



TRAIL Executive Director
Christine Scheetz

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

At TRAIL of Johnson County, we often talk about the village concept of neighbors helping neighbors. While that spirit is at the heart of everything we do, another essential ingredient that makes our work possible is partnership.

I had to say goodbye to my dog, Hachi, at the end of last summer, and last month adopted a new rescue—talk about a special partnership! Meet Lily!

No single organization can meet all the needs and desired programming and services of older adults in our community. Aging well requires access to transportation, health care, social connection, home maintenance, reliable information, and opportunities to stay engaged. That's why collaboration is so important. By working alongside other nonprofits, local governments, businesses, and community groups, TRAIL can help ensure that older adults in Johnson County have the support they need to continue living independently with dignity, safety, support, and connection.

Partnerships expand what is possible. When we connect with organizations that provide complementary services, we create a stronger network of support. For example, when a TRAIL member needs a service beyond what volunteers

can provide, our relationships with trusted community partners allow us to help connect them to the right resources quickly and confidently. Likewise, our partners know they can reach out to TRAIL when someone could benefit from our services or programs.

These collaborations also help us identify gaps in services and work together to address them. Whether it's improving access to transportation, strengthening social connections to reduce isolation, or helping older adults navigate complex systems like health care and insurance, partnerships allow us to respond more effectively to the evolving needs of our community.

Equally important are our partnerships with donors and local funders who believe in TRAIL's mission. Their support fuels the work that happens every day—matching volunteers with members, coordinating services, strengthening programs, and expanding outreach to more older adults.

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“Where Art Meets Friendship”

Community members who visited the Iowa City Senior Center during the Downtown Gallery Walk on March 6 agree that the exhibit there was aptly named: both fine art and friendship were on full display.

“Where Art Meets Friendship” was conceived by artist and TRAIL member Constance Peterson. A decade ago, she joined a group of artists who’d taken an art class at the Senior Center and wanted to continue working together. Meanwhile, a second group was formed by several other Senior Center art class participants.

“One of the artists in that second group recently asked me to join them on a monthly basis,” Constance says. “There are very fine artists in that group, and because I had had art shows with my original group, I urged that group to give it a try when the Senior Center needed art for their gallery areas during this latest Gallery Walk.”



TRAIL member and exhibit organizer Constance Peterson with some of her Senior Center artwork.

TRAIL member Linda McGuire is a member of the second group, which formed about eight years ago and includes six painters who meet at one another’s homes. Once a month, Linda says, they’re joined by three or four other artists and meet at the Senior Center or outdoors in good weather.

“Doing art with others stimulates and inspires your own artmaking and sharing your process helps expose you to new techniques,” says Constance. “Also, the easy communication that happens when you are doing art with others brings people closer to each other. A bond develops that becomes a support group.”

Linda appreciates that being part of a group “makes us get out our paints on a regular basis. For me, ‘playing art’ sometimes feels frivolous and gets pushed behind the demands of everyday life.”

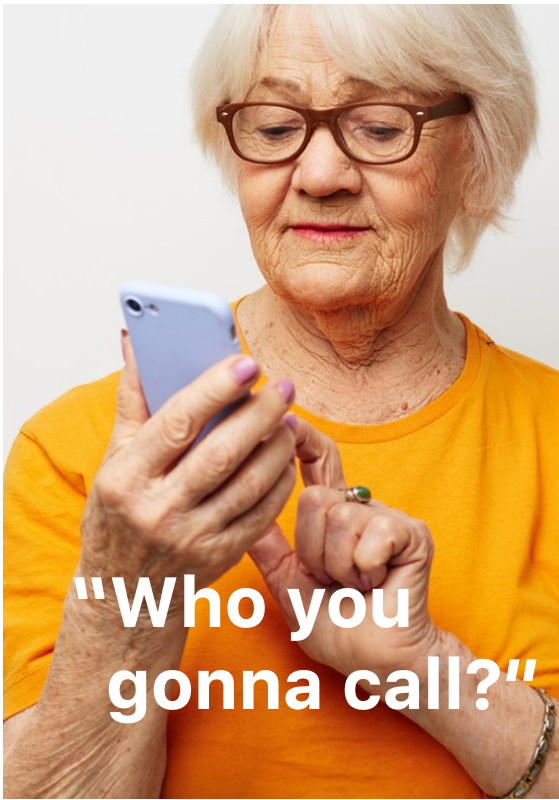
She also sees advantages to artmaking in retirement. “Now I get out more, which lets me see more and see differently. That wider perspective feeds my art, just as doing art helps me see the world better.”

“Where Art Meets Friendship”—featuring several TRAIL members, volunteers, and donors—will be display at the Senior Center through April.



In the Upper Gallery (3rd Floor) and pictured here, from left to right: Rebecca Clouse, Cheryl Miller, Corbin Bailey, Linda McGuire, Maggie Conroy, Carrie Z. Norton, and Jesse Singerman

In the Main Gallery (Assembly Room, 1st Floor): Ann Miracle, Betsy Fischer, Constance Peterson, Diana Miller, Gwen Elling, Helene Donta, and Nancy Traer



No, this isn't about the old "Ghostbusters" movie theme. Instead, it's a reminder that we're heading into spring cleaning season, which is a perfect time to remind TRAIL members about our **Vendor Requests & Recommendations forum** on the TRAIL member website.

If you have a trusted household cleaning service, home repair contractor, or yard and garden crew you can recommend to others—or if you're in need of such services yourself—it's easy to share that information with fellow TRAIL members:

1. Log onto the TRAIL member [website](#)
2. Click on FOR MEMBERS in the navigation bar at the top of the page
3. From the drop-down menu there, click on MESSAGE BOARDS
4. On that page, Vendor Requests & Recommendations is the first category listed

Click on "View Forum" under Vendor Requests & Recommendations and a page will appear with all the message "threads" that have been posted. Click on any thread to see what's being said or click on "Start a New Thread" at the top of the page to add a new review or to request recommendations from others. Your fellow TRAIL members will thank you!

The power of partnership *continued*

Local foundations and funders, government partners, businesses, and individual donors all play a critical role in ensuring that TRAIL remains a strong and sustainable resource for our community.

In many ways, TRAIL itself is a partnership—among members, volunteers, donors, funders, and community organizations. Each plays a unique role in creating a community where older adults are supported, connected, and able to thrive.

Thank you for being part of that partnership.

Friday the 13th was actually a lucky day for several TRAIL members who won pies in TRAIL's annual Pi Day drawing, held a day early this year. Pictured here is Carol Stegink; check out TRAIL's Facebook page to see more winners.



2026
UPCOMING EVENT

**TRAIL's 9th Anniversary
CELEBRATION**

SAVE THE DATE !

Thursday, May 21
4:30 to 6 PM

More information to come.

Engaging Volunteers

HELPING EASE LIFE'S TRANSITIONS



Attention, member-service volunteers! Did you read last month's *TRAIL Guide* story on the Life Transition Service offered to our Full members who are facing changes in their ability to age in place? Here are several ways you can help our members take advantage of this important service.

As we fulfill requests for Full members, we are in a good position to recognize changing needs and open the door to Life Transition Service benefits for members who may be struggling with independent living skills such as:

- Meal preparation and cleanup
- Laundry
- Housekeeping
- Managing finances
- Managing medications
- Shopping
- Communication

Other situations where a member might benefit from the Life Transition Service include:

- Limited or complicated family support
- Loneliness/isolation
- Changes in cognitive function
- Increasing confusion
- Recent falls
- Unresolved medical issues
- Safety concerns

LOOKING FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS!

Our Life Transition Service would love to have more volunteers in 2026. People well-suited for the service include individuals with backgrounds in health care or social work, those with experience supporting family members through care transitions, or community members eager to provide consistent TRAIL support to our members, guided by our team.

Being a Life Transition volunteer does require specialized training and attendance at monthly case review meetings. Volunteers are paired with a member to provide one-to-one help with a variety of things, including:

- Coordinate with family about member needs
- Accompany to medical appointments as medical advocate
- Assist with interviewing and selecting in-home care provider
- Assist to secure a primary care physician
- Identify community programs available to meet member needs
- Support end-of-life planning

If you know members who might benefit from the Life Transition Service, or you are interested in becoming a Life Transition volunteer, please contact Jessica in the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003, or send an email to membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.



MEMBER/VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Iowa City is the best place to retire

One of the most important questions we ask in later life is—where do I want to live?

Twenty-nine years ago, John and Sandra Hudson (pictured right) approached this question by exploring what was then a primitive Internet.



John had an academic career as a sociologist at Trent (Canada), Syracuse, Cornell (Ithaca), and Harvard universities. His area of interest was creativity and innovation. Sandra specialized in childhood education, implementing innovative programs in Peterborough, Ontario, and Boston, Massachusetts. After 20 years in academia, they formed Cambridge Condominium Collaborative, a real estate company specializing in condominiums.

Upon retiring in 1997, they wanted to replace their Harvard Square lifestyle with a lower cost of living. They selected Iowa City. Their priorities? A vibrant arts scene, rewarding volunteer opportunities, and world-class health care.

In Iowa City, they launched new careers as volunteers. They served on boards and pitched ideas to community leaders. They were active in saving the Englert Theatre, and Sandra chaired the Iowa City Public Arts Committee at the time the Literary Walk was implemented. Together, they served two terms on the Iowa Arts Council. Today, in their 90s, they remain active in the Gray Hawk Writers, an interest group they started 27 years ago in collaboration with the University of Iowa Retirees Association. The group has published two anthologies, *Yesterdays* and *Fortnightly*. Both are available at Prairie Lights Books.

John and Sandra note, “We are Affiliate members of TRAIL and find the calendar of events helpful in bringing programs of interest to our attention. We have enjoyed the camaraderie of the Happy Hour and have found value in the Vendor Requests and Recommendation forum.

“We appreciate the time and energy of those who have made TRAIL a success over the past nine years. TRAIL provides yet another reason Iowa City is the best place to retire.”



What I'm reading



TRAIL's Member and Volunteer Service Coordinator Jessica Hahn is an avid reader and here she shares a favorite:

"I recently reread the **Winternight Trilogy** by **Katherine Arden** and always recommend it to anyone seeking a great read. **The**

Bear and the Nightingale is the first book in the series. It follows Vasilisa 'Vasya' Petrovna, a young girl in medieval Russia who can see spirits, as her world clashes with growing Christian piety. When her father remarries a devout woman who forbids honoring old household gods, Vasya is forced to embrace her secret powers to save her family from a winter demon and an ambitious priest who fears her.

"The book explores themes of tradition vs. modernity, female identity in a patriarchal world, and the clash between old folk beliefs and encroaching Christianity, set against a backdrop of Russian folklore where nature spirits and ancient gods hold sway."

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Do you have a favorite book to recommend to TRAIL friends? Just email your suggestion to susan@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.



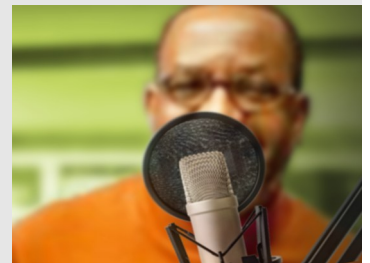
Listen up: "Young at Heart"

A TRAIL member alerted us to a podcast produced by public radio station WAMU at American University in Washington, D.C., that may be of interest to TRAIL members and friends.

As its website explains, "The "Young at Heart" podcast "helps us wrestle with some of life's inevitabilities. We all get older. And with age comes change. One of the big ones—retirement. After a life spent working either in or outside the home, there comes a day when it's time to move on—but to what?"

"We are not here to offer advice on retirement," the text continues. "Instead, we're here to offer stories of exploration and resilience from other people—stories about their transitions. These are stories to help inspire you to look forward to yours."

In each 15-minute podcast, host Kojo Nnamdi interviews older adults who share their experience about retirement and the challenges and joys of starting fresh in later life.



Listen in and you're bound to find yourself nodding in recognition and perhaps gaining some new insights along the way. You'll find current and past episodes at this link: wamu.org/show/young-at-heart/.



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Thanks to Woofables for sponsoring this month's newsletter.

Email scam: **BEWARE!**

TRAIL has become aware of a recent scam where a hacker breaks into an individual's email account, accesses the account owner's contact list, and sends seemingly legitimate emails to those contacts, asking the recipient to purchase something online or make some other type of financial transaction. If you receive an email that appears to come from a friend or colleague with a request of this nature, please double-check that the sender is who they say they are. You can help prevent hacking by changing your email password regularly. Remember: Stay suspicious and stay safe!



Above, TRAIL members (left to right) Barb Stein, Denice Connell, Julie Elliot, and Alfrieta Monagan enjoyed an in-depth tour of the Antique Car Museum in Coralville on February 27. They learned, for instance, that Des Moines was home to prominent auto makers in the early 20th century.



In Memoriam

Mary Lee Neuberger

Member Mary Lee Neuberger passed away on Sunday, February 1, 2026. She had been a TRAIL member since 2023.

See *Mary's obituary* [here](#).



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? Call Jessica at 319-800-9003 or email her at membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.

TRAIL Guide is published on or about the 15th of each month by the TRAIL Marketing and Communications Committee for the benefit of TRAIL members, donors, volunteers, and friends. If you have questions or suggestions about the newsletter, email info@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.

Upcoming TRAIL Events Calendar

[Book Club: *The Guncle* by Steven Rowley](#) (via Zoom)

Monday, March 16, 1 to 2 PM

[Alzheimer's Association Virtual Education Series](#) (via Zoom)

Thursday, March 19, 11 AM to noon

[Play Pool with John](#) \$

Tuesday, March 24, 1:30 to 3 PM

Hilltop Tavern, 1100 North Dodge Street, Iowa City

[Iowa Bibliophiles: Birds of a Feather](#)

Tuesday, March 24, 4 to 6 PM

UI Main Library, Main Library Gallery, 125 West Washington Street, Iowa City

[Springtime Brunch at Ann's Home](#)

Thursday, March 26, 11 AM to 12:30 PM

Home of Ann Romanowski

[Lambs, Goats, & Baby Plants: A Spring Tour of Sundog Farm & CSA](#)

Friday, March 27, 1 to 2:30 PM

Sundog Farm, 5025 120th Street NE, Solon

[Spring Houseplant Swap](#)

Saturday, March 28, 10 to 11:30 AM

IC Public Library, Meeting Rooms A, B, C, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[New Member Orientation](#)

Thursday, April 2, 1:30 to 2:30 PM

Java House, 1575 South 1st Avenue, Iowa City

[Member Happy Hour](#) \$

Tuesday, April 7, 4:30 to 6:30 PM

Monica's, 303 2nd Street, Coralville

[Tour at the UI Stanley Art Museum: Weaving Narrative](#)

Wednesday, April 8, 2 to 3 PM

160 West Burlington Street, Iowa City

[Hope and Fears: Why Journalism Remains Essential in a Time of Global Democratic Erosion](#)

Wednesday, April 8, 6 to 7 PM

IC Public Library, Meeting Rooms A, B, C, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[TRAIL Book Club For Men: *On the Bright Side: The New Secret Diary of Hendrick Groen, 85 Years Old*](#)

Thursday, April 9, 1:30 to 3 PM

The Courtyard by Marriott, 901 Melrose Avenue, Iowa City