

Hunting the Comeback Trail

by local author Bill Padilla

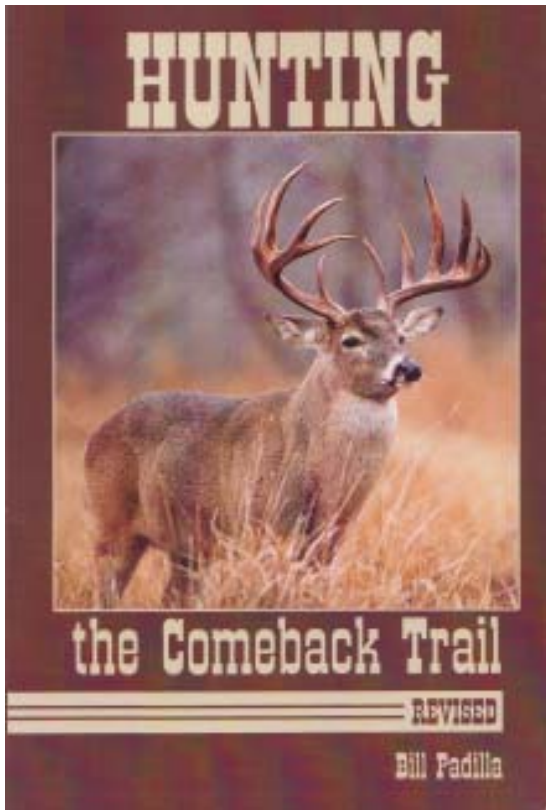
Hunting the Comeback Trail is an inspiring historical documentary of a group of disabled and health-conflicted hunters, including Bill Padilla, who, since being impaired in the seventies and early eighties, transcended adversity to stay active in their favorite sport. Padilla explains the adjustments and accommodations made for these hunters and the determination of these men who refused to let disability interfere with their passion.

Bill Padilla is an avid hunter who recognized the rehabilitating effect hunting can have on an individual. The six other men that he writes about have also experienced the therapeutic effect of hunting.

Bill Padilla is a Wyoming native who is retired in his hometown of Cheyenne.

Hunting the Comeback Trail can be ordered from the publisher (Dorrance) at 1-800-788-7654; Amazon.com; JAX in Fort Collins; Sportsman's Warehouse; Albertson's on Yellowstone; Guns & Gear; and Horton's Corner in Wheatland.

For a signed copy, please forward your check for \$19.90 (\$15.00 for the book, \$4.00 s/h and 90 sales tax for Wyoming residents, to:
**5414 Hacker Circle
 Cheyenne WY 82009**



The cell phone ban

What began as a well-intentioned, and perhaps badly needed, attempt to remove cell phones from the hands of motorists morphed into an unrecognizable "Big Brother" ordinance that left few believing this was what we really needed nor what motorists might obey.

If there is a driver in Cheyenne who has not been in a near-miss with another driver who was occupied on a cell phone, they are the lucky ones and probably in the minority. And for anyone to suggest it is only the young, the "with-it" group, who have never known driving without a cell phone at their ear, they are deluding themselves. All age groups offend.

Cell phones are a luxury. We survived for the first one hundred years of driving without one in the car. When roads were worse and much narrower and the vehicle more prone to break down and far more likely to have a flat tire, we somehow managed to get by without the cell phone. And movie theaters, public meetings and retail stores were much more conducive to visiting before the invention and price reduction of cell phones.

On the other hand, having a cell phone to make emergency calls or even to ask what kind of spice you were supposed to buy but didn't write down, because oregano is so easy to remember, has made them very useful and efficient.

If people would use common sense and common courtesy, government wouldn't have to entertain passing laws to restrict or ban the use of cell phones. But common sense and common courtesy have gone the way of customer service, so the only way to get people to do what they should do without being made to do it, is to pass laws that require it.

Laws prohibiting walking against a red light aren't to write more citations or to make it take longer to cross the street. They are to protect pedestrians from getting hit and to reduce the likelihood a driver will hit a distracted walker

who would otherwise walk across the street in front of a moving vehicle.

The worst drivers believe they're the best drivers and the best drivers don't have to be told. There are many drivers who can both drive and do something else at the same time. They are not the ones who need the cell phones taken from them when they drive. And those who do are adamant in believing they don't.

If inexperienced and poor drivers would use a little common sense and accept that they can't do anything except drive - not talk on a cell phone, breast feed a baby, read, eat, primp in the mirror, etc. - governing bodies like the Cheyenne city council and Wyoming state legislature wouldn't have to waste a lot of time and polarize residents by proposing a ban on something some can safely use when they drive and others can't.

In this particular case, the proposed ordinance didn't make any sense until the night it was killed. A ban on the use of cell phones with violations a primary offense if cited would have been supported and accepted. For weeks, the definition of "distractive driving" confused even those who supported a cell phone ban. Plus, the council and mayor couldn't decide whether the offense should be a primary or secondary offense. A secondary offense? Better off with no ban at all.

Had they started from square one and first decided the *objective* of such a ban, they might have gotten something passed. If the purpose was to reduce the number of preventable accidents, only a primary offense has a chance to accomplish that.

If a driver had to be cited for speeding, running a red light, etc., or involved in an accident before the ban on cell phones could be used to "enhance" the violation, that would have been dumb. The reason people wear seat belts is children. If schools encouraged children to tell parents and grandparents not to use cell phones, that would work better than a ban.

Stories die like this

I had held the front page for a story that I thought would be very revealing and of great interest to a large segment of our population.

With over seven years in the saddle, I have come to learn some valuable lessons. One of them is that, if I have a story involving certain departments in the city, I hold off contact with them until Friday afternoon. If I give them more time, they may decide to develop a story on the subject I'm pursuing and plant it in the daily paper before my story comes out the following Monday or Tuesday.

Another strategy I employ, primarily to avoid lost time, is to do last minute interviews when anyone in government or its subsets are involved. That is so they can withdraw at the last minute at the order of their superior(s). I won't spend a lot of time developing a story that may die. Even though I seldom use names in stories, whistleblowers and insiders certainly don't want their identities disclosed.

They could lose their jobs or face other reprisals at work.

This past week, the story I thought would garner considerable attention and interest was to come together Friday afternoon. I had set up the interview very cautiously. I had insured that the subject had the clearance of his/her supervisor to share the details of the disclosures with me. I had double-checked that fact when I set the interview time and place.

The tracks had been greased. Everything was in order. The front page was held.

Then, on Friday morning, the call I half-expected, came. Another level of supervision had to be cleared. I try to have alternatives for everything I plan. I hate to plan an interview and have it cave in at the last minute but it happens. I passed on another story Friday because I didn't have time for an interview. At least, I thought I didn't. This story may still develop. The source wants to tell it.

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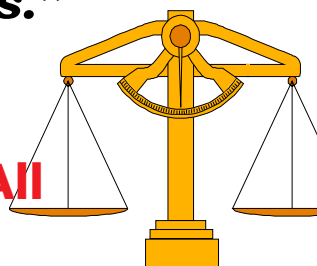
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