




Bookmark a park!

In a recent “Tuesdays with TRAIL” email, we noted that 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of Iowa’s state parks. Here’s more news worth celebrating: TRAIL member **Rebecca Conard** has authored *Iowa State Parks: A Century of Stewardship*, published by the UI Press this spring to mark the occasion.

Rebecca, who lives in Coralville, is professor of history emeritus at Middle Tennessee State University and has written several books about Iowa parks and history. Visit the [Iowa Parks Foundation website](#) to learn more, or order your copy from [Prairie Lights](#) (319-337-2681), which is offering free delivery and curbside pick-up.

 And mark your calendars for Monday, June 29, at 10 AM, when Rebecca will do a brief reading for us over Zoom, including recommendations about her favorite Iowa parks. Registration details can be found on the [TRAIL calendar](#).

A message from the Board

Even before TRAIL incorporated as a nonprofit, our founders were of one mind about TRAIL’s unwavering commitment to diversity, inclusion, social justice, and our pledge to stand firmly against the “isms” that divide us as humans—most certainly ageism and sexism, but racism as well.

As our community and nation continue to wrestle with the pervasive harms of inequality and injustice, we encourage TRAIL members to engage in these important conversations. We welcome your suggestions for ways in which TRAIL can help move the community toward a deeper understanding of the issues, toward empathy and compassion, and toward real and equal opportunities for all.

* * *

A number of you have asked for an update on our search for a new Executive Director. As you may recall, we began advertising for the position in February and received several dozen applications. COVID-19 struck just as we were narrowing the field to a few top candidates. We chose at that time to put the search on hold until, ideally, we could interview those candidates in person.

Now that our state is slowly reopening, we will reassess our current candidates and proceed with virtual interviews or additional vetting. Our hope is to have a new Executive Director in place by the fall. If you know of individuals who may be interested in and qualified for the position, please contact us at jobs@trailofjohnsoncounty.org. Complete details can be found at [this link](#) on our website. Thank you!

—The TRAIL Staff and Board

COME WALK IN A PARK! Iowa’s Walking Club, the Nebraska Trailblazers, and Iowa Parklands have teamed up to create walking routes for you to enjoy in 20 Iowa state parks this summer. To learn more, visit [20 Walks in 2020](#).

Open again, but not 'normal'

Most businesses, shopping venues, and restaurants in the Iowa City area have re-opened for business, but things are not “back to normal.” To ensure the health and safety of customers and staff from coronavirus infection, most retail and food businesses have instituted special requirements and increased their cleaning procedures. Some new features include reducing the number of customers in a store at one time; requiring the wearing of masks by employees and customers; and limiting shopping hours to allow for additional overnight cleaning and stocking.

Several online resources are available to find out what stores, restaurants, and businesses have re-opened, what their hours are, and whether they have any special restrictions. They are:

- * icareatogether.com/pickup-delivery/ (lists many area shops, restaurants, services)
- * thinkiowacity.com/covid19-grocery/ (lists groceries and pharmacies)
- * coralridgemall.com/en.html (lists Coral Ridge Mall stores and some deals and coupons)

Limiting exposure is still the best way to avoid getting COVID-19, which means [staying home as much as possible and minimizing contact with others](#), especially crowds. But if you are going out, here are some best practices:

- * Stay at least six feet away from others while shopping and while in line.
- * Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth face covering.
- * Consider running errands first thing in the morning or at the end of the day when fewer people are likely to be shopping or use special shopping hours for high-risk individuals.
- * Disinfect your cart or basket with disinfectant wipes. (Learn how to make your own wipes [here](#).)
- * Use hand sanitizer right away if you handle money, a card, or a keypad.
- * Wash your hands when you get home.
- * When getting gasoline, use disinfectant wipes on handles and buttons before you touch them; use hand sanitizer immediately after.

The coronavirus pandemic has many of us feeling isolated from friends and family. Although seniors are encouraged to stay home and to limit trips out of the home, there are ways to safely travel by car and even visit others.

Car travel may mean stops for gas, food, or bathroom breaks, so keep these ideas in mind to minimize your risk:

- ◆ Follow state and local travel restrictions. Get up-to-date information and guidance about where you are along your route and at your destination (check local and state health department websites). Keep checking updates as you travel for any new stay-at-home or shelter-in-place orders.
- ◆ Keep six feet of physical distance from others outside your car.
- ◆ Wear your mask when leaving the car and wash your hands after using any restroom.
- ◆ Keep alcohol-based hand sanitizer within easy reach in the car.
- ◆ Pack some non-perishable snacks. Consider taking your own meal to enjoy at a rest stop or park along your route. If you do want to purchase a meal, pick up food at drive-throughs or use curbside restaurant service.
- ◆ Don't forget water or other beverages you enjoy.
- ◆ If you're traveling to visit family members (especially beloved grandchildren), summer may be the best time to visit since you can spend time outdoors. Brief encounters are not a big risk, but avoid long hugs, cuddles, or sitting in laps. If everyone wears masks, grandchildren can give quick hugs around your waist or knees, keeping your faces as far apart as possible.

Learn more by visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [“considerations for travelers” website](#) or Google “When can I see my grandkids?” to find a good May 20 *New York Times* article on the subject.

Stay safe while traveling by car and visiting others

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Changes coming to Supported Membership Program

TRAIL has adjusted the guidelines governing its Supported Membership Program (SMP) for older adults with limited incomes.

“We believe our new sliding scale structure will make it possible for more individuals and households to take advantage of TRAIL’s Supported membership benefits, including volunteer services,” says TRAIL Board member Joy Smith, who led a task force charged with updating the SMP’s criteria and goals. “TRAIL membership may be of even greater interest and value due to COVID-19.”

TRAIL subsidizes a substantial portion of the annual Full membership fees for Supported members, who pay as little as \$10/year depending on income level. The annual income range for individuals eligible to participate in the SMP is \$18,300–\$30,450. For households of two or more, the range is \$20,900–\$34,800.

“Our Board believes the TRAIL member community should reflect the economic diversity of the community at large,” Joy says. “Recent data indicate that up to 35 percent of adults age 65 and older in Johnson County are living below what United Way defines as a stability budget, a percentage that may increase in the wake of the pandemic. Our goal over time is for Supported members to make up 40 percent of TRAIL’s Full member enrollment.”

TRAIL’s Supported Membership Program is underwritten in part by a grant from the Community Foundation of Johnson County; generous corporate support from MidWestOne Bank, Veridian Credit Union, and Westwinds Real Estate; and annual donations from TRAIL members, friends, and volunteers.

Podcasts to consider

After TRAIL’s first program on podcasts last year, we offered a list of some member favorites in December. This

month, we are featuring five podcasts that have been identified as most popular with baby boomers and older adults.

[Planet Money](#)—for those interested in money, economics, and the value of things.

[Radiolab](#)—for the naturally curious person with interests in science, philosophy, and the human experience.

[Stuff You Missed in History Class](#)—includes stories often left out of history books.

[TED Talks](#)—hear from the world’s leading thinkers and doers on nearly every subject imaginable.

[This American Life](#)—stories inspired by a different theme each week.

Volunteer update: Phone buddies, masks

Even in the best of times, isolation can cast a shadow over the lives of older adults. That’s why TRAIL has offered a phone check-in service to Full members and then expanded the service to Affiliate members during the COVID-19 crisis.



Volunteer committee chair Marlea O’Brien says that 18 members are currently taking advantage of this service. Some members have requested a daily call; for others, it is weekly or bi-weekly.

“I had assumed that my calls would be simple ‘check-ins,’” says TRAIL volunteer Jody Hovland. “But my buddy and I have discovered that we’re curious about each other, and we are having a good time getting acquainted. It’s like having a nice new neighbor!”

As for masks, the combined efforts of TRAIL and the Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center have resulted in 1,340 masks made and delivered between April 11 and May 27. Trail volunteers put in more than 565 hours sewing and delivering masks and volunteers from The Center have put in more than 725 hours.

Masks are still available at The Center. To receive one, you must call The Center at 319-356-5220 to make an appointment to pick it up.



The Iowa Department of Human Services has received federal funding to offer **free virtual counseling and assistance** to those affected in any way by the COVID-19 crisis. For more information, visit covidrecoveryiowa.org or call 1-844-775-9276.

NOTE: These events are all virtual, that is, they are being held online. More details and registration information for each event can be found on the calendar on TRAIL's website.



TRAIL Office will be closed on Friday, July 3, in recognition of Independence Day.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Elder Law Webinar](#)

Monday, June 15, 11 AM to noon

The Legal Hotline for Older Iowans invites you to join them for this free webinar about elder abuse protective orders and elder abuse prevention strategies, presented by Angela Broughton-Romain, Deputy Director of Iowa Legal Aid.

[TRAIL Yarning Group Celebrates Summer Solstice!](#)

Wednesday, June 17, 1:30 to 3:30 PM

North Hickory Hill Park Shelter (off North Dodge Street/Highway 1)
The Yarning Group is going to try an in-person, socially distanced gathering. Bring your own lawn chair or cushion and your latest needlecraft project.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Juneteenth and Emancipation](#)

Friday, June 19, 2 to 3 PM

Staff members from the African-American Museum of Iowa will make a Zoom presentation about this historic day. (More information about all virtual Juneteenth events happening locally is available at blackiowa.org/juneteenth.)

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Art in the Afternoon](#)

Sunday, June 21, 1 to 2:30 PM

This is a monthly showcase presented by The Artifactory for Iowa City area artists to share their work. This month's featured artist is Taissir Abdelgadir, whose work includes weaving, tie dye, silkscreen, woodcut, and linoleum block printing as well as watercolor, ink, and acrylic painting.

[TRAIL Virtual Book Club: "The Things We Cannot Say"](#)

Monday, June 22, 1 to 2 PM

This book by Kelly Rimmer moves between Nazi-occupied Poland and the modern day. Feel free to invite a friend to take part.



[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "Iowans at Work: Prohibition & Temperance"](#)

Thursday, June 25, noon to 1 PM

This online event is part of the Iowa History 101 Series, sponsored by the State Historical Society. State Curator Leo Landis will talk on the impact of prohibition and temperance on Iowans.

[Iowa State Parks Centennial—A Reading by Author Rebecca Conard](#)

Monday, June 29, 10 to 10:30 AM • See story on page 1.



[Aging in Place Forum: Working with Contractors to Modify Your Home](#)

Wednesday, July 8, noon to 1 PM

This is a virtual event, presented on Zoom and Facebook Live, and is part of the monthly forums presented by Johnson County Livable Communities. More information will be available closer to the event date.

[TRAIL Book Club](#)

Thursday, July 9, 1:30 to 3 PM

Contact David Rust at david@trailofjohnsoncounty.org for details.

[TRAIL Virtual Book Club: "This Tender Land"](#)

Monday, July 20, 1 to 2 PM

This book by William Kent Krueger tells the epic story of four children in the early 1930s who flee an orphanage and set off down the Mississippi River.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 CORPORATE SPONSORS!

TRAIL's financial stability is due in large part to contributions from individuals and organizations committed to our mission and to helping TRAIL continue serving older adults in our community. We are pleased to recognize these local businesses and other generous organizations that have stepped forward during 2020 to help TRAIL succeed.

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