



To our volunteers:

You are making a real difference in our members' lives!

In this season of giving and gratitude, the TRAIL Board of Directors extends a very special and sincere **thank you** to our fantastic TRAIL volunteers (some of whom are pictured here).



Whether you work in the office as a Member Support Specialist, have provided rides to members in need of transportation, assisted with home chores, helped with outreach, served on committees, or performed any number of other tasks, **your participation matters**.

You are making it possible for TRAIL members to live more safely and comfortably in their own homes, and to maintain the sense of independence

that so many of us value as we grow older.

Most important, you are helping to build and strengthen the TRAIL community, a circle of support that provides companionship, engagement, and peace of mind.

As TRAIL grows and evolves, we're discovering that it's not just one-time volunteer services that members appreciate – it's knowing those services are close at hand, which means less time worrying about "how am I going to get this done?" and more time spent on the activities we truly enjoy.



In recent issues of our *TRAIL Guide* newsletter, we've profiled some of our volunteers as well as members who've experienced and enjoyed their interaction with TRAIL volunteers. We've included two of those stories on the opposite side of this special edition of the newsletter, which celebrates all you do.

Again, from the TRAIL board and staff, thank you for your involvement and support of TRAIL. We look forward to your active participation in 2018. Until then, best wishes for the holidays and a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

TRAIL Board of Directors

Charlie Anderson, Past Chair • Michelle Buhman • Maggie Elliott, Treasurer • Nancy Hauserman • Diana Lundell • Linda McGuire • David Rust, Chair • Susan Shullaw, Secretary • Joy Smith

(continued on reverse)

Volunteer Profile: MS Specialist Jo Dickens



Like many retirees, Jo Dickens began looking for volunteer opportunities when she retired. She had worked for 28 years at the University of Iowa Center for Conferences, serving as Director from 2001 until her retirement on January 1 of this year, and wanted

to stay busy in a meaningful way.

When she learned about TRAIL, Jo says, "I was drawn in by the new and different purpose of TRAIL, and the concept of helping older adults stay in their own homes. My mother is 82 and lives near us, and though she's still pretty active, she relies on us for help. When I think about the many people here who don't have friends or relatives close at hand, I know TRAIL fills a real need."

As a Member Support Specialist, Jo plays a critical role in the TRAIL office, handling phone calls, member-service requests, and drop-in visitors. An Iowa City native, Jo is married to local businessman Terry Dickens. The couple have three children and six grandchildren.

Jo and Terry are also generous TRAIL contributors. Says Jo, "We're excited about being involved in the startup of a new and ground-breaking organization that's so important to the welfare of our community."

A few testimonials . . .

"My first volunteer assignment for TRAIL was helping a member weed her garden. It seemed like a small task to me, but as we chatted, it was clear that this was a big deal for her and a huge relief to have it done. It felt good to be making such a positive difference."

"I was extremely pleased by your transportation service. The TRAIL volunteer was such a delightful person!"

Thank you, TRAIL volunteers!

Member Experience: Valuing "techs-pertise"

TRAIL member Marty Fields had tried everything she could think of to get her wireless printer working again. She sought advice from friends and sales staff at stores. She even thought about paying to have someone fix it.

"I was so frustrated. Then I saw that one of the volunteer services TRAIL offers is help with computers and printers, so I signed up to have someone come look it over," Marty says.

The volunteer was very professional, calling ahead to confirm a convenient time and wearing his volunteer badge when he arrived, Marty says.



"More important, he figured out the problem and got the printer working in no time." The whole experience was very easy and pleasant, she adds.

Marty heard about TRAIL at meetings at the Iowa City Public Library and Senior Center, and was eager to sign up for membership. In addition to valuing TRAIL's volunteer service and preferred vendor list, she's attended some of our social and educational events—and may even do a bit of volunteering herself.

A retired hospital administrator, Marty sees her monthly membership fee as an investment in TRAIL and her future.

"I plan to live independently for as long as I can," she says. "My kids don't live nearby, so when I get to the point that I need more help, TRAIL will be a great resource."