

Berd Cage Nov. 10/09

Yes, I Wear A Poppy.

There are a lot of reasons I wear a poppy every year at this time. I wear the poppy for the foot soldiers that my Oma gave soup to in Tilburg, Holland during WWI. When I was a child of about seven or eight years of age, my dad told me that when he was a child my age, the allies came to their home and he saw how the skin of the feet of those soldiers came off with their boots.

I wear the poppy for my dad who had to leave his wife and family to weld army machinery and equipment during WWII.

I wear the poppy for a brother-in-law who was hurt while serving in the Korean War.

I wear the poppy for my friends who have served on peace-keeping missions in places all over the world such as Libya.

I wear the poppy for the ex-coworker who is currently in Afghanistan fighting the war on terrorism. Wearing a poppy is a personal decision and invokes personal thoughts and memories. So is buying a red "Support Our Troops" t-shirt or the ribbon magnet to place on our vehicles. I remember a friend asking me how I could support our troops in Afghanistan. Numerous people in Canada don't feel they have been affected by terrorism, they get complacent and feel that having soldiers in another country is just a waste. Those same people would feel differently if the terrorists would have targeted the twin towers in Calgary instead of New York

I believe our troops are making a difference by attacking terrorism at the grass-roots level. Destroying their fields of opium poppies, al-Qaida's financial support, is just part of what our troops are accomplishing in Afghanistan.

Where would we be if allies around the world never came together to fight Hitler?

Yes, Hitler and his army were terrorists. The definition of a terrorist is "someone who uses violence, especially bombing, kidnapping or assassination to intimidate others."

In years past, the ones to strike terror into the hearts of others have indeed been political leaders. Saddam Hussein is another example of a terrorist in leadership and many of the same people who are against our troops in Afghanistan, were glad to see Hussein caught and brought to trial for his atrocities.

The next time you are walking around town or on our nice walking path and come across a piece of paper, perhaps a candy bar wrapper or chip bag, think about our troops who don't dare get close to a piece of garbage on the road for fear that it probably is hiding a bomb.

On Remembrance Day don't forget our active troops and don't minimize what they are doing because you don't understand. Wear a poppy - it's the least you can do.

Bernadine Visotto is a Mountaineer columnist who supports and thanks our troops; active and retired.