



Photo Credit: John Anderson

# MARY ARNOLD

Community Advocate

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*The history and location of the creek and springs...help to “ground” us in the soil and water of what this place is, and thus what we are - because we live here. They remind us that life is more than sitting in front of a computer, and using a smartphone to send messages back and forth.”*

I think I will go back to the Bicentennial. I had participated in the first Save Munny campaign, 1973-74, and as a result, was appointed to one of the Bicentennial Committees -- the one that was to decide Austin's Gift to the Nation. (I think it was probably Lowell Lebermann that suggested my name, as I had met him during the Save Munny efforts, and he had also appointed me to the Austin Tomorrow Goals Assembly.)

Beverly Sheffield was the staff person assigned to our Bicentennial Committee. Beverly was sort of transitioning from being head of Parks and Recreation to retirement -- and founding the Austin Community Foundation. He shared with the committee so much history of Parks and Recreation in Austin, and the importance of our creeks and waterways. The protection of our creeks and waterways became the focus of our committee, and our recommendation that such protection and enhancement became Austin's Gift to the Nation. The full Bicentennial Committee strongly supported adding funds to the city's bond election to begin purchase of the Barton Creek Greenbelt. Thus I credit Beverly Sheffield as the one that really sparked my interest in and passion for protecting and enhancing Barton Creek - and thus Barton Springs.

**Save Munny 1973-present**

**Save Our Springs Alliance Board**

**Austin Planning Commission 1984-1989**

**Women's Environmental Coalition**

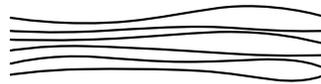
**Austin Parks Board 1978-1984**

I became a member of We Care Austin in about 1984. It was a Women's Environmental Coalition that brought to public attention various environmental issues in the community, and held forums to present speakers and have discussion. I served on the Parks Board '78-'84, Planning Commission '84-'89. Environmental ordinances were being adopted to protect our creeks, waterways, natural environment, during construction of new developments. Watershed ordinances were being adopted - including for Barton Creek. The economic downturn of the '80s and the creation of the federal agency that took possession of failed developments created both a great opportunity for local conservation groups - as well as for developers who might purchase the land from the government. When Jim Bob Moffat purchased the land in the Barton Creek watershed for his huge new development, the outcry was loud and strong. But the City Council majority and the Texas Legislature were willing to allow the development to proceed -- despite the warnings from City environmental staff and studies by the federal geologists. I was President of We Care Austin at the time, and the We Care board was glad to join other environmental groups to fight to protect Barton Springs and Barton Creek, as part of the Save Our Springs Coalition. I became a member of the Save Our Springs Board of Directors, when SOS formed its own organization.

# MARY ARNOLD CONT'D

I think of Barton Creek and Barton Springs being sort of "one of a kind." The history and location of the creek and springs seem to be "unique" and have become a strongly defining part of this city we call Austin. They help to "ground" us in the soil and water of what this place is, and thus what we are - because we live here. They remind us that life is more than sitting in front of a computer, and using a smartphone to send messages back and forth. They say "Look around you!" Get out and ENJOY the air, water, sunshine... Breathe the air, feel the water flow against your body, BE ALIVE to the world around you AND PROTECT IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS!

**BARTON CREEK**



**TIME STREAM**