



"TRAIL has the best volunteers in the world."

"We really appreciate everyone at TRAIL! You were there when we really needed it most."

"All of your volunteers are wonderful! Thank God I have TRAIL."

"Thank you for helping me and others. It means a lot to me, to all of us."

Thank you, volunteers!

Our thanks go out to TRAIL volunteers all year long, but we especially want to recognize them in April, which is National Volunteer Month.

It is our volunteers who make TRAIL a responsive and effective organization. TRAIL volunteers have continued to step up when it matters most, and they were especially needed this past year. The organization experienced these increases:

4.2 Average number of requests a TRAIL volunteer completes monthly (up from 2.4 in 2021)

18 Number of active volunteers in a month (up from 12 in 2021)

155% Growth in the average number of service requests per month (from 29 in 2021 to 74 in 2022)

The numbers are impressive and show the value that each and every volunteer makes to help TRAIL be an extraordinary organization.

You know more than anyone that this isn't about numbers. It's about the quality of life that we sustain. It's about ensuring that people can afford to get to a doctor's office and sometimes get a little help when there. It includes the value of having a clean backyard and friendly visits. It's about helping, in the last few months, to ensure that one member got to 30 consecutive cancer treatments—and for one household, to make their weekly trip to Panera. It's about the human connections you make, the reliability you offer, and the service you do.

We are grateful to volunteers for their kindness and generosity. They are an integral part of this organization.

Read about TRAIL volunteer Bob Sessions on the next page.

Heads up for a very special event! TRAIL has obtained eight tickets—available for purchase by members at \$36 each—to the immersive experience ["Beyond Van Gogh"](#) for Wednesday, June 28, at 10:30 AM, taking place at the River Center in Davenport. This will be a totally new way of seeing Vincent Van Gogh's art. Tickets can be paid for by check, made payable to TRAIL.

We anticipate tickets will go quickly, so reserve yours as soon as possible. If the event is full when you visit the [TRAIL](#) calendar, please contact Vicki Tardy at 319-351-5208 or vtardy@mchsi.com to get your name on a waiting list. If there is enough interest and tickets are still available, we will attempt to purchase more.

Meet TRAIL volunteer Bob Sessions

Robert “Bob” Sessions has been a TRAIL volunteer for only a few months but is already hooked on one of the best things about it.

“I love meeting the people, hearing their stories, and getting to know them,” he says. “So far I have done some driving and also household maintenance and repair work.” Coming in as the second-best thing for Bob is the flexibility of taking volunteer requests when it fits into his schedule because, while he has been retired since 2011, he has other volunteer “jobs” and hobbies that he enjoys.



You could say “helping” is in his nature. Among his other volunteer work: he serves on the board of his church, New

Song Episcopal, where he is also in charge of building and grounds; is on the buildings and grounds committee for Old Brick; and is the trail boss at the Harvest Preserve, working with other volunteers to maintain the Iowa City nature sanctuary.

In his leisure time he enjoys biking (almost every morning) and traveling with his wife author Lori Erickson who is nationally known for her books and articles on travel, especially spiritual journeys. In fact, during the COVID pandemic the pair traveled around the United States in their teardrop camper with their Cardigan Welsh corgi Cody and the adventures and photos from that trip will be featured in Lori’s fourth book due out this fall.

Bob, who grew up in South Dakota, spent his working life teaching philosophy, the last 25 years before retirement at Kirkwood Community College. He is an avid photographer and an author of two books and articles on philosophy in work, ethics, technology, and the environment. Besides in Lori’s books, his photos have appeared in local publications, and he posts them on his web page robertsessions.com and on Instagram at [bob.sessions](https://www.instagram.com/bob.sessions).

Bob says when he heard about TRAIL volunteer opportunities from the daughter of a close friend, the mission resonated with him, and wanted to be one of the volunteers helping older adults age safely and independently in the place they call home.

 If you would like to become a TRAIL volunteer, contact the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003, or email Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator Jessica Hahn at membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.



Visit and learn about area senior living facilities

Are you considering a move sometime in the future but don’t know where to start? Advance planning is always wise, so save your Fridays in May to visit four senior residential facilities in the area. This is an educational experience to help TRAIL members build background knowledge and start their own file of information. Only eight slots are available for each trip:

- May 5 [Melrose Meadows, Iowa City](#)
- May 12 Grand Living at Bridgewater, Coralville
- May 19 Walden Place, Iowa City
- May 26 Keystone Place at Forevergreen, North Liberty

For more information or registration, visit the TRAIL calendar (Melrose Meadows is linked above as an example), or call Barb Stein at 319-338-2931 or Connie Peterson at 319-400-4334.

Thanks to our APRIL—MAY newsletter sponsors



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Pi Day is a winner

March 14 is known as Pi Day (referring to the ratio “pi”—roughly 3.14). TRAIL has celebrated the day with many across the nation by holding a pie drawing.



Michael Connell holds the pie his wife, Denice, won in the Pi Day drawing. Denice is a member of TRAIL’s Marketing & Communications Committee.

This year, the drawing included all TRAIL members, members of TRAIL committees, and all service volunteers. If you were one of the 22 lucky winners, you heard from Executive Director Bob Untiedt, who called to say, “You’ve won a pie!”

The pies, from Kathy’s Pies in Cedar Rapids, were delivered by volunteers. Full member Barbara Plakens was heard to exclaim, “I’ve been waiting forever to win something!”

Planning your next chapter

Mark your calendar for these three Thursdays: October 5, 12, and 19. As part of its Life Transitions Service, TRAIL will present three informative programs:

- ▶ How Do I Want to Live?
- ▶ How Does My Plan Become a Reality?
- ▶ How Do I Plan Ahead for Future Care?

Barb Stein and Kaleigh Gilmore will facilitate the sessions and will include expert guest speakers. Watch for more information soon.

Enjoy nature’s ephemerals while you can

Do you love Iowa spring wildflowers—like Dutchman’s breeches, bloodroot, and Virginia bluebells? These woodland wildflowers are early bloomers—you have to catch them at the right time to see them. Commonly known as “spring ephemerals,” they take advantage of the narrow window of time when sunlight reaches the forest floor, before the overstory canopy emerges and shades them out.

Read on for opportunities to see and learn about these early bloomers:

Bur Oak Land Trust Spring Ephemerals Hikes:

- ❖ Sunday, April 16, at Big Grove Preserve
- ❖ Wednesday, April 19, at Big Grove Preserve
- ❖ Sunday, April 23, at Turkey Creek Nature Preserve
- ❖ Wednesday, April 26, at Turkey Creek Nature Preserve

You can also experience the best of Iowa’s spring season with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) new weekly woodland wildflower bloom report.

Visit the Woodland Wildflower Report webpage ([Iowa DNR wildflowers](#)) for an up-to-date list of wildflowers in bloom each week until mid-May. Similar to the fall color report, this weekly report is broken down by region (north, central, and south).

Iowa Medicaid eligibility to be redetermined

During the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals covered by Medicaid received continuous coverage to make sure they had the health services they needed during the pandemic. That “Continuous Coverage” requirement ended on April 1.

If you are covered by Medicaid, you will receive mailed instructions from the Iowa Department of Public Health and Human Services between now and February 2024 regarding redetermining your eligibility for coverage.

Members will have 60 days from their mailing date to follow the steps for redetermination or they will lose coverage. For detailed information, visit [Medicaid continuous coverage unwind](#).

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, vendors, and friends. If you have questions or suggestions about the newsletter, email info@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.

[Book Club: The Maid by Nita Prose](#) (via Zoom)
Monday, April 17, 1 to 2 PM

[Morning Coffee](#)
Tuesday, April 18, 10 to 11:30 AM
Home of Betsy Fischer, Iowa City

[Spring Ephemerals Hikes](#) • Beginning April 16 • *See story on page 3*


[New Vehicle Technology Workshop](#)
Thursday, April 20, 1 to 2:30 PM
Iowa City Senior Center, Room 302, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Having Difficult Conversations](#)
Tuesday, April 25, 1 to 2 PM
Iowa City Senior Center, Room 311, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Cedar Rapids Museum of Art + Lunch at The Class Act](#) \$
Wednesday, April 26, 11:30 AM to 3 PM
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, 410 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids

[Tinnitus Education Session](#) (via Zoom in addition to in person)
Thursday, April 27, 1 to 3 PM
Iowa City Senior Center, Room 302, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Welcome to Medicare](#)
Saturday, April 29, 10 AM to noon
Iowa City Senior Center, Room 302, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

 [Member Happy Hour](#) \$
Tuesday, May 2, 4:30 to 6:30 PM
Orchard Green, 521 South Gilbert Street, Iowa City

[TRAIL Dine Around](#) \$
Friday, May 5, 11:30 AM to 1 PM
Los Agaves Mexican Grill, 2208 North Dodge Street, Iowa City

[Visit Area Residential Facilities](#) • Beginning May 5 • *See story on page 2*

[Powerful Tools for Caregivers](#) (via Zoom)
Tuesday, May 9, 1 to 2:30 PM

[Nonprofit Board & Volunteer Fair](#)
Tuesday, May 9, 3:30 to 6:30 PM
Iowa City Public Library, Room A, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[May Trail Hiking](#)
Wednesday, May 10, 9:30 AM to noon
Kent Park, 2048 US-6 NW, Oxford

[TRAIL Book Club](#)
Thursday, May 11, 1:30 to 3 PM • Location TBD

[Book Club: The Golden Spoon by Jenna Maxwell](#) (via Zoom)
Monday, May 15, 1 to 2 PM