



## Happy Birthday



### **TRAIL opened for business four years ago this April. Happy birthday to us!**

We ended calendar year 2017 with just over 100 members; today, TRAIL is serving around 215 members who—despite the pandemic—remain active, engaged, and supportive.

The fact remains, however, that this past year has been difficult for TRAIL, as it was for all of you. Our biggest challenge as we begin year five is to bring more new members into the TRAIL community. Renewals remain strong, but without TRAIL's popular public events and face-to-face interactions, we were unable to recruit many new members in 2020.

But we know the need is there. And we know TRAIL has the capacity to reach and serve more of Johnson County's older adults, many of whom emerged from COVID determined to remain in their own homes as they age. So we're launching a **Spring Membership Drive**—and we're hoping you'll pitch in as a birthday gift to TRAIL.

**Here are three ways you can help build our membership momentum:**

- 1** If you are not yet a TRAIL member, join us at the Affiliate level, so you can enjoy our member events, a volunteer service of your choosing, and other member benefits.
- 2** If you are a TRAIL member, spread the word about TRAIL and encourage your friends, neighbors, and family members to get involved.
- 3** If you belong to a book club, church group, service club, or other special-interest group, invite TRAIL to present at your next meeting.

You'll find details about member benefits, services, and fees on the [TRAIL website](#). Or you can encourage friends to contact Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator Jessica Hahn in the TRAIL Office at 319-800-9003 or at [membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org](mailto:membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org).

We look forward to celebrating this birthday milestone with all of you as soon as we're able to gather safely together again. Until then, **thanks for keeping the TRAIL community growing strong!**

TRAIL's new Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator, Jessica Hahn, is just a month into her new role. Already, she's relying on the customer relations skills she developed in her previous role as the community business coordinator and book seller for Barnes & Noble.

## Welcome, Jessica Hahn!



“One of my favorite things was talking books with customers, and we had a lot of senior adults because they tend to be ones who like reading with a book in their hands. I love that personal connection with people,” she says.

In Jessica's new position, she is often the first connection people will have with TRAIL, whether it's people calling for

information about TRAIL, current members requesting help, or people interested in becoming a volunteer. She's already been talking with members and setting up services for them. She plans to learn more about volunteer services and how to onboard new volunteers.

“I have plenty to learn,” she says, “including the office software that helps me link members to a volunteer and so much more. But I'm tackling this and have had some great help from Sue Mellecker [who held the position before Jessica]. She's been unbelievably helpful.”

Jessica is currently working from home 20 hours a week and looks forward to the day when she can be in the TRAIL Office at the Senior Center to meet people face to face.

When not working for TRAIL, Jessica is at home in Solon with two teenage sons and her husband of 26 years (they met at the University of Northern Iowa). She enjoys hiking, biking, reading, and live music.

Have a request or need some information? Contact Jessica at 319-800-9003 or [membersupport@trailofjohnsoncountry.org](mailto:membersupport@trailofjohnsoncountry.org).

## Volunteers are ready to help

You don't know HOW to do it; you don't have TIME to do it; you don't WANT to do it. Whatever “IT” is, chances are TRAIL volunteers can help. Examples of tasks TRAIL volunteers can help with are found below and we're always adding more, as our members let us know how we can help.

We have a great group of volunteers who follow strict COVID safety protocols, have been carefully screened, and are ready to help. To arrange for a volunteer service, call the TRAIL Office at 319-800-9003.

### TRAIL volunteers can:

#### ASSIST WITH CHORES

Grocery shopping, no-contact deliveries, running errands (post office, bank, library), picking up and dropping off recycling, prescription pickups (with or without the member), occasional pet care and pet walking

#### DO LIGHT HOME MAINTENANCE

Changing light bulbs, occasional snow shoveling, hanging pictures, simple repairs, refrigerator cleanout, moving light furniture, occasional gardening, occasional light cleaning

#### MAKE FRIENDLY VISIT PHONE CALLS

To check in on how you're doing or feeling, share a special interest or favorite stories; when the pandemic eases, our volunteers can visit in person to chat, play cards, offer caregiver respite, and more

#### PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION

To and from medical or other appointments

#### PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Programming cell phones, setting up email and software, simple computer tasks, installation of electronic gadgets such as DVRs, iPads, Kindles, TV remotes and streaming, programmable thermostats

**FULL MEMBERS:** TRAIL volunteer services are part of your annual benefits and there is no additional charge; call on our volunteers as often as you like.

**AFFILIATE MEMBERS:** Since January 2021, new and renewing Affiliate members have one-time access to any service from a TRAIL volunteer as part of your 12-month membership.

# 1,000

service requests have been completed by TRAIL volunteers since 2017.

**Where can I get a COVID vaccine? Who can get it now?**

**What can I safely do after I'm vaccinated?**

Visit the Johnson County Public Health [Coronavirus Information Hub](#) to get your questions answered.



## Meet the artist, Connie Peterson

An online community and a thought-provoking book re-ignited a passion for TRAIL member Connie Peterson that brings her joy every day.

“I’ve done fine art very sporadically over the years but never gave myself permission to call myself an artist. Now I am dedicated to doing my art every day and am enjoying it immensely,” Connie says.

In January she joined an artist community on Instagram, getting support, encouragement, and answers to questions. Not long after, she read *The Practice* by Seth Godin. “His message spoke to me. He says follow your creative dream and put your work out there; don’t worry about the outcomes.” Connie has been creating acrylic paintings every day now and enjoying her conversations with fellow artists around the world. She has even sold pieces via Instagram at her handle @constancedith.

Connie has loved creating art since childhood, and she graduated with a fine arts degree from the University of Northern Iowa in 1967. She soon moved to Chicago where she began a lifelong career in graphic arts and marketing that included owning her own firm. In 1990 she moved to Iowa City and worked at the University of Iowa until retiring at age 67.

In addition to artist, the other titles Connie cherishes are mom and grandma. Her daughter Jess and grandchildren Louis and Petra live in Chicago.

Connie joined TRAIL three years ago at the suggestion of a friend and has enjoyed the events and educational and social programs, and has even been a volunteer. “I wanted to support an organization that was dedicated to keeping older people in their homes and have found that TRAIL is a well-run and caring organization,” she notes.

## Podcast tips and recommendations



In February TRAIL and the Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center co-sponsored a presentation by local podcaster Shuva Rahim. She gave the audience helpful tips on how and where to access podcasts and how to find podcasts recommended by others. She also shared the story of how she began her own podcast, [Untrained Wisdom](#), in which she interviews older adults doing interesting and often unexpected things with their lives.

A video of Shuva’s presentation is available on the [Senior Center’s YouTube page](#) or this [YouTube link](#).

When you’re looking for top-rated podcasts in areas of special interest to you, Shuva and others have suggested these sites:

- [Google podcasts](#)
- [NPR podcasts](#)
- [Good Housekeeping podcasts](#)

Happy listening!

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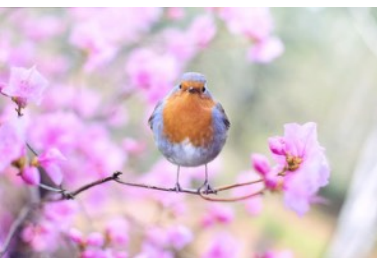
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**NOTE:** Most of these events are virtual, that is, they are being held online. More details and registration information for each event can be found on [TRAIL's online calendar](#).

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



[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Prairie Lights Reading with Maria Kuznetsova](#)

Thursday, April 15, 7 to 8 PM

Ukrainian-born writer Maria Kuznetsova will be joined in conversation by Anna Bruno.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Faith Spotlight on Islam](#)

Friday, April 16, 2 to 3 PM

UI professor Motier Haskins will discuss the faith of Islam.

[Walker Homestead Tour](#)

Sunday, April 18, 1:30 to 3 PM

Come stroll with friends in this beautiful setting and relax with food and wine.

[Wonderful Books: Sharing Our Favorites](#)

Monday, April 19, 1 to 2 PM

This month's reading selection is *Anxious People* by Fredrik Backman.

TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Tuesdays with Tom Schulein

["East Iowa City," Tuesday, April 20, 11 AM to noon](#)

["Hickory Hill Park," Tuesday, April 27, 11 AM to noon](#)

[Spring Time Lunch with Social Distancing](#)

Wednesday, April 21, 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Bring your own chair and lunch and enjoy spring with other TRAIL members (socially distanced, of course) in Susan Spaziani's driveway.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: AARP Lecture, "The Art of Aging"](#)

Wednesday, April 21, 5:30 to 6:45 PM

Learn what biological, psychological, and social research has taught us about aging.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Faith Spotlight on Judaism](#)

Thursday, April 22, 3 to 4 PM

Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz will discuss the faith of Judaism.

[Iowa History Trivia Night](#)

Thursday, April 22, 7 to 8 PM

Hosted by Jess Rundlett of the State Historical Museum.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "How to Navigate Transportation Technology"](#)

Friday, April 23, 2:30 to 3:30 PM

A presentation by Kelly Schneider, Mobility Coordinator for Johnson County.

[TRAIL Volunteer Orientation via Zoom](#)

Saturday, April 24, 10 to 11 AM

[Prescription Drug Take Back Event](#)

Saturday, April 24, 10 AM to 2 PM • Eastside Recycling Center, Iowa City

TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "Aging in Place: Revitalizing Your Home & Community"

[Part 1: Tuesday, April 27, noon to 1 PM](#)

[Part 2: Thursday, April 29, noon to 1 PM](#)

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Faith Spotlight on Unitarian Universalism](#)

Wednesday, April 28, 1 to 2 PM

Reverend Diana Smith will discuss the faith of Unitarian Universalism.

[Container Gardening Class](#)

Monday, May 17, 10 to 11 AM • Location TBD

[Wonderful Books: Sharing Our Favorites](#)

Monday, May 17, 1 to 2 PM