

Rural Route 4 Driverless Transportation

Technology is close to giving us driverless vehicles. I'm familiar with the idea and have had experience with driverless transportation. No, not the four-wheeled type, but the four-footed kind. They're similar. When things go wrong, it's going to be bad.



Phillip Burgess

Venture back with me to the early '70s, perhaps 1971. The Burgesses on Rural Route 4 had gotten a stubborn old mule named Ada. My Uncle Arthel, Daddy Grand's younger brother, had "gifted" us with Ada. Unable to take care of her, Uncle Arthel had walked her over to our house, which was about a half-mile away from his pasture. He also gave us her bridle and blinders.

Ada was fat, sullen, and out of sorts all the time. Even though she'd been taught to pull a plow, the few times we hitched her up for work in the garden she would rebel. She loved to bite, snort, and ignore commands. Her favorite tactic was to spit her bit. So we left her alone to graze in the pasture with our bull, Midnight Chief, and our brood cows.

That is, until I decided she would be my horse. If I couldn't be Marshall Dillon with a fancy horse, I'd become Festus Hagen with a mule.

On a hot, summer day I bridled Ada up, and carefully attached her blinders. She spit the bit several times and, in the process, tried her best to take a bite out of my hand. But I prevailed. I jumped aboard her dusty back, saddleless, and pretended I was John Wayne. "Pilgrim," I thought, "you don't want to mess with me."

(Continued on back)

Drinking Water Week

More than 350 people joined us for pizza, prizes, and games as we celebrated Drinking Water Week on the TUA grounds in May.

For more than 40 years, the American Water Works Association and its members have observed Drinking Water Week to recognize the vital role clean water plays in our daily lives.



*In the Next Edition: The
Round Up Spotlight is on
Good Samaritan*



Watts Happening

Water is Life

From the time we wake up in the morning, take a shower, and brew our coffee, to the time that we brush our teeth and go to bed, water is a resource that most of us rely on well beyond our bodies requiring it to survive.

As your water utility, TUA is committed to delivering safe and reliable water for all our customers' needs.

TUA's 10,500 water customers use an average of 3 million gallons of water each day. TUA purchases potable water from the Duck River Utility Commission, whose source is Normandy Lake.

The DRUC water treatment plant uses advanced water treatment technology to remove both particulate matter and dissolved compounds from the water before it is disinfected and pumped to the TUA distribution system.

TUA and DRUC are proud to report that water produced by the DRUC filtration plant met all federal and state standards for drinking water in 2022. In fact, TUA and DRUC have never violated any US EPA or state standard or regulation since it was formed in 1976.

(Continued from front)

We walked across the pasture, through the broom sage, behind the pond and into the woods. So far, so good. Was Ada enjoying the ride as much as me? Uh, no. Faster than you could say "gee" or "haw" Ada abruptly decided it was time to head for the barn. At a fast pace. At a gait. At a flat-out run. I was aboard a driver-less vehicle that was out of control!

No amount of yanking on the reins (hay bale twine), cussing, cajoling or anything else deterred Ada from going to the barn. I was bouncing up and down on her back like I was on a trampoline. My backside was being mauled!

So, I hung on for dear life. I grabbed a piece of Ada's brown mane with my right hand. Ada's hooves clicked on the hardened pasture and the wind blew through my hair. I wondered what Festus would do.

With each step Ada and I were getting closer and closer to the barn entrance. Sitting atop this runaway beast I saw my life flash before me. Next thing I knew Ada had "scrubbed" me from her back using the top of the barn entrance. I rolled backward, let go of the reins and tumbled off the backside of Ada, landing with a hard thump on the ground. The abundant manure helped soften the blow.

Checking myself, the only thing that hurt was my pride. Meanwhile, Ada just stood there, cool and collected. She turned her head and sneered at me.

So, don't judge me when I refuse to buy a driver-less vehicle. Too many dreadful things can happen. Ada taught me I don't want or need one.

Philip Burgess' book, "Rural Route 4, The Good 'Ol Days Were Never Better," is available on Amazon.

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Water Quality Report Available Now!

TUA is proud to present its water quality report for 2023. Call 455-4515 to request a copy or download one from our website: visit tullahomautilities.com!

