



See TRAIL's expanded calendar on page 4.

## Anniversary reminder: Meet our "main event"

If there's one thing we've learned about the TRAIL community, it's that our members, volunteers, donors, and vendors love to laugh.

Happily, our keynote presenter at TRAIL's upcoming anniversary event, the local actor and playwright **Janet Schlapkohl**, shares that trait—and she's a pro at generating laughter as well. Janet will be presenting a brief, original monologue at our May 16 celebration, and you won't want to miss it.

For those who've not seen Janet's many performances at Riverside Theatre and other local venues, here's a quick bio summary: She earned her MFA in

Playwriting from the University of Iowa and is the founder of [Combined Efforts Theatre](#) and director of [Country Camp, LLC](#). She is the recipient of the Isabelle Turner Human Rights Award, the Richard Maibaum Award, and the Finkbine Award for Human Rights, and was selected as a 2014 Visionary Playwright by Theater Masters. Janet's plays have been produced in New York

City, Nashville, Los Angeles, Colorado, and across Iowa. She has also worked as a director, a dramaturge, a scenic artist, and a costume designer. She is currently an adjunct assistant professor in the UI Department of Theatre Arts.

Of her TRAIL engagement, Janet says, "I'm excited to try out some new material for this specific demographic, which I think is timely." We think so, too. Remember to RSVP for our anniversary event by May 10. We look forward to seeing you there!



## You're Invited "Better Together"

TRAIL's  
**Second Anniversary Celebration**

Thursday, May 16,  
4:30-6:30 PM at the  
Unitarian Universalist Society  
2355 Oakdale Road, Coralville

*Please RSVP by May 10.*



### NOTE: ADDRESS CORRECTION

Our recent mail and email invitations to TRAIL's May 16 anniversary event contained some address errors. **Please note** that the Unitarian Universalist Society is located at 2355 Oakdale Road, which is just south of Oakdale Boulevard. Parking is located on the west side of the UUS building, and additional parking is located in a commuter lot several blocks south of the UUS facility, also along Oakdale Road. We apologize for the road/boulevard confusion!

### And baby makes four!

TRAIL members and volunteers who've seen Executive Director Hillary Ramaker in recent weeks will know something we're pleased to share with the TRAIL community as a whole: Hillary is expecting her second child around the first of June, and will begin an extended maternity leave in late May.

From now until her leave begins, Hillary will focus on training our new staff member, Sue Mellecker (see page 2). Hillary plans to return to her regular work schedule shortly after Labor Day.

Please join us in congratulating Hillary, spouse Doug, and soon-to-be big brother Evan!





## Staffing news: Meet Sue Mellecker

After a long and successful career in the global travel-technology industry, mostly working remotely for her overseas employer, **Sue Mellecker** decided it was time for a change. She began looking for a somewhat smaller role where, as she says, “I can cheerfully and successfully contribute to a local organization.”

Happily, that “smaller” role is going to make a big difference to TRAIL, where Sue will begin her new job as **Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator** on April 22. Working 20 hours a week, Sue will staff the TRAIL office during our regular hours (Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 1 PM). Her main duties will be responding to member requests, arranging volunteer services, answering public inquiries, greeting office visitors, and managing day-to-day office operations.

Sue has considerable experience in providing exceptional customer service, handling new technologies, and developing efficient practices and procedures. She’s highly organized, forward-thinking, and is a great communicator in person and on paper. And best of all, our members, volunteers, donors, vendors, and visitors will find Sue to be unfailingly upbeat, energetic, and eager to assist.

“I am so excited to join the TRAIL team and be part of this new and evolving organization,” Sue says. “As a lifelong Iowa Citian, I am looking forward to connecting (and possibly reconnecting!) with TRAIL members, volunteers, and the Iowa City community at large, as well as supporting TRAIL in achieving its future goals.” Stop by the office later this month and say hello!

**TRAIL members were treated to a host of social and educational events in March—learning about great books to read, a new program that “fits” you in your car, and resources available for recycling, composting, and living “green.”**

### LIVING WELL EVENTS

#### GREAT BOOKS OF 2018.

Laura Crossett, head of Adult Services for the Coralville Public Library, shared titles of books that she recommends. Here is her list for those who may have missed this informative session:

- An American Marriage* by Tayari Jones
- The Female Persuasion* by Meg Wolitzer
- Spinning Silver* by Naomi Novik
- The Witch Elm* by Tana French
- The Great Alone* by Kristin Hannah
- The Coddling of the American Mind* by Greg Lukianoff and Jonathan Haidt
- Educated* by Tara Westover
- Heavy* by Kiese Laymon
- These Truths* by Jill Lepore
- Blue Dreams* by Lauren Slater

We are grateful to **James Investment Group of Iowa City** for their generous support of the **Living Well** series.

**CARFIT PROGRAM.** Gretchen Cluff, CarFit Coordinator for the state of Iowa, explained how the CarFit program can help older drivers keep driving as long as possible by improving the “fit” of their vehicle to them. Although this was not a session where drivers got their cars “fitted,” Gretchen noted that there is an opportunity to do just that coming to Iowa City Mercy Hospital on September 21. She encouraged those interested to register soon, as the session will fill fast. The online link for information and registration is [www.car-fit.org/carfit/ViewEvent](http://www.car-fit.org/carfit/ViewEvent). For more information about CarFit, including the 12-point CarFit checklist, visit [www.car-fit.org](http://www.car-fit.org).

**TOUR OF EASTSIDE RECYCLING CENTER.** Attendees were surprised by all the options for composting, recycling, and other services located at the Eastside Recycling Center (2401 Scott Boulevard, Iowa City) that can be used by any resident of Johnson County. Handouts from the session are posted on the TRAIL member website under Member Documents.

In addition, attendees learned about other recycling drop-off locations that may be more convenient and what is accepted at those sites. They are: 1201 North Dodge Street; Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center, 3900 Hebl Avenue SW; and Coralville Recycling Center, 950 Hughes Street, Coralville.

For more information, visit [www.icgov.org/recycling](http://www.icgov.org/recycling).



TRAIL members (left to right) Vicki Tardy, Susan Spaziani, and Lorraine Bowans look at samples in the workroom of The Mansion.

Fourteen members attended the March 7 event at the design studio's new location in Coralville and learned about furniture, fabrics, and design ideas that help older adults continue to live independently.

## Survey: Sorry!

Sometimes technology is our friend, and sometimes not so much. We wish to apologize to the TRAIL members who gamely attempted to complete our recent online survey and were prevented from filling out some of the multiple-choice and/or preference-ranking questions. Although the survey performed fine in test mode, it most clearly did not do so when many of you tried to complete it at home.



In the future, we will either discontinue use of SurveyMonkey, or craft questions that do not require multiple responses. We greatly appreciate all who did (or attempted to!) take the survey, whether in print or online, and we will report on preliminary results next month. Thanks very much for your patience as well as your opinions!

## Certified Aging-in-Place Specialists (CAPS)

All TRAIL members have access to a list of Prescreened Service Providers, some of whom are Certified Aging-in-Place Specialists. Professionals with this designation have taken courses to better understand how to design or modify homes so they are easier for older adults to live in. Modifications may include roll-in showers for easy wheelchair access, wider doorways, higher toilets, designer grab bars, ramps, or additional task lighting.



While most CAPS professionals are remodelers, contractors, and architects, Lorraine Bowans of Ruhl and Ruhl Realtors has been fascinated with construction. Before becoming a realtor, she worked as a certified

civil engineering technician for the city, so gaining CAPS certification was an easy choice.

“Not many realtors get their CAPS certification,” says Bowans, who is also an Affiliate TRAIL member. “I enjoy finding ways to make homes attractive yet functional. In the Johnson County community, there’s a desire for it. I encourage people to make the house work for you while you’re living in it.”

In addition, Bowans works with older clients who are purchasing a new home.

“The certification has enhanced my knowledge and helps me look at a house in a different way. Ninety percent of people can only see what the house is, and 10 percent can see what it can be. Now I can look at the home with an eye to what modifications are possible, maybe moving a doorway for easier access to a room or changing where light switches are located.”

Her passion for helping older adults age in place may someday include fulfilling a dream to build an aging-in-place spec home. “For a few months, people could come see all the things that can be done in a home to make it more livable for older adults,” she says. “If it didn’t sell right away, I’d live there myself!”

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Please register for any of these member events online or by calling the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003.

More details about each event can be found on the TRAIL calendar online.

[Dine Around: Let's Have Breakfast at Leaf Kitchen](#)

Wednesday, April 17, 8:30 to 10 AM

301 1/2 Kirkwood Avenue, Iowa City

Enjoy a tasty, unique breakfast menu in a cozy setting. Leaf Kitchen offers free parking and is wheelchair accessible.

[Yarning Group](#)

Thursday, April 18, 1:30 to 3:30 PM

Home of Vicky Tardy, 4608 Oak Crest Hill Road SE, Iowa City

[New Member Orientation](#)

Tuesday, April 23, 3:30 to 5 PM

Home of Carrie Z. Norton, 1008 Marcy Street, Iowa City

Learn about TRAIL benefits and meet other new members.



[Louis Comfort Tiffany: Treasures from the Driehaus Collection](#)

Wednesday, April 24, 11 AM to 4 PM

Figge Art Museum, 225 W. Second Street, Davenport

This collection features 62 works ranging from small glass vases to breathtaking stained-glass windows and lamps. Lunch in the museum cafe will be followed by a docent-led tour. Members pay their own charges. Carpooling available.

[Grant Wood Studio and Gallery Tour](#)

Wednesday, May 1, 1:30 to 3:30 PM

Grant Wood Studio and Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, 810 Second Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids

After a docent-led tour of Grant Wood's studio, the group will move to the museum for a tour of its Grant Wood collection. Free parking available at both sites; members pay their own charges.

[Moviegoers Matinee: "Amazing Grace"](#)

Tuesday, May 7, noon to 3 PM

FilmScene, Iowa City Ped Mall, 118 East College Street

This is an 87-minute film of a gospel choir with Aretha Franklin, the Queen of Soul. FilmScene has not yet announced the start time of the movie. Register online to attend; you will be contacted before the event with details.

[Book Group](#)

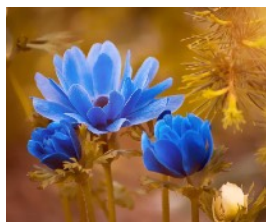
Thursday, May 9, 1:30 to 3 PM

Panera at Iowa City Marketplace. *New members welcome!*

[Yarning Group](#)

Thursday, May 9, 1:30 to 3:30 PM

Home of Barbara Plakans, 122 Brentwood Drive, Iowa City



[A Hike on the \(Wild\)flower Side](#)

Friday, May 10, 10 AM to noon

Rochester Cemetery, 1179 Cemetery Road, Tipton

This hike will be guided by Elizabeth Swain, director of the Master Naturalist Program. Rochester Cemetery is a never-plowed prairie remnant with more than 330 native species. See the TRAIL calendar listing online for recommended gear and travel options.

[University of Iowa Baseball Game](#)

Sunday, May 12, 12:45 to 3:30 PM

Duane Banks Field, 960 Evasheski Drive, Iowa City

The Iowa men will take on Michigan State. Meet at the ticket booth. Members pay their own charges. Free parking.