



Raising the flags

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You can count the number of [surviving World War I veterans](#) in the world on one hand.

But in the 92 years since the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month ceasing fire in the “war to end all wars,” millions of veterans have been called upon and willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.

In Odessa, events throughout the day remembered Armistice Day, now Veterans Day, to do a small part in acknowledging that.

Thursday morning, Odessa College students, faculty, veterans and civilians came out for a flag-raising in the parking lot.



OC softball player Amber Gutierrez, 19, was there because the softball team was. But she said her cousin Javier Gutierrez is serving in the Marines, and it’s important for people to acknowledge veterans on this day.

“It’s showing the respect you have for the people that put their lives on the line for us,” she said.

Eric Wheeldon, 18, is training as an emergency management technician at OC and said both his parents served in the military.

“Civilians, the least they can do is come out,” Wheeldon said. Wheeldon said people should remember to be humble and thankful.

“Not everyone sees combat, not everyone does well,” Wheeldon said. “But at least they tried.”

Sudip Bose, emergency medicine physician at Medical Center Hospital and former U.S. Army combat physician, spoke at the event about the courage of those who serve to push beyond the very rational fears of war for something greater.

“We come from unique backgrounds, but today we unite to recognize this courage,” Bose said.

Bose said improvements in medical technology throughout the 20th and 21st centuries meant more soldiers were surviving their injuries than ever before.

“In World War One, if you lost your arm, you were dead,” Bose said.



“It’d be great if there weren’t wars, and we had another way to advance medically,” Bose said. Bose said the testing ground of millions of people being severely injured leads to products or ideas that benefit wider society.

At a Veterans Day ceremony at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin, retired U.S. Air Force Maj. Barney Welch applauded the Junior ROTC

 members in attendance.

“You can’t help but have such faith in the future because young people like these made a commitment to serve our country,” he said.

Retired U.S. Army Col. Gary Law said Veterans Day also means celebrating the families of those who served.

“To me, being a veteran represents a commitment to a set of values, such as duty, loyalty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage,” he said.

Bose said veterans are marked differently even after they integrate back in to society.

“They realize the sacrifices over there continue back here,” Bose said. “Even a simple thank you can go a long ways.”

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