



Volunteers provide a key benefit—and help build community

Volunteers are vital to the “village” that TRAIL aspires to create, says Executive Director Hillary Ramaker. “Part of becoming a village is recognizing that everyone can participate in their own way, based on their own preferences and skills.”

Access to volunteer services is a valuable feature of Full membership in TRAIL. These services include:

- * In-town transportation to medical appointments and church events, or dropping off items to Goodwill
- * Moving and reconnecting electronic components
- * Small gardening projects such as pruning and raking
- * Home projects including installing fire extinguishers, replacing smoke detector batteries, checking gutters, and moving furniture
- * Home checks while members are out of town
- * The Rise and Shine daily check-in program

If you’re a Full member and have hesitated to call on TRAIL volunteers, think of it this way: It’s a “prepaid” service. Feel free to use it fully!

Matching skills to needs

TRAIL volunteers form a trusted resource

Whether it was his 38 years as a high school physics teacher or something else, Jim Ruebush has lots of handy skills.

When TRAIL Full member Marty Fields replaced carpeting in her home, she needed help unhooking and moving the TV and its components, not to mention moving and reconnecting everything when the carpeting was complete. And it was Jim in his role as a TRAIL volunteer who came to her assistance. What’s more, he put up a smoke detector for Marty and helped with a couple of other issues.

“That sort of thing doesn’t scare me,” says Jim. He is happy to assist with televisions and peripherals, computers, printers, and all sorts of electronic devices and he has done so for other TRAIL Full members.

Jim heard about TRAIL through board member Susan Shullaw as the organization was being formed, and he “felt that I could contribute something as a volunteer.”

“TRAIL members know that a TRAIL volunteer is someone who can be trusted,” he says. “It’s a problem that a lot of seniors face—not knowing who they can turn to for help—and I want to be part of a program that tries to fight against that.”

“I hope that TRAIL members won’t hesitate to use volunteers,” Jim adds. “It makes us feel good to help out.”

Did you remember to RSVP for TRAIL’s First Anniversary Celebration

, which is happening on Wednesday of this week? If you’ve not yet replied and are able to join us, please call the TRAIL office as soon as possible and let us know. The event is taking place at Terry Trueblood Lodge, 579 McCollister Blvd. in Iowa City from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. The program begins at 5:15 and will include a presentation by local actor and playwright Maggie Conroy, written especially for TRAIL. Hope to see you there!



Get up close with Big Grove Preserve

Walkers, hikers, and nature lovers are invited to enjoy a TRAIL-sponsored walking tour of Big Grove Preserve on Friday, May 18, from 3 to 4 PM. The tour will be led by Seth Somerville, property stewardship specialist with the Burr Oak Land Trust.

Big Grove Preserve is an 80-acre woodland adjacent to the Coralville Reservoir, held in trust by the Burr Oak Land Trust. Established in 1978, Burr Oak Land Trust accepts donations of land from property owners who want their natural areas to be held in public trust, available to current and future generations.

Members who want to join the tour need to be able to walk 45 minutes on uneven surfaces outdoors. Bug spray, long pants and long sleeves, closed toe shoes, and a hat are all recommended, particularly to protect against ticks.

Housing options explored at fair

Barbara Plakans and Nancy Collins are planning to stay in their own homes as long as they are safely able, with the help of TRAIL. But they said the May 7 Housing Options Fair at the Coralville Public Library was an efficient way to get a lot of information.

“It never hurts to be prepared and the more information you have the better,” said Barbara. “It’s very helpful to know what is available and how much things cost,” added Nancy.

Sponsored by the TRAIL Membership Committee, the event featured tables stocked with information and giveaways. Representatives of 14 organizations were there to talk with TRAIL members about their offerings—cost, availability, floor plans, meals, activities, exercise facilities, transportation, medical facilities, and more.

For those who missed the event, a list of participating organizations will be available on the TRAIL website under “Member Documents.”

Educate, entertain, enlarge your world with TRAIL events

REMINDER: Please register in advance for any of these events—either online or by calling or emailing the office.

MEMBER-ONLY EVENTS

The events in this section are for TRAIL members. If you have questions about your membership status or would like to join TRAIL, please contact the TRAIL office or visit <http://trailofjohnsoncounty.org/membership/benefits-fee>

May Living Well Presentation

“Planning Ahead: Decisions about Health and Wealth,” Tuesday, May 15, 10:30 to 11:30 AM, East Side Recycling Center. UI College of Law Professor Josephine Gittler will discuss legal vehicles for surrogate decision making concerning one’s health and one’s financial situation.

Big Grove Preserve Walking Tour

Friday, May 18, 3 to 4 PM

3999 Starry Night Lane NE, Solon. *See story at left and the TRAIL calendar for driving directions.*

New Member Orientation

Thursday, May 24, 3 to 4:30 PM

Home of Beverly Robalino, Iowa City.

Dine Around, Rapid Creek Cidery

Thursday, May 24, 5 to 7 PM. Members pay their own charges.

Dine Around: Potluck Salad Lunch

Wednesday, June 6, 12 noon to 2 PM

Home of Vicki and Dwight Tardy, Iowa City

ALL OTHER EVENTS

TRAIL First Anniversary Celebration

Wednesday, May 16, 4:30 to 6:30 PM

See story on page 1

Tea and Tales

Sunday, May 20, 12:30 to 2:30 PM

Zuber’s Homestead Hotel, 2206 44th Ave., Homestead
An afternoon tea party featuring a local storyteller. \$18 plus tax. Members are welcome to bring guests. See the TRAIL calendar for details.

Talking About End-of-Life

Monday, May 21, 2 to 3:30 PM

Iowa City Senior Center, Room 202. Meets monthly through August; facilitated by Craig Mosher.

TRAIL Office closed

Monday, May 28

Unused meds? Know safe disposal

By Jim Clayton

If you've missed prescription medication take-away days offered by the City of Iowa City, here are some tips for safely disposing of expired, unused, or unwanted medications.

Walgreens, Hy-Vee, and Walmart all will take back any medications prescribed by their pharmacists, as will the Iowa City Police Department.

You can also safely dispose of many medications in your household trash by following these procedures from the FDA website: www.fda.gov/Drugs/default.htm.

- ❖ Remove the drugs from their original containers and mix them with something undesirable, such as used coffee grounds, dirt, or cat litter.
- ❖ Put the mixture in something you can close (a resealable zipper storage bag, empty can, or other container) to prevent the drug from leaking or spilling out.
- ❖ Throw the container in the garbage.
- ❖ Scratch out all your personal information on the empty medicine packaging to protect your identity and privacy. Throw the packaging away or recycle if applicable.

The FDA also publishes a [detailed flyer](#) on this topic and a list of [drugs recommended for flushing](#), which are posted in the Member Documents section of the TRAIL member website. If you have questions about your own medications—how to take, store, or dispose of unused portions—ask your health care provider or pharmacist.

TRAIL volunteer Jim Clayton and his wife, Christine Allen, owned and operated The Soap Opera on College Street from 1981 until 2015. During those years, Jim was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Iowa Alcoholic Beverage Commission and also served as co-director of the Stepping Up Campus and Community Coalition, a harms reduction program funded by the University of Iowa and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Q & A with Johnson County Aging Specialist Jeff Kellbach

This is a new position. Why did Johnson County decide to hire an aging specialist?

Individuals age 65 and older are the fastest growing cohort in Johnson County, nearly tripling the next fastest growing group, and it will continue to grow with the baby boomer generation. During this extreme growth, we have also seen reduced funding for agencies serving the older adult population.



Jeff Kellbach

What does an aging specialist do?

I will provide older adults and caregivers a coordinated point of entry where they can receive information and assistance, needs assessment, referral, assistance in completing applications, and follow up to ensure that referrals and services are accessed. I am also the staff liaison to the Johnson County Livable

Community Initiative, which aims to help the county become a more livable community where everyone can age successfully.

What are your goals for your first year?

My #1 goal is to help as many individuals and families as possible with issues related to older adults. In order to do this, I hope to make more people aware that this service is available. The more individuals I meet with, the more I can find out about any gaps in the community and to see what solutions we can come up with to keep improving Johnson County.

Contact Information:

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Phone: 319-688-5842

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ANNIVERSARY GIFTS WELCOME!

Much of TRAIL's early success is due to an outpouring of support from donors across the community, which has allowed us to ramp up quickly and offer a growing slate of member services. If you have benefitted from those services, or if you simply believe in TRAIL's aging-in-place mission and want to help us thrive in the future, consider making a charitable gift during our Spring fundraising campaign.

Visit trailofjohnsoncounty.org/support/annual-fund to contribute online, or you may send a check to the TRAIL office at the address listed below. Thank you!

New Medicare numbers, cards are in the works

You are probably aware that Medicare is issuing new Medicare ID numbers that will replace the Social Security numbers that have appeared on users' cards in the past. Your new Medicare number will be unique to you.

The Social Security Administration is doing this in order to reduce the amount of fraud associated with individuals' Social Security numbers.

When you receive your new Medicare card, be sure to destroy your old one.

A few things to note:

- ★ People who are enrolling in Medicare for the first time will be among the earliest to receive their new Medicare numbers.
- ★ Your new card will be sent to you automatically; you do not need to request it. Just be sure that the mailing address you have on file with Social Security is up-to-date so that your card is mailed to the correct address.
- ★ You can find more information about when the new cards are being mailed by visiting www.medicare.gov.

Scam artists may use this opportunity to get personal information by contacting you about your new card.

As Medicare states on its website: "If someone asks you for your information, for money, or threatens to cancel your health benefits if you don't share your personal information, hang up and call us at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)."

This is a good time to recall other fraud prevention tips from TRAIL member and volunteer Lorraine Bowans:

- ★ Protect your Social Security number. Don't carry it in your wallet or put it on your checks.
- ★ Shred sensitive information.
- ★ Limit the number of credit cards that you carry with you.
- ★ Keep copies of credit cards (front and back) in a safe place.
- ★ Monitor your bills and financial accounts. Contact your creditors if a bill doesn't show up on time, you see a charge that you didn't make, or a payment has not been received.

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