

Candidate Questionnaire
San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition
December 2007

1. Do you feel that arts and culture is important to the city of San Diego and its citizens? Yes X No___ Please comment

San Diego thrives as a community that cultivates unique culture and arts institutions which nourish the mind and soul, and provide millions of dollars in tax revenues to our city. I am committed to a vision where every child in San Diego, regardless of background or income, has an equal opportunity to watch a local arts performance and visit a San Diego museum. City Hall must do more to ensure that our arts & culture community has a prominent position in the country, and puts us on the map in the same way SeaWorld and the San Diego Zoo have.

I have been a longtime supporter of the performing arts. My wife Gayle Francis and I proudly co-produced *The Lonesome West*, which was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Play in 1999. Gayle also produced the *Laramie Project* which had its West Coast premiere at the La Jolla Playhouse in 2001, and toured nationally, ultimately becoming an HBO movie.

2. Are you aware of the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture and what it does? Yes X No

3. Do you attend arts or cultural events? Yes X No___ Last year over 3.9 million people attended events presented by 80 nonprofit arts and culture organizations funded by the Commission through competitive grants (including 21. music groups, 13 theatres, 10 dance companies, 12 museums, five arts education groups and 16 other cultural groups). What are the last three art or cultural events you attended? (Fundraisers and special events excluded)

I have attended numerous arts and cultural events in the recent past. I have watched the play *Lincolnesque* at the Old Globe Theatre, taken a tour of the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit at the Museum of Man, and visited special exhibits and galleries at the Museum of Photographic Arts, the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

4. Are you aware of the source of funding for the Commission? Yes X No Five years ago the City of San Diego, through its Commission for Arts and Culture, invested one cent of the ten and a half cents of Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) in arts and culture. Will you support restoring and dedicating the City's allocation of one cent of TOT to arts and culture? Yes___ No X

Unfortunately, due to Jerry Sanders' lack of action at City Hall and inability to control our finances, San Diego now faces a \$32 million budget deficit and more than a \$300 million structural deficit over five years. This has exacerbated pressures throughout all city departments and services, including funding for the arts and important cultural programs. I will bring a realistic approach to setting our city's finances back on track. As Mayor, I pledge to be an active supporter of our arts community, and will provide private fundraising leadership and logistical assistance as requested.

5. Do you consider San Diego a cultural destination? Yes No According to a regional study, San Diego attracts 2.7 million out-of-town travelers annually who make their travel decisions primarily based on the city's broad variety of cultural attractions (organizations with budgets ranging from \$29,000 to \$1.8 million). Arts and culture are vital to this community and the local economy. What would you do to promote San Diego as a cultural destination?

My vision is to market San Diego as a City of Culture, highlighting our unique history, rich architecture, lively performing arts and international diversity. As Mayor, I will direct my office to work with the San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition to provide strong cooperation and partnership to ensure the success of scheduled activities and ongoing performances and exhibits. I will promote the increased involvement of the community in school arts programs, and ask corporate leaders, particularly those with no history of donating in the past, to patron our exciting arts community. I will seek out greater temporary public art to draw visitors to all corners of our city, and use the bully pulpit to raise awareness to performance art events, cultural festivals, and our local institutions. I will redouble efforts to support outdoor art events, such as The Gates in New York City, helping draw cultural tourists and, local interest throughout the non-peak tourist months.

6. Did you participate in visual or performing arts classes in school? Yes No Did/do your children? Yes No Unfortunately, most public schools don't have the resources to provide arts education for our young people. What do you see as the role of the arts and cultural community in addressing this issue?

I believe that the arts and cultural community are a wealth of knowledge of expertise, which can help direct parents and educators to free or low-cost enriching art experiences throughout our City. They can also help formulate volunteer and educational programs that can benefit public schools, sharing the wonders of Shakespeare, the performing arts, and the diversity and history of our world.

7. Do you agree that Balboa Park is an important cultural center for the city? Yes No In 2015, San Diego will be celebrating the Centennial of Balboa Park. This will be an opportunity to put San Diego in the national spotlight and on the world map. What is your vision of the importance of this event?

The 1915 Panama-California Exposition was a defining moment that put the City of San Diego on the world stage, and transformed a dusty and undeveloped Balboa Park into the urban jewel we know today. The centennial of Balboa Park is a wonderful occasion to remind our young people about the historical roots of our City, celebrate our rich culture and diversity, and chart the path for a brighter, prosperous future for all residents.

My vision is to embrace the community-wide centennial effort that Mayor Gavin Newsom undertook to commemorate the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, bringing together the talents and interests of educators, seniors, businesses, volunteers and city leaders to honor that city's momentous day in history. I would ask for historical organizations and cultural groups to help our visitors industry with marketing and communication efforts to bring international media and tourists to help mark the occasion, and share with the world our arts and culture scene. I will seek out corporate underwriters to help share the costs of a citywide celebration. I would also ask for the arts and culture community, particularly those located in Balboa Park, to consider launching a rolling celebration, with new public events, exhibits and lectures throughout the year.

The "birth" of Balboa Park helped put us on the world stage and change us into the city we are today; I know that working together, it can do it again.

8. Have you been involved in efforts to rebuild and sustain museums and cultural institutions the city? Yes ___ No ___ San Diego is home to a number of very important cultural facilities. How do you plan to protect and sustain the museums and cultural institutions in Balboa Park, the NTC Promenade, Downtown and in our neighborhoods?

I am a proud supporter of the arts; my wife Gayle and I have donated \$25,000 to the La Jolla Playhouse. When it comes to charting a path for the future of our important arts and, cultural institutions, I will always have an open door and listen to the voices of every community stakeholder because without art, we are diminished as a society. I will seek out stronger public-private partnerships to ensure that our valuable institutions have the support and resources they need to thrive in our City, and develop long-term planning.

9. Are you aware of the City's Public Art Master Plan and what it does? Yes X No ___ Many of the world's great cities are renowned for their public art. San Diego's public art includes a range of works from early 20th century to contemporary. Name three pieces of public art that you like in the City of San Diego.

I enjoy the El Cid statue in Balboa Park, the "Read/Write/Think/Dream" installation and the "Standing" statue of the Stuart Art Collection.

10. Do you consider yourself a supporter of arts and culture both personally and publicly?

Yes X No ___

Have you met officials of the arts and cultural organizations located in the district(s) served by the elective office for which you are running? Yes X No ___

Which organizations do you or members of your family support? (As an audience member, volunteer, donor, subscriber and/or patron, staff member, board member)

I am a former Board Member of the San Diego Symphony. My wife Gayle and I are audience members of the La Jolla Playhouse, the Old Globe Theatre, the San Diego Opera, the San Diego Civic Theatre, the San Diego Museum of Art, and the San Diego Zoo. Across the country, I have enjoyed visiting the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, the National Gallery in Washington, DC, and we are also both members of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. From our trips abroad, we enjoyed visiting the arts and cultural sites of Rome, Vatican City, the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, the Louvre and Musee d'Orsay in Paris, the National Gallery in London, the Palace of Versailles, the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, and the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. I am also a collector of Norman Rockwell paintings, Remington sculptures, historical American relics and antique maps, which I have displayed in my office. My wife and I plan on attending the Art Basel show in Miami later this year in December.