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The Poppy Lady: Moina Belle Michael And Her Tribute To Veterans



Synopsis

When American soldiers entered World War I, Moina Belle Michael, a schoolteacher from Georgia, knew she had to act. Some of the soldiers were her students and friends. Almost single-handedly, Moina worked to establish the red poppy as the symbol to honor and remember soldiers. And she devoted the rest of her life to making sure the symbol would last forever. Thanks to her hard work, that symbol remains strong today. Author Barbara Elizabeth Walsh and artist Layne Johnson worked with experts, primary documents, and Moina's great-nieces to better understand Moina's determination to honor the war veterans. A portion of the book's proceeds will support the National Military Family Association's Operation Purple[®], which benefits children of the U.S. military.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 850L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Calkins Creek (September 1, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590787544

ISBN-13: 978-1590787540

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 9 x 10.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 42 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #242,962 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #115 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Social Activists](#) #147 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Military & Wars](#) #193 in [Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Non-religious](#)

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

Customer Reviews

Moina Belle Michael was teaching at the University of Georgia's Normal School in 1917, when her country entered the first World War. Vowing to do what she could for the "lads" in uniform, she began by knitting socks and rolling bandages. Later she took a position in New York City, where she helped departing soldiers. Inspired by McCrae's poem beginning "In Flanders fields the poppies blow," Michael launched a successful campaign encouraging people to wear poppies in honor of fallen soldiers. An epilogue

brings the story up-to-date. Inspired by Walsh's father's contact with Michael when he was a soldier in World War II, this informative picture book is based on original interviews as well as Michael's book *The Miracle Flower* (1941), articles, and websites. Rich with color, Johnson's narrative paintings portray Michael's life and times with warmth, drama, and attention to detail. Teachers looking for a heartfelt alternative to the familiar, too-often-pedestrian children's books on Veterans Day and Memorial Day may want to introduce their students to the compassionate, determined "Poppy Lady." • Grades 2-5. --Carolyn Phelan

Publishers Weekly Since WWI, red poppies have been used to commemorate fallen soldiers; Walsh explains why in a glowing tribute to the woman behind the symbol, Moina Belle Michael, a professor at the University of Georgia who "wanted to do more" for the men in uniform, and who went on to contribute to the war effort in several ways. Johnson's oil paintings offer several dramatically lit, almost beatific portraits of Michael as well as one scene of a somber WWI battlefield, covered with red poppies and white crosses. . . .

Booklist Inspired by Walsh's father's contact with Michael when he was a soldier in World War II, this informative picture book is based on original interviews as well as Michael's book *The Miracle Flower* (1941), articles, and websites. Rich with color, Johnson's narrative paintings portray Michael's life and times with warmth, drama, and attention to detail. Teachers looking for a heartfelt alternative to the familiar, too-often-pedestrian children's books on Veterans Day and Memorial Day may want to introduce their students to the compassionate, determined 'Poppy Lady.' Carolyn Phelan

School Library Journal Most children have seen red poppies for sale around Veterans Day, but how many of them know how they came to be associated with veterans? Johnson's lush and vivid illustrations on oversize spreads depict the world at that time-the soldiers going off to war, the women working on the home front, and period dress. . . . can be used to talk about Veterans Day, included in a study of World War I, and to foster talk about what it means to serve your country. The copious back matter allows students to read further. Joan Kindig

"Since WWI, red poppies have been used to commemorate fallen soldiers; Walsh explains why in a glowing tribute to the woman behind the symbol, Moina Belle Michael. . . . Johnson's oil paintings offer several dramatically lit, almost beatific portraits of Michael" --Publishers Weekly

Moina Belle Michael's story as told by very gifted author Barbara Elizabeth Walsh is an important part of our shared heritage. Against all odds and in a day when women had few rights and

opportunities Moina almost singlehandedly launched a national campaign to establish the red poppy as the symbol of sacrifice and courage of America's soldiers. Sacrificing her own personal life, Moina, helped individual soldiers in many ways and often was their only friend. The courage and strength of character that Moina displayed will inspire both children and adults. Moina, refused to give up her cause and when she had small victories always asked herself "What can I do now?" Especially in these difficult times this important, inspirational and beautifully illustrated book should be in the children's section of every library and read as part of third and fourth grade curriculum in many schools. In character with Moina, author Barbara E. Walsh will generously be donating any "profits" the book generates to charities that benefit the children of veterans. Let's support the soldiers and buy the book for those we love.

I have always been a supporter of the VFW auxiliary poppy program because my mother was in the organization and help promote the project. I started looking into the program and found out the history and then read about the creator and started searching for books and lo and behold on I ran onto this book and checked with the local library and checked it out. It was so interesting to me and the book is so well done that I ordered a copy and is now is one of my most favorite books. As a result I have decided to work to get a display at the library of the poppy and feature the book. I recommend it highly because the poppy program needs to grow bigger and help our veterans.

Teaches some University of Georgia (GO DAWGS!!!) and American Legion history that has been mostly forgotten. Illustrations are awesome! A bit too "wordy" as a narrative for 1st/2nd graders. Maybe best suited to 3rd graders.

Beautiful illustrations!! A well-written, informative picture book. It is a poignant, heart-warming story of a young woman who made a difference by doing what seemed a small thing in a big way but evolved into something never forgotten. I would definitely again!

Fantastic story of the Poppy Lady from WWI.

I loved reading this book to my students. It's an wonderful story about the way one woman chose to honor veterans. We read it together on Veteran's Day, and then the students created their own red poppy.

great for children to learn there is more about memorial day than BBQ and hot dog eating contests. This book should be in our schools. My 10 year granddaughter loved it.

This is a great book!! I read it to my 4th and 5th graders and discussed Veteran's Day! They really got a lot out of the book!

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