



One of the unexpected aspects of being Executive Director is talking with people about their legacy. Many people spend their lives being passionate about wildlife or a piece of land. They want to make sure that their work lives on after their passing. As I approach the middle of my life, I'm starting to reflect on the legacies of the people who have shaped my life as well as starting to consider the legacy I will leave behind.

My parents could be credited for instilling in me a legacy of nature appreciation. Growing up in Wisconsin, we went camping 'up north' several times every summer. They took me to naturalist-led hikes at state parks, and then humored me when I wanted to lead hikes for them. They taught me how to catch fish and crayfish, pick apples, and hunt for mushrooms in the family's 'back 40' woods. But what instilled that desire to be outside in them?

My mom's parents lived on a small dairy farm, but had other jobs to pay the bills. Some people say I inherited my grandma Eva Hoffman's passion for birds. She would feed them regularly (but would scare away the 'crackles' or Common Grackles), and I would read her nature books when I visited her house. However, I feel like I am continuing my grandpa Harold's legacy. He died when I was 5 years old, so I don't have many memories of him. He was a hunter, fisherman, and conservationist. After his passing, he was inducted into the Manitowoc County Conservationists' Hall of Fame. He had provided leadership by serving on the Board of Directors for the Manitowoc County Fish & Game and was on a team that purchased land and installed boat ramps at many of the county lakes. He was also a member of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Mishicot Sportsman Club, and Two Rivers Fish & Game. He





*Grandpa on the right with two of his fishing buddies after a successful day.*

was known as a dedicated volunteer who would do whatever needed to be done to promote conservation: providing physical labor a truck or shovel when needed, selling memberships and hunting tickets, asking businesses to put up posters, helping maintain pheasant pens, and sending kids to environmental education programs. On his farm, he initiated conservation measures such as erosion prevention, crop rotation, and tree planting. The one memory I

do have of my grandpa is feeding tiny sport fish (I believe they were trout) in a rearing pond before they were released into the river and Lake Michigan to grow. My grandpa's legacy lives not just in me, but also in my aunts, uncles and cousins. They hunt and fish, maintain and expand the family's 'back 40', and volunteer in their community.

What strikes me is that my grandpa was not trying to instill a particular legacy in us; he was only doing

what he was passionate about, and that affected everyone around him in different, but impactful, ways.

Currently, I am working to leave my own legacy through my work with AOK. Not only do I hope to build upon the former Executive Director Ron Klataske's legacy of being a strong voice for wildlife, I am working on building a vibrant and engaged community of conservationists in Kansas and the Great Plains.

What is your legacy? How can AOK continue your legacy? Do you have a plot of land that has been protected from development and invasive species? Perhaps it can be added to AOK's sanctuary program. Do you have means to support AOK's advocacy, conservation, and education mission? Perhaps you can set up or contribute to AOK financially. Here are some ways to include AOK in your legacy:

### **Supporting AOK conservation now:**

1. Become an AOK member at [audubonofkansas.org](https://audubonofkansas.org). For as little as \$20/year you can add your voice to those defending wildlife in the Great Plains. You will also receive the next Prairie Wings delivered to your door. A monthly donation helps sustain our mission throughout the year.
2. Donate equipment. AOK is in need of reliable transportation for its staff and farm equipment for sanctuary management. If the equipment is not suited for AOK work, they could also be sold with the funds supporting AOK's mission.
3. Donate a required distribution of your IRA. This contribution can be made without accruing any tax obligation from the distribution.
4. Make a gift of stock or bonds. Contributions of appreciated stock or bonds provide support for AOK's mission while you avoid capital gains liability.

### **Creating a legacy gift:**

5. Create a charitable gift annuity. Work with your financial planner to create a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust. You will continue to receive fixed payments for the rest of your life and receive a charitable deduction. You also have the satisfaction of knowing that the remainder of your gift will benefit wildlife through AOK.
6. Include a bequest to AOK in your will or trust. Simply bequeath a fixed dollar amount or a percentage of your residual estate to Audubon of Kansas, Inc.

### **Create a legacy sanctuary:**

7. Donate a property to AOK to be included in our sanctuary program through outright donation, bequest, or life estate. Our hope is that one day, all people in Kansas can have access within an hour's drive to wildlife and wild places through AOK. In collaboration with the donor, AOK prepares a management plan which outlines how funding will be established to support ongoing care and maintenance of the property. Contact Jackie to learn more about this program at 785-537-4385 or [jackie@audubonofkansas.org](mailto:jackie@audubonofkansas.org).
8. Property that is not suitable for a sanctuary would also be accepted as 'trade lands'. The properties would be sold to support AOK's area of greatest need, or could be designated for a specific aspect of our mission, such as advocacy, conservation, or education.

**Please consult with your CPA, Attorney, or Professional Advisor when making planned gifts.** Audubon of Kansas, Inc., is a not-for-profit 501c3 conservation organization incorporated in the State of Kansas with its address at PO Box 1106, Manhattan KS 66505-1106. AOK's federal identification number is 48-0849282.