



Who are TRAIL's volunteers?

A new member recently asked, "How does TRAIL vet its volunteers?"

TRAIL volunteers must complete a background check that includes a nationwide Social Security number trace, criminal history, and other criteria. Our volunteer drivers must provide proof of auto insurance and evidence of a valid Iowa driver's license each year, and they also undergo an Iowa motor vehicle record check. All TRAIL volunteers receive training on working with older adults, and they sign a confidentiality agreement to help ensure our members' privacy.

About half of our member-service volunteers are TRAIL members themselves. They—and we—work hard to ensure TRAIL volunteers are competent, caring, and trustworthy individuals you'll feel confident about welcoming into your home.

Tell us what you think!

Later this month, **all TRAIL members will receive a brief survey** in the mail

with questions about your TRAIL experience. The survey will take just a few minutes to complete and return (or to complete online if you prefer). Your responses will help guide TRAIL leadership as we plan for future member benefits and services. Thanks in advance for your participation!

Member profile

Meet Blair Frank and Mary Kirkpatrick

When a friend told them about the benefits of TRAIL membership, Blair Frank and Mary Kirkpatrick thought it sounded like a perfect solution for aging in place in the Iowa City home they have shared since 2012.

Mary says, "I'm one who likes to look ahead and have a plan, and we had looked into several things, but TRAIL membership seemed like the best fit for us."

For Blair and Mary, being close to nature and the spiritual peace it brings is essential to their lives. In the past nine years, they have transformed their property into the Rainbow Urban Homestead, with gardens in the front and back yards, which is now a certified Wildlife Habitat.

Blair says, "We have created a sanctuary here for critters, plants, and people. We grow plants for eating and many can also be used as medicine." In addition to extensive gardens, which were featured in Project Green's Open Gardens Weekend in July, the property also supports a rainwater collection system, solar panels, lily pond, and fire pit. The pair's activism extends to area environmental causes including 100 Grannies for a Livable Future and groups supporting clean water and safe, local organic food.

Travel is another passion for the couple—whether visiting children and grandchildren on the East Coast or in Canada and China, or touring in Brazil, Scotland, Hawaii, and England. In fact, after becoming Full members in June this year, their transportation to the airport for a recent trip was provided by TRAIL volunteers. Mary says, "It was so nice and more personal than using a shuttle or taxi."

The more Blair learns about TRAIL, the more he appreciates it, he says. "We are caring for each other, bringing back a community connection, and remembering what it means to be a neighbor again."



Membership = Friendship

Twyla Morlan wears two hats: one as an Affiliate TRAIL member and one as a TRAIL volunteer. When she joined TRAIL in 2019, she immediately decided to become a volunteer.



Twyla, a lifetime Iowan who retired 16 years ago as the postmaster at the Oakdale Post Office (remember when Oakdale had one?), says volunteering is one of the fun aspects of TRAIL because it brings her together with others.

“I enjoy meeting new people, and by volunteering, I’ve done just that,” she says. Twyla has mostly answered requests for rides to members’ various appointments in town. As a result, she has developed a friendship with another TRAIL member after giving several rides to her.

“We enjoy getting together to have tea or lemonade. It’s wonderful, because our paths wouldn’t have crossed if I hadn’t volunteered,” she says.

After 42 years of marriage, Twyla’s husband passed away, so the benefit of having TRAIL’s vetted service provider list available to her is important, she says. Although she has only called a couple times to use some of the service providers, she likes knowing that when she does need help, TRAIL resources are there for her to use.

“My membership in TRAIL and volunteering has just been a very positive thing in my life.”



IN MEMORIAM

Frank Schmidt

TRAIL member
2017-2019

See Frank’s
obituary [here](#).

Welcome, new Board members!

At its August meeting, the TRAIL Board of Directors elected two new members to serve three-year terms:

Lesanne Fliehler, a TRAIL member and also a member of the TRAIL Communications Committee. Lesanne is a retired University of Iowa communications specialist and holds one degree from UI and another from UNI. She enjoys the outdoors, attending live arts events, and cooking. She also volunteers with the UI Senior College, the UI Retirees Association, and Riverside Theatre.

Bob Reynolds, also a TRAIL member and member-service volunteer, and a member of the TRAIL Finance Committee. Bob and his wife moved to Iowa City from Illinois in 2020 to be close to their daughter and her family. Bob retired just before the move after a career in accounting. He enjoys his grandchildren, sports, and being out in nature.



DUE TO THE RAPID SPREAD of the Delta variant in our area, an Iowa City [emergency proclamation](#) requires individuals to wear face coverings in public places.

Reminder: TRAIL's COVID protocols remain in place for members and volunteers participating in TRAIL volunteer-service requests, regardless of vaccination status. These guidelines ask members and volunteers to wear masks during volunteer transportation to appointments or other errands. Members and volunteers should also wear masks when they are together indoors or unable to maintain social distancing outdoors.

Masks are required in the Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center, including visits to the TRAIL Office in room 301.

Thanks to our SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER newsletter sponsor

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Member tip o' the month:

Member directory search



Want to know if there are other TRAIL members in your neighborhood,

or to reconnect with a member you met at a TRAIL event? Check out the TRAIL Member Directory!

- ➔ On the **TRAIL member website**, click on the **FOR MEMBERS** tab on the top navigation bar. From the resulting drop-down menu, choose **MEMBER DIRECTORY**.
- ➔ The **Standard Member Directory** screen will appear next. Type the first or last name—or even the first initial—of the person you're looking for into the **Search Text** box and then click on the **Search** button on the right.
- ➔ The **Standard Member Directory** screen will appear again, but now you'll see a **Google map** beneath the Search Criteria box. Below the map will be the names and contact info for all TRAIL members who meet the criteria you used for your search.
- ➔ On the map, red pins indicate where those members live within our community, if they chose to make that information accessible to other TRAIL members when then joined. (*None of this information is visible to the public.*)

In next month's Member Tip, we'll explain how to modify your own information as it appears in the Member Directory.

Worried about falling? Get proactive

If you're 65 or older, take note: More than one in three individuals age 65 and older takes a fall every year. As we age, the consequences of a fall can become more serious. And understandably, the fear of falling causes many older adults to limit their activities. But that doesn't have to be the case.

The website of the [National Institute on Aging](https://www.nia.nih.gov/) offers much helpful information on:

- ◆ Preventing falls and fractures
- ◆ The fear of falling
- ◆ Causes and risk factors for falls
- ◆ Fall prevention strategies
- ◆ Keeping your bones strong
- ◆ What to do in case of a fall

On page 4 of this *TRAIL Guide*, you'll find a link to the UI's 7th Annual Falls Prevention Coalition Symposium on September 20. The online event offers sessions for health care professionals, caregivers, and the general public—and it's all free.

In next month's TRAIL Guide: New technologies that aim to prevent falls and detect falls when they happen

The smiles were as bright as the bouquets on August 27, when TRAIL members visited Lovely Bunches Farm north of Iowa City to pick their own flowers. Pictured here are Phyllis Black, left, and Barb Stein. Keep your eyes open for a future flower-picking event.



On September 9, TRAIL members Pat Brockett, left, and Jefri Palermo hosted a tour of their "Prairie Grass Playhouse" collection. Since the pandemic began, the two women have been creating and displaying miniature scenes in a Little Free Library-type box in front of their home. The scenes change monthly; many represent social justice themes, and TRAIL guests were wowed by the cleverness and detail. We hope to invite Jefri and Pat to do a Zoom presentation this fall for a more in-depth look at their creative process.

NOTE: Some of these events are virtual, while others are in person. Locations, full details, and registration information 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.

GOOD NEWS NOTE:

Johnson County was recognized last month by AARP as an age-friendly community and accepted into the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. Johnson County is the first county in Iowa to receive this designation.

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

[TRAIL Yarning Group in the Great Outdoors](#)

Wednesday, September 15, 1:30 to 3 PM

[Wine and Cheese on My Porch](#)

Thursday, September 16, 5 to 6:30 PM

Home of Betsy Fischer, Iowa City

[UI Museum of Natural History Docent-Led Tour](#)

Friday, September 17, 10 to 11 AM

UI Museum of Natural History, Macbride Hall, UI Pentacrest, 17 South Clinton Street, Iowa City

[History of Iowa City Elementary Schools](#)

Friday, September 17, 1 to 2 PM

Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: 7th Annual Falls Prevention Coalition Symposium](#)

Monday, September 20, 11 AM to 5 PM

[Wonderful Books: Sharing Our Favorites!](#)

Monday, September 20, 1 to 2 PM

[Amateur Grillmaster Dinner](#)

Monday, September 20, 5 to 7 PM

Home of Ann Romanowski, Iowa City

[Koi Farm Tour and Lunch](#) (lunch \$)

Tuesday, September 21, 10 AM to 1 PM

Kloubec Koi Farm, 1375 Baxter Avenue NW, Amana

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "Alzheimer's Prevention and Treatment"](#)

Tuesday, September 21, 1 to 2:30 PM

[Water Management in Iowa City](#)

Friday, September 24, 1 to 2 PM

Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "Managing Your Passwords"](#)

Tuesday, September 28, 10:30 to 11:30 AM

[Potluck Salad Lunch](#)

Wednesday, September 29, noon to 1:30 PM

Home of Vicki and Dwight Tardy, Iowa City

[UI Stanley Museum of Art Update with Director Lauren Lessing](#)

Thursday, September 30, 2 to 3 PM

[New Member Orientation](#)

Friday, October 1, 1:30 to 2:30 PM

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Caregiver Wellness Series: "Financial Preparation & Long-Term Care"](#)

Tuesday, October 12, 1 to 2 PM

[TRAIL Member In-Person Happy Hour](#) (\$)

Tuesday, October 12, 4:30 to 6 PM

Location TBD

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "The Ins and Outs of Reverse Mortgages"](#)

Wednesday, October 13, noon to 1 PM

[TRAIL Book Club](#)

Thursday, October 14, 1:30 to 3 PM