

183000

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Eriks Zarins [eriks.zarins@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 4:42 PM
To: Moore-Love, Karla
Subject: Street renaming

June 22, 2009

Portland City Council,

You are scheduled to hear arguments tomorrow about the proposal to rename 39th Ave. to César E. Chávez Blvd. and to take a final vote on the matter next week. It is my opinion that that vote should be delayed for at least a month. In a June 1, 2009, letter from Portland Planning Commission President Don Hanson, he stated the following:

The Planning Commission shared the frustration of the Historian Panel and many testifiers with the process. There are many lessons we can learn from our experiences. We strongly believe the process needs to be refined. We are sharing our recommendations on process refinements with you separately for consideration at a later date after the Council has made its decision.

Any discussion of the flaws and possible improvements to the process should come *before*, and not after you make a final vote on this issue. If it is found out after the vote that the process had at least one significant flaw, which I believe is the case, then legitimacy of the council's decision will be seriously undermined, regardless of if it is for or against the re-naming.

I am presently working on a paper looking at Portland's street renaming process and I have ideas on how to improve it. A month would allow me the needed time to complete the document to the level of quality necessary for it to be useful. To get an idea of the type of paper I will produce, please go to: <http://oregonstate.edu/~zarinse/historic/made-in-oregon--portland-icon.html>.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eriks Zarins
7303 SE Mill St.
Portland, Oregon 97215
eriks.zarins@yahoo.com

6/22/2009

From: Xilia Faye [xiliafaye@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 4:42 PM
To: Adams, Sam; Commissioner Fish; Leonard, Randy; Commissioner Fritz; Commissioner Saltzman; Moore-Love, Karla
Subject: Vote NO on renaming 39th Avenue

\$86000 in this economic downturn would be better spent fixing the potholes on 39th rather than renaming any street with any name. And what of the costs to local buisness for reprinting signage letterheads and cards? Will the city pay for that as well? Very disapointed in my Portland politicians.

Xilia Faye

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Y.L. Pea [sweetpea@Christian.net]
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 4:41 PM
To: Moore-Love, Karla; Adams, Sam; Commissioner Fritz; Commissioner Fish; Leonard, Randy; Commissioner Saltzman; Yvonne Pea
Subject: marta guembes



guembesprofiling.p
df (24 KB)

Hello:

I am not sure how much is taken into account when making a decision regarding the person's actions submitting the application.

Attached is the latest article about Marta Guembes filing a complaint about racial profiling with the city. (June 18, 2009)

Previously she sued the city of Portland for a cop pushing her because she was Hispanic and also is on another committee regarding profiling with the city of Portland's police department. She has suits and other filed complaints about Hispanic profiling.

I would be curious if there were cameras when she claimed she was almost attacked during one of the CC street re-naming meetings at city hall.

It is sad that a committee of two has caused so much unrest within the city.

Please vote no on re-naming 39th.

Chavez leader claims profiling

Hispanic activist says traffic stop was because of her race

By Jim Redden

The Portland Tribune, Jun 18, 2009

ADVERTISEMENTS



In fact, Guembes said, she was looking for her teenage son, who was late getting home. Guembes lives in the area and was driving slowly to find him, she said.

According to the IPR and police records, when Reyna first approached Guembes' car, Guembes asked why she had been stopped and denied doing anything wrong. The police records reveal that Reyna told Guembes she "looked suspicious," a comment Guembes took as referring to her race.

"I was not doing anything wrong," she said. "There was no reason to pull me over."

Although Reyna let Guembes go without issuing a citation, Guembes filed a racial profiling complaint with IPR, as allowed by city policies. She was interviewed by IPR director Mary-Beth Baptista, who thought the bureau needed to respond to the allegation and referred the complaint to the Internal Affairs Division.

Kristy Galvan, the acting lieutenant in charge of the division, responded in a letter to Guembes on April 27, 2009. In the letter, Galvan denied that Guembes was pulled over because she was Hispanic. Galvan wrote Reyna thought Guembes was casing the neighborhood.

"You were in fact, not casing, but when Sergeant Reyna told you that you looked suspicious, it is because your behavior did look suspicious, based on her training and experience," Galvan wrote.

In a May 5, 2009, letter to Guembes, Baptista said she agreed with Galvan and was closing the case. Guembes has protested the closure. As a result, other IPR employees will now review the complaint.

“I’ve talked to hundreds of people in the community about the same kinds of things happening to them – about being stopped by the police for no reason,” she said. “The city needs to understand this is happening and do something about it.”

1830 00

Parsons, Susan

From: Elsa Flores [morena6779@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 4:53 PM
To: Parsons, Susan
Subject: street

Hello,

I just want to send my vote to name the street in honor of our leader Cesar E. Chavez.

Thanks, Si Se Puede!!!!!!!

Bing™ brings you maps, menus, and reviews organized in one place. [Try it now.](#)

Parsons, Susan

From: Gary Bondurant [garybondurant@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 4:17 PM
To: Parsons, Susan
Subject: proposed street renaming

Hi,

I'd like to say that with the streets proposed for the name change, I'd rather see a park or something named after Chavez.

Like the report said Broadway and Grand have a lot of historical significance so not options,

For me, I feel 39th should also be left alone because I love the named/numbered street grid system. It seems fairly consistent in the central part of PDX.

And honestly with I kind of wish Broadway downtown was numbered for the consistency.

That's my 2 cents.

Thanks!

Gary Bondurant
634 NE 22nd Ave PDX.

--

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Do you Tweet?

<http://www.twitter.com/garybondurant>

Cesar Chavez Blvd. Testimony

Nate Waas Shull, SE Portland

My name is Nate Waas Shull, and I live in southeast Portland. I'm testifying on behalf of myself and my family, and our message is simple – we are going to be so proud of our city when we name a street after Cesar E. Chavez, one of America's civil rights giants.

If you happen to be a school kid, and you happen to be Latino, your chances of graduating from high school in Portland are 39%. Thirty nine percent. Take ten Latino school kids and have them stand in a row. Ask for half of them to step forward. Then tell one more to join them. Then take the six of them off to the side and tell them that they should go ahead and start getting ready for poverty wages, poorer health and a life of struggle for themselves and any kids they might have down the road.

What if we told our Latino youth something different? What if we told them 'you belong here'? What if we told them 'this is your home'? What if we told them, 'your culture and your contributions make our city a better place to live for all of us'? I've worked with Latino youth in this city for years and I can tell you, Latino kids get a whole lot of messages from our community but they don't too often sound like that.

Today we have an opportunity before us. We have the power to send that message to every kid who hops a bus, does a Mapquest search, or gives directions to Fred Meyer to his cousin visiting from out of town. Yes, *street names* matter. Parks and community centers do too but today we're here to talk about Portland streets – streets that mostly bear the names of white men.

I'm a white man – and as a white man in Portland I welcome the daily reminder that white people alone do not own this city – even though sometimes we might act like we do. I look forward to driving down 39th Avenue, in my neighborhood and remembering what it is that I love so much about this city, a city that's stronger, more interesting, and more beautiful because of our diversity.

RECEIVED

2009 JUN 22 P 4: 38

GARY BLACKMER, AUDITOR
CITY OF PORTLAND, OR

BY _____

Moore-Love, Karla

From: philipm@sellwoodmd.com
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 2:44 PM
To: Adams, Sam; Commissioner Fish; Leonard, Randy; Commissioner Fritz; Commissioner Saltzman; Moore-Love, Karla
Subject: Vote NO on renaming 39th Avenue

Dear Commissioner: Please vote NO on the proposal to rename 39th Avenue. I am a lifelong Portlander and am shocked and disgusted that this idea has even come this far. I would like to think people who are most affected by a decision of this magnitude and cost would be considered important. In discussions with my neighbors and co-workers, the consensus is this is just not a good idea. Again, please vote NO.

Respectfully submitted,
Philip McKinney, O.D.
6505 SE 16th
Portland, OR 97202

I am using the Free version of SPAMfighter.
We are a community of 6 million users fighting spam.
SPAMfighter has removed 1100 of my spam emails to date.
The Professional version does not have this message.

183000

Parsons, Susan

From: Martha Perez [marthaoperez@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 2:40 PM
To: Parsons, Susan
Subject: Public comment on changing SE 39th Ave to Cesar Chavez Blvd

| TO: Members of the Portland City Council**| FR: Ms. Martha O. Perez****| Monday, June 22nd, 2009****| Dear Council Members,**

My name is Martha Perez. I currently reside at 920 NW Kearney Street, # 110 in Portland, OR 97209. I am a general political activist, healthcare researcher, and a single parent currently teaching my daughter how to speak Spanish. I am of Mexican/Native American/Irish/French-Canadian heritage. My father, Mr. Casey Perez, is a former Bracero, and/both a naturalized citizen (now deceased).

From the beginning of this controversial debate, I originally suggested that a park be re-named after Cesar Chavez, as was done in Sacramento, California, but now we must decide whether or not to re-name SE 39th Avenue. I admit both pros and cons, to doing so. It is a difficult decision, but I believe the sooner we can attend to it, the better, for our fair city has more pressing issues to deal with right now.

I respectfully request that the decision to re-name SE 39th Avenue be granted; however, with the highest of stipulation that in the future, any protocol & procedure be strictly enforced, with respect to re-naming/re-designation of city infrastructure, such as a street, bridge or park, etc.

However the outcome of this particular vote, I shall fully support and agree to, as the final decision of record. I thank each and every member of our Portland City Council, for their thoughtful words, and consideration of this important matter of business. **Best regards.**

| Respectfully Submitted,**| Ms. Martha O. Perez****| 920 NW Kearney ST # 110****| Portland, OR 97209-3435****| (503) 954-8653 home/cell 24 hours**

| (503) 416-1779 office

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Y.L. Pea [sweetpea@Christian.net]
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2009 2:12 PM
To: Moore-Love, Karla; Commissioner Fritz; Adams, Sam; Leonard, Randy; Commissioner Saltzman; Commissioner Fish; Yvonne Pea
Subject: People's opinions on re-naming a street Cesar Chavez



cc-compiled.pdf (1
MB)

Hello:

I believe you are making a decision tomorrow and the Oregonian states Nick Fish has been focused on the city budget (as well he should be!) and Randy Leonard on the stadium negotiations (as, he also should be), but this leaves very little time to review the issues on this very important re-naming effort.

There are over 4700 articles addressing this issue just in the Oregonian alone.

Attached you will find 12 of them, randomly selected. If you have time you can look up the remaining 4688 articles!!

Please read the comments made by your people.

These may be people unable to come to the meeting tomorrow night, or for whatever reason were unable to attend the previous meetings. Their opinions are just as important!

Please vote NO on re-naming 39th.

Thank you

Son says Cesar Chavez would scold Portland street renaming effort

The humble labor leader focused on the bigger picture, not himself, and would want energies put to other use, his son says

Sunday, May 31, 2009

GOSIA WOZNIACKA

The Oregonian Staff

DELANO, Calif. -- The old adobe building sits among open fields, past the edge of the small San Joaquin Valley town. No sign leads you here, no plaque or statue reveals that a Mexican American named Cesar Estrada Chavez led a five-year strike and a national boycott that broke down powerful grape growers and improved conditions for America's farmworkers.

The man, it turns out, was as unpretentious as the United Farm Workers office that continues his life's work.

So, if the road to his former headquarters isn't even named after him, what would Chavez think of Portland's two-year controversy to rename a street in his honor?

"He would scold everybody for wasting so much time on it," said his son, Paul Chavez. "He would remind us there's so much work to be done, and that's what we should spend our time on."

Granted, naming something after Cesar Chavez is an important recognition, Paul Chavez said, but his father would want it to go hand in hand with education and action.

"If it's just the street signs and holidays, that's nice, it's how you honor people, but it's got to be more," Paul Chavez said. "If you have an educational component, then it would represent who he was and (then) I could see him say, 'Yes, let's do the street renaming.' "

Chavez spent his life shunning praise and focusing the attention on the plight of farmworkers. But eventually he conceded his place as a role model for Latinos, family and friends say.

"He would have seen that there was a point of pride for people in this (renaming) debate," said Marc Grossman, Chavez's longtime aide and spokesman. "He would have seen people honoring him as a symbol that was more than just about him."

Humility, empowerment

Cesar Chavez was a modest man who had a difficult time accepting personal recognition or gifts, Paul Chavez said.

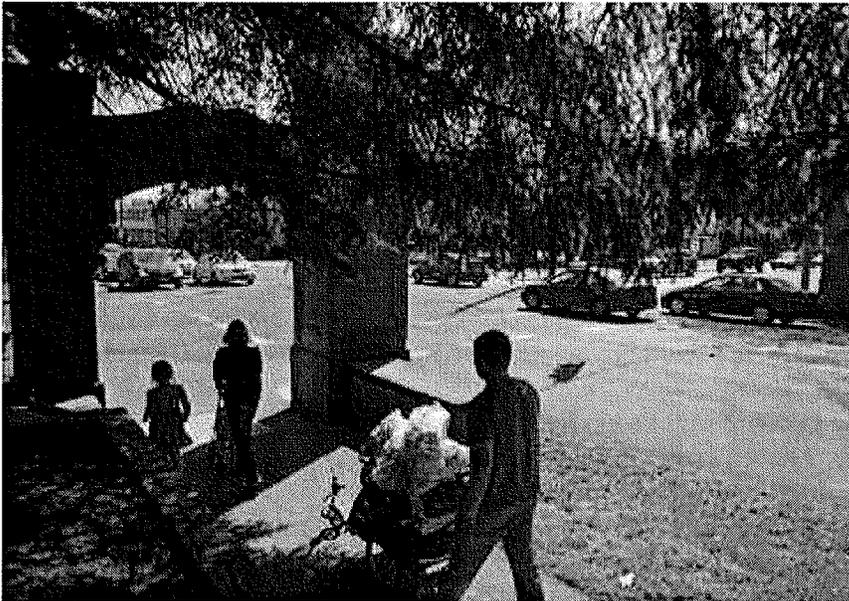
"He was very humble," his son said. "He knew there were countless workers who sacrificed and made the work possible. So recognition should not be lavished on him."

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Portland council still undecided as hearing on Chavez street nears

by James Mayer, The Oregonian

Saturday June 20, 2009, 6:38 PM



Thomas Boyd/The Oregonian Walkers head down Southeast 39th Avenue at Stark Street this spring. Whether to rename the street -- home to 1,265 residences and 122 businesses -- for Cesar Chavez is scheduled to come before the Portland City Council on Tuesday.

Portland city Commissioner Nick Fish may be the only resident on 39th Avenue without a firm position on whether the street should be renamed for farm labor activist Cesar Chavez.

"I want to study the code, get briefed and understand all the issues, and then make an informed decision," said Fish, who lives on Northeast 39th in the Hollywood neighborhood.

Tuesday

The Portland City Council will hold a hearing on an ordinance renaming 39th Avenue to Cesar E. Chavez Boulevard at 6 p.m. in City Hall, 1221 S.W. Fourth Ave.

Fish is in good company on the City Council: The three other commissioners and the mayor also say they haven't made up their minds and are waiting to hear the arguments Tuesday.

The council is in a tough political spot. The fast-growing Latino community and its allies say the name change will show respect for a cultural hero. But dozens of residents and businesses on the 7.22-mile street argue that the change amounts to an exercise in political correctness that will disrupt their lives and cost them money.

"It's been a long, long road," said Marta Guembes, one of the chief organizers of the renaming effort. "We're really excited. We're prepared.

"There are people that don't want it. That's just what it is. We're looking forward to speaking to the commissioners and the mayor, and we're hoping for their vote."

Fish said he has been so focused on the city budget and the creation of the new Housing Bureau that he hasn't put a lot of energy into renaming 39th.

"I sent out a letter talking about my deep regard for Cesar Chavez, his role in United States history," Fish said. "He is certainly an appropriate person for a street naming."

Commissioner Randy Leonard said he has been concentrating on soccer and baseball stadium negotiations. "I haven't sorted through all the issues yet," he said.

Commissioners followed city code for the first time and avoided much of the public bloodletting that accompanied the 2007 attempt to rename North Interstate Avenue for Chavez. Two years ago, then-Mayor Tom Potter championed the cause, and the council bypassed much of the vetting process.



This time, the applicants paid a fee and collected more than 2,500 valid signatures on a proposal to rename either Broadway, Grand or 39th Avenue. A historian panel held hearings on each street and determined that of the three, 39th Avenue was the only one without historical significance. The planning commission recommended that 39th be renamed, and the City Council will decide.

This year's effort sparked less overt racism, and the anti-immigrant tone that marked the Interstate debate was largely absent. A city survey found 694 property owners or residents oppose the change and 91 support it.

"I believe we as a city are up to a passionate but respectful discussion of the issue," Mayor Sam Adams said.

Unlike the Interstate battle, the Chavez supporters don't have a champion on the council this time.

Commissioners say that following the process doesn't ensure a yes vote, and opposition by people on the street doesn't automatically rule it out.

"It's one thing to be against something; it's another to have a good reason," Leonard said. "That's what I'd like to hear."

The mayor said Chavez -- an American citizen whose organizing efforts in California led to the formation of the United Farm Workers union -- is worthy of a significant honor.

"The issue is the nature of disruption that comes with renaming the street versus the opportunity that comes with renaming the street," he said. "I'll be paying special attention to the disruption to businesses along the 39th corridor."

Commissioner Amanda Fritz wrote to constituents saying she is undecided.

"The citizens making the request are given the right to do so in the code," Fritz said. "Even in tough times, I believe it is important to honor the rules that apply to everyone, and to apply them as adopted. I do recognize that many residents and businesses on 39th Avenue are strongly opposed, and that will weigh into my decision."

The Richmond, Beaumont-Wilshire, Montavilla and Laurelhurst neighborhood associations along 39th have voted to oppose the renaming. No association has supported it.

Opponents have raised several technical issues.

Eric Fruits, a Portland State University economist who lives on 39th Avenue, criticized the method that the auditor's office used to verify the signatures on the petition that launched the renaming process. Among other things, Fruits said the city made no effort to determine whether the petition signers were legal residents of the United States.

Fruits also said renaming 39th Avenue violates code because the street continues into Milwaukie. The code says only streets contained completely within the city qualify for renaming. The city attorney's office has determined that the code wouldn't be violated because Johnson Creek and a park interrupt the street.

William Schneider, a chiropractor with an office on 39th Avenue, has been collecting signatures on a petition to rename Delta Park or the new light-rail bridge across the Willamette for Chavez instead of 39th.

But Schneider said the Chavez committee won't talk to him about a compromise.

Guembes said she and the other supporters have said clearly all along that they want to rename a street.

"Not a park. Not a bridge," she said. "If anybody wants to talk to us about working together with us to rename a street, that's what we are trying to do. That's what we have done all this time."

-- *Kim Melton of The Oregonian contributed to this report.*

-- *James Mayer; jimmayer@news.oregonian.com*

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COMMENTS (38) [Post a comment](#)

Posted by johnsonc20 on [06/20/09 at 7:07PM](#)

I say vote yes. 39 is a number, not a name. A bridge or park would have been good, but 39th is in my neighborhood and I welcome it. I doubt very much if people will get lost or confused anymore than they do because of Broadway and Park on the Westside. The renaming honors a man worthy of having his name on a Portland street. People didn't want to rename MLK, Naito, or Rosa Parks, but somehow Portland survived it.

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Posted by localauthor on [06/20/09 at 7:19PM](#)

Let this naming committee pay for all the new street signs, all the business cards, stationary, and other ancillary costs associated the the name change, and out of their own personal funds if it's so damned important. Otherwise, why are we wasting tax dollars even talking about it? Were Chavez still alive, he'd more than likely oppose it himself, based on his own comments on such matters.

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Posted by artyracer on [06/20/09 at 7:24PM](#)

"an American citizen whose organizing efforts in California led to the formation of the United Farm Workers union"

So name a street in CA after him.

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Posted by seancruz on [06/20/09](#) at 7:27PM

I am searching for Cesar Chavez in Portland, Oregon.

Cesar Chavez was a Mexican American farm worker, son and grandson of Mexican farm workers, and a Chicano, like myself.

Cesar Chavez, the spirit of Cesar Chavez, ought to be easy to find...if you know what you are looking for...I found my own Chicano identity, you see, through Cesar Chavez, through the Chicano Movement in California in the 1960's.

The Cesar Chavez they are talking about renaming a street for in Portland must be a different person than the one I know.

In this long Portland argument, Cesar Chavez has been described as a "Latino", as a "Hispanic", as a "not Hispanic, but an American", as an "American" and as a "Latino American", but never as a Mexican American or a Chicano, not even by the people who claim to own the Chavez-honoring franchise.

It was his Mexican face that got him arrested for refusing to sit in the theater balcony, in the Mexican section, and nothing else.

Cesar Chavez's struggle and his campaigns were defined by his life experience as a brown-skinned, Spanish-speaking, Mexican-American migrant farmworker, a person who far too many Americans would categorize even today as a wetback, and they do....

We've all seen and heard the bigoted comments that this street-renaming fiasco has generated.

The only persons that those bigoted comments are directed towards are Mexican people, Mexican-American people, like Cesar Chavez, like me.

Portland State University has a Department of Chicano and Latino Studies, where "Emphasis is on the experience of the Chicano and other Latinos as residents and citizens in the United States...Graduates with a certificate in Chicano/Latino studies will have...gained important insight into a very different culture within U.S. borders."

This fact explains in part why the Portland Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce has been completely silent on the street-renaming issue over the entire past two years. There are no Chicanos over there, and no farmworkers either.

In two years of kicking the street-renaming can-of-worms through town, what insights have been gained?

Most Portlanders in this street-renaming fiasco, completely ignorant of the fact that Hispanic and Latino cultures are not all the same, use these terms interchangeably to describe significantly different cultures, as if they are synonyms. There is no honor in that.

Chicanos are the warrior class. Not everyone likes to hear that. Cesar Chavez was a Chicano.

Farm labor in the USA is not a "Latino" experience, or a "Hispanic" experience and not necessarily an "immigrant" experience.

Historically and to the present day, farm labor is by a wide margin a Mexican experience, a Mexican-American experience, and in California, where Cesar Chavez family and my family worked the fields, a Chicano experience, and it is 100% an experience of deep, abject poverty and injustice, conditions that continue to exist today.

There is no honor in being told "you people all look alike."

Our experience is unique to us, and Cesar Chavez brought that experience out of the shadows, brought us out of the shadows, Mexican people, Mexican Americans, Chicanos.

In Portland, Oregon's mostly-Mexican farmworkers remain in the shadows, and the City Council and the Boulevard Renaming Committee have done nothing to bring about change where it matters.

Oregon's mostly-Mexican farmworkers remain the state's only population that is prohibited by law from the right to overtime pay for working more than 40 hours a week.

Oregon's mostly-Mexican farmworkers won the right to meal and rest breaks during the workday only five years ago, the only population in the state denied that fundamental right.

When the City Council meets on Tuesday, there may be farmworkers in the audience. What will they have gained at the end of the day? The right to overtime pay? Protection for the sexual harassment that these mostly-Mexican women farmworkers suffer in the fields and orchards? Any meaningful change to their living and working conditions?

The City of Portland offers them a stretch of asphalt instead, a victory only for the handful of City Hall insiders who are keeping their heads down until after the Council makes its decision.

Important note: The Boulevard Renaming Committee recently took down all of the photos from its website that might identify who its members are, all those City Hall insiders failing in the courage department, too.

Renaming a street against the will of the people who live there while failing to address the living and working conditions of farmworkers with anything more than rhetoric conveys no honor to Cesar Chavez.

Renaming a street without a single Mexican business or architectural feature, and with no Mexican food along its entire length is no way to honor Cesar Chavez.

It's not much better than the Boulevard Committee's boneheaded choice of Interstate Avenue for "honoring" Cesar Chavez, where the only sources of Mexican food was Taco Bell and Taco Time, two corporate franchises.

Until recently, Taco Bell was the subject of a lengthy, bitter boycott because of it's opposition to a 1-cent pay increase for farmworkers. That information never made it into the Portland "honoring" discussion.

The Chavez Boulevard Committee, which mostly consists of City Hall insiders and people without a drop of Mexican blood flowing in their veins, demanded that Interstate Avenue be renamed, which would have been fine for Taco Bell, but an insult to Mexican people.

The Boulevard Committee made the claim that failing to rename a Portland street would be an insult to Latinos and Hispanics, and the City Council bought it

Most people are simply indifferent to the living and working conditions of farmworkers.

Cesar Chavez recognized that in order to overcome that indifference, that American indifference, he had to educate the public.

So far, I'm not seeing much in Portland that gives a clue to Cesar Chavez, but I'm going to keep searching....

Sean Cruz writes BlogoliticalSean at www.blogoliticalsean.blogspot.com

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 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by john317 on [06/20/09 at 7:29PM](#)

I say vote NO! I've lived in the Portland area for almost 50 years and 39th is an important north-south avenue that connects NE and SE and has historical significance. Why change it? It makes no sense and is surely unfair to all the businesses and homeowners along that ave. If you want to name a street after someone, honor them with a NEW street or a park so people and businesses don't have to change their addresses. It smacks of political correctness gone too far and will cost taxpayer money as it already has (all the meetings and such) in this time where every dollar counts. Please don't change it!

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Posted by etherbud on 06/20/09 at 7:54PM

I want to point out the central issues around renaming 39th Avenue, Cesar Chavez Avenue.

The renaming of 39th Avenue has absolutely nothing to do with Cesar Chavez as an Hispanic. And making it an issue has only clouded the facts, turning a fair debate on why 39th Avenue should NOT be renamed into a red herring -- a diversion -- a pretense.

The committee for renaming 39th for Cesar Chavez played the race card. By doing so it was much like asking our committee if we had stopped beating our mother-in-law. No matter how we answer the charge, we're guilty by the response.

We understand the emotions behind honoring Mr. Chavez, but we have never, ever objected to the name change because it was Cesar Chavez, or that he was a minority.

We would be against changing the name of the street regardless of race, color or any other prejudicial measure. This is not about the name, but the renaming of a long standing Portland Street.

The idea is wrong -- not the choice of a new name.

The result would be wrong -- not the proposal that Cesar Chavez be honored.

Parks, plazas, monuments, bridges, buildings and schools are the usual method of honoring our heroes.

Mr. Chavez currently has:

18 schools with his name in California.

24 elementary, middle and high schools with his name all around the United States.

6 libraries with his name around the United States.

18 streets with his name around the United States.

9 parks with his name around the United States.

An unincorporated community in Texas with his name.

And here in Oregon, Eugene has a Cesar Chavez Elementary School and Mt. Angel has Colegio Cesar Chavez, a post secondary college.

We don't need to add another street when it's clear that Mr. Chavez has been rightly honored all over these United States and here in Oregon.

One more street with Cesar Chavez's name doesn't add much to the honors rightfully bestowed upon him.

Changing 39th is disruptive and adds a burden to those of us who live and work on and around it. It's costly. It's a high price to pay. It's the wrong thing to do.

Changing 39th Avenue means all forms of communications would have to be corrected -- from paper to websites to signs. 39th Avenue is not a small park or a community library that can be renamed with little effect.

Google Maps, Map Quest, and other preferred methods for finding an address will not be able to locate Cesar Chavez Avenue.

Finally, was the original petition tainted by under age signatories; moreover, were the names checked as they are for referendums and initiatives.

Is support for the name change actually strongly supported outside of the Hispanic community?

Cesar Chavez was a great man who worked tirelessly for worker's rights and our Hispanic community should be proud of him.

However, naming the 19th street after him is not the right move.

Renaming 39th Avenue is a bad precedent.

What street is next?

What hero, local or not, will be the next street name -- and the next -- and the next?

It's an issue for all of us in Portland, not just those of us who live and work off 39th Avenue.

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 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by redmond2 on [06/20/09 at 8:08PM](#)

Sean Cruz ... thanks for the history lesson. It offers a little more dimension to data. Personally, I am used to "39th" and think Chavez could be remembered by a landmark...creating it's own place - like a new light rail bridge.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by sxweiss on [06/20/09 at 8:15PM](#)

Sean Cruz's thoughtful statement is the best dissertation I've seen anyone write on the subject of renaming a street in honor of Cesar Chavez. I think the action of naming a street for someone who works for the improvement of a community is an appropriate action but I disagree with the idea of selecting an already-named street and changing its name nominally to honor any person who is deceased but has *little, if any connection to the development of the community*. If the honoree can't enjoy it and have a sense of whatever they did being meaningful to the community and appreciated by his or her fellow citizens then what's the point? Truthfully, I don't think there is any. All that it accomplishes is a "feel-good" sense for the campaigners and for those who have the decision-making authority.

Sean brings to the discussion the issues of respecting people who happen to have been born in Middle America or South America or have ancestors that were. Keep in mind as you meet and interact with people that no matter which country they were born in within the western hemisphere that each country is a part of America. It's not the United States but it *is* America.

Both the renaming committee and the city council should both think much more creatively and compassionately and work to help every American who is in need without regard to which country the individual or their ancestors came from.

By the way, in the interest of full disclosure my own personal ancestry is that my family is a mix of german, irish and American indian. I do have a daughter-in-law and two granddaughters from Chihuahua, Mexico and they are as cherished as each of our other three daughters-in-law and two sons-in-law.

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Posted by ewebetcha on [06/20/09 at 8:17PM](#)

yes. thanks sean for your input.

I say name the day labor shelter after chavez.

it would be very very inexpensive to do so.

on the other hand, there are many, many costs to renaming 39th. it is foolish to waste money at a time like this. and it would be a waste of money for many people who live and work along 39th to have to change. there is no tax deduction offered for these out of pocket expenses.

if you put this to a vote, definitely the people would not approve of renaming 39th.

name the day labor shelter after chavez. it is more appropriate.

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Posted by oldPSUguy on [06/21/09 at 8:16AM](#)

City council members and mayor, not looking to get reelected, are the only ones who should be considering renaming 39th Ave.

In a populist city, naming 39th after Chavez would not be a popular move,

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Posted by ilearim on [06/21/09 at 9:07AM](#)

"Not a park. Not a bridge," she said. "If anybody wants to talk to us about working together with us to rename a street, that's what we are trying to do. That's what we have done all this time."

This is not in the spirit of Cesar Chavez - quite the opposite in fact. Are you telling me that Cesar Chavez would want to have a street named after him if it caused such a division? Heck no! A school named after him would be such a great and more appropriate legacy.

Marta Guembes is in this for her own ego and nothing less. This is not about honoring Cesar Chavez, but about Marta Guembes. I hope that the City Commissioners wake up and don't get bullied by her.

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Posted by bumpercar on [06/21/09 at 9:19AM](#)

Cesar Chavez also testified before congress against illegal immigration because he knew illegal immigrants hurt his efforts to organize a union: they undercut the organizing of a union because they weren't part of that organization and they undercut the higher pay he was wanting for his farm workers. Chavez also had thugs strong-arm the illegals to get them out. So not all was rosey with Chavez, he knew how the illegals would work for less pay and undermine his union strength.

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Posted by bumpercar on [06/21/09 at 9:24AM](#)

Also Marta Guembes' "in your face attitude" rubs me the wrong way. She's arrogant, doesn't have a clue how to mediate different points of view and says if you don't vote for this your children will have a "less fulfilling" life. What BS. How many of her signatures were from illegal aliens who don't even have a right to be in this country. Let's have an american try this in Mexico and see what happens - yah, right.

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Posted by oregonj on 06/21/09 at 9:27AM

I too want to thank Sean for his reasoned and dispassionate statement about the 39th renaming folly. If Council members read only 2 sentences about this, they should read his:

Renaming a street against the will of the people who live there while failing to address the living and working conditions of farmworkers with anything more than rhetoric conveys no honor to Cesar Chavez.

Renaming a street without a single Mexican business or architectural feature, and with no Mexican food along its entire length is no way to honor Cesar Chavez.

And maybe read a third sentence:

It only takes 19500 signatures to refer this to the ballot.

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Posted by peawee on 06/21/09 at 9:56AM

OregonJ: This NEEDS to go to the ballot. Five people should not be making such a decision

Quote from Cesar Chavez Boulevard Committee website:

"How will this affect my business and home address- Planning the effort to rename the street continues, and steps have been taken in order to INFORM and CONNECT with the area community residents and businesses. The committee greatly values the role of the neighborhood associations, businesses and other community organizations in the area and has made it THE PRIORITY (they had this in caps) to meet one-on-one with groups to talk about the project and hopefully acquire support."

The CECBC had REFUSED to meet with any neighborhood associations when they were invited. The CECBC has REFUSED to meet with the Save 39th committee.

Their website also states they will educate the public about Cesar Chavez. Didn't happen.

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Posted by peawee on 06/21/09 at 10:01AM

Quote from Randy Leonard 11-2-07(Oregonian)

"We are not asking people to help us decide whether to rename a street. IT IS DONE. We want them to help us pick a street so it's something the entire city rallies around instead of what we've seen so far"

Leonard: The entire city DOES NOT RALLY around this.

By his statement, it appears Leonard does have his mind made up.

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Posted by peawee on [06/21/09 at 10:14AM](#)

Quote from Paul Chavez, Cesar's son:

Oregonian: May 31, 2009:

"He (Cesar Chavez) would scold everybody for wasting so much time on it," said his son, Paul Chavez. "He would remind us there's som much work to be done, and that's what we should spend our time on." "If you have an educational component, then it would represent who he was and (then), I could see him say, Yes, let's do the street re-naming"

There is no educational component. The CECBC refuses to meet with people. They stated they would educate people PRIOR to this meeting about Chavez. Didn't happen.

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Posted by oregonj on [06/21/09 at 10:17AM](#)

Randy also said:

"a vast majority" of Lents residents support a baseball stadium.

So I don't put much faith in his words.

And Sam last year said he wouldn't rename Interstate 'over neighborhood opposition'.

His words are also nearly meaningless.

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Posted by JLundegaard on [06/21/09 at 11:19AM](#)

Sean,

Thanks for the informative posting. I had no idea about most of the info given and appreciate the education.

One of my closest friends in high school was Ian Chavez. Honestly I don't think I ever knew he was Hispanic/ Latino/ Chicano. It just never occurred to me. He was just Ian. He was from New Mexico where his father was a musician and a professor at a university. I don't know to this day if he was born in the US or not. It didn't matter. He was a good friend. I miss being so innocent that I didn't notice race.

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Posted by Bodytalk555 on [06/21/09 at 11:47AM](#)

Portland politicians are the same as milk toast, soft and squishy. What a pathetic excuse to suck up to the Mexicans. Way to go P-ville. keep on being the laughing stock of the west coast.

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Posted by bitchnCamaro on [06/21/09 at 12:03PM](#)

Lets just change the name of this country to Mexico II and be done with it.

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Posted by OregoNative1 on [06/21/09 at 12:17PM](#)

It is selfish to keep pushing this on the city and its taxpayers especially at a time when the real issues are about survival and schools. Also as noted in the article "A city survey found 694 property owners or residents oppose the change and 91 support it." As far as I am concerned the vote has been taken. It failed, move on.

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Posted by jawjapeach on [06/21/09 at 12:58PM](#)

Much thanks to Sean Cruz for the informative and extremely well written post. If only the city council "leaders" could read!!

The people have spoken with a resounding NO. I can't believe the city council and this renaming group are still dragging this out. Give it up already!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Apparently, the peoples voice means nothing in Portland. It makes absolutely NO sense to name anything over there after any Mexican, Hispanic, Latino or whatever you want to call them. There are no Hispanic businesses there, no Hispanic/Latino presence at all. Why not name the new Willamette Crossing bridge after him. As we are closing down

schools and there surely won't be anymore built to name after him, why not name a bridge which would be a good representation of Mr. Chavez and his work.

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Posted by pdxne on [06/21/09 at 1:32PM](#)

From what I read its obvious that there would be a big majority to honor Cesar Chavez by naming the new Willamette bridge.

The only group opposed to this is the committee which says its goal is to honor Cesar Chavez. They prefer a solution which is not wanted by the majority of the people.

Why????

I don't get what it is about renaming a street being better than naming a bridge. There would be a huge support for the bridge which the committee just throws away. Don't they care what those people think??

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Posted by oregonj on [06/21/09 at 3:53PM](#)

Its time for the adults on City Council to tell the naming Committee: sit down and come up with a compromise: the Willamette Bridge, Delta Park....

Maybe Sam and Randy haven't thought about this yet. But come on folks, if the Council can't work this thing out, they don't deserve to be negotiating for major league sports.

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Posted by ilearim on [06/21/09 at 7:32PM](#)

pdxne: You see, Marta Guembes (she is basically the committee) does not care about really honoring Cesar Chavez - this is about her and her fragile ego.

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Posted by moralgrounds on [06/21/09 at 8:35PM](#)

Thanks Cesar Chavez Boulevard Committee for their hard work. Thanks specially to Martha Guembes for all her patience and determination just like Rosa Parks in this David-Goliath cause. And welcome Cesar Chavez to the Portland landscape.

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Posted by Benny86 on [06/21/09 at 10:12PM](#)

Thank you Sean Cruz for your well articulated comments regarding this stret naming fiasco.

I couldn't help but think that this fiasco was initiated and propogated by Martha Guembes and her ilk. The politicos do what politicos do, and agree to rename a street because it is politically expedient to do so.

Of course nothing is ever free, and I'm sure those politicians who vote to rename the street would remind the Hispanic/Latino/Chicano community of their "great deed" in supporting the name change, all the while ignoring the very real issues you raised.

I wonder too, if you personally tried to educate the city council on the real issues that are important, instead of the superfluous, inane viewpoint of Guembas et. al, in trying to rename a street, at the expense of the will of the community it affects.

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Posted by tallulah13 on 06/21/09 at 10:18PM

Marta Guembes is an ambitious woman. However, she isn't doing anything to honor Cesar Chavez. She wants to force her will upon the people of Portland, just to feel powerful.

I agree with the previous poster who said that renaming the street after Cesar Chavez isn't the problem; the problem is renaming the street at all. We don't need renamed streets.

If the people who have actually invested money and time on that street (the home- and business-owners) don't want a name change, then it shouldn't happen.

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Posted by savepdx on 06/21/09 at 10:20PM

Anyone see the Portland Tribune story about Marta Guembes and her complaint against the Portland Police? This woman has a COMPLEX!! There is always a potential for misunderstanding when your conduct arouses suspicion; that doesn't mean police have gone out of the way to target you. Normal people just shrug this off and go on their way. But, No... Marta, has to file a "racial profiling" complaint.

FYI, "profiling" is an accepted part of the triad of criminal investigation methods in law enforcement--added to previous centuries' 1. Clues and 2.Criminology

Give this troublemaker a one way Greyhound ticket out of here.

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Posted by ilearim on 06/21/09 at 10:41PM

moralgrounds: You joke, right?

Marta/Martha Guembes has done more to tarnish the name and legacy of Cesar Chavez than all the good folks who are simply trying play by the rules.

Guembes is a vindictive person who is in this for her own ego. If she really cared about honoring Cesar Chavez, she would have done it in such way that he would approve - not this BS.

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Posted by UPS68 on 06/22/09 at 12:19AM

Please just leave the streets alone.

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Posted by goart on 06/22/09 at 1:52AM

Hey Marta, it would really useful if you diclosed your true beliefs to everyone. Racism cuts both ways and you need to say hello to R Herndon's wife. I am sure she would be really surprised to meet you. Once you get your personal life straight, leave our streets alone.

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Posted by kickrocksman on 06/22/09 at 8:07AM

Say NO to any name change backed my Guembes. She is a racist and Chavez deserves to be honored by honorable people, not this scumbag. This was taken from the Portland Mercury:

---Marta Guembes, co-chair of the César E. Chávez Committee, is “insulted” that four commissioners have agreed to rename 4th Avenue instead of Interstate.

“It’s very insulting,” she says. “They have not called me to let me know they’re working on this.” She found out by reading the paper this morning.

“We proposed Interstate, after we went through many streets to decide what would work for us, and the Latino community.” This new idea, she says, is “these white men who have the power and are telling us what is best for us.”

And she’s sticking to her guns—she wants a vote on the street that the committee proposed, Interstate.---

Her attitude is insulting to the residents of Portland. I went to the renaming forum at Ockley Green Middle School in '07 and I appalled by her disregard for long-time resident opinion. She said "this WILL happen" and it didn't. Please don't cater to her racist propaganda. Let a better class of people honor Chavez. She is unwilling to compromise with a self-serving agenda that has very little to do with Chavez.

VOTE NO FOR

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Posted by beboxer on [06/22/09 at 9:12AM](#)

I'm progressive, but I vote NO on any renaming. Unlike Rev. Martin Luther King Jr, Cesar Chavez is no person on the road to sainthood. If that's the way they want, let's rename 40th to be Monsanto Blvd. 41st can be Dole Blvd. 42nd can be Kraft Way.

Then we need to rename NW 2nd with a Chinese icon.

NW Mao Zedong Blvd. Now there's a name that I'm sure that many will understand. Or NW Tiananmen Square Ave.

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Posted by flyers73 on [06/22/09 at 9:56AM](#)

Name the illegal alien labor center after Chavez?

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Posted by titotoby on [06/22/09 at 11:26AM](#)

If they want a street named after Chavez they can go back to California and do it there. I am fed up with the entitlement mentality that the immigrants seem to have. If our President was to do anything right it would be to deport them all and strip their children of US citizenship (they did not earn it). They want to play the race card, but it has nothing to do with it. Chavez did nothing for the city or the state of Oregon...

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Posted by watkinst002 on [06/22/09 at 11:30AM](#)

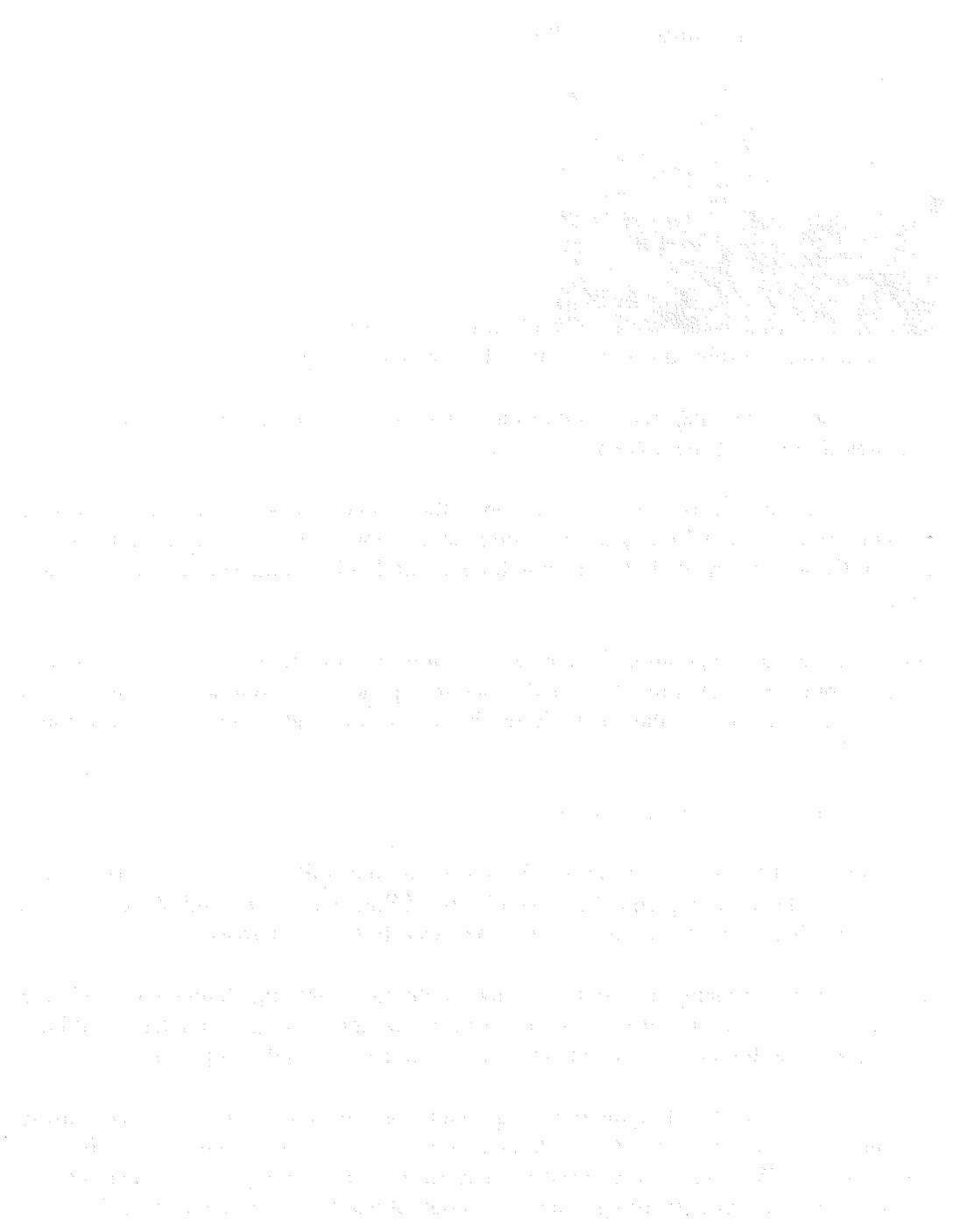
I no longer go to downtown Portland, disgusted, and now I will be voting against every member of this "Mexican" city council.

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Username (Don't Have a Username? [Sign up here](#)):

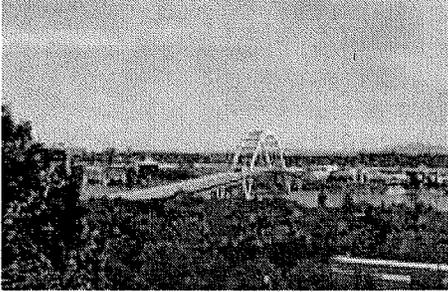
Password:



Cesar Chavez: A divide, or a bridge?

by The Editorial Board

Saturday May 16, 2009, 12:45 PM



SubmittedAgain, why isn't this perfectly beautiful, and still unnamed, bridge a suitable way to honor Cesar Chavez?

The Portlanders who rightfully seek to honor Cesar Chavez act as though it will have meaning only if there is controversy

Is this really necessary, running over the top of the people who live and do business along Portland's 39th Avenue, hinting all the while that anyone who objects to renaming the street for Cesar Chavez ought to do something about that latent racism they're carrying around?

Is this how we want to go about honoring our heroes, not just now, but time after time, inviting people to gather a few thousand signatures, pick three prominent streets and ram through a name change on the one with the shortest history and the least clout down at City Hall?

No, that shouldn't be the way we do it.

Portland is about to add a stunning new bridge across the Willamette River, part of the \$1.4 billion light-rail line planned between Portland State University and Milwaukie. As we've argued here before, why not name it the Cesar E. Chavez Crossing?

There are other promising ideas out there, too, including renaming Delta Park for Chavez. We also like the symmetry of naming the Farmers Market for a man who dedicated his life to advocating for agricultural laborers, food activism and fighting poverty.

Yet the petitioners demanding the renaming of an existing street for Chavez sweep away all of these ideas as unworthy. As Marta Guembes, co-chair of the Chavez renaming committee said, "We are in the process for a street, not for anything else but a street." What is it about a street renaming, what it is about taking 39th, that makes it such a

powerful honor, compared, say, with having Chavez's name grace one of the spans in the heart of the City of Bridges?

You heard part of the answer just before Tuesday's 7-1 vote in favor of the renaming by the Portland Planning Commission, when Commissioner Lai-Lani Ovalles depicted the decision as a question of courage, and added, "We have to make decisions that will hurt people emotionally."

That's the trouble not only with this particular street renaming, but with all those that have taken place in Portland over the years. It wasn't enough to honor a great civic leader like Bill Naito or a remarkable civil rights figure such as Rosa Parks by putting their name on a new school, road, park or bridge. That wasn't hard enough. It didn't hurt enough.

So here we are again, months now into a tedious and occasionally ugly debate that absolutely, positively can't end without somebody in pain. The Portland City Council, after it holds another divisive hearing on the renaming, can pick its poison: It can reject the Chavez renaming, and invite another go-round about lily-white Portland and its institutional racism. Or it can tell hundreds of people along 39th that not only is their street not "significant in its own right," neither are they.

That's gonna hurt, and maybe that is the whole point. But it won't stop with the bruising of the folks along 39th, or the well-meaning advocates who want to honor Chavez. This is going to happen again and again if the council ratifies this "process" that invites community groups to honor their heroes at the expense of people who have no say in the matter.

Again, this doesn't have to happen. There's a perfectly beautiful unnamed bridge coming to this city. It would be more visible, and more symbolic, than a street in eastside Portland. Of course, there's a drawback: Where's the pain?

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[COMMENTS \(63\)](#) [Post a comment](#)
Posted by taxed on [05/14/09 at 4:23PM](#)

Easy, just make the people pushing the re-naming PAY for it. That will stop it fast. The cost of new street signs, the cost of the maps, the cost of the new business cards, stationary, signs etc will run into the millions. If the people who want to change the name are serious, then they can pony up the money.

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Posted by originalBeav on [05/14/09 at 4:40PM](#)

I cannot imagine how much time and money has been spent on this renaming effort, money and time better spent on more tangible people helps.

The number of people that actually care about changing the name are a very small percentage of the tri-county population, small percentage. If they want it so bad, let them step up and pay for it. NO city or county tax money, no city or county work time, etc. Let the supporters pay for it, and get the work done.

If they accomplish their task, they can feel good about it. If they don't, they tried. Either way, I won't give the street name a second glance unless I am looking for an address.

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Posted by ilearim on [05/14/09 at 4:41PM](#)

It was just a few weeks ago that this Editorial Board came out against renaming:
http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2009/04/dont_rename_39th_avenue.html

Visit <http://www.save39th.com/> for more information

It seems that Marta Guembes is inviting hostility for hostility sake. As for Lai-Lani Ovalles depicting the decision as a question of courage is beyond disingenuous. Her mind was made up a long time ago, people of Portland be damned. There was no courage by her or the other 6 on Planning Commission that voted in favor of this senseless process.

Lets hope Mayor Adams and the commissioners have the ability to speak for all of Portland, not just a very small and vocal group who have not a shed of respect for the rest of Portland.

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Posted by nobodyknows9 on [05/14/09 at 6:23PM](#)

where does the city have the money to rename 39th ave when alot of parts of se portland do NOT have sidewalks and paved roads. who pays to have the new signs put up?? on every block on 39th ..who is going to pay all the business's to change their address on 39th ave this is not about racism it is about common sense.. why would you rename a NUMBERED street with a name .. 39th is a major divide if you have people new to portland that use the thomas guide as you count the blocks from 36 to 39th you have an idea where you are located and what direction you need to go. during these hard economic times you would think renaming a street would not be a priority.. GET RID OF PORTLAND PLANNING COMMISSION if this is one of things they spend their time wasting..

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Posted by seancruz on 05/14/09 at 7:00PM

Questions for the City Council (and directly to the parties named) regarding the process of renaming 39th:

1. Did public officials and/or their staff make any personal guarantees to members of the Chavez Committee or any other persons that the City would in fact rename a street?
2. Who are the members of the Chavez Committee? They have publicly identified only the two co-chairs. Are any City Council or Mayor's staff also members of the committee?
3. Are the committee members residents of Portland, and is Portland residency important to a Portland street renaming process?
4. If renaming a street is so important to the Hispanic/Latino communities, why has the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce taken no position on the issue over the past two years? Has the City Council had any communication with the Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber regarding renaming streets for Cesar Chavez?
5. Berthe Ferran, Portland Development Commissioner and Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Board member, is on the record supporting the renaming of Interstate Avenue, identifying herself specifically as a Latina, not a Hispanic. Is the commissioner a member of the Chavez Committee, and does she now support renaming 39th Avenue?
6. State Senator Jackie Dingfelder is the only legislator to support a street renaming (Interstate), does she now support renaming 39th Avenue?
7. Portland Public Schools Board Member Martin Gonzalez appears on the Chavez Committee website, supporting renaming Interstate. Is he a committee member? Does he now support renaming 39th Avenue?
8. Maria Lisa Johnson is Director of the City of Portland's Office of Human Relations and appears on the Chavez Committee website, supporting renaming Interstate. Is she a member of the committee and does she now support renaming 39th?
9. City Council and just about everyone else in Portland agrees that the city's renaming process is deeply flawed, that entire neighborhoods feel disrespected and undervalued throughout the past two years. Given its mission statement, why has the Office of Human Relations failed to act in any capacity as this process has deeply divided the city? What are we paying Ms Johnson for, anyway?

From the website:

"The City of Portland deeply believes that everyone within our city deserves to be valued and respected, to feel safe, and be free from discrimination.

On March 19, 2008, City Council approved the creation of an Office of Human Relations (OHR) and a Human Rights Commission. The mission of these two efforts is to work toward:

- Eliminating discrimination and bigotry,
- Strengthening inter-group relationships, and
- Fostering greater understanding, inclusion and justice for those who live, work, study, worship, travel and play in Portland.

The Office of Human Relations will provide leadership on civil and human rights issues through the coordination advocacy, education, research, and intervention services. It will house the Human Rights Commission, comprised of 11-15 volunteer commissioners, who are charged with setting the strategic priorities of the office."

<http://www.portlandonline.com/humanrelations/>

10. Lastly, why would the "Planning" Commission endorse renaming a street that lacks even a single Latino or Hispanic business throughout its entire length? This is planning?

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Posted by rosedude on [05/14/09 at 7:49PM](#)

Perfect. Can't think of A finer way to honor this great man than the beautiful new bridge. Best idea I have heard. Zero cost to rename something. Zero effect on business. Zero hindrance to the navigationally challenged. How could anyone possibly take offense? Anybody on the editorial board want to run for City Council?

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Posted by perskeptic on [05/14/09 at 8:15PM](#)

Thank you Sean Cruz. Have these questions been put to the City Council? It's true, the renaming process is badly flawed.

The Historian panel didn't follow the code. They threw out the phrase "significant in its own right." They complained about not really being able to meet because of the requirements for meeting. Even the idea of pitting three streets against each other - so the historian committee picked the one "they deemed" to be the least "historically significant." It seems they couldn't define this either.

The Planning Commission meeting was run by Irma Valdez. I guess her experience as a former federal prosecutor and former Assistant U.S. Attorney gave her extra status to the

other board members as she literally bulldozed her way and interrupted the other board members and seemed to intimidate them to a vote to pick NE 39th. The transcript of the meeting will show this.

We need to honor the residents and businesses of Portland. This is the City and the good for the City does not cause a bitter divide.

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Posted by fraternal on [05/14/09 at 8:49PM](#)

The editorial is right in demanding that the City Council have the courage to reject this demand.

However the editors are naive [or perhaps overly tactful] if they really believe that Guembes et all are in this to honor Cesar Chavez. That has nothing to do with it. They are power-hungry activists eager to have a scalp on their belts so they can say they intimidated and extorted Portland into their outrageous and totally unnecessary and expensive demand. As you said, they will never accept any compromise. That is the definition of a fanatic.

And while the city council rightly rejects their unclean proposal, it must repeal Chptr 17.93 which defines the process. Its history is shameful and keeping it will only encourage other selfish and arrogant activists to push their own demands. Enough already!

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Posted by seancruz on [05/14/09 at 9:16PM](#)

I support the Oregonian Editorial Board on this 100%. Note perfect!

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Posted by fraternal on [05/14/09 at 9:18PM](#)

Sean Cruz: I can tell you something about your first question. There was in fact collusion between someone on or close to the City Council helping the Chavez Committee. I noticed in the city rules that when the Council has rejected a street re-naming proposal, the proponents must wait TWO FULL YEARS before trying again.

We all know that the Interstate Avenue disgrace went on until the very end of 2007 when it fell apart as a tragi-comedy of errors. So I asked someone at the Planning Commission how the Chavez Committee could be pushing this new proposal, since not even a full year had passed. I was told, and the man who told me was deadly serious, that the city had concluded that since the Interstate demand had NOT followed the code rules, it had never really been "rejected" by the City Council and therefore the 2-year time wait did

not apply!! Can you believe it?? In other words because they cheated the first time, they can ignore the rule about waiting 2 years!! I was also told, perhaps inadvertently, that one or more city council members privately invited the Chavez people to renew their push and to follow the rules. This whole thing stinks to high heaven.
I wish you could expose even more of these shenanigans

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Posted by fraternal on [05/14/09 at 10:15PM](#)

I have a suggestion. As others have pointed out, our posted comments may be preaching to the choir, and only a few of our Letters will appear in print.
Time is short. We will probably have only one week's notice of the council's public hearing.

What might help is a LARGE PAID AD, hopefully even a FULL PAGE, in THE OREGONIAN, stating many of the points we are making here to one another.
Can anyone suggest how we can come together and do this? I for one would be willing to give a sum but we need to communicate directly etc. Any ideas how to manage this?
Please.

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Posted by sam38 on [05/14/09 at 10:32PM](#)

Since City Councilman Nick Fish...actually lives ON NE 39th...does this mean he is dismissed from this vote?
Wonder what his view is? Haven't heard...
Who is reporting this tidbit...haven't seen it anywhere?

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Posted by BellaBelotti on [05/14/09 at 10:52PM](#)

Thank you, editorial board.

Your comments are based on common sense and a sense of compromise. Your view will fail to sway the city council because your view is based on common sense and compromise.

Randy Leonard said Portlanders against illegal alien workers are, "Xenophobic - afraid of foreign workers."
That is the intellect you and we are up against.

Time's a wasting. It's time to "hurt emotionally" those 87% of 39th Ave. residents who don't want their street renamed. It's for their own good you know.

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Posted by seancruz on 05/14/09 at 10:54PM

Here's another couple of good questions:

How could a committee of only two people possibly have enough political power to tie the city in knots for two years? Who are we really dealing with?

Promise King, formerly of Commissioner Saltzman's staff, is on record supporting renaming Interstate. Is he a committee member? Does he now support renaming 39th? He's still living on the public dime as Executive Director of the Oregon League of Minority Voters.

Who else is out there (or in there) with their heads down?

There is nothing impartial about any part of this process.

I will say it again: This should have begun with an open, public discussion of who Cesar Chavez was and what about him was remarkable and worthy of remembering, and then proceeded to a discussion of what would be some appropriate ways to express our conclusions in a permanent, physical form...THAT would have been a path of honor.

If I had been running the Office of Human Relations, that's how I would have been spending some of my time....

Instead, every time someone has suggested an alternative to renaming a street, the Chavez Committee's two members have reacted really poorly, and the Office of Human Relations remains silent, ignoring its own mandate.

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Posted by phosphorus on 05/14/09 at 11:44PM

Fraternal writes, "the editors are naive [or perhaps overly tactful] if they really believe Guembes et al are in this to honor Cesar Chavez. That has nothing to do with it"

Bella Belotti writes, "Randy Leonard said Portlanders against illegal alien workers are 'Xenophobic - afraid of foreign workers.' That is the intellect you and we are up against"

EXACTLY! The great irony of this whole farce is that Cesar Chavez STRONGLY opposed illegal immigration. The man and his true message have been completely lost and subverted by a small group of people determined to promote their own agenda and interests at everyone else's expense, EVEN THE MAN THEY ARE SUPPOSEDLY HONORING!

Excellent editorial, Oregonian.

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Posted by ednumrich on [05/15/09 at 3:16AM](#)

To suggest that the Cesar Chavez debacle involves "well-meaning advocates" brings to mind the brain-power of those in charge at Auschwitz.

The fact is that the rabble-rousing sponsors have done more damage to disfigure the good deeds of Mr. Chavez than any possible naming of anything. Chavez will not be remembered in this community for anything other than the hate and discontent advocated by a zealous few who simply have found another way to masturbate in public.

Ed Numrich

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Posted by jwh2008 on [05/15/09 at 6:42AM](#)

You might as well give up fight renaming the streets and bridges after these radical "union organizers" as they are part of the pay back for union support for the libs.

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Posted by rtheda on [05/15/09 at 7:33AM](#)

And yes there is a "Martin Luther King" Street. But he advanced ANTIDISCRIMINATION TO BENEFIT EVERYONE, WHITE, LATINO AND BLACK ET AL in this country

CESAR CHAVEZ, UNLIKE MLK, DIDN'T EVEN ADVANCE CIVIL RIGHTS FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY, ONLY FOR HIS NARROW INTEREST GROUP.

You know, you don't see 'Saigon' Street or "Confucius" street.

The Asians are too busy making money to offend people like this.

You don't see "Frederick the Great" street or "Gandhi" street. Or "Muhammed, peace be upon that great name" street.

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[Post a comment](#)

Posted by rtheda on [05/15/09 at 7:44AM](#)

39TH IS ACTUALLY A VERY IMPORTANT NAVIGATIONAL AID. ITS A MAJOR STREET. WITHOUT 39TH TO FOLLOW, YOU DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE

YOU ARE OUT HERE AND WHERE THE NUMBERS ARE. THE NEXT MAJOR STREET IS 82ND.

THE CITY COUNCIL MUST NOT LIVE OUT HERE EITHER, OR THEY WOULD KNOW BETTER THAN TO SCREW AROUND WITH SUCH AN IMPORTANT STREET.

ITS REALLY LAUGHABLE TOO THAT THEY PICK 39TH, WITH NO LATINO/CHICANO/MECHA PEOPLE ON IT TO HONOR A HERO THAT HAD NO BENEFIT TO THE ENTIRE COUNTRY AND ONLY ADVANCED THE INTERESTS OF A SMALL PORTION OF THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY.

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Posted by 14freelove on [05/15/09 at 8:03AM](#)

"we have to have the courage to hurt people" said the planning commissioner.

the editorial board needs reciprocal courage to denounce this ugly power play without mealy-mouthed sops to its authors such as the word "rightfully" in the first sentence, and describing Chavez as one of "our heroes" later on. it needs the courage to recognize that when a racist calls someone else a racist, the accusation is weightless. you have nothing to lose but your white guilt.

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Posted by fraternal on [05/15/09 at 8:11AM](#)

The story behind selecting 39th Ave is part of a bigger scam in which certain hidden city officials actively helped these activists. The rules say only one street may have its name changed per year and we all remember how all sides blew it in 2007 with the Interstate fiasco.

This time, city legal advisors told the Guembes crowd to go ahead and apply for THREE POSSIBLE streets to change the names. In effect they said "Pick a street, any street, and once we find out which one offers the least resistance, we will back you on that!" And we see now what happened. The so-called "historians committee" on which NO HISTORIANS sit fumbled the ball badly. The Planning Commission simply out and out betrayed their duty and us citizens and fell for the rhetoric of Guembes et al. The majority actually seemed to believe that she was trying to honor Chavez! How dumb can people be?

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Posted by caramaru3 on [05/15/09 at 9:10AM](#)

Whoa Whoa Ed Numrich! (Hausafus?)

Your imagery is a bit much: wordy zealots equated with the Nazi murderers of Auschwitz? Finding new ways of masturbating in public?

You have got to be off your oats big fella. The editorialists were suggesting that the community--the entire regional community including the people of the city of Vancouver and Washington where the bridge will connect--should honor Cesar E Chavez by naming the Columbia Crossing after him.

How does one twist that into a nasty smear summoning up visions of Auswitz and masturbation in one comment? Cool off already! Ain't that big a deal.

Its politic posturing, not a matter of life and death, the board is dealing with here.

I think editorial is a very reasoned and reasonable proposal. Whether I like it or not (and I do like the compromise) its really up to the communities and entities involved, the politicos we elected and their surrogates to work it out.

I am just wondering how the good citizens of the sovereign state of Washington and the city of Vancouver feel about having their part of the future Columbia Crossing Bridge named by Portland, Oregon? I wonder how the Oregonian's editors see those good folks going along with their naming idea when we can't settle our own hash amicably without resorting to slurs and heinous insults on our side of the river?

Lets be a little more civil, please.

Editor's note: Caramaru, you misread a key fact in our editorial. We're suggesting that the new Trimet bridge, which will carry light rail, bikes and pedestrians over the river from downtown, not the Columbia River Crossing bridge, be named for Chavez

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Posted by 39er on [05/15/09 at 10:30AM](#)

I must admit I've been pleading with my wife to cancel the Oregonian for years. The journalism is not up to snuff IMO.

The recent article about Hispanics continued that tradition. The Hispanics seemed to be coming out of thin air. How on earth did they get to Oregon? You would never know from reading the O. They're coming it seems, and that's that. Like the weather.

This editorial however, is spot on. Kudos. They want to bloody lily-white Portlander's noses. Period. That is what this is all about. Chavez is just a name to use for ends. I doubt he would have wanted any part of this "process".

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Posted by xltzee56 on 05/15/09 at 11:15AM

rtheda says: "You know, you don't see 'Saigon' Street or 'Confucius' street.

The Asians are too busy making money to offend people like this."

Wow. Can you say "stereotype"?

39er asks: "The Hispanics seemed to be coming out of thin air. How on earth did they get to Oregon?"

Well, 39er, FYI, many of "them" were born here. Some travelled by car, train or plane. Just like lots of other Oregonians. Jeez...

Good editorial. While I like the idea of honoring Chavez, the renaming of streets (especially numbered streets). The bridge is an excellent idea.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by xltzee56 on 05/15/09 at 11:48AM

Last sentence of last post should read:

Good editorial. While I like the idea of honoring Chavez, the renaming of streets (especially numbered streets) makes no sense. The bridge is an excellent idea.

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Posted by 2large on 05/15/09 at 12:27PM

PBS has this quote on the website listed below:

"Years before his death, Chavez was asked by a union member if he wanted to be remembered by statues and public memorials. Chavez replied, 'If you want to remember me, organize!'"

<http://www.pbs.org/itvs/fightfields/cesarchavez.html>

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Posted by all4fairness on 05/15/09 at 1:33PM

Taxed is correct. It isn't about whether Chavez deserve recognition and it CERTAINLY isn't about racism. It is about money. If it is important to the committee, they need to address the real issue and raise the money to offset the cost to the business.

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Posted by Lynne97030 on 05/15/09 at 1:53PM

If the city commissioners can't find the "courage" to back the majority of taxpayers, who are complaining about being forced to fund the street-renaming at the expense of other projects considered more beneficial to us all, they are not representing the will of the people.

This issue reminds me of the gay marriage debacle sponsored by the Multnomah County commissioners a few years back.

Is there no way to vaccinate public officials against unseemly hubris?

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Posted by tehpeople on 05/15/09 at 3:22PM

Jump ahead of the game and name the new farmers market Chavez.

Then tell the street name changers that they already have something "named".

Why isn't racism against whites racism?

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Posted by peawee on 05/15/09 at 4:46PM

Three of the planning commissioners had their minds made up before anything was presented to them:

Ovalles said it was because of the people she spoke with during the Interstate debate and she wanted to honor her Latino brothers and sisters (she didn't say anything about honoring Chavez), and she also said the emails she got from people that said they had friends that spoke Spanish was racist.

Valdez controlled the entire meeting on the 12th. She told another member they had been "allowed" to make 5 points and she basically shut her up. She said if this was about a white man, there wouldn't have been this debate. She referred to Abe Lincoln who doesn't even belong in the same category as Chavez. By the way, she may be a citizen, but she was born in Mexico.

This is all about race. The racism comes from the committee wanting this re-name. The people against the re-naming never mentioned race. The TWO committee members did multiple times. Kathy Romero the wife of the other committee member said it is to honor brown skin.

Chavez didn't do anything with regards to Brown skin. It was about rights for fieldworkers.

They just happened to be mostly Mexican.

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Posted by peawee on 05/15/09 at 4:54PM

PLEASE READ:

Quote from Cesar Chavez:

"The Oregon story is important because we were trying TO KEEP THEM FROM SETTING A PRECEDENT. The only thing was my heart wasn't in those fights. They slowed us down terribly....."

Also, the head of the Historian panel has a direct connection to the UFW. He wrote a book that was endorsed by Dolores Huerta (sister-in-law to Chavez and co-founder of the UFW. Gilbert Paul Carrasco

As far as the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Dena Marshall the head of the paid committee to mediate with the Historian panel IS A MEMBER OF THE HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERC.

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Posted by peawee on 05/15/09 at 4:57PM

Guembes and Romero don't WANT A BRIDGE. No one seems to be listening to them. They said they would take a bridge, a park, or anything else AFTER they get a major street named for Chavez.

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[Post a comment](#)

Posted by smilepdxer on 05/15/09 at 7:19PM

I had lived in Santa Ana, California for 18 years. The population is largely mexicans (90% of 380,000). The city doesnt have a street named Cesar Chavez or any spanish name. All streets are english name or numbered streets. Only one place that name Cesar Chavez is Cesar Chavez High School. Compare to Portland, I m laughing. Name a new bridge Cesar Chavez is a good idea. Very simple and no cost. Everyone will be happy.

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Posted by maushard on [05/16/09 at 2:41AM](#)

My, The Oregonian's editorial writers are especially prickly these days.

The idea isn't to inflict pain, no matter what you believe one person says on the matter.

No, the idea is ensure a very obvious and public demonstration of demographic presence in a particular community. A permanent and constant recognition of the Hispanic community in the City of Portland. That's what this is about.

Doing so by renaming a major urban boulevard is a time honored and important gesture domestically and around the world.

Hey, when one side comes out on top after a revolution, or one generation takes its rightful place in serious power politics, then they usually eventually validate the changes by changing a few street names to some of their champions.

Street renamings are a bit old school, for sure. But tradition obviously has its place. And this is certainly one of them, I feel.

The generation that now takes a seat at this bountious Cascadia table has every right to leave behind its calling cards in our collective communal pysches.

Moreover, when people and organizations, like The Oregonian, actively attempt to deny the reasonable recognition of an ethnic or cultural group's presence, then you have to wonder Why?

Racism, xenophobia, nativism, Know-nothingness. Take your pick. They all apply.

Let's never forget that in the heyday of the all too real Oregon Klan, The Oregonian famously took a noncommittal head-in-the-sand position according to many serious historians.

Also, during the round ups of the entire Japanese-American community, US citizens included, in Portland in 1942, The Oregonian facilitated the ethnic cleansing with propaganda photo features of faux pleasant living conditions in the city's barb wire and guard-patrolled detention camp, located on the site of the present day Expo Center.

The Oregonian has a hell of a lot to live down and learn from. And it really has a butt full of nerve to advise ANY minority group about the rights and wrongs of honoring its heroes.

One more thing. Cesar Chavez was a labor leader, a union man fighting for civil rights. How can anyone therefore trust The Oregonian, an infamous union-busting company, to

offer any valid editorial discourse on the proper means to honor the people who devoted their lives to improving the living standards of the poor and working class?

When push comes to shove, this publication is not on our side. This editorial is just another example of how The Oregonian proves that maxim every day.

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Posted by upgrad203 on [05/16/09 at 5:24AM](#)

Maushard says: "Moreover, when people and organizations, like The Oregonian, actively attempt to deny the reasonable recognition of an ethnic or cultural group's presence, then you have to wonder Why?

Racism, xenophobia, nativism, Know-nothingness. Take your pick. They all apply."

maushard, The Oregonian is not denying the reasonable recognition of an ethnic or cultural group, they gave three alternatives along with an explanation as to why each would represent a reasonable recognition. The premise of the article is that a street with no Hispanic businesses and far removed from the field workers Chavez organized is not reasonable recognition.

Yes, there is precedent for naming roads in honor of an individual, as well as naming bridges, buildings, parks, cities, airports, rivers, neighborhoods, mountains, schools, boats, beaches, etc. But, why here, why now? Because of the personal agenda of a few people who are attempting exhibit their power, and when stopped, they play the race card.

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Posted by urlordchaos on [05/16/09 at 7:41AM](#)

I am from Phoenix, Az. and I can tell you that in all 35 years that I have lived I have never even heard of the man until this issue of street renaming came up. Now in all of these so called "Discussions", NOT ONCE have I actually seen a SINGLE good reason to rename 39th ave.

First off, I haven't even seen ANY ONE in any of these RECENT posts THAT ACTUALLY WANT THIS STREET RENAMED!

Second, IN MY OPINION, I think that those who are advocating this are NOT really honoring a man they think should be considered a "HERO". If this man really made that much of a difference, I really do not believe that HE would be happy with the so called "HONOR" that you are trying to bestow upon an area that really doesn't know his contributions to UNIONS.

Third, and most of all, I BELIEVE, that those people who TRULY HONOR the man, are not behind this. Just some wanna be Al Sharptons or Jesse Jacksons. And until they get "THIER WAY" they are willing to call ANYONE WHO IS AGAINST THEM IN THIER AGENDA "RACIST".

All I know is that I live on 40th ave near a street called "FAILING", and if this so called debacle actually succeeds, I am going to do my best to photograph "CEASER E. CHAVES and FAILING" signs together and POST THEM ONLINE JUST FOR GIGGLES.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT FOOLS?

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Posted by urlordchaos on [05/16/09 at 8:02AM](#)

IF YOU ARE SO CLOSE MINDED AS TO JUST STICK WITH A STREET, MAYBE, YOU SHOULD PLAY IN ONE.

"For our childrens sake." What B.S. is that?

If you had gone to SCHOOL, or were actually taught something, then maybe, JUST maybe, you would UNDERSTAND that renaming a STREET does NOT honor any one! All it shows is your inability to think ahead, and realistically, (no offense but IMO), you just want to impose your misconstrued beliefs on people who not only misunderstand your concepts of so called "HONOR" but who are also unable to comprehend why you would choose such a street that HAS NO RELATION to unions or farming or even near anything remotely HISPANIC of nature.

GET REAL! Open your eyes and realize this is 2009 not the PAST. HELLO!

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Posted by fraternal on [05/16/09 at 8:23AM](#)

maushard knows a lot about history and uses it in his attempt to downgrade the CONTENT of this editorial. I think most readers will evaluate the editorial on its own terms and disregard what the paper may or may not have done 50,60,70 years ago. I certainly disagree with many present-day editorial stances of the paper but judge each one on its own.

maushard himself admits that this drive by Guembes and her minions is a power-politics campaign which vitiates whatever purity a sincere move to honor Chavez would have. This may be akin to what fascist and communist dictatorships have done in Europe. It is hardly the way we want or expect in Portland.

Unfortunately the Chavez committee folks are not the only ones who come to this conflict with unclean hands. The city of Portland itself has never played it straight or fair with its own voter-citizens when it comes to street re-naming so in one way I do not

blame Guembes for taking them up on their own terms. From 1989 with the Union Avenue decree through the clandestine and irregular impositions of Naito and Rosa Parks, the city has ignored its own alleged "criteria" whenever it felt so inclined. When Guembes allied with Mayor Potter 2 years ago to ram Chavez down the Interstate Avenue, fortunately this sneaky move was caught in time and the affair exploded in a fiasco, but here we sit faced with the same effort again! Enough is enough!

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Posted by rockright on [05/16/09 at 8:42AM](#)

xlntzee56

Got to admit the Asians are very successful and don't concern themselves with such nonsense.

On the other hand the hispanics have all the Illegal Alien issues to deal with. Trying to justify letting millions of illegals overtax our system. And lots of other problems.

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Posted by watkinst002 on [05/16/09 at 11:11AM](#)

Next election I'm voting these council clowns out of office.

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Posted by zzrydr2002 on [05/16/09 at 11:44AM](#)

FWIW...#1.Chavez Crossing...#2.Chavez Market #3.Chavez (Delta) Park...#4.NONE...And let's move on...

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Posted by maushard on [05/16/09 at 4:12PM](#)

"Maushard, The Origionian (sic) is not denying the reasonable recognition of an ethnic or cultural group, (sic) they gave three alternatives along with an explanation as to why each would represent a reasonable recognition. The premise of the article is that a street with no Hispanic businesses and far removed from the field workers Chavez organized is not reasonable recognition."

Sorry, but renaming 39th Avenue is most certainly a "reasonable recognition." Chavez didn't fight only for Hispanic field workers and/or businesses. He obviously struggled to

bring union protection and improved living standards for everyone who needs those things.

Geesh, don't ghetto-ize your mind too, upgrad203.

Again, what right does The Oregonian have, what actual gravitas does it bring to the table that allows it to seriously disrupt the reasonable plans of fair-minded community leaders representing for their say in the community?

It matters that a major Portland street be renamed in recognition of the local Hispanic community. This is what its activist leadership has declared as a major goal. It process should, and probably will, be finalized soon.

The people who are driving the renaming campaign have earned the right to do this, through the blood, sweat and tears invested by Hispanics of all nations in our Portland community. We are enriched, enlived, and better off for their presence.

You simply have to seriously look at yourself in the mirror and honestly ask, "Why am I really opposed to nemaning 39th Avenue for Cesar Chavez?"

If Portland is ever going to be taken seriously among internationally recognized livable cities, then its retrograde, nativist tendencies must be overcome. They have held the city back long enough.

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Posted by fraternal on 05/16/09 at 4:30PM

If maushard can with a straight face call the Marta Gumbes crowd on the Chavez Committee "fair minded community leaders" who have "earned the right to do this", he either is seeing someone other than what we all have seen, or else perhaps he is himself a member of that tiny core group.

To whom does it matter that a major Portland street be re-named? I admit that our city politicians have given the worst possible example by the way they forced the destruction of Union Ave and Portland Blvd in devious sneaky ways, but this does not justify letting them do it again. And the Gumbes committee does not come to this present campaign with clean hands either. It was all too ready & eager to go along with former Mayor Potter in a stealth attack on Interstate Avenue. Fortunately enough cooler heads prevailed and that attempt ended in a laughable fiasco.

That should have, under the city's own rules, ended the Chavez drive for 2 more years, but renegade members of the city council secretly connived with the committee and encouraged it to try once again. Others also bent every rule possible to facilitate this new drive in all its dishonesty. All Portland needs to do to be taken seriously is to stand firm now and then abolish this farcical set of criteria and procedures so that we never again have to be dragged through this comedy by people pushing their own selfish political goals.

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Posted by maushard on 05/16/09 at 5:40PM

"Others also bent every rule possible to facilitate this new drive in all its dishonesty."

Dude, are you talking about the campaign to name a major Portland boulevard for Cesar Chavez, or the Bush invasion of Iraq. Lordy.

Hey, you got at least one thing right:

"He is seeing someone other than what we all have seen."

Open your imperial eyes.

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Posted by perskeptic on 05/16/09 at 7:43PM

maushard:

"Dude, are you talking about the campaign to name a major Portland boulevard for Cesar Chavez, or the Bush invasion of Iraq. Lordy."

This is an invasion to change a street name - you seem to have some knowledge - then acknowledge that this campaign for street name changing by the Chavez Committee is being tried out in different cities in the U.S.

"Cesar Chavez street rename
Dallas officials clash over a street's renaming"

<http://www.minorityjobs.net/article/1446/Dallas-officials-clash-over-a-streets-renaming-Cesar-Chavez-street-rename.html>

"Margarita Martín-Hidalgo: Grandstanding Hispanic activists

"http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/opinion/viewpoints/stories/DN-hidalgo_14edi.State.Edition1.2c4e130.html

Dude, as far as being imperial, the people that feel that a street should not be renamed are from all parts of society, all races, all religions, all political parties, from conservative to liberal, from union members to business owners, from old to young.

Perhaps the Chavez Committee is being imperious - Dude, you know what imperious means -- assuming power or authority without justification; arrogant and domineering.

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Posted by maushard on [05/16/09 at 7:54PM](#)

Yes, the Chavez Committee is assuming power, arrogantly and by domination over the entirety of Stumptown's multi-dimensional social tapestry. Yes.

We are all in grave peril!

That Chavez Committee has to be stopped. And stopped now.

It's interesting to meet yet another Portlander so insecure in their identity as to automatically feel threatened when someone else asserts theirs.

Good luck with that approach.

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[Post a comment](#)

Posted by perskeptic on [05/16/09 at 9:38PM](#)

maushard - No point being ridiculous even if I was using ridicule. Hyperbole just doesn't work.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by UPS68 on [05/16/09 at 10:43PM](#)

Naming a bridge sounds like a win-win. What is renaming a street except causing great irritation?

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by warkitten on [05/16/09 at 11:58PM](#)

"The Portlanders who rightfully seek to honor Cesar Chavez act as though it will have meaning only if there is controversy"

It's nice that the Oregonian shows its bias in the first sentence. Would someone remind me of the contributions Mr. Chavez has made to Portland (or Oregon for that matter)? I seem to have forgotten.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by maushard on [05/17/09 at 4:19AM](#)

perskeptic--

you're nothing but a bum running up against a brick wall. you gotta have better than that.

Come on.

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Posted by leo1234 on [05/17/09 at 5:57AM](#)

Wow, the Oregonian editors showed that they could produce a news article without vague smears on Sam Adams. What a surprise!

Not a bad article. I like the bridge crossing idea, or a permanent farmer's market. I has also proposed (earlier) that the revised / rebuilt Sellwood Bridge could be the Cesar Chavez Bridge.

I am sure the Sellwood neighborhood would not mind, and Lake Oswego is too far away to care.

Streets are too important to Portland's commerce and other considerations, to have more streets "named." Drop that idea.

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Posted by peawee on [05/17/09 at 9:46AM](#)

maushard

I am really very confused. I thought this re-name was to honor Cesar Chavez, not a race, color of skin or one small faction of this city/state.

When MLK was renamed it was to honor a great, and I mean great civil rights leader--not to honor color of skin or one race in the community.

When Abe Lincoln has streets named after him it has to do with his great presidency definitely not the color of his skin, a race or because two people formed a "committee" and want to antagonize the citizens by wearing them down emotionally and financially until they get their way. Only a street is good enough for them. There have been other very appropriate alternatives offered, and accepted for the common good of this entire community--including this minority.

They are creating a divide that may unfortunately continue for years in this area.

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Posted by chargersfann on [05/17/09 at 9:49AM](#)

so tell me folks why is it so unreasonable for mexico to name something after an american?i am so sick of this racist b.s. that we must name a street or bridge after mr chavez.when in the hell has mexico ever named any street after any american down in mexico?until mexico honors an american in mexico for once shut up all your chavez street name change supporters

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Posted by buckleyone on [05/17/09 at 10:07AM](#)

So who is Cezar Chavez? Why would we name a street after him? What did he do to change America so significantly that I don't know who he is? The taxpayers are going to pay for this change? Ah, this is the change we voted for...now I get it. Wake Up America, it's 11:45, time for all taxcheats, liars and American haters to get out of bed. Oh, sorry...I thought this was the White House.

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Posted by kedsokedso on [05/17/09 at 12:41PM](#)

chavez might have made life better for lettuce pickers and table grape pickers but how many are there? that is laudable. it cost we consumers more for those products.

why rename a grubby street. why not a catholic cathedral? chavez would have done more good by advocating birth control for his people.

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Posted by motherducker on [05/17/09 at 4:00PM](#)

it should be a prominent park. delta park sounds good. or a school. we name schools after prominent and and influential citizens all the time. high schools are named after presidents.

naming the interstate bridge after him would be laughable. good thing the portland city council doesn't get to name the bridge, phew.

i'm sick of hearing about about Guembes. they're using Chavez's legacy to gain power and notoriety for themselves.

and quit the racist baloney. it's pathetic and makes you sound stupid.

portland seriously needs to update it's policies on renaming streets.

and Sam Adams.....gtfooh

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Posted by washcomom on 05/17/09 at 7:10PM

Let's get real. 39th Street is a street that people use continually and never have one thought provoking moment to reflect on whomever the street is named after. It's just means to an end of transportation.

Take the naming to a different location - say like a park, a school, or area such as stated in the article, that begins to give a different annotation. Wouldn't it be a great thing to name a new charter school that teaches agriculture/horticulture after him?

To rename an existing street is like telling people that they have moved, without moving, and causing such pain and grief. The act of having to tell people where they live in the same house but is now a different street name is downright disheartening. How do you explain to others - I live in the same house, but a different address? Each and every person who owns something along 39th street will have to contact all their creditors - mortgage, credit card, utilities, car loan, etc, as well as the governments (local and federal) - about their new addresses. That's a BIG deal! And things get fouled up along the way.

It's ok not to give in to every idea that comes across the desk.

This almost seems like it needs to be voted on - since it because a change in the Portland demographic community.

And given this quote by Commissioner Lai-Lani Ovalles, "We have to make decisions that will hurt people emotionally..." Guess what? Emotions play a HUGE part in whether or not you are elected next election. Here's the emotion of the majority of Portland - The people not in office don't want it. There are only a few of you, and a majority of the rest of us. What don't you get about this whole thing?

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Posted by bluegordon on 05/17/09 at 7:37PM

Here is one more reason this is so ridiculous. We have a HEALTHCARE crisis in this country. On 39th Ave there numerous healthcare providers (doctors,dentists,chiropractors,ect.) Each one of these providers deal with literally thousands of insurance companies. Each practices will have to spend tens of thousands in

labor and material to notify each company of the street name change. And thats just one of the expenses they will incur.

Aren't we trying to figure out a ways to lower the cost of healthcare. And this ridiculous vanity project of a few people is threatening to gobble up critical HEALTHCARE dollars. People could potentially loose access to the care they need because of this nonsense.

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Posted by fraternal on [05/17/09 at 8:08PM](#)

the 2 or 3 activists pushing this demand do not give a damn about the pain, exzpanse and inconvenience it causes to everyone else. All they want is a power-politics victory they can boast of.

As to the Planning Commission, they are not elected so responsibility to the will of the voters ranks very low on their priorities. I suspect the Mayor appoints them....so what does THAT tell us about HIS objectivity?

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Posted by perskeptic on [05/18/09 at 9:05AM](#)

Please look at this website for saving ne 39th:

<http://www.save39th.com/>

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by rtheda on [05/18/09 at 10:51AM](#)

wow do you believe the Oregonian censored my post about no one stands up for anglo culture? What is wrong with defending the culture that the country was based on? Why are we abandoning our historical culture instead of defending it?

does anyone know how long it was up?

THESE ARE THE SAME ACTIVISTS WHO THINK CALIFORNIA SHOULD BE RETURENED TO MEXICO.

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Posted by peawee on [05/23/09 at 10:12AM](#)

There are only two on the Cesar Chavez committee that we know of:

Jose Romero, who apparently doesn't live in Portland and didn't pay taxes according to an article on the save 39th street website.

Marta Guembes: She is or was a Guatamalan Consul. Does anyone know if she is a US Citizen? I thought I had read where she sued Portland for racial profiling, but apparently that is not the case. She has been on a couple of committees to STOP racial profiling in Portland. Is racial profiling an issue in Portland?

I am really concerned when our system allows a couple of people as the above to cause such a disturbance to so many people in this great city.

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Posted by jeffxanne on [06/06/09 at 7:20PM](#)

Do not change the name. Name something "Cesar Chavez _____" when it is new, which is when names are typically given. Name the new I-5 Columbia crossing CESAR CHAVEZ MEMORIAL BRIDGE" similar to the Glen Jackson bridge, which everyone knows as the "205 bridge." With the expected growth of PDX in the coming decade, there will be plenty of opportunity to give our respects to historic civic leaders, including Mr. Chavez.

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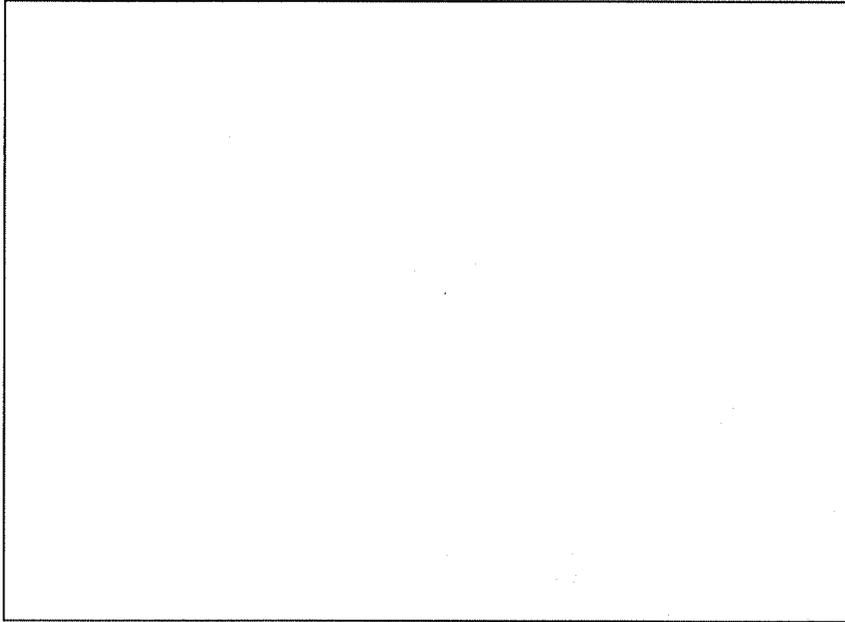
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Renaming 39th Avenue to Cesar Chavez Gains Steam

Added by [The Oregonian](#) on April 24, 2009 at 6:43 PM

With a historian panel's conclusion that 39th Avenue lacks historic significance, the proposal to rename it for Cesar Chavez gains steam. Pedestrians make their way down SE 39th Ave to cross SE Stark Street, Friday, April 24, 2009. Thomas Boyd/The Oregonian

Tags: [39th Avenue](#) | [Cesar Chavez](#) | [News](#) | [Oregon](#) | [Portland](#)

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Posted by **stingwall** on April 24, 2009 at 11:25 PM

YES, we have so many Mexicans in Portland that we need to rename a street after a Mexican immigrant! What a great idea!

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Posted by **malawijay** on April 25, 2009 at 4:55 AM

Actually, Cesar Chavez was an American, born in Arizona. His legacy ought to be honored, even in Portland.

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Posted by **agentbenz** on April 26, 2009 at 12:36 AM

I don't agree with renaming this street for Caesar Chavez.

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Posted by **peawee** on April 26, 2009 at 5:41 PM

Why should Cesar Chavez be honored in Portland? He was never here. He is NOT an American hero. He was a farmworker activist for Mexicans.

The Historian committee members are NOT historians.

People need to read about the true history of Cesar Chavez. He is not the person the Mexican/Latino population have made us to believe.

39th street has a VERy significant history in Portland.

The people that live on 39th did not have ample notice to go to the meetings.

It is difficult to find the articles on this re-naming in the media--including this newspaper.

Look at the committee heads: Carrasco: immigration attorney, Hispanic Bar Association, Represented a Hispanic college. Dena Marshall: Member Hispanic Bar, member Hispanic chamber of commerce.

This whole thing is being pushed by 5 or 6 people. They even had trouble getting the 2500 signatures required. They had to do 1300 over because they didn't follow the rules.

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Posted by **rtheda** on April 27, 2009 at 11:00 AM

The City Council wants 39th. This whole process was just a pretext. The fix is in. Why do you think they picked two streets with historical names and one numbered street? Of course a numbered street is going to be seen as having less historical significance. It's all fixed by the city council and decided already for you. Why don't you think they picked NW 23rd as the numbered street (or NE 181 in Rockwood, which is the most appropriate area because it's now a Latino area and actually has a Latino connection)? People are wasting your time trying to complain or you better get organized to stop it and go to the meeting on Tuesday.

REASONS AGAINST THE 39TH CHANGE:

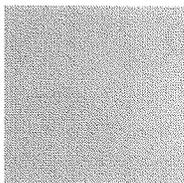
1. Belmont Hawthorne area is historically significant as the first suburb in Portland 'Sunnyside' in the 1880's with the trolley car line up Belmont and down Hawthorne. The area has no Latino connection historically and in fact actually has important Anglo historic significance. Anglo culture is important to protect as well as Latino culture.
2. 39th is an important navigational name, no matter what a Willamette University Law Professor says otherwise in a prior Oregonian article.
3. NE 181st is a far more appropriate street to rename because it actually has a Latino connection, with the Rockwood area filled with Latino oriented businesses and restaurants, salsa clubs, tiendras (sorry if that is misspelled, word is Spanish for small grocery store) etc. Why not rename a street that actually has a Latino connection. Why rename 39th in Belmont Hawthorne area that has Anglo historic significance?

I am very appreciative of Latino culture and have backpacked through 8 Latin American countries. I just don't think we should ignore the important Pioneer history of Oregon.

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clie

:

[Faint, mostly illegible text follows, appearing to be a list or series of entries. Some words like 'clie' and a colon are visible at the beginning of the text block.]

Panel finds 39th Avenue qualified to rename for Cesar Chavez

by James Mayer, The Oregonian

Monday April 20, 2009, 8:42 PM

The names Broadway and Grand Avenue have historic significance, more so than 39th Avenue.

That's the conclusion reached tonight by a historian panel analyzing a proposal to rename one of three Portland streets for labor leader Cesar Chavez.

The recommendations now go to the Portland Planning Commission, which will meet Tuesday, April 28. The City Council will make the final decision; a date has not been set.

City code allows streets to be renamed unless the existing names have historic significance. The panel held hearings on each street.

The panel had no trouble concluding that it was appropriate to name a street for Chavez. But determining the streets' historic significance was harder.

Broadway runs through the cultural district, the downtown retail core and Old Town/Chinatown before crossing the Willamette River and heading east through many neighborhoods. It was originally called Seventh Avenue in downtown, but when the Broadway Bridge was opened in 1913, the city changed the name to match.

Grand Avenue was originally called Fifth Avenue, but it was changed in 1893 after East Portland merchants sought a more imposing name. Opponents of a new name noted that Grand is part of a historic district.

Opponents of renaming 39th Avenue, a major north-south artery through the city, had less history to cite. But they argued that 39th's navigational benefits would be lost in a renaming.

The panel didn't buy that argument.

"The numbering system will survive if one street is renamed," said panel chairman Paul Carrasco, who lives in Portland and teaches at Willamette University's College of Law in Salem.

Another panelist, Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell, recommended that the city come up with a process of naming new streets and bridges, following a frequent suggestion from the hearings.

-- James Mayer;
jimmayer@news.oregonian.com

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 COMMENTS (93) [Post a comment](#)
 Posted by DaveJ2007 on [04/20/09 at 9:24PM](#)

All so we can make the City Council and the Mayor feel happy about themselves for being so progressive. I will continue to use "SE 39th," thanks very much.

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Posted by ranterguy on [04/20/09 at 9:26PM](#)

Finally some logic here! Mr. Chavez can be honored without changing an historic street name, making all maps obsolete, and having anyone who disagrees unfairly branded as a racist! Being as we are in Portland, I'm a little flabbergasted....

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Posted by BobArctor on [04/20/09 at 9:46PM](#)

I just went down and talked to 39th Ave. It nominates 82nd.

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Posted by sjl4540 on [04/20/09 at 10:08PM](#)

Tell me again why a street needs to be renamed after a very minor figure..

If you want to name a street after a major historical figure go for Jimmy Doolittle. At least he did something for everyone in the United States.

Why rename anything? Just build a new street.

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Posted by OverseasBeav on [04/20/09 at 10:10PM](#)

Overwhelmingly, the response of the public has been "NO" to renaming any street, great, shove it down our throats PC dorks. Sorry WK....no matter what they do, it'll always be 39th Ave to me.

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Posted by overlookjewl on [04/20/09 at 10:25PM](#)

Darn, I was hoping for Broadway so the West side of the city could engage in some Pc Bullsh*t.

C. Chavez is rolling in his grave for such a dishonor of intent.

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Posted by warkitten on [04/20/09 at 10:40PM](#)

For the love of all that's holy, drop this stupid idea already. No one but a vocal minority wants it changed. A vast vocal majority doesn't. It's 39th and will never be anything else.

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Posted by pdxchiro on [04/20/09 at 10:40PM](#)

Who is pushing so hard for a street name change? It seems like the people of Portland don't want it, so why is it being shoved down our throats?

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Posted by erikaren on [04/20/09 at 11:06PM](#)

I propose to rename 82nd Avenue as the "George Bush Parkway". 122nd Avenue as "Dick Cheney Boulevard".

And 4th Avenue in downtown Portland, from Union Station to Barbur Boulevard? Saddam Hussein Boulevard.

Imagine our City Hall on Saddam Hussein Boulevard. Along with the Multnomah County Courthouse.

(Disclaimer: I work on 4th Avenue. We use a PO Box, so it won't affect us that much, but it'll affect the other tenant in our building...who just happens to be more City offices.)

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Posted by chesterzen on [04/20/09 at 11:11PM](#)

Cesar Romero is my personal hero. I propose we name 38th and 40th after him.

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Posted by gilligan72 on [04/20/09 at 11:17PM](#)

This is ridiculous! Do we as residents of Portland get a vote?
Stop RENAMING the streets! Build a statue...paint a mural...leave the streets alone.

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Posted by tombdragon on [04/20/09 at 11:19PM](#)

Why do we have to name the streets? As a progressive community our streets don't need names and buildings shouldn't be cataloged by a number. Such things as addresses, names and numbers only further the capitalist free market agenda, and we cannot allow such an open system to exist, only to serve the rich. And what kind of racist name is "Portland" it must be offensive to some self interest group on some level? Such constraints need to be hidden and removed from our community!

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Posted by mb425 on [04/20/09 at 11:27PM](#)

chesterzen,

I'm ok with your idea as long as 39th (my street) is named after George Romero. He has done so much for the rights of the dead.

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Posted by PDXSocialist on [04/20/09 at 11:32PM](#)

I'm really glad this re-name went through. Cesar Chavez was a great advocate for the rights of farm workers. My great-grandparents were migrant workers, so I'm glad that someone who fought for the rights of people like them is finally be honored in Portland.

On the other hand, it's sad to see that so many people have opposed the re-name. Portland is a city with a sad, long history of racism and white supremism, and we still have a long way to go.

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Posted by puffy999 on [04/21/09 at 12:39AM](#)

Why, again, are they renaming a street after the Dog Whisperer?

/kidding, but I hope it gets someone's panties in a bunch

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Posted by pre4ever on [04/21/09 at 12:58AM](#)

Ah come on! At least name it "Ramblin Rod Road" because he made a positive contribution to generations of Portland kiddies!!!

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Posted by OverseasBeav on [04/21/09 at 1:01AM](#)

Preferring common sense to PC B.S. doesn't make you a racist or white supremecist PDXSocialist. I would never support the renaming of any street after any person (or after anything else for that matter) regardless of race/color/gender or whatever. It has nothing to do with race and everything to do with practicality. Get a clue. Typical response from a citizen of The People's Republic of Portland.

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Posted by leo1234 on [04/21/09 at 4:31AM](#)

Renaming Portland streets is a stupid idea. It should not be so easily controlled by a "panel" and the City Council. Bill Naito was no saint in the 1970s - 90s... why did he get a street?

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Posted by mcgee1969 on [04/21/09 at 7:57AM](#)

As a former Portland resident, I feel that renaming streets at this point is stupid. Being able to navigate through the city of Portland is what's so unique and simple. Every time I return to visit, after living in Portland for six years, I am able to find my way around the city partially because of the main streets remain the same. Question: is Chavez even an american citizen? I can remember the Hispanic community larger in Hillsboro- do they not have a chavez street over there????

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Posted by peakfun on [04/21/09 at 8:17AM](#)

In terms of human priorities in this city, this is a wrong expenditure of resources. With the projected social service cuts coming as a result of the economy in the tank, the latino community will have a difficult time accessing food, housing, and school assistance. Meanwhile their community's leaders are busy changing street names !?! instead of working toward food security??

Buen suerte --Good luck eating sign posts!!

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Posted by drbonsky on [04/21/09 at 8:24AM](#)

the soviet apparachiks running this town need to be shown the door. who votes for the clowns?

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Posted by metrohomer on [04/21/09 at 8:55AM](#)

Wouldn't this be more appropriate in Salem where we actually have a viable hispanic community.

The "whitest" big city in the United States sure has a guilty complex.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by noregister on [04/21/09 at 9:01AM](#)

Please keep in mind that this "historian panel", as the article mistakenly writes, contains NOT ONE actual historian.

Oregonian, please issue a correction.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by flyers73 on [04/21/09 at 9:19AM](#)

The Portland transportation dept needs something to do this summer. the city that works?

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by PDXLifer on [04/21/09 at 9:38AM](#)

Answers to some of the above questions can be found here:

<http://www.portlandonline.com/index.cfm?c=49756>

Updated Feb. 23, 2009.

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Posted by barack666 on [04/21/09 at 9:59AM](#)

To #2 state in unemployment (Oregon)

I wonder if #1 state in unemployment (Michigan) is struggling with street naming priorities? Or is this how they ended up as #1?

Just wondering.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by warkitten on [04/21/09 at 10:12AM](#)

barack666, this isn't a state issue. Good job genius.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by mb425 on [04/21/09 at 10:15AM](#)

"Bill Naito was no saint in the 1970s - 90s... why did he get a street?"

No idea. I still end up calling Front Avenue on sometimes when out of people ask me for directions. I hope I didn't send them into a frustrating situation.

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 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by warkitten on [04/21/09 at 10:17AM](#)

Since Nazi developed technology and Nazi's themselves contributed far more to the United States than Mr. Chavez ever did, can I just assume we'll get an Adolf Hitler avenue next? I mean, as long as we're on this ridiculous re-naming kick let's go all the way.

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Posted by mb425 on [04/21/09 at 10:20AM](#)

???

<http://www.portlandonline.com/index.cfm?c=49756>

FAQ #2: "A portion of Front Avenue was renamed Naito Parkway..."

FAQ #12: "Also, renaming only a portion of a street is not permitted."

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 [Post a comment](#)

Posted by oddballpdx on [04/21/09 at 10:30AM](#)

The part that bothers me the most is how predictable this whole thing has been. 39th will be renamed as it is easier to do that than say no to about 2 dozen people. It will always be 39th as 99.9% of the people will continue to remember it that way. This whole thing is a JOKE and has been a terrible waste of time and resources. Is there a way to start a counter petition to stop the renaming
? Maybe if enough signatures were collected we could rename the renaming. That seems like something the morons at city hall would go for.

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Posted by portlandlive on [04/21/09 at 10:44AM](#)

This is a done deal, who cares what people who live on the street and in the area think or want. This pandering to a small group of activists is crazy. Way to go Marta, are you going to shut up after this? Say hi to Herndon for me.

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Posted by beboxer on [04/21/09 at 10:45AM](#)

I am called a liberal. But I say:

Don't change the name.

Don't change the name.

Enough already. It was too big of a hassle in other cities. Unlike Mr. King, Mr. Chavez doesn't have a big majority of people who liked him.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by mb425 on [04/21/09 at 10:46AM](#)

"The Street Formerly Known as 39th"

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by ednumrich on [04/21/09 at 10:58AM](#)

My apologies. Couldn't get through all the comments and entries ahead of this one without uncontrollable laughter. What I did read is more cogent than anything from City Hall.

The suggestion is if voters want to recall Sam Adams, please take the rest (or most) of the city council with him. And, I repeat that "Randy Leonard" is at least a noun preceded by an adjective.

Ed Numrich
numrich@msn.com

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by PSCFlounder on 04/21/09 at 11:12AM

mb425

Front Avenue was changed to Bill Naito Parkway by then mayor and socialist leader Vera Katz in hopes the Naito family would donate some property to the city that the socialist party had their sights on. But it didn't work out that way.

Chiers

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by sufferpuppet on 04/21/09 at 11:21AM

Dog Whisper Ave. Good call.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by motherducker on 04/21/09 at 11:41AM

it's weird that one of the whitest cities in America calls itself diverse and names streets after minorities.

even though hardly any minorities actually live here. most of those live in "across the tracks" type neighborhoods.

we live in a very racist intolerant city. what's wierd is the great measures we take to pretend we don't.

keep portland weird!

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by snakespeare on 04/21/09 at 11:52AM

39th Mini Mart has a great selection of beers. They claim over 1,000 varieties. I guess they'll have to change their name to Cesar Chavez Boulevard Mini Mart.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by tehpeople on 04/21/09 at 12:29PM

My patience with this crud is all used up.

Let those America haters go back to Mexico and rename their streets.

But if it has to be done...

Union street already got screwed.

rename it Chavez for now, then Rosa Parks next year and something else every year.

Let the business name, street sign name and map name go back to Union, and let the "special" name change every year.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by Blittle on [04/21/09 at 12:38PM](#)

I wonder when "racist" will finally be as taboo as racial slurs are today. It's a firebrand term used to abuse and deafen opposition - a first ammendment right - and one that has been used several times on these blogs by oregonian staff. They're pandering to your sensitivities people!!! When someone accuses you of racism, just ignore them!

If you actually read the FAQs on the City of Portland website you will find that the city or commissioners have absolutely nil to do with the proposal to rename the streets. They have a responsibility to follow it through once the proposal has been received, the fee paid and the appropriate number of signatures received.

To me, 2500 signatures is not enough to change a major artery in this city. Perhaps we should strive to change the law?

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by Steavis on [04/21/09 at 12:41PM](#)

"Do we as residents of Portland get a vote?"

You forget, they sent out postcards to prop owners on Grand, Broadway and 39th.

Grand and Broadway said NO 10-1, 39th only said NO 9-1. They lost

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by Kuthla on [04/21/09 at 12:43PM](#)

Let's see...how many streets in Mexico are named after Americans?

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by Kuthla on 04/21/09 at 12:43PM

Let's see...how many streets in Mexico are named after Americans?

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by ean on 04/21/09 at 12:45PM

I still am saying that naming a bridge after the guy would be a better idea. One thing both sides can agree on is that this is a colossal waste of money. Time to figure it out and do it.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by GRH15 on 04/21/09 at 12:48PM

From what I can see, the opposition to the renaming has more to do with Principle, than actually having anything against Cesar Chavez. This is about a small group of people forcing thier desires on others. It is startin to feel like a rape.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by PSCFlounder on 04/21/09 at 1:00PM

Something for consideration. With his Hispanic heritage and soccer a popular Hispanic activity, rename Portland's soccer field in his honor. It would require this group to purchase the naming rights along with a yearly renewal fee of course. I am sure Merritt Paulson would be more than honored to participate in this movement.

Chiers

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by PDXLifer on 04/21/09 at 1:04PM

"Blittle"

I appreciate your comment because it shows you actually researched the subject online in the one resource available for establishing a procedure. Unfortunately, you may not realize that, as I had noted, the process was revised Feb, 2009. The City Code simply is changed by the city council to accommodate the whims of the city council. That's all. So to say they " ...have absolutely nil to do with the proposal to rename the streets. They have a responsibility to follow it through once the proposal has been received, the fee paid and the appropriate number of signatures received....," is unfortunately exactly what they want you to infer. But remember - THEY established the Code. And if something in

it doesn't work this time, they'll change it again. Try to find the Code that was superceded by this. Good luck!

And I agree, 2500 signatures is a travesty. Try to find the legislative(?) history leading to this number. Good luck!

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by nwokie on 04/21/09 at 1:06PM

How about naming a street for Lt Gen Winfield Scott, the American General that captured Mexico city in the Mexican American war.

Or Davy Crocket, hero of the Alamo. Hey how about Alamo street?

Gen Robert E. Lee street has a nice ring, he was Gen Scotts chief Aide in the Mexican American war.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by Blittle on 04/21/09 at 1:18PM

Thanks PDXLifer - I didn't realize that the revision coincided with the proposal.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by RECRis on 04/21/09 at 1:33PM

Why upset any Portland Street? Wait and name a bridge or name a street in Salem, That is our capital and it would be more fitting.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by Menefree on 04/21/09 at 1:54PM

Panel chair Carrasco is perhaps unaware that many of the currently numbered avenues in the SE section of the grid once bore actual names. Were he to walk along Gladstone St, for example, he might observe those names etched into curb tops. That is, it was once deemed appropriate, perhaps efficient, to eliminate street names in favor of numbers. It would appear conveniently capricious of Mr Carrasco, et al, to argue now that there is less reason for changing a numbered avenue than some other thoroughfare.

Alternatively, all of the numbered avenues should be restored to their original names. Such restoration might stimulate the sense of place that, for the most, exists only in the rhetoric of those who would so dishonor a great leader like Cesar Chavez by pursuing this folly.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by [steve44](#) on [04/21/09 at 2:08PM](#)

Instead of naming streets after dead people, why not sell the rights like they do for stadiums? Budweiser street could cross Kraft macaroni and cheese ave. Safeco could advertise and free up the naming rights for Seattle's ballpark for Ballpark franks.

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[Post a comment](#)

Posted by [fraternal](#) on [04/21/09 at 2:10PM](#)

Most of you posting and reading comments here agree [as do I] that the whole process has become a travesty in which certain city officials are helping the Chavez activists manipulate and make a mockery of the rules. The question is: What can we do about it? I have sent letters and e-mails to the Mayor and City Commissioners voicing my objections. We, the real voting citizens of Portland, have to let them know they must do two things: turn down this present proposal loudly and clearly; then delete Chatpr 17.93 from the city code so that no other small noisy group can wreak such havoc again. Enough is enough?

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by [sxweiss](#) on [04/21/09 at 2:18PM](#)

How many people know the following about Cesar Chavez?

From Wikipedia:

"The UFWA during Chávez's tenure was committed to restricting immigration. César Chávez and Dolores Huerta fought the Bracero Program that existed from 1942 to 1964. Their opposition stemmed from their belief that the program undermined U.S. workers and exploited the migrant workers. Their efforts contributed to Congress ending the Bracero Program in 1964. In 1973, the UFW was one of the first labor unions to oppose proposed employer sanctions that would have prohibited hiring undocumented immigrants. Later during the 1980s, while Chávez was still working alongside UFW president, Dolores Huerta, the cofounder of the UFW, was key in getting the amnesty provisions into the 1986 federal immigration act.[8]

On a few occasions, concerns that undocumented migrant labor would undermine UFW strike campaigns led to a number of controversial events, which the UFW describes as anti-strikebreaking events, but which have also been interpreted as being anti-immigrant.

In 1969, Chávez and members of the UFW marched through the Imperial and Coachella Valleys to the border of Mexico to protest growers' use of undocumented immigrants as strikebreakers. Joining him on the march were both Reverend Ralph Abernathy and U.S. Senator Walter Mondale.[9] In its early years, Chávez and the UFW went so far as to report undocumented immigrants who served as strikebreaking replacement workers, as well as those who refused to unionize, to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.[10][11][12][13][14]

In 1973, the United Farm Workers set up a "wet line" along the United States-Mexico border to prevent Mexican immigrants from entering the United States illegally and potentially undermining the UFW's unionization efforts.[15] During one such event in which Chávez was not involved, some UFW members, under the guidance of Chávez's cousin Manuel, physically attacked the strikebreakers, after attempts to peacefully persuade them not to cross the border failed.[16][17][18]

I just think one needs to look at all sides of a person when identifying whether they are the wonderful example that in the past we've attributed to Thomas Jefferson and others.

It doesn't matter what anyone's ethnicity is but it does matter what kind of person they are.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by snakespeare on [04/21/09 at 2:26PM](#)

So, you're saying, the guy opposed illegal immigration, and that's a bad thing?

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by savepdx on [04/21/09 at 2:31PM](#)

I would rather see Portland City Hall renamed Chavez Center. Seriously.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by ewebetcha on [04/21/09 at 2:35PM](#)

Again. How about naming the "day labor shelter" after Chavez?

That way, you don't have to RENAME anything, no signs to change, no business cards to change, no addresses to change.

Very clean.

Just Do It.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by Buff1 on [04/21/09 at 2:36PM](#)

Finally! Finally the WHITE racist, chauvinist, sexist, homophobic, classist, imperialists of Portland will bow their heads in reverence to Cesar Chavez. I mean really, in a civilized country how have they gotten away with the outrage of not having honored him already? Philistines!

Now we must take the next step. I propose we rename all of Portland's streets for the people's heroes. Come on my fellow travellers lets all meet tomorrow at noon at the corner of NE Che Guavara Blvd and Chairman Mao Ave. Then we can really speak truth to power! Oh wait I forgot time and direction are the hegemonic chains of Western imperialism. When the Sun Mother is high in the direction of Cold Wind and Father Mountain!

What a travesty. I'm emberassed to tell people I'm from Portland anymore...

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Posted by tombdragon on [04/21/09 at 3:07PM](#)

Just so we have a Historical reference - in 1915 4th Avenue was renamed "Union Avenue" - to celebrate the defeat of the "Confederate Aggressors" in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the end to the Civil War. Our neighbor in the mid sixties would still refer to it as 4th Avenue 50+ years later because of the controversial name change. I find it to be comical that the name "Union" was thought to be racist, and MLK replaced it. Arguably "Union" has more historical significance than Martin Luther King, and Cesar Chavez will never be as significant as MLK. If Cesar Chavez needs a street, make it one in a new subdivision built on a former vegetable field.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by sxweiss on [04/21/09 at 3:33PM](#)

Snakespeare,

I hope I've got that right and it's not Shakespeare.

No-o-o I'm not saying that opposition to illegal immigration is a bad thing.

I am saying that for anyone to threaten or abuse ANYONE, ANY TIME so that you can move an agenda forward is at least unethical and I just don't think unethical people deserve monuments to their success just as I would oppose a monument to Adolf Hitler who was successful at abusing non-Arayan people or so-called religious leader Jim Jones

for convincing people to drink toxic drinks for his purpose or a serial killer because his victims were prostitutes.

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Posted by ednumrich on [04/21/09 at 3:39PM](#)

Let's name the new bridge after the Mayor's one-time boy friend. Twelve lanes wide . . . ?

Ed Numrich

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Posted by idalou on [04/21/09 at 3:48PM](#)

I used to work in the library of the Oregon Historical Society and patrons came in all the time looking for information, maps, and photos about their homes and neighborhoods. One reference book we ALWAYS had to use to help them track back a specific address contained a list of all the street name changes in Portland. There were HUNDREDS of changes. (During WWI a lot of German street names were changed, for example.) It has been interesting watching all the angst and wailing that has arisen over the name change of a few streets. People act like street names are sacred and literally etched in stone, never to be changed, when it has been done many, many times before.

I grew up a few blocks from Union Ave. and it took me years to refer to it as Martin Luther King Blvd, because habits are hard to break. But, now it is easy to remember. I live a few blocks from 39th Ave. and I will enjoy calling it Cesar Chavez Blvd.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by PDXLifer on [04/21/09 at 3:50PM](#)

Sorry, "ednumrich," but it won't happen.

Beau Bridges is already taken!

Ba-da-bing!

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by mb425 on [04/21/09 at 3:58PM](#)

idalou

I think I can buy into what you are proposing. After a few years when I get bored living on Cesar Chavez Blvd. I would really like people to consider renaming it to George Romero St.

We needn't fear the Gray Man.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by elduderino77 on [04/21/09 at 6:57PM](#)

Has this committee that is shoving this down our throats considered the cost to redo all street signs and direction signs, AND the business cost to reprint and republish everything with the new address? Not the best time for tight budgets to have to spend a ridiculous amount on unnecessary costs. I have no problem admiring people that have accomplished great things in this country, but I think it's clear that Portlanders don't want this, and the cost would be too great for all businesses impacted.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by ctesiphon on [04/21/09 at 7:11PM](#)

I demand the large local Russian and Ukrainian community be honored by renaming streets after Igor Sikorsky (invented the helicopter, pretty significant I think), Erwin Chargaff (whose pioneering work in genetics allowed Watson and Crick to model DNA as a double helix), Moshe Feldenkrais (developed the Feldenkrais Method, which should be familiar to many Portlanders in the "alternative medicine" field) and definitely one after Mikhail Gorbachev, without whom the Cold War would never have ended.

Let's not forget the countless famous Scandinavians, Chinese, Irish, Germans, Vietnamese, British, Korean, Japanese and others who have contributed to American society but whose people now have no way to honor them in Portland by naming an existing street after them.

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[Post a comment](#)

Posted by fraternal on [04/21/09 at 7:12PM](#)

responding to duderino & others, the advocates of the street re-naming pay very little even of the processing cost. We the city tax payers will pay well over \$100 thousand to change all the street signs. Neither the city nor the advocates pay private businesses one red cent for the trouble they cause. Isn't this a great city??

On top of this, remember that according to the FAQ info, the 2500 signatures used to launch this whole mess could come from 16 year olds, whether here legally or not. WOW!! Of course we voters have no say whatsoever so don't even try. When we did in the 1980s over Union Ave, the court slapped us down on a legalese pretext.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by elduderino77 on [04/21/09 at 7:29PM](#)

Exactly my thoughts, that's where I was going with my statement. The advocates for renaming the street will not have to pay a dime, but instead the cost will be completely out of the business owners and taxpayers pockets. Ya know what name sounds good? 39th avenue. Leave it as it is.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by ednumrich on [04/21/09 at 7:31PM](#)

Well, there's also a beer brand "a head" of Sam himself.

That leaves "breed love". We went through that over Vietnam.

And lost that war to arrogance and hubris as well.

Ed Numrich

numrich@msn.com

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by goldiemyear on [04/21/09 at 7:36PM](#)

I'm amazed this issue is still being argued. It seems the main argument is the problem with everybody having to change their address. The SIMPLE solution is to just name the next bridge or park after Chavez. Maybe the new I-5 bridge? I think a park or bridge would be a more fitting tribute than a street.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by phosphorus on [04/21/09 at 8:51PM](#)

No goldiemyear, I think the REAL argument and problem is that a lot of people are "bleeping" tired of having small, vocal minorities cynically using the protections and freedoms of this nation to force their agendas and prejudices on the rest of us. We passed laws to protect minorities and stop discrimination and, somehow, they have been turned around and used as a tool to bully, harass and punish the majority for their legitimate opinions. As Blittle wrote, the cry of "racist" is commonly used as a means of intimidating opposition and when the facts fail these advocacy groups, that is what they resort to. This same tactic is also used by many other groups, the latest example is Miss California being criticized and punished at the Miss USA contest for simply stating she didn't personally believe in gay marriage.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by UPS68 on [04/21/09 at 9:08PM](#)

don't change any numbered street. period.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by wildriver on [04/22/09 at 2:37AM](#)

If they rename 39th Ave. to Cesar Chavez Ave; then lets get a petition started to rename Cesar Chavez Ave. to 39th Ave.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by whadyamean on [04/22/09 at 6:02AM](#)

This is exactly the reason I will leave Portland - we have an ineffective, lying mayor pedophile, a city council that ignores the wishes of the citizens that they represent, and the entire city/county government that is unresponsive. We have too many pressing issues to even consider naming anything after anybody - solve the real problems then worry about this PC BS. Get a grip.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by OddBall on [04/22/09 at 6:10AM](#)

If they rename any street after Senor Chavez it should be MLK Blvd.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by fraternal on [04/22/09 at 7:27AM](#)

For wildriver and others: the City officials who wrote the rules knew very well that we true residents would start demanding exactly what you say, i.e. apetition to RE-name these changed streets back to their original names. So they DELIBERATELY wrote the rule that you can petition to re-name a street ONLY after a PERSON. That made it impossible to try to change MLK back to Union and would have the same effect on trying to change Chavez back to 39th. These guys know exactly what they are doing and will never listen to the voice of the people unless you get out there and tell them so. Grrrrrrr.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by mosscottage on [04/22/09 at 8:06AM](#)

You need to understand that the street renaming has nothing to do with honoring Chavez, it is all about taking something very dear and loved (a current street name) from the Gringo...European American...Whites and, yes, shoving it down their throats.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by donovan29 on [04/22/09 at 8:38AM](#)

The city has no money with which to reimburse all those who have to change letterheads, billing addresses, and all the other bothersome and costly details because of a name change.

If determined, at least wait until you are back in the black and can afford the reimbursement.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by donovan29 on [04/22/09 at 8:38AM](#)

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Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by donovan29 on [04/22/09 at 8:39AM](#)

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If determined, at least wait until you are back in the black and can afford the reimbursement.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by peawee on [04/22/09 at 8:45AM](#)

Martha Guembes the head of this Cesar Chavez re-naming committee:

1- the 2500 signatures needed: half didn't qualify, they had to re-do

2-she is currently involved in claiming the Portland police do racial profiling

3-She is trying to push ESL through the Oregon school systems--it nearly bankrupted California

4-In 1994 she sued the city with another Hispanic for emotional distress.

Chavez was a Mexican-American.

Latinos are 4% of Oregon, probably on 2% are Mexican.

Don't the rest of the 98% of Portlanders get a "vote" in this decision?

It isn't Cesar Chavez street yet:

Go to the Portland City site: voice your opinion
On the 28th there is an open public meeting with the planning commission.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by peawee on [04/22/09 at 8:50AM](#)

fraternal:

Yes, there is something we can do: I actually answered you post on the April 13th post site.

Let's get a petition and go door to door on 39th street in opposition to the re-name.

This small group only had to get 2500 signatures to ASK to re-name a street.

Go to the city of Portland site: There were postcards sent to all residents/businesses on the asked for streets: they came back with 87% or higher opposed to re-naming.

Swamp the planning commission with your opposition letters or emails before the 4-28th meeting. ATTEND the meeting.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by raindawg on [04/22/09 at 10:02AM](#)

I've spent close to 12 months traveling in Latin America over the past 20 years. I'm reasonably well educated in Latin American history, workers rights, and the struggles and accomplishments of Cesar Chavez that warrant commemoration.

But this whole street renaming thing is moronic.

Naming new buildings or institutions after leaders makes sense.

Is there any logical reason why 39th needs to be renamed? No. If it is renamed, shouldn't it be named after someone who actually had a connection to it.....say, one of the greatest biologists of the 20th century who was also a great American that took personal and professional sacrifice to stand up for rights he believed in.....Linus Pauling, anyone? He grew up at the corner of 39th and Hawthorne, NOT Hawthorne and Chavez!!!

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by idalou on [04/22/09 at 10:13AM](#)

"Let's get a petition and go door to door on 39th street in opposition to the re-name."
says Peawee.

I live two blocks from 39th and don't mind the change to Chavez Blvd. But, based on some of the ugly comments on this discussion board, I would be terrified if I lived on 39th and someone asked me to sign a petition against the change. I would be worried about my safety if I refused to sign.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by chargersfann on [04/22/09 at 10:15AM](#)

tell me why do we need to name a street after chavez just to appease the latino community?i dont see any streets in mexico named after american icons like,washington,lincoln, eisenhower,reagan and etc.if the latinos wanted a street named after chavez so badly then explain to me why not one of them ever marched in the streets down in mexico and demanded that?sorry until mexico for once names something after an american they sorry no street for chavez because chavez has never done or ever did crap for the average oregonian and means absolutely nothing to us

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by hjplatt2 on [04/22/09 at 10:41AM](#)

On the list of things our city leaders need to get done, this is a distraction in a very troubling time for our economy.

There are many historical individuals we could honor with street names.

Why not honor some of our residents with economic development instead....

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by mb425 on [04/22/09 at 11:26AM](#)

Thanks peawee for info we can act on. If this is plan A, then plan B needs to be what wildriver said, but instead of renaming back to 39th (which apparently can't be done), Linus Pauling sounds great to me. What an inspiration for being educated, innovative, a contributor for the greater good...and he's a local.

idalou,

Are you sure you're in the right place? This is where the fun people hang out. Way to try and frame people as being unreasonable by claiming you fear for your life. If you want real trouble, just wait till I send some of the zombie horde from my basement to come live at your house.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by exiled1 on [04/22/09 at 11:35AM](#)

idalou,

"would be terrified if I lived on 39th and someone asked me to sign a petition against the change. I would be worried about my safety if I refused to sign."

Really? Ugly? Soooo, anyone who does not buy off on a vocal minority force feeding the renaming os streets is making ugly comments? Wow. Maybe people are sick and tired of having P.C. and diversity shoved down their throats.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by nwokie on [04/22/09 at 11:43AM](#)

Winfield Scott, would be an approprite name for a stret in Mexico City.

Robert E. Lee would be another, maybe John J Pershing or George Patton

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by peawee on [04/22/09 at 2:17PM](#)

Testing-my last post wouldn't go through

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by leecory on [04/23/09 at 6:13AM](#)

Why dont we change the name of the city to Obamagrad , and pray to the east on our government issued prayer rugs while we are at it . Why not a simple statue in the park for a simple man ? this is more soviet style , revisionist mind control

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Posted by peawee on [04/23/09 at 10:17AM](#)

Go to the City of Portland Web Site

Click on the Cesar Chavez re-naming at the top.

Email the planning commission and let them know you do not want ANY street in Portland re-named Cesar Chavez.

Public Meeting on Monday, April 28th.

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

[Post a comment](#)

Username (Don't Have a Username? [Sign up here](#)):

Password:

Remember Me

Letters to the editor: Cesar Chavez: Bridge, School, Market?

by Readers

Wednesday April 15, 2009, 8:00 PM

Print publication: Thursday, April 16, 2009:

I applaud the efforts of the Cesar E. Chavez Boulevard Committee. Its commitment to honoring an American hero and advocating for the first public and permanent recognition of a Latino public servant is commendable.

Three public hearings took place allowing Portlanders to share their opinions and viewpoints. A panel of historians is currently deliberating and a recommendation will soon be made. With the process well underway, I am appalled by The Oregonian's latest editorial proposing that a yet-to-be constructed TriMet bridge be named for Chavez instead.

The Oregonian is simply finding an easy fix to avoid conflict. They would rather have the community wait until 2015 for a possible bridge than to rename a street. Let's finish the original process the editorial board endorsed and move on.

DAVID MARTINEZ
North Portland

I commend The Oregonian's editorial board for proposing that the new Willamette River light-rail bridge be named for Cesar Chavez. This action will remove much of the hostility and animosity toward the Hispanic community that was created with their street name change agenda.

I urge the planning commission and the city council to follow your lead and endorse this change.

GREG TENNEY
Northeast Portland

On page two of the Metro section, April 7, we learn that the Cesar Chavez street naming debate continues. On page three of the same paper, we learn that Portland Public Schools needs to rename Clark K-8 @ Binnsmead school. Why not get together and make everyone happy?

DENNIS POKLIKUHA
North Portland

Why doesn't everyone quit bickering about naming a street or bridge after Cesar Chavez and name the Portland Farmers Market after him. After all, wasn't that what he was all about -- farm workers' rights?

GINNY VAN LOO
Milwaukie

One of the interesting things about living in Portland is how proud we white folks are about our tolerance of others. But when asked to slightly perturb the numerical regularity of our Eastside avenues our response is, "You ask too much!"

White culture, though for the most part based on Christian roots conveniently overlooks the central teaching of that faith -- "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Now, nobody is asking any Portlanders to lay down their lives in this street-naming business, but merely to relinquish a smidgen of our privilege. If indifference rather than hate is the opposite of love, in what light does our refusal cast us?

We've heard much testimony about the civic and personal history vested in the name "39th." If we are concerned with history, perhaps we had best be making some history ourselves and try to transform this city into a place that is truly, rather than theoretically, welcoming to people who seek justice. I hope that every 10-year-old riding down what is now 39th Avenue will someday ask, "Momma, who was Cesar Chavez?"

JACK C. STRATON
Southeast Portland

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COMMENTS (15) [Post a comment](#)

Posted by BellaBelotti on [04/15/09](#) at 11:09PM

"A panel of historians"
David, actually, they aren't.

"The Oregonian is simply finding an easy fix to avoid conflict."
David, I think the Oregonian's intentions are admirable, but I too disagree with them.
No easy fixes!
No compromise!
No street re-naming!

"we white folks"
"White culture, though for the most part based on Christian roots"
Jack, why do you bring race and religion into the Cesar Chavez issue?
This is a street renaming issue.

"transform this city into a place that is truly, rather than theoretically, welcoming to people who seek justice"
Jack, what are you talking about?
Which people are seeking justice?
Certainly not the people who demand one of the three streets they chose be renamed - in spite of the wishes of 91% of the polled residents of those streets.

"People who seek justice"
You must be talking about the home and business owners on Broadway, Grand and 39th who just want to live and let live and not have a street name change stuffed down their throat. Jack, most of us do truly already welcome these neighbors.

"I hope that every 10-year-old riding down what is now 39th Avenue will someday ask, 'Momma, who was Cesar Chavez?'"
Jack, I hope that won't be necessary. I hope by the time something is named for Chavez, all 10 year olds will know Chavez was an American who fought valiantly for farm workers' rights and who fought against illegal immigration from Mexico, but who lost that fight and consequently his union.

For those of you not privy to the Cesar Chavez renaming controversy, this is a power play by illegal alien supporters to show their strength and connections with Portland city government by getting a major Portland street renamed for Cesar Chavez. Chavez/illegals - oh the irony.

These illegal alien supporters are not interested in compromise. They see no strength in negotiation. I'm telling you, it's a power trip.
Don't believe me?

Once something is named for Chavez we will get a prominent appearance by the United Farm Workers - no, not the labor union. The UFW is now nothing more than an illegal alien support group which would like nothing better than another feather in its cap.

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Posted by snolly on 04/16/09 at 1:13AM

I say someone needs to pull 2500 signatures together to rename a street after say...MARMADUKE - the old Great Dane that brought so much to the city of Portland. If someone has the time and effort to organize a small signature gathering campaign and collect a couple hundred bucks, then I think we could make a complete mockery of Portland's street renaming process. This would thereby force the city to "rethink" the process in order to make it more difficult or just flat impossible like it should be.

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Posted by ednumrich on 04/16/09 at 3:30AM

What if the time and taxpayer money spent on this Hispanic ego trip were instead devoted to the arts that it would fund an endowment at the Portland Art Museum? Or, perpetual "free" days in the name of Cesar Chavez?

How about 2500 signatures to tar and feather the entire city council and sappy Sam on this one, and the destruction of Memorial Coliseum while at it?

Ed Numrich

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Posted by sadoggie on 04/16/09 at 8:24AM

I think that we need to name a street after people who directly served the community in and around Portland. Some possibilities include but are not limited to: George Freese, Terry Shrunk, Ron Tonkin, Kevin Duckworth, Linus Pauling, Terry Baker, Clyde Drexler, Arnie Schmutz or Jack Bionda. At least these people lived and were involved in the community. Nothing against Chavez but I don't believe there is a record of even one days visit to the city.

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Posted by wnd on 04/16/09 at 9:20AM

How about "Dorothy English Way" to commemorate a classy woman who fought for property rights hereabouts? Multnomah County currently owes her (estate) more than \$1 million dollars in proper respects.

As for Chavez, perhaps, the bridge over I-5 near the day labor p/u site?

Si, and no one will have to change their formal address, as in 'kowtowing' to Portland's pithy wierd council!

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Posted by michael22 on 04/16/09 at 12:03PM

These comments are getting way off track. This isn't the time or place to start talking about honoring other people.

Chavez appears worthy of honor, but street renaming is not the right solution. There are definitely some (hopefully not all) street renaming supporters who are indeed on a power trip. If you don't agree with the street renaming, they will label you a racist, no questions asked.

As for the 10-year old asking who Cesar Chavez was, the follow-up question will be "Why did they choose to rename 39th Street? It doesn't seem to be tied in any respect to who Chavez was or what he stood for"

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Posted by derkstoneweb on 04/16/09 at 2:07PM

Whatever street is named after Cesar Chavez should be named after Vera Katz 1 year later. She did more for this City then anyone else in recent history. And what hate group would ever dare to attack this woman?

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Posted by fraternal on 04/16/09 at 2:39PM

Greetings to all of you sharing my desire to stop this street-renaming now once and for all and at the same time get the City Council to repeal Chapter 17.93 of the city code which allows such nonsense to happen again.

If you want a real shock, go to the city's official web site, click on the Chavez info and read 17.93 for yourself and then read the FAQs which show how the city attorneys have interpreted it to our detriment.

For those wishing to play games by re-naming a street after Marmaduke or Vera Katz, the rules specify it can be named only after a real person who has been dead for 5 years.

Tough luck!

But here's one that will really frost folks like you and me. The code specifies that the 2500 signatures supporting the proposal must come "from legal residents of the city at large." Now you or I might think that should mean "registered voters" as it does on most measures. But NO! The city attorney has defined this to include anyone age 16 or over living within the city and intending to remain here. Leaving aside the likely inclusion of illegal immigrants, this also means that teenagers can start this city process and yet we the registered voters will never be allowed final say. This is INTOLERABLE. Contact your city commissioners and the Mayor as I have done. They do NOT likely read these

comments. Don't leave them in ignorance of the majority views of us voters. There are even worse matters I will raise in a future posting.

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Posted by fraternal on 04/16/09 at 6:04PM

Fellow fighters! I fear our postings amount to merely preaching to the choir. Please join me in writing to the Mayor and the 4 city commissioners pointing out as many good reasons as you can think of for rejecting the Chavez street name change. I hope you might also ask them to delete 17.93 from the city code so we never again have to confront these idiocies.

The Planning Commission meets on Tuesday April 28 and will hear testimony. Your views cannot hurt, even if I have little confidence in them listening to us. I'm almost as sceptical about the City council unless we can work up a louder public tide of outrage. I'm looking for ways. Does anyone have any suggestions?

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Posted by peawee on 04/21/09 at 3:12PM

Yes, since 39th street was the only one that is going to be recommended by the Historian panel, I suggest we go door to door on 39th and get as many signatures as possible against the re-naming.

It only took 2500 to get it before the board. They already have more than 2500 cards back saying that they do not want a street re-named Cesar Chavez.

The two "Historian" heads were: Gilbert Carrasco:teaches immigration law, member of the Hispanic bar association, and more, Dena Marshall: member Hispanic Bar Association, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, interpreter for the Farmworkers Health project and more.

I was at the meeting last night. Carrasco was the only one voting in favor of the Hispanics all three times (actually he abstained once when the other two said no to Broadway).

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Posted by peawee on 04/21/09 at 3:15PM

fraternal:

Did you attend any of the meetings?

Martha Guembes, heading the Cesar Chavez task force, is also currently suing (I believe) the Portland Police Dept for racial profiling. She is trying to get ESL enacted in the

public schools ESL bankrupted the California school systems. She also sued the city of Portland in 1994 for emotional distress. There is only 4% Latino in Portland. Chavez was Mexican. Mexicans only account for about 2% in Portland.

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Posted by peawee on [04/21/09 at 3:19PM](#)

Portlanders should be outraged.

Cesar Chavez's legacy is spread because of the Cesar Chavez Foundation--which makes millions on his name.

Illegal immigrants wave his flag for amnesty.

He designed this flag after the Nazi flag (Per his statement in Cesar Chavez, Autobiography of La Causa)

I lived in Salinas in 1970, when he was terrorizing our town. I testified at these meetings, but his legacy is so strong because somany were taught only the very positive in school. Another did testify about his strikers throwing bleach on the produce in stores, so I wasn't the only one with negative memories.

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Posted by peawee on [04/21/09 at 3:30PM](#)

Carrasco was the only historian to comment on why Chavez is an appropriate person to name a street after:

"Because even those who didn't want the street named in their backyard, still thought he was an American hero." Because he was respected by the Kennedys, MLK.

Well--he was respected by the Kennedys because he took his strikers on buses to various states to campaign for the Kennedys. The Kennedys even paid Chavez to set up a campaign headquarters. The strikers (letting the lettuce rot in Salinas) were busy getting votes for the Kennedys.

MLK-I am not sure, but I think he simply sent Chavez a note praising his "non-violence".

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Posted by peawee on [04/21/09 at 3:37PM](#)

Oh and the "Historian" Committee. They are NOT Historians. One is the Hispanic/immigration attorney, one is a retired military man and the other the chairman

of a homeowners group. They were introduced as Historians, so I thought they had very in depth knowledge about Chavez.

I only knew what I had lived in 1970, was not the very positive image of Chavez that they presented. I have read two Chavez books (by his supporters) and communicated with other Salinas residents that lived there in 1970. Also, I have tons of information on the "march", the violent acts, etc.

He was selected by the original 6 forming the grape strikes because he was the only one in the group that spoke English!

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Posted by peawee on 04/21/09 at 3:43PM

The farmworkers in Salinas were Filipino until WWII.
When they joined the military, the Bracero program was enacted to fill the gap.

The Filipinos also dominated the grape fields in Delano, where the infamous grape strike took place. Filipinos already had a fully functioning union. They already had strikes and boycotts. Chavez pushed his way in. He made the Filipino leader the Vice president of the new union, which later became the UFW. Too much to relate here.

Chavez did do a lot of good, I am sure. But he is definitely not the hero the Latinos make him out to be.

What was most distressing was when one man testified at the first meeting and said Chavez was on the same level as Jesus Christ!!!

Cesar Chavez Boulevard

Posted by **Brian Aveney, Lake Oswego**, April 06, 2009 6:28AM

Renaming Airport Way between PDX and I-205 to Cesar Chavez Boulevard would offer significant visibility with minimal negative business or historical impact.

That stretch of Airport Way is a divided road with sculpture and plantings in the median - a proper boulevard. A statue of Chavez would be easy to add in a visible place, appropriately surrounded by growing plants. Such a renaming would result in Chavez Blvd signs on I-205 seen by many motorists traveling in the Northwest. Renaming Mt Hood Ave station to Chavez Blvd station would give him a place on the TriMet transit map. And, of course, everyone who flew in or out of Portland or dropped off or picked up someone at the airport would see his name.

This would seem a win-win-win solution for Chavez supporters, the city, and local businesses.

Renaming only the grand boulevard between the terminal and I-205 and allowing the terminal frontage roads to continue using the current names would minimize the number of businesses impacted in this time of recession. This suggestion would no doubt entail its own costs, but renaming Airport Way and Mount Hood Ave station seem to have less historical and business impact than some other proposals.

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COMMENTS (5) [Post a comment](#)

Posted by WURZBURG on [04/07/09 at 10:02AM](#)

WHO CARES???

Why should we name anything after Chavez? What the heck has he done specifically to enhance the city of Portland? I really think the taxpayers and business community have more pressing issues facing us all at this time!!!!

Inappropriate?

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Posted by WURZBURG on [04/07/09 at 10:03AM](#)

WHO CARES???

Why should we name anything after Chavez? What the heck has he done specifically to enhance the city of Portland? I really think the taxpayers and business community have more pressing issues facing us all at this time!!!!

Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)

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Posted by peawee on 04/07/09 at 11:14AM

If you have been at the meetings, you would hear the Latino committee only want a street in downtown---they do not want a market, a statue, a park, a bridge ONLY one of these three streets.

Cesar Chavez Street has no place in Portland, or anywhere in Oregon for that matter.

Jose Garcia would be more appropriate. He actually did do something for the migrant workers of Oregon.

Chavez is just a figure head for Latinos for whatever there current cause might be. Having a major street name gives more leverage.

Read the true history of Chavez and you will see what the Cesar Chavez foundation teaches is more hype than facts. They spread their curriculum all around the US. That is why so many people think he is so great. Propaganda for the greed of the remaining Chavez family.

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Posted by OverseasBeav on 04/08/09 at 6:00PM

Nice of you to offer than up Brian. Why don't you start a campaign to rename the street in front of your house to honor him.

A "Boulevard" and a statue?.....This crap has gotten way out of control.

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Posted by sysgnosis on 04/11/09 at 11:52PM

From what I have read about him, Mr. Chavez spent a great deal of his life attempting to better the lives of many people. He definitely deserves to have his name remembered, but the truth is that he already has plenty in the way of remembrance...

He has streets already named after him in LA, San Francisco, Austin, Ogden (UT). There was briefly a college in Mount Angel bearing his name, and there is an adult education school currently bearing it in Fresno. He has parks in Modesto, Sacramento, San Diego, Berkeley and San Jose. You can find elementary schools named after him in Davis (CA),

Santa Fe, Bakersfield and Madison as well as high schools in Houston and Delano (CA). There are buildings named for him at Berkeley and San Francisco State University. He has a library in Oakland, an apartment complex in Davis (CA), a community center in Racine (WI), a statue at the University of Texas at Austin and a bowling alley in Amarillo. His portrait hangs in the National Gallery, and his union jacket hangs in the National Museum of American History. His birthday has been made an official holiday in several states, he has been inducted into the California Hall of Fame and he has been on a US postage stamp.

I would say that the current level of thanks by way of remembrance is more than enough to show our appreciation for Mr. Chavez. There are many other people who have done so much for Portland, its suburbs and the Willamette Valley; let's throw around some street names for some of them who have had a direct hand in making our region as great as it is.