

# AOK WELCOMES New Board Members

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**VANESSA AVARA**  
*Manhattan*

Originally from Colorado, Vanessa moved to Kansas in 1981 and now lives in Manhattan. Now retired, she was the Assistant Director of Milford Nature Center by Milford Lake. She has been a falconer since 1993, and was the first woman licensed in Kansas, but has not actively flown birds for quite some time. She is still involved in the Kansas Hawking Club and is a strong advocate of the sport. Besides contributing to the success of AOK, she is also on Sunset Zoo's Conservation Board and has been involved in the Black-footed Ferret reintroduction since 2008.



**JOHN MALLERY**  
*Overland Park*

John has had a lifelong passion for the natural world. He grew up as an only child and spent his free time exploring the large woodland behind his house in Pennsylvania. He went to college at the University of Tampa, where he majored in Marine Science and Biology and minored in Chemistry. He decided to take a year off before going to graduate school so he could “see the world.” He drove from Tampa, Florida to Anchorage, Alaska and back - taking eight months. He has now been to all 50 states, and is very close to his goal of watching birds in every county in Kansas. John has held many diverse occupations including comedian, juggler, and knife thrower; a private investigator; and a managing consultant at one of the ten largest accounting firms in the country. He currently works as a testifying expert in computer forensics. Besides contributing to AOK, he has also co-authored the book, *Birds and Beyond: The Prints of Maurice R. Bebb*. John knows that “birds don’t exist in a vacuum” and AOK joins him in recognizing that if we want to continue to see birds, we have to be better stewards of the environment.



**ALEXIS POWELL**  
*Emporia*

Alexis is a natural history enthusiast and biologist with research interests in organismal, evolutionary, and conservation biology. Most of his formal work has involved birds, but he also studies mudpuppy salamanders and turtles in rivers of eastern Kansas, experimental evolution of a species of filamentous fungus, and has a passion for prairie-obligate butterflies. He also enjoys travel, photography, birding, bicycling, reading, and politics. His background spans seven generations in rural Lawrence, where he became involved with Jayhawk Audubon Society. Since 2015, he has lived in Emporia, where he aims to remain and where he is a Biology Professor at Emporia State University.



**MICHELLE  
WORRALL TITON**  
*Prairie Village*

Michelle holds degrees in both journalism and law from the University of Kansas. She is also a licensed property and casualty insurance agent and is a frequent speaker on cyber, media and intellectual property insurance, insurance coverage issues and risk management. Michelle is a remote cyber product counsel for Zurich NA. She has two sons, two dogs, a cat and a horse. An equal opportunity employer, Michelle feeds both the birds and squirrels at her suburban home. Animals and their well-being have always been important to Michelle as she grew up in a home where spiders and mice were trapped and carried outside. Michelle has been a vegetarian for more than thirty years because of health, animal, and environmental concerns.



**DYLAN WHEELER**  
*Wichita*

Dylan is presently an attorney focusing on general civil litigation with a law firm in his hometown of Wichita, KS. He earned a bachelor's degree in English from Kansas State University and his Juris Doctorate from the Washburn University School of Law. He started advocating on behalf of AOK while still in law school. He dedicated an entire semester during his last year of law school to researching and understanding the variety of federal and state environmental and administrative statutes/regulations directly related to the conflict over the senior water rights held by the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge. He is currently one of the attorneys assisting in AOK's case originally brought against the USFWS and its Director, the US Department of the Interior, the Kansas Secretary of Agriculture, and the Chief Engineer of the Kansas Division of Water Resources for their failure to enforce Quivira's senior water right.



**JIM BRESNAHAN**

*Lawrence*

*Chapter Representative for Jayhawk Audubon Society*

Jim received a B.A. in Biology from Southern Illinois University, a D.V.M. degree from the University of Illinois and a post-doctoral M.S. from the University of Missouri. In addition to three years of small animal veterinary practice in his hometown of Granite City, Illinois, he was University Veterinarian and Director of Veterinary Services at Duke University for five years and University Veterinarian and Director of the Animal Care Unit at the University of Kansas for 25 years before his retirement in 2009. He was privileged to have been the veterinarian for a rare prosimian primate center while at Duke and a wildlife rehabilitation program while at KU.



**ANN TANNER**

*Leawood*

*Chapter Representative for Burroughs Audubon Society*

Ann Tanner is a pharmacist by training and a naturalist at heart. She is originally from Mississippi but has lived in Kansas for many years. Ann serves on the Board of Directors for the Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater Kansas City, is on the Advisory Board for Kansas Master Naturalists, and is on the Board of Directors for Delta Wind Birds in Mississippi.



**DAN HOUSEHOLDER**

*Wichita*

*Chapter Representative for Wichita Audubon Society*

Dan is a retired physician, currently (2021-2023) President of Wichita Audubon Society and an observer of AOK Chapter meetup.