



Up and running!



It's hard to believe that nearly two months have passed since TRAIL officially opened its doors for membership. We have

indeed been running to keep up with inquiries, applications, and drop-by visitors. We are pleased and grateful for the positive community response to our mission of helping older adults age in place. We now have more than 50 members, with more signing on every day!

With a solid cadre of volunteers in place (like Jo, at right), we're ready and eager to accept more members at both the Affiliate and Full levels. Please don't hesitate to refer your friends and family to TRAIL. In addition, we welcome the opportunity to talk about TRAIL to service clubs, church groups, or other organizations. Spread the word and help us grow!

Sincerely yours,

Executive Director

hillary@trailofjohnsoncounty.org

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Volunteer Profile:

Jo Dickens makes a difference



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."

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Want to join Jo as a TRAIL volunteer? Opportunities are available in areas such as transportation, medical advocacy (see page 2), in-home services, member support services, and our Rise & Shine program. [Contact us](#) for more information. Or you're welcome to stop by the TRAIL office in the heart of downtown Iowa City. We're in Room 201 of the Iowa City-Johnson County Senior Center, 28 South Linn Street. Office hours are 9AM-1PM, Monday-Friday. (But call first to make sure we'll be there to greet you: 319-800-9003.)

1st Member Social draws eager crowd

TRAIL's first Monthly Member Social was held at the Eastside Recycling Center's Education Center on Thursday, June 8, 2017, and we were very pleased by the large and enthusiastic turnout.



More than 30 TRAIL members and volunteers gathered to learn from TRAIL board chair David Rust and Executive Director Hillary Ramaker about accessing member benefits, plans for future member involvement, and more.

Our next Member Social will be held in mid-July. Keep an eye on the [TRAIL calendar](#) on our website for date and time details, and then plan to join us to meet your fellow TRAIL members, and discuss ideas for future events organized around topics you're interested in exploring.

Have ideas for upcoming events? Contact the TRAIL office and we'll put you in touch with our event volunteers. We welcome your input!

In the spotlight

Medical advocacy program

For many aging adults, a visit to the doctor's office can be a challenging experience. Even when one's health is good, patients may have questions that need to be asked and, in response, physicians may have advice that needs to be remembered and followed. Yet some older adults can feel intimidated in the presence of health care professionals and even be reluctant to ask questions or pursue medical help in the first place.

That's why TRAIL's Medical Advocacy program, offered to Full members as a volunteer service, is so important. Our specially trained Medical Advocate volunteers are available to assist with the following:

- Transportation to and from medical appointments
- Consulting with the member in advance to gather and write down any questions to be asked during the appointment
- Accompanying the member to the appointment, taking notes about what was said, and serving as a reminder about any previously shared questions or concerns

Medical Advocacy volunteers abide by strict confidentiality standards and are not permitted to dispense medications or provide wound care or other personal services. However, their presence and assistance at medical appointments can provide peace of mind and help ensure instructions are followed.

Full members who would like to request these services should email us at membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org or call the office at 319-800-9003. We're here to help!

Newsletter ideas? Let us know!

In upcoming issues, we plan to introduce you to some of your fellow TRAIL members, ask our service providers for home maintenance tips, share national news highlights about aging well, and consult with University of Iowa aging experts on their latest research. If you have other topics you'd like to see covered here, call the TRAIL office or send your ideas to info@trailofjohnsoncounty.org. Thanks!