NEWS FROM TRAIL OF JOHNSON COUNTY

TRAIL Guide

October 2026

ENGAGING VOLUNTEERS

All signs point to TRAIL



First, a big THANK YOU to the transportation volunteers who participated in the recent survey about using magnetic signs when driving for TRAIL. More than 80 percent of drivers responding to the survey said they are willing to use the signs.

Drivers pointed out several positive points about using the signs, including:

"Seems like a **good marketing idea."**

"The sign **adds safety for members** (like Uber signs) and is great awareness building for TRAIL."

> "I have been using a laminated TRAIL Driver sign in my back rear window for years, but **this new magnetic version is a big improvement.** Thank you!"

Drivers also considered potential issues, such as forgetting to affix the signs before embarking on a drive, and storage of signs when not in use, but overall were happy to try using the signs, recognizing that it will bring more visibility to TRAIL.

Later this year, TRAIL will have 15 signs printed and distributed to drivers to affix to their vehicles when they provide transportation to TRAIL Full members. The signs will not harm the car's exterior and are easy to apply and remove.

In all cases, use of the magnetic signs is optional for the driver and TRAIL members. If a member is uncomfortable riding in a vehicle with the TRAIL sign, they should let the volunteer know and the sign can easily be removed.

And, just a friendly reminder, we can always use more transportation volunteers! Persons interested in volunteering with TRAIL can contact Jessica in the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003 or send an email to membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.



More healthy living sessions to come!

TRAIL's Closing the Gap series continues with three more presentations scheduled for Thursdays afternoons, 1 to 2:30 PM, at the Kirkwood Regional Center in Coralville. To register, visit **Closing the Gap** on the TRAIL website.

OCT. 15 **Bone Health**
(David DeMik, MD, PharmD, Steindler Orthopedic Clinic, and Jim Norman, PT, Athletico)

OCT. 22 **Brain Health**
(Michelle Voss, PhD, University of Iowa Health, Brain, and Cognition Lab)

OCT. 29 ***Elderescence***
(Connie Benton Wolfe, Chief Visionary Officer, Aging and In-Home Services of Northeast Indiana; founder, GroundGame Health)

Closing the Gap is free and open to the public.



More than a will:
Planning to stay home

By Keyan McAreavy, BrownWinick Law

Most of us think of estate planning as deciding what happens after we're gone. But if we plan to stay in our own homes, another question matters: Who can step in for me while I'm still here?

A will covers what happens to your property after death. It doesn't appoint anyone to pay your bills, talk with your doctors, or keep your household running if illness or injury leaves you unable to, even for a short time. Three documents fill that gap:

- Durable financial power of attorney. Names someone you trust to pay bills, manage bank accounts, work with insurers, and handle matters involving your home. It remains effective during incapacity. Without one, your family may have to ask a court to appoint someone.
- Healthcare power of attorney. Names the person who makes medical decisions when you're unable to make health care decisions. You choose that person in advance rather than leaving it to chance or family disagreement.
- Living will (advance directive). Records your wishes about life-sustaining procedures if you have a terminal condition or are permanently unconscious.

Picture a short hospital stay that turns into weeks of rehab. With these documents in place, someone you've chosen can pay the mortgage and property taxes, coordinate your care, and help get the house ready for your return. Without such documents, your family may need to seek guardianship or conservatorship through the courts, adding time, expense, and stress to an already hard situation.

Choosing the right people matters as much as signing the papers. Discuss your wishes with those you name and name a backup. Give your agents copies of the documents and your health care providers copies of the medical documents. Make sure your agents know where to find the originals.

Together, a will and these documents help ensure decisions reflect your wishes and are handled by people you trust. If your plan stopped at a will, or your documents were signed years ago, now is a good time to take another look.



In Memoriam

Ann Romanowski

Ann Romanowski was a long-time member (2018) and TRAIL Social and Education Committee member for about nine years. She came to every meeting with ideas for events and willingness to host.

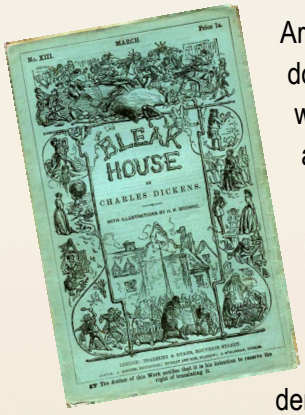
Ann often provided cooking demonstrations, packets of recipes, and treat platters that were as great to look at as eat. She hosted tea parties, planned our yearly flower arranging at Willow and Stock, and organized arrangements for our anniversary celebrations. — Barb Stein

See Ann's obituary **here**.

From serial TV back to Victorian serialized novels—

Charles Dickens' *Bleak House*

By Teresa Mangum, TRAIL volunteer



Are you addicted to TV series doled out one episode at a time—with a cliff hanger to whet your appetite for the coming week? Then you know how the Victorians first read Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* in 1852. For 20 months, ravenous subscribers devoured a densely printed 32-page "part" that consisted of nine chapters, two illustrations, and abundant commercial advertisements. The opening part sold out on day one.

The novel features Jarndyce vs Jarndyce, a case that pits relatives against one another and crushes everyone (except lawyers) in its path. Fresh from a bruising copyright battle, Dickens chose an ageless omniscient narrator to provide a soaring critique of the legal system.

A second narrator, Esther Summerson, offers an alternative view. Haunted by a harsh childhood, Esther learned compassion long before she became the companion to two young wards of the court.

The novel asks tough, timely questions. How can communities of care respond when the state fails its citizens? How will we treat "illegitimate" children and their mothers? How should the rich treat the poor, including indigent elderly people? The novel also unveils a new member of the legal system—the detective. Victorians hotly debated whether someone who associates with crime and criminals can be trusted.

If you'd like to read the novel at a speedy pace in good company, a few spots remain in my UI Senior College class that begins October 29. If you prefer to "read" with your ears, don't miss the unabridged award-winning audio version by Miriam Margoyles. You may know her as Professor Sprout from the early Harry Potter movies.





Coming your way

TRAIL's annual fund appeal will appear in your mailbox in early November.

Did you know that membership fees cover less than half of TRAIL's annual budget? The remainder comes through donations from members, volunteers, and community members. And the success of our annual fund helps us meet the growing demand for TRAIL's services. Your gift can help ensure that older adults can count on the support and connection they need.

Please consider including TRAIL among your charitable priorities this year. It's easy to give anytime of year through TRAIL's safe and secure **online giving page**. Thank you for all the ways you support TRAIL!



Local church offers medical supply closet

St. Mark's United Methodist Church, located at 2675 E. Washington Street in Iowa City, offers a free medical supply closet to any community members in need. Available items include wheelchairs, walkers, canes, blood pressure cuffs, shower chairs, oxygen supplies, and more. There is no paperwork, no cost, and no need to return items.

Donated items are also welcome, although some items cannot be accepted.

For more information and to check on the availability of specific items, call the church at 319-337-7201 during office hours, 9 AM to noon, Monday through Friday.



Alice and Kendall Atkinson
Kathy and LaVerne Dvorsky
Rose Frank
Ernie Geiger
Gretchen Holt and Henry Lyell
Jody Hovland and Ron Clark
Patricia and Irwin Levin
Eva Mickey
Elke and George Nelson
Christine Rohret
Barbara Staib
Robin Ungar
David Wilder

MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT!

Election Day—Nov. 3—is coming up fast. With so many changes to election rules in recent years, it may be best to vote in person if you possibly can. The good news: you can do so NOW.

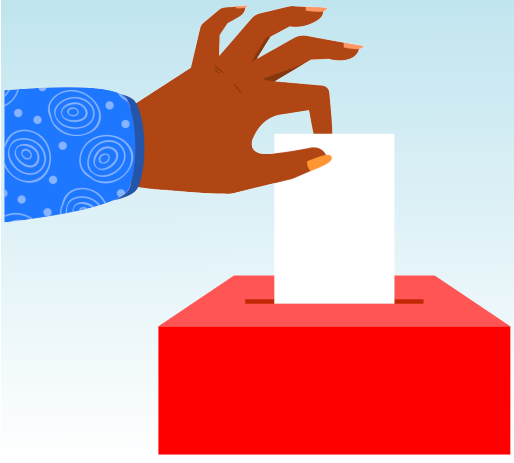
Early voting began in Johnson County on Oct. 14 and will continue through Monday, Nov. 2. You will find a complete list of early-voting locations and hours at this **link**. Or you may call the Johnson County Auditor's Office at 319-356-6004 for more information.

Mail-in ballots began being sent to voters on Oct. 14. If you would like to request a mail-in ballot, Monday, Oct. 19, is the last day you can do so. Your request must be in the Auditor's Office in the Johnson County Administration Building at 913 S. Dubuque St. by 5 PM that day.

If you are not registered to vote, you may do so at the Auditor's Office in advance or on Election Day. Note that you will need proof of ID (driver's license or passport) and proof of address (bring a utility bill, bank statement, or piece of government mail delivered to you at your home address).

In addition to contests for national, state, and county office holders, the Nov. 3 ballot asks voters to approve three additional proposals: an amendment to the Iowa Constitution relating to individual and corporate income tax; a bond issuance for a new Johnson County jail; and a bond issuance allowing Kirkwood Community College to make various facilities upgrades.

These are important issues and we encourage you to do your homework before voting. The **Johnson County League of Women Voters** is an excellent, nonpartisan source of information about these and other ballot measures.





Need a ride to the polls, whether before or on Election Day? If you are a Full TRAIL member, contact Jessica at the TRAIL office at least a week in advance to arrange transportation to your polling place. Polls are open on Nov. 3 from 7 AM to 8 PM.



In Memoriam

Jim McCue

Jim passed away on September 27. He and his wife, Mary, were members of TRAIL from 2018 to 2025. Jim enjoyed participating in the men's book club. He served on the Shelter House and United Way boards, volunteered with Shelter House, and was involved with the Foreign Relations Council.

See Jim's obituary **here**.



The TRAIL office will be closed on Wednesday, November 11, in observation of Veterans Day.

Federal and state offices will not be open. Johnson County will close most county administrative and government offices as will local city governments.



TRAIL's ice cream social

Ice cream provided by Dan and Debbie's Creamery in Ely, was enjoyed by TRAIL members and friends on September 28. Attendees were treated to beautiful weather at City Park after the originally scheduled social had been rained out.

TRAIL is grateful to Dan and Debbie's Creamery for once again donating the ice cream to this popular event.







THANKS to **Team Iowa Physical Therapy** for sponsoring this month's newsletter.





Lunch bunch at Keystone

Keystone at Forevergreen kindly invited us to return for a chef's tasting of their meal offerings. On Friday, September 18, we were treated to pasta station entrées, as well as dessert.

Above: Keystone's chef creating our delicious meal: Tracy Albertsen (host at Keystone), Terry Boles, Chef Kassidy Burroughs, Gail Royar, Ana Peterson, Mary Wiemann, and Kathleen Kearney.



NOTE: Some events are virtual, while others are in person. Full details for each event can be found on TRAIL's online calendar.

New events are frequently added, so check TRAIL's weekly calendar preview emailed on Fridays or the online calendar to stay up-to-date.

Calendar key: BLUE events are for TRAIL members. GREEN (virtual) and YELLOW (in-person) events are hosted by other groups but may be of interest to TRAIL members.

Members pay their own fees if there is a cost associated with an event ($). Want to attend an event, but need a ride? Full members can call Jessica at 319-800-9003 or email her at membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.

If you have questions or suggestions about the newsletter, email info@trailof johnson-

OUR MISSION:
TRAIL is powered by volunteers to help older adults live and age with support, safety, and connection in the places they call home by providing tools and resources for active independent living.

Upcoming TRAIL Events Calendar

TRAIL office closed November 11 in observation of Veterans Day.

Closing the Gap: Healthspan vs. Lifespan (Topic: Bone Health)
Thursday, October 15, 1 to 2:30 PM
Kirkwood Regional Center, 2301 Oakdale Blvd, Coralville

Iowa City Book Festival
October 18—25, Various venues and schedules
Downtown Iowa City

Book Club: *Whistler* by Ann Pratchett (via Zoom)
Monday, October 19, 1 to 2 PM

Closing the Gap: Healthspan vs. Lifespan (Topic: Brain Health)
Thursday, October 22, 1 to 2:30 PM
Kirkwood Regional Center, 2301 Oakdale Blvd, Coralville

Fighting Against Fraud: Spot the Red Flags Before It's Too Late
Friday, October 23, 1 to 2 PM
Iowa City Senior Center, Room 302, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

A Lifetime of Memories: Decluttering and Downsizing with Compassion
(This UI College of Nursing virtual event is free and open to the public)
Tuesday, October 27, noon to 1 PM

The Fred Korematsu Story: The Courage to Stand Up for What is Right
Tuesday, October 27, 5:30 to 6:30 PM
Iowa City Senior Center, Assembly Room, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

Let's Talk Books: Horror (via Zoom)
Tuesday, October 27, 7 to 8 PM

Closing the Gap: Healthspan vs. Lifespan (Topic: *Elderescence*)
Thursday, October 29, 1 to 2:30 PM
Kirkwood Regional Center, 2301 Oakdale Blvd, Coralville

Studio H_2O Kitchen, Bath, and Lighting Showroom Tour
Wednesday, November 4, 10 to 11 AM
Studio H_2O, 2020 South Riverside Drive, Iowa City

Book Club: *Joyland* by Stephen King (via Zoom)
Monday, November 16, 1 to 2 PM

Butter and Jam: Dine Around **$**
Friday, November 20, 10:30 AM to noon
Butter and Jam, 801 1st Avenue, Coralville