



CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission
16089 N Bullard Ave
Surprise, AZ 85374
Wednesday, February 4, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
Surprise Regional Library

- A. Call To Order
B. Roll Call
C. Pledge of Allegiance
D. Staff Reports
E. Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission Agenda

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

INSTRUCTIONS: In order to address the Board\Commission, you will need to fill out a Call to the Public Form available at the front counter, and then turn it in to the Secretary before the meeting begins.

Note: A.R.S. 38-431.01(H) - During this time members of the public may address the Board\Commission only on issues within the jurisdiction of the Board\Commission which are not an item on the agenda. At the conclusion of the open call, the Board\Commission may respond to criticism, may ask staff to review the matter or may ask that the matter be put on a future agenda. No discussion or action shall take place on any item raised.

CONSENT AGENDA:

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

- 1. Citywide Consideration and action pertaining to the January 7, 2026 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Sports, Entertainment, and Culture
2. Citywide Discussion pertaining to current arts programming in Surprise that support veterans and future support and advocacy thereof. Sports, Entertainment, and Culture

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - PUBLIC HEARING:

- F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items
G. Current Events and Reports
H. Adjournment

KRISTI PASSARELLI, CITY CLERK

POSTED: Friday, January 30, 2026 at 3:30pm

SPECIAL NOTE: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS, INCLUDING LARGE PRINT MATERIALS OR INTERPRETER, SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE @ 623.222.1200 OR CLERK@SURPRISEAZ.GOV, BY NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING TIME.



CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission

Council Meeting Date: February 4, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Sports, Entertainment, and District: Citywide
Culture
Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action pertaining to the January 7, 2026 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

Motion:

I move to approve the December 3, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.

Background:

N/A

Objective Analysis:

N/A

Policy Compliant:

Aligns with City policy.

Financial Impact:

None.

Budget Impact:

None.

FTE Impact:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 010726_SACAC Meeting Minutes_DRAFT
-

CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission
16089 N. Bullard Avenue
Surprise, Arizona 85374
Wednesday, January 7, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
Surprise Regional Library Programming Room
Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

A. Call to Order

B. Roll Call

Chair Crystal Kupper, Vice-Chair Dr. Charlotte Pullins, Hassan Rasul, Katherine Dunphy, Susan deJong, Margaret Lieu, and Steve Wallgren.

Absent: none

Staff: Julie Akerly – Arts & Culture Manager, Danica Marlin – Art in Public Places Coordinator, Alexandra Giambalvo – Arts & Culture Assistant

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Staff Reports

Ms. Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager, reported on the following items:

- Roots of Creation: Art and Nature Festival is set for January 24th 12-4pm.
- Play Your Way to the Park is upcoming February 7th, 6-8pm.
- Cactus Rd. Traffic Cabinet reception set for February 5th, 6-7:30pm.
- Maintenance and restoration work is beginning Monday, January 12th.
- The new Patron Services Coordinator, Production Coordinator as well as Department Marketing Manager have begun.
- New “Get Involved” opportunities for volunteers.

E. Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission Agenda

- Minutes
- SACAC Commissioner Appointment Criteria
- Surprise Regional Library

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

None

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS – NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Consideration and action pertaining to the December 3rd, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes.
 - Commissioner Wallgren moved to approve the December 3rd, 2025 Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner DeJong 2nd. 7 Yes votes. 0 Abstained. 0 No votes. Motion carried.

2. Discussion and review pertaining to SACAC commissioner appointment criteria.
 - Commissioners reviewed criteria and selected questions to recommend for inclusion in the application and interview process.
 - Commissioner Chair Crystal Kupper, Vice-Chair Dr. Charlotte Pullins will present criteria to City Council for consideration.

3. Discussion pertaining to future new artwork at Surprise Regional Library.
 - Pre-qualified muralist and Library Panel–selected artist Adrian Ramirez. Adrian presented his design proposal to the Commission:
 - Adrian is a Phoenix, Arizona–based visual artist and designer who Works across murals, sculptures, and illustrations, draws inspiration from music and cultural heritage and invites viewers to contemplate perception and emotion as core elements of his practice influences, body of work, concept for the work.
 - Work will consist of 2 8’ x 24’ ft vinyl wrapped wall sections in the Surprise Regional Library.
 - The figures portrayed will represent the process between writing and reading on respective walls with rich and vibrant environments that relate and “speak” to one another.
 - The artist’s focus is on clean lines and graphic style creating a “visual playground” for viewers from a distance.
 - The Artist will conduct a community engagement workshop where he will present and lead a collaborative painting, each person contributing to a larger puzzled work. This will influence his work.
 - The Commissioners provided feedback:
 - Bright color palettes including baby blue and electric green presented by the artist are harmonious with the existing environment and will bring light and brightness to the space.
 - The Commission expressed concerns with the proposed location of the artwork, an encouraged further exploration.
 - Mockups should be provided at the next phase of the work.

- F. Other Business and Future Agenda Items
 - Next meeting will take place on February 4th, 2026.

- G. Current Events and Reports
 - December Commissioner outing: MLK Day of Service

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. – Commissioner Dr. Pullens motioned. Commissioner Lieu 2nd. 7 Yes votes. 0 abstained. 0 No votes. Motion Carried.

	<hr/> Crystal Kupper, Chair
ATTEST:	<hr/> Danica Marlin, Art in Public Places Coordinator
CERTIFICATION: I, Julie Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager for the City of Surprise Arts, Culture & Library Department, Maricopa County, Arizona, do hereby verify that these are the true and correct minutes of the Arts and Cultural Advisory Commission meeting held on December 3, 2025.	
	<hr/> Julie Akerly, Arts & Culture Manager



CITY OF SURPRISE
Arts & Cultural Advisory Commission

Council Meeting Date: February 4, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Sports, Entertainment, and District: Citywide
Culture
Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Discussion pertaining to current arts programming in Surprise that support veterans and future support and advocacy thereof.

Motion:

None.

Background:

Arts programs for Veteran's can have a significant positive impact on the mental health and well-being of Veterans and military communities. The Commission requested an agenda item to learn more about arts programs for Veteran's, programs that currently exist for Veteran's, and to discuss ideas to advocate and support Veteran's and the arts programs in Surprise.

Objective Analysis:

The Commission will meet with leaders from Surprise-based arts organizations who currently provide or have previously provided arts programming for Veteran's to learn more about their programs and discuss ideas for education, advocacy and support for Veteran's art programs.

Policy Compliant:

This agenda item is policy compliant.

Financial Impact:

None.

Budget Impact:

None.

FTE Impact:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Veterans and the Arts Presentation

Veteran's and the Arts

Discussion & Presentation

Goals for the Discussion

- Map the current ecosystem
- Surface barriers
- Identify advocacy/support actions

Why the Arts?

IMPACT POINTS

66% Report Decreased Depression

Two out of three soldiers who completed creative arts therapy say it decreased their depression.¹

83% Reported Decreased Stress

The arts play a powerful role in diminishing the effects of TBI, yielding a 66% decrease in depression, 50% decrease in anxiety, and 83% decrease in stress.²

85% SAY ART THERAPY HELPS

85% of military patients who participate in creative arts therapies say it was helpful in their healing.³

\$1.7 Billion in Potential Savings Due To Art Therapies

Creative art therapies could save the U.S. military billions of dollars in healthcare costs. Evidence-based treatments, (e.g., art therapies) for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and major depression could save the United States as much as \$1.7 billion, or more than \$1,000 per veteran.⁴

ARTS HELP VETERANS REINTEGRATE

Veterans who participated in expressive writing saw greater reductions in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms, and easier reintegration compared with other veterans.⁵

ARTS: TOP 5 MOST HELPFUL TREATMENTS

Service Members in treatment at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence at Walter Reed Medical Center ranked creative arts therapies in the top five "most helpful in their recovery" out of approximately 40 treatment options.⁶

ARTS INSPIRE NEW THINKING IN MILITARY TREATMENTS

Design thinking inspired the U.S. Army to create a new Systemic Operation Design program. The Army experimented with and adapted it, applying it in the field, and across the entire organization.⁷

Research from
Americans for
the Arts - Arts
Impact Explorer

Organization Introductions

- What Veterans/military-connected groups do you serve?
- What do you offer to these groups?
- What outcomes do you track or observe?
- One thing you need from partners/City/community to grow impact.

WHAM Art Center

West Valley Arts Council

The Silent Survivors Project

Michael Maisano, PsyD

Founder

Mission

*"Our mission is to fight the stigma of mental health in our **Veteran population and military**, through entertainment, education and research."*

Veteran Suicide

- 22 Veterans a day take their own lives.
- Over 140,000 (War on Terror) Veterans have taken their own lives. In contrast approximately 10,000 Service Members were killed from combat.
- The main cause Veterans don't seek help is **The Stigma!**
- The Silent Survivor's Project is dedicated to fight the stigma!

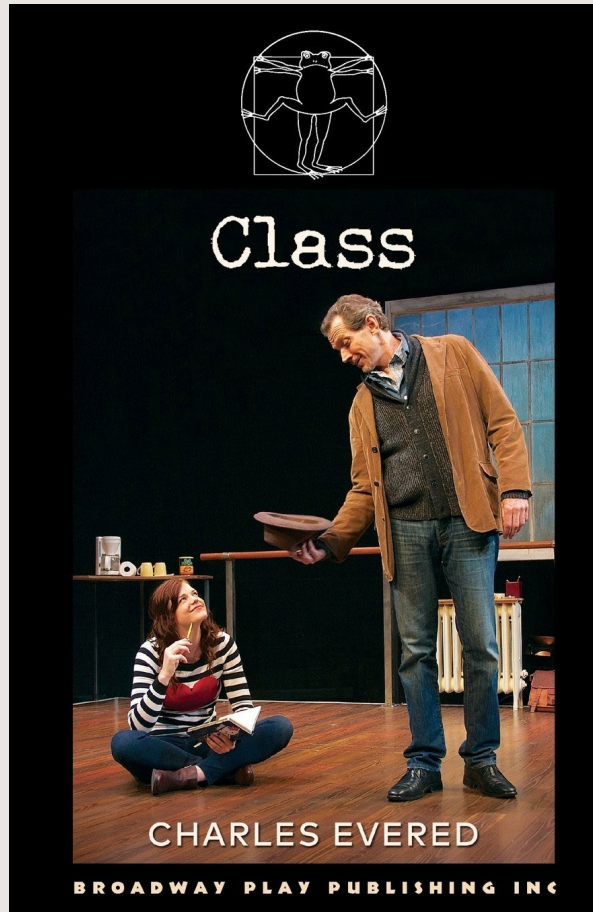


The Arizona Frontline Theatre

Fall 2026 Schedule

- **Class** (Chuck Evered) - August
- **Clouds Hill** (Chuck Evered) - September
- **Now I Get It** / Musical (Loren Marsters) - October
- **Adopt A Sailor** (Chuck Evered) - November
- **An Actor's Carol** (Chuck Evered) - December

August 2026

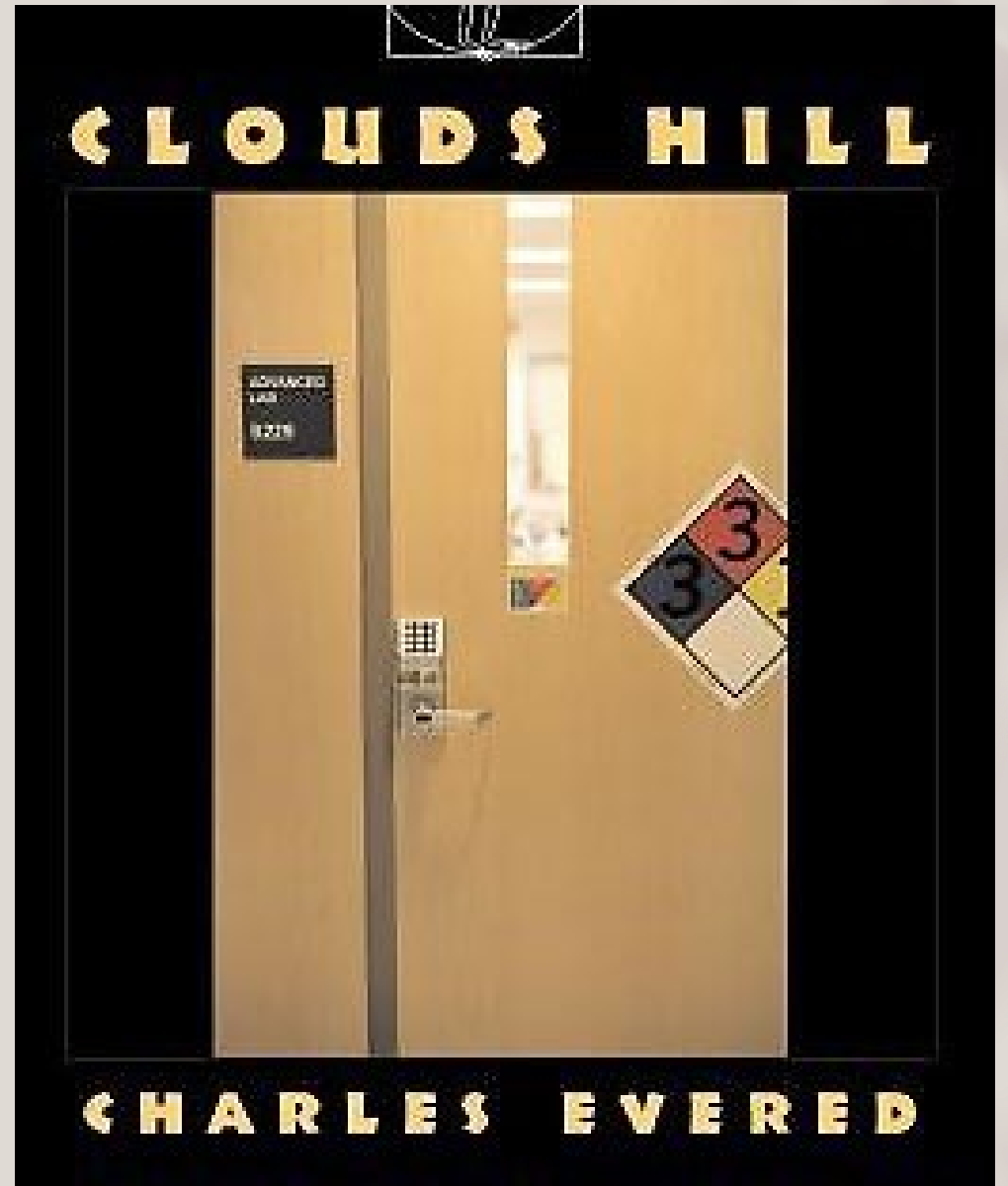


A mysterious young woman shows up in the studio of a famed acting teacher in New York City

- "A lovely piece of theatre ... a flawless experience that makes you realize just how much value theatre has in our lives ... Evered's CLASS truly is a class act ... thoroughly absorbing entertainment." – Broadway World

September 2026

Two professors suspect their student of being a terrorist.

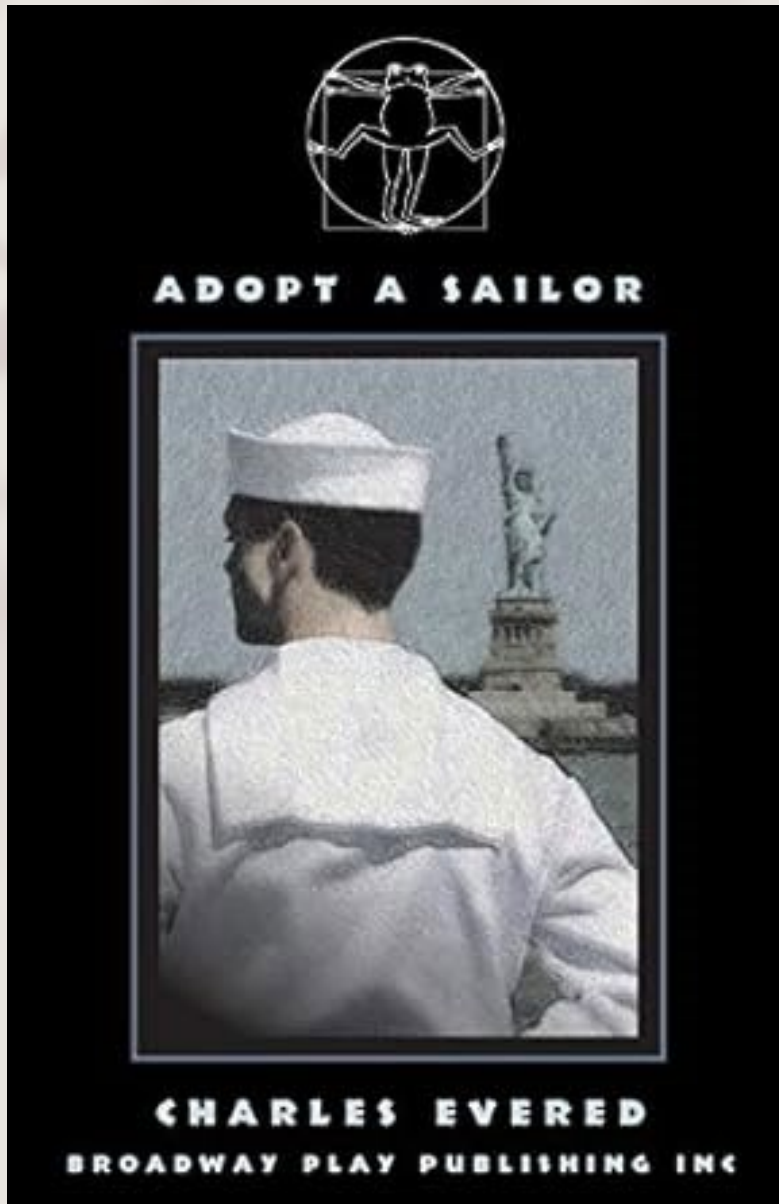


October 2026

<https://youtu.be/vxK8Jp4e7B0>

“Now,
I Get It”

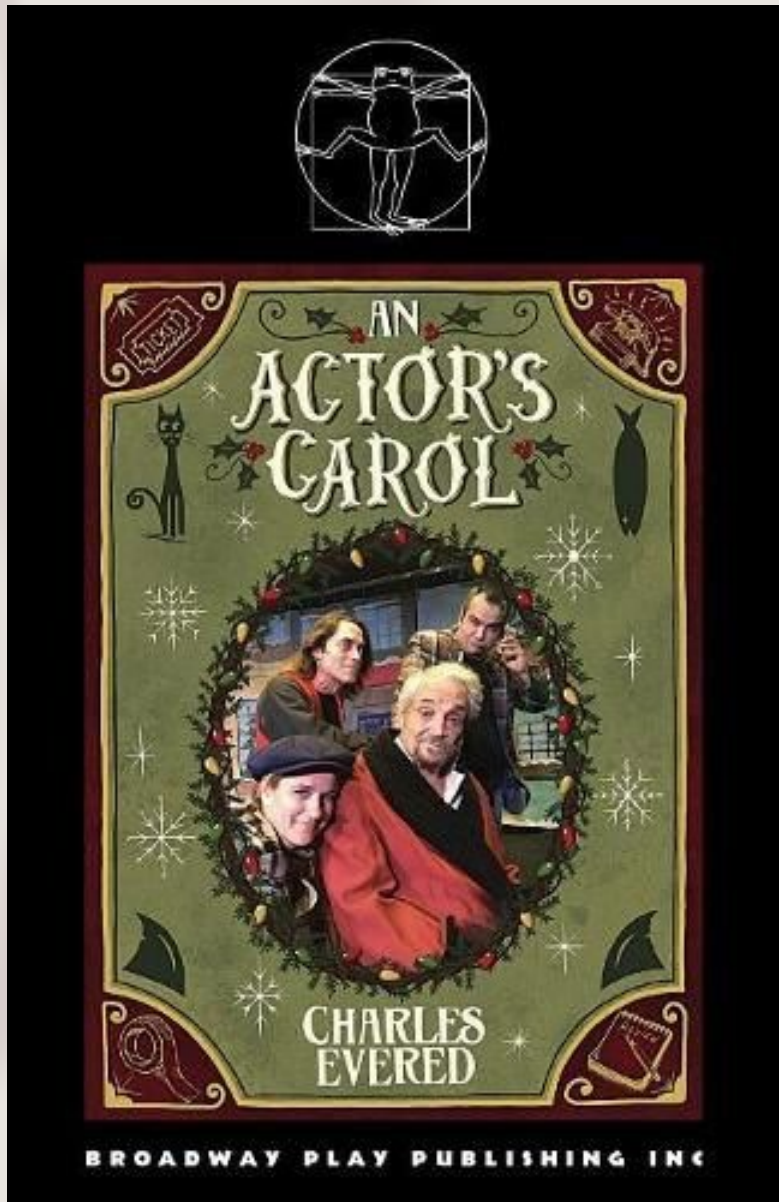




November 2026

A self-involved New York couple adopt a young sailor from Arkansas during Fleet Week.

"This finely crafted, both exquisitely simple and profound piece holds an important place in our history. Uniquely gratifying to perform for those of us who witnessed the horror of September 11th, 2001, from our living room windows, and invaluable to those who live after us to help explain the inexplicable feelings of that unbearable time." – Bebe Neuwirth



December 2026

Burned-out actor Hugh Pendleton, not-so-fresh from playing Scrooge one too many times in the backwater community theatre where his once promising career has met its unglamorous end, is surprised to encounter three spirits of his own in this quirky and compelling ode to the holiday classic.

Questions???

The Silent Survivors Project /
Arizona Frontline Theatre

silentsurvivorsproject.org

Understanding the Landscape

- Who are we serving well – and who are we missing?
- Where do Veterans currently access arts opportunities in our region?
- What's the biggest barrier to participation right now?

Program Design that Works for Veterans

- What formats get the best engagement?
- What helps Veterans feel safe and respected in arts spaces?
- What accommodations matter most?

Partnerships & Places

- Which City/community venues could be arts access points for Veterans?
- What partnerships would unlock scale?
- If a Veteran needs the next step, what worm handoff is realistic?

Measuring Impact

- What outcomes do you track now?
- What's on simple shared metric?
- What would be most persuasive to funders/council/public?

Funding, Advocacy and Sustainability

- What kind of support matters most from the City/Commission?
- What's the smallest pilot we could launch in 6-9 months?
- What's one policy or practice change that would reduce friction?