

My Resolution To No Resolutions

Making a New Year's resolution is an act of optimism and although I would consider myself more of an optimist than a pessimist, I don't make New Year's resolutions. New Year's is probably the only time of year that I feel apprehensive and even a bit pessimistic. I could blame it on my age and the fact that I go to more funerals every year, but the truth is that Auld Lang Syne made me cry even as a child. It is a sad song.

2009 was a bad year for a lot of people. The economy took a nose-dive and caused the disintegration of businesses and families. People the world over had to tighten the purse strings and re-evaluate their lifestyles. Many young people who have never known recession had their eyes opened. Those type of hardships we live through and become wiser because of them.

I start feeling the pessimism take over when I listen to statistics that play on the TV and radio at the end of every year; especially with the recent deaths of more Canadian soldiers and the Calgary Herald journalist. In 2009, 100 journalists were killed around the world while doing their jobs. That number is up from 87 the year before. That doesn't include the number of journalists who went missing. Thirty-one of those journalists who were killed in 2009 were killed while covering a political news conference in the Philippines.

Since the journalist from the Calgary Herald was killed, many are suggesting that journalists not be allowed on the front lines of war. Who knows what kind of stories would come out of war-torn countries if there were no journalists willing to go with our troops.

Not knowing how many journalists died while driving to a story or in storms, fires, or tsunamis, as compared to how many died while covering wars this year, I would suggest that the 31 who died during the political press conference attack

would be the largest number. Should we therefore, keep our journalists from attending political press conferences? That sort of defeats the purpose, doesn't it?

Other statistics that were coming across the airwaves were that 69 per cent of Albertans are confident that 2010 is going to be a better year economically than 2009. I'm surprised that number isn't higher since so many are already back to work and unemployment is coming back down.

The statistic I found the most agreeable to me was that 79 per cent of people polled by a Calgary TV station said they weren't making New Year's resolutions. See, the hard times of 2009 did make people wiser.

Bernadine Visotto is a columnist for The Mountaineer and admires the bravery of the journalists covering stories on the front lines of war.