



Arizona Community
Tree Council, Inc.

Speaker Bios

Todd Bentley

Todd Bentley is the Fire Chief of the Groom Creek Fire District. He is a member of a Wildland Fire Incident Management Team and has been spearheading the work for creating defensible space in the Groom Creek area since 2001. Chief Bentley has created public/private partnerships in order to effectively conduct the work being completed. Todd Bentley led the effort for Groom Creek to be designated a Firewise Community USA and a Firewise ArcView Community and was awarded this recognition in August 2005.

Claud Cluff

Claud Cluff has been working in the green industry for the last 33 years; first in retail nursery in 1976 then in wholesale nursery in 1984. He has worked 22 years with the City of Chandler and has a Bachelor's of Science degree from U of A in Plant Sciences. He has taught at Mesa Community College in the Urban Horticulture program for the last 10 years. Claud is a Certified Nursery Professional, a Certified Arborist, and a Certified Landscape Professional and has both an Applicators and Qualifying Party certification with the Office of Pest Management.

Vicki Christiansen

Vicki Christiansen was appointed the Arizona State Forester and Director of the Arizona Division of Forestry by Governor Jan Brewer in April, 2009. She is responsible for the protection of 22 million acres of state and private lands in Arizona which includes the prevention and suppression of wild land fires as well as oversight of forest health, stewardship forestry and urban and community forestry programs. Prior to her appointment, she served as the Washington State Forester for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. She received her Bachelor of Science in Forest Management from the University of Washington.

Sarah Harris

Sarah Harris is currently the Nursery Director for the Ahakhav Tribal Preserve, on the Colorado River Indian Reservation near Parker, Arizona. She has spent the last 15 years working with different agencies throughout the western United States doing biological weed control and fire fuels reduction with goats. Many of these projects have been focused on native restoration. She has been involved in agriculture in one form or another her entire life. She is a University of Arizona Master Gardener, Lower Colorado River RC&D board member, and involved in organizing a local Weed Management Area, as well as an ACTC member. Working at Ahakhav Tribal Preserve has provided new insights to cultural, native, and functional aspects of integrating landscape design.

John Eisenhower

John Eisenhower is the owner of Integrity Tree Service, Inc., a residential and commercial tree maintenance company in Scottsdale, Arizona. A Certified Arborist, John enjoys working with trees and teaching others how to select, plant and maintain them. He is a past president of the Arizona Community Tree Council, an organization dedicated to the planting and

care of trees in communities throughout Arizona. John is an active member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists and holds a degree in English Literature from Arizona State University.

Ed Gilman, Ph.D.

Dr. Ed Gilman is Professor of Environmental Horticulture at the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Florida and has a 50% research and 50% extension teaching assignment and teaches an arboriculture class. He works with arborists, consultants, landscape contractors, tree nursery operators, urban foresters, planners, landscape architects and others engaged in tree selection, growing, planting and management issues. Research includes irrigation, fertilization, roots, and other tree transplant and after-care techniques and a recent focus on tree response to pruning. His team provides service to the industry and to residents in Florida by incorporating this and other research-based information into educational programs, demonstration sites, publications, websites, and software.

Tim Johnson

Tim A. Johnson is a second-generation registered consulting arborist. His career in Arboriculture started in 1961 with his father's tree care firm. Tim has a Bachelor of Science degree in Ornamental Horticulture from California Polytechnic State University - San Luis Obispo, California, is Registered Consulting Arborist #360 and has experience in all aspects of Tree Health Management throughout the United States and overseas. He founded Artistic Arborist, Inc., in 1978. The firm provides consulting, training, research, and tree health management services. Artistic Arborist also has a retail outlet for tree care tools and equipment.

Gary Kudes

Gary Kudes was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He received a Bachelor's of Science in Horticulture at Pennsylvania State University. He recently retired from his position as Horticulturist with the City of Phoenix after 25 years of service. His job duties included dealing with landscape installation, landscape maintenance, turf management, environmental issues and of course, tree care. He had been the Qualifying Party for the City of Phoenix for over 10 years and provided oversight and training to over 250 licensed pesticide applicators.

Terry Mikel

Terry Mikel received his Bachelor's of Science degree in Horticulture and M.S. in Ethno Botany from the University of Arizona. He has worked for the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension for 27 years in Yuma, Pima and Maricopa Counties. At his present position, he teaches for the Certified Landscape Professional Program, AZ Certified Nursery Professional Program, ISA Certified Arborist Training, and Master Gardener Programs in Arizona.

Charles Paradzick

Chuck Paradzick has been working for the Salt River Project as a wildlife biologist since 2005. In this position his primary focus is the development and implementation of a Habitat Conservation Plan to meet the Endangered Species Act compliance for operation of two SRP dams on the Verde River. He also works closely with other SRP divisions on water and power management compliance needs. Prior to SRP, he spent 11 years with the Arizona Game and Fish

Department in their nongame, habitat and fisheries programs. Seven of those years were focused on willow flycatcher field research. During the last three years with the Game and Fish Department within the Aquatic Habitat Program he worked to incorporate riparian/wetland species needs and habitat values into land and water policies, projects and plans. He received both a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Conservation Biology in 1994 and Masters of Natural Science in 2005 from Arizona State University.

Steve Priebe

Steve Priebe received his B.S. and M.S. in Botany from Eastern Illinois University, 1979 and 1981 respectively. He worked for the Desert Botanical Garden from 1981-1989 in positions including Horticulturist, Propagator, and Chief Horticulturist. Since 1989, he has worked for the City of Phoenix as a Horticulturist in the Street Transportation Department. Steve oversees and monitors the field work on the City's side of the sound wall on all urban freeways within the city limits including about 45 linear miles, or about 400 acres, of urban freeway landscapes. His responsibilities include reviewing landscape plans, and meetings with contractors and consultants. Steve taught at Phoenix Community College (PCC) as Instructor of Golf Course Horticulture (GCO/REC 131) in the Golf Course Curriculum, 2000-2003. Additional certifications include: State of Arizona Structural Pest Control Commission Qualifying Party, 1991; Certified Arborist, 1991; Certified Backflow Prevention Unit Tester, 1990. He has been a member of ACTC since 2002, serving as Co-Chair of the Calendar Committee 2004 (for the 2005 Arbor Day Calendar), VP and Chair of Education Committee 2006, and President 2007.

Ursula Schuch

Ursula Schuch earned her M.S. in Forest Science and her Ph.D. in Horticulture. She has worked for 18 years in Extension Services, research and teaching ornamental horticulture. Her research includes nursery production and landscape management with emphasis on water quality and stress tolerance of plants.