

The Department of Communication in the College of Public Programs presents

# Highly Classified:



Performance  
of  
**Narratives**  
from



## ASU's Classified Staff

7:30 p.m.

Sat., Oct. 17 & 24, 1998

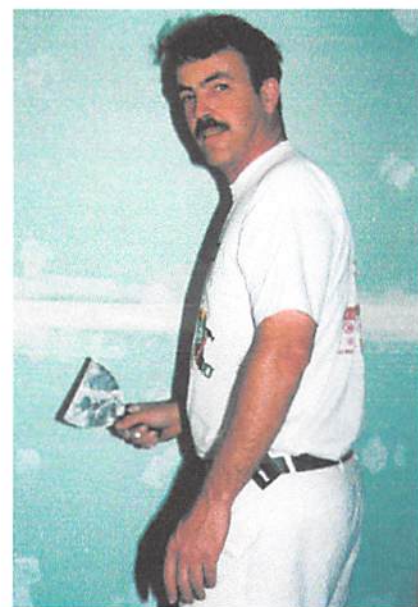
Fri., Oct. 23, 1998

&

2:30 p.m.

Sun., Oct. 18 & 25, 1998

Pima Room,  
Memorial Union



This performance is crafted from chapters of the life stories of ASU classified staff members. The stories were cocreated and will be performed by both classified staff and students. *Highly Classified* is part of ASU Public Events's *Untold Stories* series and the American Festival Project. Tickets are free; however, due to limited seating in the Memorial Union, tickets must be picked up in person at the Gammage Auditorium Ticket Office beginning October 1, 1998. Contact: Communication Department, K. B. Valentine, 965-4111 or ASU Public Events, 965-5092.



**ASU**  
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

## 'Highly Classified' tells vivid stories of staff

By Sarah Auffret

We all need to tell our personal stories to someone, says Kristin Valentine, communication professor. And her students have learned to listen to them.

Life stories told by classified staff members at ASU – many poignant, some funny – are the rich background for "Highly Classified," a narrative performance at the Memorial Union Oct. 17 – 25. The free dramatic presentations sponsored by the Department of Communication are part of an Untold Stories series by ASU Public Events.

There's the ASU supervisor who describes her late grandmother as her saving grace, the one who sheltered her from her parents' abuse and gave her unconditional love. The happiest times in her life were when the two stayed up late at night playing Gin Rummy, eating Fritos and Pepsi.

An electrician divorced for 17 years and estranged from his daughter, talks about his joy in getting a call from her one night with the news that he's a grandfather. They're now visiting regularly and getting to know each other again.

Accounting Specialist June Harris remembers living in Alaska, caring for 44 sled dogs while managing other responsibilities. Once she directed a truck around a cliff through a treacherous whiteout storm. Another time she played mama bear to two frightened

cubs, and was nurse and comforter to a dying baby moose.

Robert Curry, administrative assistant, recalls dumping live fish and crawdads from the canal into neighbors' back yard pools with his brother. Police Officer Stewart Adams describes his fascination with emergency sirens as a young boy.

Fascinated by stories like these she'd heard from various staffers, Valentine asked undergraduates in her Oral Traditions class during two semesters to interview staff members. They wrote papers about the oral histories they'd recorded and later portrayed their staff partners on stage, in front of the class.

Crafted into a performance script by Valentine and her student assistants, Jennifer Shamrock and Amanda Hubber, "Highly Classified" is performed by five staff members and four students who won parts in auditions last spring. They've been rehearsing every Saturday for weeks.

Valentine says students have found that staff members are interesting people with vivid histories, not only people who help them register for classes or who paint, plumb, repair and clean. Storytelling creates an intimate feeling that is hard to match in any other form of entertainment, she says.

"We didn't simply collect stories," says one student. "We formed personal relation-



**"Highly Classified" student cast member Shawna Marquis (right) tells a classified staff member's story while fellow cast member and real classified staff member Reba Wilson prepares to tell one of her own life stories during a rehearsal.**

Tim Trumble photo

ships with people we sometimes take for granted, but who make our lives a little easier. We found we were evaluating our own beliefs and values, and questioning why we look at the world as we do."

Free performances will be in the MU Pima Room at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 17, 23 and 24, and at 2:30 p.m. Oct. 18 and 25. Tickets are required and are available at Gammage box office.

President Lattie Coor will make a cameo appearance at a scholarship fund-raiser Oct.

16. Tickets priced at \$50 are available through Anette Nord at the College of Public Programs, 965-1034.

Classified staff members who will be performing the stories are Patrick Rhodes, Erik Jensen, Luis Flores, Reba Wilson and Michelle Paredes. Students are Justin Waker, Jordana Oberman, Rose Loschiavo and Shawna Marquis.

Auffret, with Media Relations & Public Information, can be reached at 965-6991 or (saffret@asu.edu).

## Hayden Library features Fritz Scholder book collection