

No hay peor ciego...

por Luis Melodelgado

Apresurada se acababa la tarde de un viernes cualquiera, viajando al oriente desde Siler City. Había decidido escapar la 64 tomando un atajo hacia mi residencia; una carretera que en la creciente penumbra parecía alejarse de todo. “¿Qué tan aburrido es vivir en nuestro condado?”—pensaba sorteando las curvas y columpios, atravesando calzadas rodeadas de hermosos pinos irguiéndose imponentes hacia el vespertino cielo. Tan fuertes en el oca como en la alborada. De vez en cuando alguna casa de madera, quizás construida a mitades del siglo XIX, me robaba el aliento. De sus chimeneas subían humos que a mí se me antojaban saliendo del ayer.

“En el condado no hay museos, tampoco tenemos salas de cine,”—había comenzado a enfocar mis sentidos al inmediato quehacer de enumerar para poder juzgar; “hay que viajar afuera para divertirse”.

De pronto un venado capturó mi atención, ¡otro más!—sin embargo, este se veía hermoso a contraluz. Esbelto. Su corona de astas, hacía del animal el rey del atardecer. En el suspenso de mis ojos enredados con los suyos, me imaginé por supuesto muchas cosas: el sonido de un rifle, ¡Pum! Su cabeza, adornando alguna chimenea con esa corona natural que pudiera recordarles a todos la alcurnia de su presa; su carne en tirones humeantes y deliciosos, en un convivio donde el venado es el único y verdadero invitado de honor. ¡Cómo se renueva la vida en los cuerpos de los cazadores! No me gusta la caza, pero sucede. La alquimia del intercambio, por otra parte, bien vale la nota.

Atento, el animal miró mi auto alejarse. “No tenemos muchos restaurantes ni bares, ni salas de espectáculos.” Me di cuenta que había reducido mi velocidad.

Poco más de 5 millas por debajo de las requeridas 45. Todos lo saben, los venados suelen largarse a correr. Más vale prevenir que lamentar. Hay quienes no tendrían reparo, y querrían continuar con la prisa que llevan. Mis disculpas. Mi auto frena por la vida. ¿Alguna vez les ha saltado al camino un guajolote silvestre? Generalmente en las carreteras auxiliares se los ve acompañados de otros individuos de su

misma especie. Elegantes cruzando la carretera uno a la vez. Uno tras otro. ¿Cómo no disminuir la velocidad?

Aún recuerdo mi última duda antes de entrar a casa, “¿Habrá suficiente entretenimiento en el condado de Chatham?”

Me esperaban algunos mensajes telefónicos: fiesta el viernes, biip; fútbol el domingo, biip; el sábado visita al nuevo parque de Pittsboro, biip; medias onces el domingo en el Lago Jordan, ¿quizás pesca?



Thanks to Brett Walden for accompanying Luis on a photographic tour of Chatham County. Gracias a Brett Walden por enseñar a Luis sitios para fotografiar en el Condado de Chatham.

PHOTO BY LUIS MELODELGADO/ FOTO POR LUIS MELODELGADO

biip, End-of-messages, Biiiiip.

Ya estaba. Tenía al menos una hora para ir a la fiesta. Lo siento por el sábado, después de los deberes matutinos, iría a Durham a mirar una obra de teatro—aprovecharía el viaje para pasar al centro comercial. El domingo, después de pescar y disfrutar del lago con mis conocidos, iría al fútbol.

Al final no pude decidir si hay suficiente entretenimiento en nuestro condado. Quizás alguien en la nueva Biblioteca Pública en Pittsboro pueda ofrecerme otra perspectiva, con su nuevo horario y todo, un paseo a ella tampoco estaría mal.

Luis Melodelgado es residente del Condado de Chatham. Sus intereses incluyen la exploración de la imaginación y sus usos, y algunos asuntos de la justicia social.

None so blind as those who will not see

By Luis Melodelgado
Translated by Nora Haenn

The evening fell as if in some sort of hurry on a long November Friday. Traveling east from Siler City, I had decided to escape the 64 by taking a short cut home, a road that in the growing darkness seemed far from everywhere. “How dull is this county?” I thought negotiating the

he stared at me, and I looked back, I began to imagine all kinds of things: the sound of a rifle, boom! His head with its regal crown a decoration in someone's home. His flesh, smoked in delicious strips, at a party where he is the only, the true guest of honor. The hunter and the deer acting out life's alchemy of give and take. Silently, attentively, he kept an eye on my car as I drove past.

“We don't have many restaurants or bars or clubs.” It was then that I realized I had slowed my speed. I was traveling about 5 miles under the 45 mile-an-hour limit. The deer had made me cautious. Everyone knows they bolt into traffic, better safe than sorry. Some people don't care to slow down. I apologize to the cars behind me in a hurry to stay in a rush. My car brakes for life. Has a wild turkey ever jumped in front of your car? They always travel in flocks, but seem to prefer crossing the road one-by-one. How could you not slow down?

The telephone answering machine was blinking when I walked into the house: party on Friday, beep; soccer on Sunday, beep; a visit to Pittsboro's new park on Saturday, beep; Lake Jordan Sunday at noon, maybe fishing, beep; End-of-messages, beep.

Now, I had a plan. I had an hour to get ready for today's party. After my Saturday morning errands, I would head to a play in Durham and fit in a shopping trip along the way. Sunday, after fishing at the lake, I would play soccer. I put off deciding how easy or hard it is to have fun in our county. I thought maybe someone at Pittsboro's Chatham Community library—with all its local resources—would have some ideas. The library has new, extended weekend hours. I might have time to fit in a trip there as well.

Luis and Nora are Chatham residents. Luis is a translator with interests in theater and writing. Nora teaches the anthropology of Mexico at NCSU. Email: wordxchange@yahoo.com

curves and hills, passing rows of pines that stood tall and imposing against the evening sky. They would be there in the morning as well, equally firm. Every now and then a wooden house, perhaps built in the 19th century, stole my breath. The smoke from their chimneys invited me to travel back in time.

“There are no museums in this county, and no movie theaters,” I continued my Friday litany of complaints. “People have to travel outside the county to have any fun.”

Then, a deer on the side of the road. Another one! Lit from behind, the deer looked elegant, beautiful. His antlers gave him an air of royalty, made him king of the setting sun. As

INFORMATION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

to information overload. We are enticed by the dazzling array of websites and data that are ours for the price of a click. Rarely do we contemplate how we are going to handle such resource inflows. We are “eager beavers” when it comes to gathering information and sharing it with our friends and associates, even if they silently wince at the thought of yet another missive coming their way.

For now, we're stuck in a “nether-land” of massive information flows that exceed anyone's ability to keep up. Lacking contemplation and forethought as to how we will set up our file structure, label file folders, and assign what information goes where, we are lost in a sea of too much competing for our attention. We have too little mental energy to address the problem and, invariably, too little time to revisit what we've collected.

One day, our technology will match our ambition. The time will come when, like on Star Trek, information becomes available on demand. No need to type in a URL or download anything; simply announce what you want,

using everyday commands, and your request awaits on the computer screen built into your wall.

For now, a bumpy road awaits. The information anxiety you feel today is going to increase. With planning and forethought, however, and the strength to say “no” to so much of what we could be gathering, each of us has the ability to effectively reign over our own information kingdom.

Jeff Davidson is “The Work-Life Balance Expert” addressing corporate and association audiences. He has written “Breathing Space,” “Simpler Living,” the “60 Second Innovator,” and the “60 Second Self-Starter.” Visit www.BreathingSpace.com for more information.

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