

# **SUGGESTIONS**

1. **BAN "SMOKE BOMBS"**
  - a. **POLUTE AIR**
  - b. **EXCESS SMOKE IN AREAS WHERE PEOPLE ARE ALLERGIC TO SMOKE**
  - c. **START A "NEW TRADITION" ON JULY 4<sup>TH</sup>**
    1. **POTLOCKS THROUGHOUT PORTLAND**
    2. **OTHER COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES LIKE FAIRS, CARNAVALS, ETC.**
2. **WARN CITIZENS THAT P.T.S.D. MAY "OCCUR" ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY**
  - a. **THE ACCURANCE OF THE P.T.S.D. WILL CONTINUE THROUGHOUT MONTH OF "JULY"**
3. **CUT DOWN HOW MANY FIREWORK STANDS ARE ALLOWED TO SELL FIREWORKS**
4. **FIREWORKS WHOULD BE ILLEGAL IN CITY LIMITS**

5. DON'T ALLOW CITIZENS TO SET OFF  
ANY FIREWORKS AFTER 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY.

a. NO IF'S, AND'S, OR BUT'S

THIS IS A WARNING OF WHAT TO EXPECT  
WHEN THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY COMES ALONG.

“ONLY” VICTIMS OF CRIME NEED TO  
KNOW WHAT THEY ARE EXPERIENCEING IS  
NORMAL. THE 10,000 CITIZENS OF  
CLAUCKAMAS TOWN CENTER SHOOTING  
NEED TO BE AWARE OF WHAT TO EXPECT,  
AND THE “COMMUNITY” NEEDS TO STAND  
BEHIND THEM, AND **ALL VETERENS**  
**OF WAR** DURING THIS TIME OF TRAUMA  
THAT IS TO *continue*

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.***

Share

0

More

Next Blog»

[Create Blog](#) [Sign In](#)

## My Blog

Leverage the past to make the world a better place, one person at a time.

SATURDAY, JULY 5, 2008

### Virtual War Zone on 4th of July (PTSD)

4th of July is a special day for Americans to celebrate America's independence from Britain. Unfortunately, the fireworks can easily trigger terrible fear, anxiety, loneliness, horrible memory, depression and insomnia for those who have lived through combat zone and now suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I am one of those people. I have lived through the war in Cambodia before the Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia and during the invasion and occupation of Vietnam in Cambodia after 1979.

I am blogging at this moment because I just got woken up by the bangs of the unofficial fireworks in the neighborhoods. Now I am having trouble going back to sleep. The more I tried to force myself to sleep the more I am awake reliving my memory of the Khmer Rouge genocide which killed two million Cambodians including my parents (who were starved to death).

Leading up to tonight I was well prepared to cope with the fireworks.

On Thursday July 3rd, I was on Think Out Loud (a program of OPB Radio) to share with the radio audience my own personal experience on how I cope with the fireworks. I told the host Emily Harris and the people who suffer from PTSD that one way to cope with the firework is to be up close and personal beneath a firework display. So tonight, I took my children to Willamette Park and watch the fireworks up close. I truly enjoyed and appreciated the firework. Practically beneath the fireworks, I was able to distinguish the fireworks from the rockets, bullets and explosions in a war zone.

Having marched in the Hillsboro 4th of July Parade this morning (as a Royal Rosarian), I was exhausted and went right to sleep after watching the fireworks tonight. I did it. I managed to prevent the fireworks from becoming a powerful trigger to my PTSD.

Yes, I did it... until a bang woke me up. My heart was pounding involuntarily. Not fully awake, I thought I was in the middle of a combat zone. The presence of the supposed bullets and rockets were momentarily real to me. My horrible memories of the Khmer Rouge labor camps and genocide haunted me.

I am having a headache and my brain isn't working. I am very tired but

#### LINKS

[About Me](#)[Golden Leaf](#)[Speaking Engagements](#)

cannot fall asleep. I feel like I am in a combat zone. My only comfort is my belief that I am coping better than most of my fellow PTSD victims especially many American veterans. As I know that tomorrow will be a great day for me despite tonight's nightmare, my heart goes out to those who may not be able to see tomorrow in the same light as I.

Happy 4th of July!

Posted by [Kilong Ung](#) at 12:53 AM 

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

- LISTEN (<http://www.opb.org/listen/>)
- WATCH (<http://media.opb.org/>)
- SUPPORT (<http://www.opb.org/support/>)
- SHOP (<http://www.shoppbs.org/family/index.jsp?categoryid=3953964>)
- (<http://www.opb.org/>)



Make it  
happen!

contribute now

(<https://secure.opb.org/support/contribute/>)

- HOME (<http://www.opb.org/>) TV (<http://www.opb.org/television/>)
- RADIO (<http://www.opb.org/radio/>) NEWS (<http://www.opb.org/news/>)
- ARTS & LIFE (<http://www.opb.org/artsandlife/>) EARTHFIX (<http://earthfix.opb.org/>)
- MUSIC (<http://opbmusic.org/>) KIDS & FAMILY (<http://www.opb.org/kidsfamily/>)

GO

## Think Out Loud

([/thinkoutloud/](#))

### SHARE THIS SHOW:

21

2

Like

Twit

### ON THE BLOG:

- Why Don't More Veterans Suffer From PTSD? ([/thinkoutloud/blog/why-dont-more-veterans-suffer-ptsd/](#))

### RELATED CONVERSATIONS:

- Veterans' Affairs ([/thinkoutloud/shows/veterans-affairs/](#))
- Veterans' Stories ([/thinkoutloud/shows/veterans-stories/](#))
- Ten Years After 9/11 ([/thinkoutloud/shows/10-years-after-911/](#))
- Coming Back From War ([/thinkoutloud/shows/coming-back-from-war/](#))
- Killings in Afghanistan ([/thinkoutloud/shows/killings-afghanistan/](#))

Suggest a Topic ([/thinkoutloud/blog/suggest-topic/](#))

### RECENTLY ON TOL:

- 2013 Legislative Session Kicks Off ([/thinkoutloud/shows/2013-legislative-session-kicks-off/](#))
- Oregon Bans Transgender Health Care Discrimination ([/thinkoutloud/shows/oregon-bans-transgender-health-care-discrimination/](#))
- Mohamed Mohamud Trial Begins ([/thinkoutloud/shows/mohamed-mohamud-trial-begins/](#))

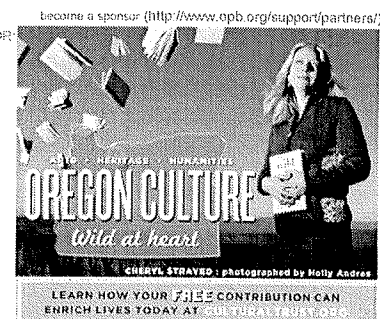
### TOL Our Town (<http://toloutown.tumblr.com/>)


- A tumblr site (<http://toloutown.tumblr.com/>) dedicated to the people and places that make up Oregon and Southwest Washington.

### TAGS: ([/thinkoutloud/tags/](#))

[2012 conventions](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/2012-conventions/](#)) [2012 election](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/2012-election/](#)) [2012 season](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/2012-season/](#)) [arts](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/arts/](#)) [arts and culture](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/arts-and-culture/](#)) [author](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/author/](#)) [bikes](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/bikes/](#)) [books](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/books/](#)) [budget](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/budget/](#)) [business](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/business/](#)) [central oregon](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/central-oregon/](#)) [clackamas](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/clackamas/](#)) [college](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/college/](#)) [corrections](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/corrections/](#)) [courts](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/courts/](#)) [crime](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/crime/](#)) [culture](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/culture/](#)) [culture club](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/culture-club/](#)) [democrats](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/democrats/](#)) [drugs](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/drugs/](#)) [eastern oregon](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/eastern-oregon/](#)) [economy](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/economy/](#)) [education](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/education/](#)) [environment](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/environment/](#)) [family](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/family/](#)) [food](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/food/](#)) [gay rights](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/gay-rights/](#)) [health](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/health/](#)) [health care](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/health-care/](#)) [health insurance](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/health-insurance/](#)) [high school](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/high-school/](#)) [housing](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/housing/](#)) [internet](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/internet/](#)) [jobs](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/jobs/](#)) [kids](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/kids/](#)) [labor](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/labor/](#)) [law](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/law/](#)) [legislature](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/legislature/](#)) [liberty](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/liberty/](#)) [literature](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/literature/](#)) [living](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/living/](#)) [medicine](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/medicine/](#)) [mental health](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/mental-health/](#)) [military](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/military/](#)) [minor parties](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/minor-parties/](#)) [movies](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/movies/](#)) [music](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/music/](#)) [native americans](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/native-americans/](#)) [news](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/news/](#)) [newspaper](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/newspaper/](#)) [olympics](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/olympics/](#)) [oregon](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/oregon/](#)) [our town](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/our-town/](#)) [outdoors](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/outdoors/](#)) [parenting](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/parenting/](#)) [police](#) ([/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/police/](#))

THANKS TO OUR SPONSOR:





Low Cost of Doing Business

PRATT & LARSON  
TILE AND STONE

AIR DATE: Thursday, July 3rd 2008

AIR DATE: Thursday, July 3rd 2008

(#)

Download the mp3 for this show.  <http://www.gpb.org/audio/download/?f=tol/episodes/2008/07/03.mp3>

### Should we stop fireworks on The Fourth to help people with PTSD?



(<http://www.ncpsd.va.gov/ncmain/information/>) (PTSD) -- those bangs can trigger terrible fear and horrible

(<http://www.ohsu.edu/health/health-topics/topic.do?tid=9119>) of people who have been in a war

know what you think -- should we consider canceling fireworks on the Fourth to help people who served in war, but now live with the nightmares?

[illegible]

- under the Khmer Rouge

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/deed.en>)

20health/ · military (/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/military/) · ptsd (/thinkoutloud/shows/tag/ptsd/) · veteran

would explode and scare the hell out of those guys, so we learned not to use river rocks.

and they need to get desensitized to them.

There are places where fireworks are banned, like in the forests, so those are places available to people who can't or don't want to be around fireworks.

[Tom D Ford \(@thinkoutloudusers/Tom D Ford\) — Wed July 2nd 8:14p.m. \(#tom-d-ford-07-02-08-20-14\)](#)

I tend to agree with you, Tom. I've had active PTSD for five years, and while fireworks (and all loud noises) can terrify me and be extremely difficult for me to cope with, I have never once thought that all fireworks should be canceled across America because it's difficult for ME to deal with them. For most, it is a time of celebration and fun times. For sufferers of PTSD, it can be a time of avoidance, isolation, fear, and so much worse.

Ccanceling fireworks would anger so many on so many levels. Even in my own little world, I have encountered enough people who don't have PTSD say things like, "Why don't you just get over it?... Or just plug your ears for crying out loud?" There is so little understanding from those who do NOT suffer from this disorder. There is no way to fully comprehend the effect triggers have on someone with PTSD, if you have not suffered it yourself. It is not merely a jolt like being startled and then you laugh about it. The fear and anxiety it triggers resonates in your entire body and it does not dissipate, and it makes you want to react, and maybe even fight for your life. And it can last for hours or even days.

Bottom line, I guess, is that this is MY disorder, and it is up to me to keep moving forward and learn how to live with my symptoms and triggers. It is not up to America to make my life easier. It's up to me to face PTSD head on and fight it until I've won. It may be a lifelong battle, but it's mine and mine alone.

I am grateful for the support I HAVE received from family, counselors, and online support groups and forums. They have saved me at times. But it's still my battle.

[jhiatt \(@thinkoutloudusers/jhiatt\) — Thu July 3rd 1:33p.m. \(#jhiatt-07-03-08-13-33\)](#)

"It may be a lifelong battle, but it's mine and mine alone."

Thanks for the reply. I wish you well.

[Tom D Ford \(@thinkoutloudusers/Tom D Ford\) — Thu July 3rd 8:14p.m. \(#tom-d-ford-07-03-08-20-14\)](#)

**Smell is the most effective way to get people to remember the past. I think that the smell of blackpowder is a best way to remind Americans of the 1776 Colonial Revolution against Great Britain.**

The colonists were considered terrorists by the British so that is in our birthright, overthrowing bad and tyrannical government. In order to remind Americans of that birthright I think that Fireworks ought to be required on the Fourth and on every other possible occasion. I think children ought to be taught in school how to handle and light fireworks safely every year of school so they get it and so we can stop all the efforts to ban fireworks, both personal and public.

[Tom D Ford \(@thinkoutloudusers/Tom D Ford\) — Wed July 2nd 8:25p.m. \(#tom-d-ford-07-02-08-20-25\)](#)

I don't have wartime induced PTSD, but various life experiences have led me hate the sound of artillery launches and the subsequent explosions and react viscerally to them. Not only my body hates explosions, but my mind and soul hate what they represent.

The "rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air" is an image of death and horror. The point of the national anthem is that the horror of rockets nonetheless gave light to something better: the flag. They are the OPPOSITE of what the flag represents in the anthem. Listen:

"And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,  
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there."

And note: Those were the ENEMY rockets attacking Fort McHenry. The flags illumination by the rockets is intended to be IRONIC. The very instruments of death that attacked us, illuminated the flag and gave hope. The meaning comes when we understand the primary meaning of rockets. Without that consciousness we pretty much miss the whole point of the line. To make the rockets central to the celebration in an un-ironic way, as if they represent OUR power, is bad reading of poetry, if nothing else. Instead of understanding that (and who can expect the public to understand poetic irony in the national anthem) today on the Fourth of July we simply enjoy the bombs and rockets red glare... the light produced by the technology of death.

Sure, it's just pretty colors to most people, but lest we forget, the thud of artillery accompanies every colorful display. If you've seen death, heard the thud of artillery in conflict, or really focused on what war means (even as a civilian) then that is a sound you never want to hear again. These explosive displays are really a glorification of killing technology.

You might say that it DOES represent what this empire and nation stands for - a glorification of raw power. I'd prefer to hope that the explosions of the Fourth of July are a sad distortion of what this place and community could stand for.

I make every effort to be out of ear shot, and I never feel more alienated from America than on the Fourth.

An American commentator from 50 years ago, James Cabel, said "patriotism is the religion of hell." That's not a bad description of what I feel when watching people get all solemn and worshipful at a fireworks display. At those moments I find myself living in some kind of alternate world where no one gets the reality they are living in or the meaning of the symbols they participate in. (At least I

## • About OPB

- (<http://www.opb.org/about>)
- FAQs  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/faq/member/>)
- Employment  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/careers/jobs/>)
- Volunteering  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/volunteering/>)
- Tours  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/tours/>)
- Producing for OPB  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/produce/>)
- Accessibility Services  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/accessibility/>)
- Hire OPB  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/services/>)
- Pressroom  
(<http://pressroom.opb.org/>)

## • Contact Us

- (<http://www.opb.org/about/contactus/>)
- Facebook  
([http://www.facebook.com/oregonpublicbroadcasting?\\_fb\\_noscript=1](http://www.facebook.com/oregonpublicbroadcasting?_fb_noscript=1))
- Twitter  
(<http://twitter.com/opb>)
- Mobile Apps  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/connect/apps/>)
- Blogs  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/connect/>)
- Newsletters  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/newsletter/>)
- RSS Feeds  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/rssfeeds/>)
- Upcoming Events  
(<http://artsandlife/events/week/>)
- Reception Issues  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/contact/reception/>)

(<http://getclicky.com/66419817>)

prefer to be hopeful that they don't get it, and not consider the possibility that they do get it.) At no time is Cabel's comment more understandable than during the hellish quasi-religious rocket demonstrations that count as a celebration of America every July Fourth.

Perhaps you will think this too far out of the box to present to your listeners, but I'll bet that there is a significant group out there who have no real PTSD, but find the Fourth of July traumatic on a visceral and symbolic level anyway. I certainly sympathize with veterans who can't bear it. I think they know the reality of war. It is written in their bodies, and they are the sane ones... not the crowds who love the explosions.

[Mike222 \(thinkoutloud/users/Mike222\) — Wed July 2nd 11:47p.m. \(#mike222-07-02-08-23-47\)](#)

We could cancel big fireworks shows, but what won't happen is convincing individuals NOT to buy and shoot off their own fireworks. It is the latter, because they are unpredictable and randomly occur over days, that are more likely to provoke fear and anxiety in someone with PTSD. But this is America, home of the selfish, and we certainly couldn't NOT have fireworks on the 4th, when they are fun and pretty and make us go "OOH", even if our fun causes suffering in the veterans we claim to honor. The majority of Americans seem unwilling to actually make sacrifices, no matter how much lip service they give to the importance of doing so. (Case in point: more people now favor drilling offshore vs. conservation of oil. Do you think these folks are going to give up their bottle rockets?)

[Katie C \(thinkoutloud/users/Katie\\_C\) — Thu July 3rd 1:08a.m. \(#katie-c-07-03-08-01-08\)](#)

I will even go further to say that I think that any time the US is actively fighting in other parts of the world, we should not celebrate with fireworks. The sounds and "pretty colors" that we are supposed to enjoy on the 4th are causes of fear and death in Iraq and Afghanistan. Also, I would think that if we were truly supportive of this country, we would honor soldiers that have fought for us by not triggering their PTSD.

[ennioia \(thinkoutloud/users/ennoia\) — Thu July 3rd 9:55a.m. \(#ennioia-07-03-08-09-55\)](#)

I know ex-soldiers with PTSD from combat and many more civilian friends with PTSD from personal traumas and it just isn't practical to accomodate everyone with a problem. I'm not a big fan of fireworks - like many people I have to sedate my dog to make it through the 4th - but they are an important tradition to many and especially for kids. None of the veterans I know would be willing to deprive their children or anyone else's because of their own discomfort.

I can think of one thing, however - how about local theaters and concert halls offering free or discounted admission to veterans on the 4th to give them a place to go that is somewhat insulated from the public celebrations outdoors?

[John in Salem \(thinkoutloud/users/John in Salem\) — Thu July 3rd 10:05a.m. \(#john-in-salem-07-03-08-10-05\)](#)

I have not served in the US Military, but have friends and family members who have. I am very proud of their service and willingness to sacrifice, and I still believe that America is a wonderful country and worth fighting for. I do not speak for any veteran - only represent my own opinion.

For many years I have had trouble watching fireworks because of what they literally represent - bombs and gunfire. I try to remind myself of the ideal behind the commotion - the good in the world that is worth fighting for, if you will. Still, when I hear fireworks, in my mind I see people dying.

I think telling people to just "desensitize" themselves is short-sighted. What else should we de-sensitize ourselves to? Every one of us is, has, or will go through pain in our lives. Responding by treating each other with a little more kindness and humility seems a more humane attitude than just telling people to get over it. I've struggled to come up with an alternative, since I do believe the 4th of July is worth celebrating. So I really appreciate John's suggestion of discounted public venues as quiet alternatives for veterans or other people who struggle with the chaos of fireworks.

I would also go a step further and support a ban on private fireworks sales, or at least a ban on the noisy ones. That way the public displays are at least a little more isolated and easier to escape from. After all, the ultimate celebration of victory is the achievement of peace. Fireworks do not represent peace.

[Jenny H \(thinkoutloud/users/Jenny H\) — Thu July 3rd 11:27a.m. \(#jenny-h-07-03-08-11-27\)](#)

I imagine that tens, perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars are spent by people on fireworks each year. I think a great public campaign should be created drawing attention to PTSD and fireworks. Ask the firework-purchasing public to donate half of the money they might otherwise have spent on fireworks to a veterans fund that goes to helping vets' families or vets with physical and emotional problems.

[catrina \(thinkoutloud/users/catrina\) — Thu July 3rd 12:03p.m. \(#catrina-07-03-08-12-03\)](#)

With all the fanfare about Presidential candidates and their respective health conditions and how those conditions might affect their ability to lead the country, it would seem that a president with PTSD might make different decisions under pressure than one without. Is there any credence to this idea or is it hogwash? Secondly, when a successful organization looks for a new leader, usually that leader does not turn out to be someone in their later years with many health problems, particularly psycho-social disorders like PTSD. Why do we not take these same issues into consideration when choosing a leader for the country? Thanks for taking my questions.

[Profess \(thinkoutloud/users/Profess\) — Thu July 3rd 12:19p.m. \(#profess-07-03-08-12-19\)](#)

I think it's important to note that PTSD is a response of the nervous system that shows up in our bodies through our physiology to a traumatic experience, whether it was combat, witnessing horrific events, or emotional trauma. All of which, obviously, are part of war. I'd like people to know about an organization that helps people heal trauma in general, and with PTSD in particular. It's called The Foundation for Human Enrichment and the primary source of healing trauma is through a process called Somatic Experiencing. It was developed by Dr. Peter Levine and is acknowledged worldwide as an effective treatment for trauma healing. The website is [www.traumahealing.com](http://www.traumahealing.com)

I hope you won't think this an advertisement. The foundation is a non-profit and is currently doing leading edge work in helping people heal PTSD. Thank you for sharing this important resource for



people struggling with unresolved trauma.

PS: I think fireworks should be banned for many reasons.

[janicecastelbaum \(/thinkoutloud/users/janicecastelbaum\) — Thu July 3rd 12:20p.m. \(#janicecastelbaum-07-03-08-12-20\)](#)

There is a type of medication, the beta blockers, that prevent PTSD if taken soon after a traumatic event. Why isn't the military making this available. It could save thousands of individuals from developing this disorder.

It is interesting that individuals came out of the holocaust, WW I and II and were traumatized. But they just went on with their lives. Yes, they had symptoms but they just kept going. They worked, had families, built lives. There is evidence that some of the "treatments" that have been administered for PTSD may actually make it worse.

Susan Bettis

[sbettis \(/thinkoutloud/users/sbettis\) — Thu July 3rd 12:20p.m. \(#sbettis-07-03-08-12-20\)](#)

I'm a former Marine and suffer from PTSD. The 4th of July is the most difficult holiday for me and my family. It's not just the noise of the Fireworks but the smell of the gun powder is a very strong trigger. It's hard on my family because I would rather stay in the house with the radio (OPB)blaring in the background as I watch the fort display on T.V.

[ddogg6 \(/thinkoutloud/users/ddogg\\_6\) — Thu July 3rd 12:22p.m. \(#ddogg\\_6-07-03-08-12-22\)](#)

My only experience with PTSD comes vicariously. With an increasing eye on the news over the past several years, my views about celebrating the 4th of July with fireworks have changed dramatically. Not only are those actively involved in combat affected, but also uncountable numbers of civilians being exposed to war. Maybe I'm over analyzing, but it seems to me, that fireworks emulate bombs via colorful explosions and violent sounds intentionally.

I live in Vancouver, only a couple miles from the annual 4th celebration at Fort Vancouver - listening to the huge explosions in the distance with what others may have experienced in my mind is sobering and terrifying.

[yourTVlies \(/thinkoutloud/users/yourTVlies\) — Thu July 3rd 12:25p.m. \(#yourtvlies-07-03-08-12-25\)](#)

Hello, I am recovering from PTSD. I was in a horrible cross-over head-on motor vehicle accident last July on Hwy 26 near Sandy, OR.

5 people died, 4 on the scene and my husband a few days later.

The intensity of the impact of the three cars colliding and the sounds, smells and sights still plague me. I have to close my eyes when watching any kind of movie or image with special effect car accidents. My body still remembers all the feelings of the accident- I find a few things helpful- yoga, prayer, and a good therapist.

The banging of the fireworks has brought back some feelings of panic, but there's no sense in changing this tradition- I find it therapeutic to return to normal life as naturally as possible.

[lindseyl \(/thinkoutloud/users/lindseyl\) — Thu July 3rd 12:28p.m. \(#lindseyl-07-03-08-12-28\)](#)

Hello,

I also have PTSD and feel for all the veterans with PTSD. I think one of my hopes is that all the discussion of PTSD in the last few years will result in a wider understanding of PTSD in the general culture. Also I hope that the fact that PTSD from rape (men & women) is so common will be included in this greater understanding and be more widely recognized. I would like to see this destigmatized as the difficulty discussing rape adds to the development / maintenance of the PTSD symptoms for survivors.

Here are some stats from the The Anxiety Disorders Association of America (ADAA)website:

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): PTSD can follow exposure to a traumatic event and symptoms include reliving the traumatic event, avoidance, detachment, and difficulty sleeping and concentrating.

PTSD Statistics:

w Affects 7.7 million, 3.5%

w Women are more likely to be afflicted than men.

w Rape is the most likely PTSD trigger; 65% of men and 45.9% women who are raped will develop the disorder.

[Sophie3 \(/thinkoutloud/users/Sophie3\) — Thu July 3rd 12:57p.m. \(#sophie3-07-03-08-12-57\)](#)

I hope that those who support a 'ban on fireworks' would also support more gun restriction. Both go 'bang' both have the potential to harm people, both are items that, for many people, are part of the way they express their patriotism. Justa thought.

[Profess \(/thinkoutloud/users/Profess\) — Thu July 3rd 12:44p.m. \(#profess-07-03-08-12-44\)](#)

Let's acknowledge the elephant in the living room here, War. Fireworks are not the problem, most kids are thrilled by fireworks while growing up, it is only after growing up and making war that they get PTSD and learn to be afraid of loud noises. War is the problem that ought to be addressed!

Blood Oil, wars for Oil, is the major cause of far too many of these problems.

[Tom D Ford \(/thinkoutloud/users/Tom D Ford\) — Thu July 3rd 12:45p.m. \(#tom-d-ford-07-03-08-12-45\)](#)

Good Morning,

My oldest brother is a Vietnam Vet and was diagnosed with PTSD. I have not heard from him or about him in over 8 years. Last I knew he moved to San Diego and after our Mother passed away none of his siblings have heard from him.

I know he did have constant contact with the VA but I don't know how to find out about him.

I know this is not about the specific topic is there someone in the VA I can contact that will help find out where he is and his status?

Thank you,  
Jenny Martinez

[jennym \(thinkoutloud/users/jennym\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 12:57p.m. (#jennym-07-03-08-12-57)

I don't know about the VA but just try calling them. Also try your US senators and representatives, they can and often do work wonders in pulling strings and making government work for you, and I can't recommend them strongly enough, they scare the hell out of department heads.

I have always kept in mind that in an emergency I could call the local police and/or Sheriff for help in locating someone, so you might try the San Diego County Sheriff. Even if they can't help they might offer suggestions.

Good luck, I wish you and your brother well and reconnection.

[Tom D Ford \(thinkoutloud/users/Tom D Ford\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 1:18p.m. (#tom-d-ford-07-03-08-13-18)

while we're at it maybe we should ensure that all motor vehicles are tuned up so that they never backfire. I doubt if very many veterans would want a ban on fireworks and it's obviously something that is never going to happen so why even discuss it? You must really be having a hard time coming up with topics. OPB should bring back the show that used to be on at 9 in the morning.

[rastamasta \(thinkoutloud/users/rastamasta\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 1:02p.m. (#rastamasta-07-03-08-13-02)

Should the opening ceremony of the Olympics be banned? How about fireworks at Disneyland, and at ballparks. How about that great pyrotechnic show in Australia at the turn of the millenium? How about Chinese New Years? The Europeans have great fireworks traditions, would you ban them also? Ban them in Mexico?

Fireworks are seen as celebratory all around the world, I think it is just very wrong to ban them just because some people have PTSD.

Sheesh! Ban war and celebrate that ban with fireworks!

[Tom D Ford \(thinkoutloud/users/Tom D Ford\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 1:06p.m. (#tom-d-ford-07-03-08-13-06)

I agree with Tom. Banning the firework isn't going to solve the PTSD. We need a different solution to PTSD.

I am also wondering if PTSD is a scapegoat for banning the firework. There has to be a better reason if we were going to cancel the firework.

[kilongung.blogspot.com](#)

[Kilong \(thinkoutloud/users/Kilong\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 11:37p.m. (#kilong-07-03-08-23-37)

I served in U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam for 20 months. I never considered myself as having PTSD. I struggled with my problems and viewed them as solely related to me and my personality. I saw private therapists, group therapy, and therapeutic retreats, both religious and non-religious. When I had problems at work, I worked longer and harder. I periodically retreated from the world for several months to a couple of years. Disconnected from friends and family who wondered if they had offended me. It was only at the suggestion of a veteran friend and out of desperation I accidentally went to a VA Vet Center. Once I engaged in counseling and realized the source of my problem, everything became clear. My historical struggles and problems made sense. This was so empowering and gave me such a wonderful feeling of hope. I could never understand why I would often be unable to watch a suspenseful movie without feeling overwhelming anxiety. Why I broke down and cried like a baby watching "Saving Private Ryan". The VA Vet Center has been a life saver for me.

[MeanMachine2 \(thinkoutloud/users/MeanMachine2\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 1:32p.m. (#meanmachine2-07-03-08-13-32)

The Navajo have a days long healing ceremony for returning warriors because they know they have been damaged by battle. I wish that the US would take a hint and take the same care in healing and training returning warriors back to civilian life that they do in training them for war.

[Tom D Ford \(thinkoutloud/users/Tom D Ford\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 2:14p.m. (#tom-d-ford-07-03-08-14-14)

I think I left so much unsaid because I needed to get to my meeting. One thing I wanted say was to urge people not to cancel the firework. It is a treasure, and it is a privilege to be able to see something that spectacular. One way to cope with PTSD is to think of others. In this case, think of the children and how much joy the firework brings to their lives. (Cancel water guns and the likes before the firework.) I think I mentioned on the air that being up close and personal beneath the firework helps me separate firework from the war zone.

[kilongung.blogspot.com](#)

[Kilong \(thinkoutloud/users/Kilong\)](#) — Thu July 3rd 11:12p.m. (#kilong-07-03-08-23-12)

Unfortunately, my night didn't end as planned. You may read about the rest of my 4th of July night here: <http://kilong-ung.blogspot.com/2008/07/virtual-war-zone-on-4th-of-july-ptsd.html>

[Kilong \(thinkoutloud/users/Kilong\)](#) — Mon July 14th 11:41p.m. (#kilong-07-14-08-23-41)

Comments are now closed.

- **Support** (<http://www.opb.org/support/>)
- **Contribution** (<https://secure.opb.org/support/contribute/>)
- **Business Partners** (<http://www.opb.org/support/partners/>)
- **Leadership Giving**  
(<http://www.opb.org/support/membership/leadership/>)
- **Planned Giving**  
(<http://www.opb.org/support/plannedgiving/>)
- **Vehicle Donations**  
(<http://www.opb.org/support/vehicledonation/>)

Search OPB



- **Legal**
- **Privacy Policy**  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/privacypolicy/>)
- **Terms of Use**  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/termsofuse/>)
- **Editorial Policy**  
(<http://www.opb.org/about/editorialpolicy/>)

(<http://www.pbs.org/cg-registry/galocalization?station=KOPB5&file=1966.html>)

([http://www.npr.org/stations/forceforce\\_localization.php?station=KOPB\\_Pt&url=http://www.npr.org/](http://www.npr.org/stations/forceforce_localization.php?station=KOPB_Pt&url=http://www.npr.org/)) (<http://www.pri.org/>)

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/>) (<http://americanpublicmedia.org/>)

© 2012, Oregon Public Broadcasting (<http://www.opb.org/>)



***4th OF JULY***

---



***FIREWORKS***

---



***&***

---



***VICTIMS OF GUNFIRE***

---



**BANG**

**BOOM**

**CRACKLE**

**WHISTLES**

**SMOKE**

**SYMPTOMS OF**  
.....

**P.T.S.D.**

**WITH THE FIREWORKS**  
.....

***ON***

***4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY***  
.....

**\*SOME SYPTOMS AS FOLLOWS:\***

- 1. RAPID HEART BEAT**
- 2. SHAKES**
- 3. CRYING**
- 4. ETC.**

**\*CLOSE YOUR EYES & IMAGINE A GUN IN YOUR FACE  
WITH GUNMAN CLICKING LATCH BACK. NOW A**

**“LOUD” BANG!**

**(FROM FIREWORKS). IT WILL SCARE YOU DEARLY.**

**A.I’VE EXPERIENCED A “GUN” IN MY FACE AND THE  
GUY “CLICK” IT BACK TO SHOOT, BUT DIDN’T.**

**a. As of today, the whole month of JULY is a  
“battle” for me w/ shakes, crying, rapid  
heartbeat, and sometimes vomit.**

**B.Other victims of gunfire experience same  
symptoms. Example:**

**a. FLYER I PRESENTED YOU**

**b. CASHIERS, NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS, OR  
RELATIVES WHO ARE VICTIMS OF GUNFIRE.**

**c. FINALLY, BUT NOT LEAST, THE**

**THOUSANDS OF VICTIMS OF  
GUNMAN AT CLACKAMUS MALL**

**C. NEW YEARS EVE FIREWORKS DON'T "EFFECT"  
VICTIMS' OF GUNFIRE LIKE THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY**

**PROBLEM IN PORTLAND:**

- **FIREWORK STANDS SELLING FIREWORKS  
ACROSS STREET FROM EACH OTHER ON  
"S.E. FOSTER & 82<sup>ND</sup> AVE.  
(FRED MEYERS PARKING LOT, AND BIG 5 LOT)**

①

**Parsons, Susan****From:** Evelyn Bross [evelyn\_bross@yahoo.com]**Sent:** Tuesday, December 18, 2012 9:20 AM**To:** Parsons, Susan**Subject:** reaqust on agenda city hall meeting ~~January 9, 2013~~ *February 13*

Dear Susan: Please put me on the agenda for the January 9th city hall meeting at 9:30 a.m. Like I told you, the fireworks need to much stricter than it is. I can imagine what the 10.000 people at CLAUKAMUS MALL SHOOTING will be going through after I went through something like that with my housing managers husband put a gun to my face just because I knocked at the door to let them know of a water leak in laundry room.

THANK YOU

EVELYN BROSS



Evelyn Bross  
8435 SE Insley St., Apt. 1  
Portland, OR 97266-4860



Request of Evelyn Bross to address Council regarding more restrictions for  
fireworks (Communication)

FEB 13 2013

PLACED ON FILE

Filed FEB 18 2013

**LaVonne Griffin-Valade**  
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Novick		
Hales		