Susan read to us. Actually, she didn’t read, she recited. Our small group of women met once a month to share our lives and our stories. Susan often used her turn to share a new poem.

The Austin City Council members sitting on the dais were regaled with recitations too. About Barton Springs. About the water flowing from the springs, about the heritage trees on the grounds of Barton Springs in danger of being cut down.

Susan used her voice—and what a voice it was—confident and bold. Articulating every syllable. Pausing to look you in the eye as she read.

She used her voice to regale the City Council members with stories of the wrongs they were about to commit to the Springs.

She used her voice as a guest on John Aielli’s Ekletikos radio program on KUT to sweep listeners up in her words and cadences about the beauty of the Springs.

She recited beside a heritage tree at the Springs.

My life had taken me into the realm of environmental education, and so it was with gratitude that I listened to her voice and was inspired by her voice.

Susan may no longer be with us. But her voice remains.

“It is said the thirst of Earth’s great trees calls water from depths which are invisible causing springs to flow.”

-from Legend

-remembrance by Irene Pickhardt