



PROFESSOR E. GUS FRUH

1939-1978

U.T. Professor of Civil Engineering 1966
Director of Environmental Health Division

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I believe how a man uses his land is his right, but society that is being affected by how a man uses his land also has a right.”

Gus Fruh is a well-loved segment of the Barton Creek greenbelt. However, many a Barton Creek visitor has wondered about the origin of the name. Who was Gus Fruh, and why was this section of the Barton Creek Greenbelt named in his honor?

When Mayor Carol McClellan inaugurated this segment of the greenbelt in 1978 it was Gus Fruh's wife, Gwen and their two young daughters, Lauren and Andrea who would represent him at the dedication. Fruh was too ill to attend, brought down by cancer. He would pass away a few weeks later at the age of 39.

But, it is Fruh who we have to thank for swimmable water in the Barton Creek greenbelt. An engineer who studied water and water quality, Fruh wrote about the relationship between water quality and urbanization. While serving on the City of Austin citizen's Environmental Board, Fruh asserted that it was not enough for Barton Creek to have water quality standards to meet an aesthetic standard, but that the City should request from the Texas Water Quality Board that Barton Creek meet "swimming standards."



Fruh said that increased water quality to allow human contact would mean that developers would have to treat run-off from their properties and that would have "ramifications on the requested extension of sewer lines in Barton Creek." His ideas influenced a whole generation of activists who were eager to protect this unique and beautiful area of Austin.

So, next time that you swim in Barton Creek, you can thank E. Gus Fruh for working to raise awareness about the need for the water to not only be beautiful to look at, but also be clean enough in which to swim.

-remembrance compiled by the Barton Creek Time Stream team

BARTON CREEK
TIME STREAM

