

Discussing Climate Change in your Community

By Ted Zislis, Volunteer Speaker – The Climate Reality Project

The topic of Climate Change has been both relevant, confusing and controversial. Depending on the predominating demographic of a community, there is controversy regarding whether discussing the topic should even occur. This presentation hopes to discuss some of the most current thoughts regarding both the what, why and how for such discussions to occur, particularly for voters who are uncertain which candidates they might support. The impetus for this presentation comes from recent participation as an attendee at a leadership training conference sponsored by former Vice President Al Gore. Since his production of the 2006 movie, An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore has been using the proceeds to support his Climate Reality Project Foundation which engages primarily in training citizens around the world to be community educators regarding global climate change. This presentation includes references to the many publications which have since been produced regarding prime venues for engaging the public in thought and discussion regarding this topic.

The topic of climate science is complex and confusing. This presentation will present a basic explanation of the causes and processes involved in our ever-transforming global climate reality. It will show numerous graphic examples of the many phenomena which we rarely hear about from our local news. While the effects of global climate change appear to be overwhelming, the future of the continuous upward trends in global warming appears to be controllable. Discussion of how we can all make small changes that can have a global impact will be presented. With the concerted effort of enthusiastic volunteer leadership, we can all have a role in inspiring and motivating our friends and neighbors to be educated voters as well as both environmental activists and global preservationists.

Ted Zislis made his career as a dentist in the US Army, serving on active duty for 33 years, as a board certified specialist in both Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and Oral Medicine. Through his world travels and military assignments, he gained both clinical, laboratory, research, administrative and educational skills. After his military career, he worked for a private dental practice in North Carolina, and upon moving to Arizona, he taught pathology at the Medical / Dental School level. Since retiring from dentistry, Ted volunteers at the Phoenix Zoo, the AZ Museum for Natural History in Mesa, the Southwest Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Scottsdale, and for the ASU Natural History Collections. He sees the value of approaching the study and teaching of nature in a holistic way. In addition, he plays drums, piano and vibraphone with six jazz bands in the Phoenix area. He received certification by the Arizona Association of Environmental Education, and is a member of the Climate Reality Project Leadership Corps.