

Candidate's Name Stephen Whitburn

**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. City government should strive to improve the quality of life of its citizens. An important component of enriching our quality of life is maximizing the arts and culture environment.

2. Are you aware of the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture and what it does? Yes X No ___
The Commission supports the arts and culture environment by advocating for supportive public policies, recommending funding, and advising on programs and projects. I have had the good fortune to know Commission members who serve as enthusiastic ambassadors for the enrichment of the arts and culture environment.

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)

North Park Festival of the Arts

Gay Men's Chorus

Noel-Baza Gallery opening, Little Italy

Diversionary Theater

Ray At Night

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 X No ___

I strongly believe that TOT should be invested according to the requirements of the San Diego Municipal Code and the Council Policy dictating investment of TOT funds, including the requirements to fund arts and culture programs with TOT dollars.

5. Do you consider San Diego a cultural destination? Yes X 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 \$18 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?

I believe that the San Diego-Tijuana region should be promoted as a bicultural, cross-border arts and culture community. I believe that the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the new Tourism Marketing District can and should promote San Diego's arts and cultural scene nationally and internationally. I support the dedication of a portion of TOT revenues to smaller cultural organizations and to local arts and cultural activities like Ray at Night in North Park and the Adams Avenue Roots Festival and the Adams Avenue Street Festival in Normal Heights.

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?

World Culture and Literature class (emphasis on visual arts) plus extra-curricular in drama and forensics.

Many San Diego cultural institutions are working hard to attract young audiences, including Classics for Kids, the Balboa Park museums and organizations, and performing arts groups. Leveraging this work through media to publicize the impact of these programs on community life is important, along with making sure that city facilities are available on a cost-effective basis to support this outreach.

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?

I believe that the San Diego-Tijuana region ought to be seen as a binational arts and cultural destination. I believe that through the Centennial of Balboa Park, we can rekindle the acknowledgement of our ties to Latin America as we did with the Panama -California Exposition in 1915. As the Councilmember for Balboa Park, the preparation for the Centennial will be important to me and my staff throughout my tenure on the Council.

8. Have you been involved in efforts to rebuild and sustain museums and cultural institutions in 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 have supported the Save Our Heritage Organization and joined other groups in seeking to preserve historic or contributing elements of our communities. The City must play a leadership role in the preservation and support of our cultural institutions. I believe we should consider a quality of life bond initiative to help us restore and improve the infrastructure of Balboa Park and other regional cultural assets.

9. Are you aware of the City's Public Art Master Plan and what it does? Yes 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.

The Prado in Balboa Park. The Vermont Street Bridge. The wonderful signs that denote the neighborhoods of District 3. I'm excited about the present efforts to establish signature signage in City Heights.

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

Yes 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 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 served as the volunteer emcee for the cultural dance stage at the North Park Festival of the Arts for seven consecutive years. Have attended multiple performances by Gay Men's Chorus, Junior Theater, Diversionsary Theatre.
