and has richly blessed us with love, joy, and peace. We look forward to 1997 and wish God's blessings for you and yours in the coming year.

**Carl & Chantal Flynn**  
9205 Woodgate Circle West  
Waco, Texas 76712  
(817) 420-1060  
internet: Carl\_Flynn@baylor.edu  
WWW: [http://www.baylor.edu/~Carl\\_Flynn](http://www.baylor.edu/~Carl_Flynn)