



Above, board member Susan Shullaw shares insights from the volunteers at her table at TRAIL's All-Volunteer Meeting, September 29.

Two more committees work behind the scenes to advance TRAIL

Welcome to the third in a series of articles on volunteers who work behind the scenes to help provide many of the benefits that TRAIL members enjoy, and who also assist paid staff members (Executive Director Bob Untiedt and Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator Jessica Hahn) with operational functions such as fundraising, member relations, and volunteer recruitment and training.

About 40 volunteers serve on five core committees, an ad hoc committee for the Life Transition Service, and the board of directors. In addition to the monthly business meetings of the board and the committees, the volunteers "do the work" to ensure TRAIL's viability.

This installment highlights the volunteers and work of the Volunteer Committee and the Life Transition Service.

Volunteer Committee

Members of this committee work with Bob and Jessica to recruit, train, and retain TRAIL volunteers. They also develop policies and procedures related to volunteers and their key role in the organization and implement educational programs that keep volunteers informed and supportive of TRAIL and its mission.

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Member profile

Having traveled the world, he finds home in Iowa City

With Veteran's Day approaching in November, we profile one of the veterans among our number, Pat Erkel of Iowa City.

Pat grew up in Sumner, Iowa, and served in the military between 1954 and 1968, splitting his time between the Army and the Air Force. He traveled the world, working as a truck driver in the Army and a supply clerk in the Air Force. His service included several years based in South Vietnam during the war in the mid-1960s and delivering supplies to units around the country. Though he ventured into combat zones, he never came under fire.



"I had a great time in the military, said Pat. "I enjoyed serving my country."

He and his wife, Joyce, eventually moved to Iowa City and joined TRAIL in 2021, primarily for the transportation service, as health conditions prevented her from driving anymore. TRAIL was recommended to them by Johnson County social service agencies they were looking to for transportation assistance.

Since then, they've participated in TRAIL social activities, as well, and often meet members for coffee to stay active.

Joyce considers her membership as much of an investment as an expense.

"You don't have to pay a car payment, insurance, gas, or license plates and you get a friendly person to talk to," she said. "It's a great deal, and they bend over backwards for you."

Joyce said she's enjoyed it so much she's left TRAIL brochures at her beauty salon to help spread the word.

Prescription Drug Take Back Day set for October 28

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, slated for Saturday, October 28, provides residents with a safe and secure method for disposing of unwanted prescriptions and medications.



The East Side Recycling Center, located at 2400 Scott Blvd SE, Iowa City, will be taking medications as well as needles and sharps, which should be contained in rigid plastic containers with lids, like coffee cans or laundry detergent bottles (thinner plastic, like milk jugs, should not be used).

Unwanted medications can be delivered to both the Coralville and North Liberty police departments at any time (not only on National Drug Take Back Day). Both organizations do not accept inhalers or needles.

Throughout our community, several pharmacies provide this service, including HyVee Pharmacies, Walgreens on Muscatine Avenue, Hartig Drug, Towncrest Pharmacy, and University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

IN MEMORIAM



Patricia Jones

TRAIL member in 2022

See her obituary [here](#).

"Committees" continued

About 30 service and committee volunteers gathered September 29 at the All-Volunteer Meeting to socialize with fellow volunteers, share their experiences, and suggest additional ideas for recruiting TRAIL members and volunteers.

Longtime volunteer Jim Ruebush may have summarized it the best when he said, "Why do we do it? Because we like to help. We like to see that our actions are making a difference in people's lives."

With TRAIL membership growing to more than 257 this year, the number of service requests for volunteers is also growing.

In 2022, there were 74 service requests a month filled, and this year, through the end of August, it has jumped to 114 a month. While more than 75 percent of requests are for transportation, volunteers also support various tasks in and outside the home, make friendly visits, and provide medical advocacy, among other services.

Life Transition Service

In 2021, some TRAIL founding members identified a potential new service for Full members and worked together with Bob to create the Life Transition Service. Simply put, the service supports Full members who are navigating changes in their ability to age in place, including but not limited to:

- a hospitalization,
- family or personal crisis,
- a decline in health or wellness, or
- a wish to plan for future caretaking needs.

Members are paired with a specially trained Life Transition volunteer who assists them to identify and investigate options for care, housing, and services. The volunteers can also help follow up and advocate with service providers as needed.

Volunteer Bob Reynolds has done just that for an 86-year-old member who has no children or close relatives. Bob was doing friendly visits once a week with the member but soon noticed that he would benefit from additional services, including supplemental nutrition, medical care, and other financial and legal assistance.

Bob is now paired with the member as part of the Life Transition Service. He says, "It's been very rewarding for me. I just kept thinking . . . the member really has no one who is going to help him with these things. What would happen to him if we don't help?"

Life Transition volunteers respect member choices and confidentiality and meet monthly with TRAIL's social work consultant, Kayleigh Gilmore, who provides professional guidance.

➡ **As you learn more** about the committees that make TRAIL thrive, be aware that all committees welcome new members. So, if you have a skill to offer or interest in a committee, please reach out to Jessica in the TRAIL office, 319-800-9003, to volunteer.

Volunteer Committee

Chair, Allison Andrews
Phyllis Black
Jody Hovland
Nancy Husted
David Keeley
Pat Smith

Life Transition Service (*ad hoc committee*)

Charlie Anderson
Allison Andrews
Maggie Elliott
Jessica Hahn
Joy Smith

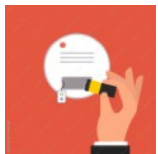
A new way to find trusted service professionals

A new feature on the TRAIL member website will make it easier to find reliable local service contractors—from plumbers to personal care professionals—that are recommended by the TRAIL member community. We've added a new section to the Message Board, called **Vendor Requests & Recommendations**, to replace the prescreened service provider list. The Message Board is an easy and convenient way for members to connect with other TRAIL members seeking advice and referrals.

Just as important, this feature is **private**. Unlike other online review sites, such as Yelp or Google, TRAIL's Message Board is open to TRAIL members only. No one outside of TRAIL can access the website, so it's secure from spammers, "bots," and other external threats that plague social media.

The Vendor Requests & Recommendations portion of the Message Board is up and running. A document called "How to Use the TRAIL Message Board Feature" is available in the Member Documents section (under Member & Community Resources) of the website to help you learn and feel comfortable using the feature. An in-person training session led by TRAIL member and volunteer Jim Ruebush will be scheduled in November. Check the TRAIL calendar for registration and details.

Get a helping hand with smoke detectors and light bulbs



Don't even think about climbing a ladder. TRAIL volunteers Ana and Ryan Peterson will be available on Sunday, November 5, from 3 to 6 PM, to change smoke detector batteries and light bulbs for TRAIL members. All you need to do is provide the necessary batteries and light bulbs. Note: For safety reasons they cannot do ceilings that are higher than 11 feet.

Sign up on the [TRAIL calendar](#) or call the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003.

Reminder: Rides available

Don't forget that volunteers are available to offer rides to more than doctor appointments. The TRAIL calendar is full of social and educational events, and if there's one you'd like to attend, just put in a request by emailing Jessica Hahn, membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org, or by calling the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003.



Above, TRAIL member Alfrieta Monagan is shown taking part in a fire extinguisher demonstration at the Senior Center on October 3.

Be alert for phone scams

The Iowa City Police indicate there has been an uptick in phone scams that target the elderly. These scams, known as a "grandparent scam," appear to be from an elderly person's grandchildren. The phone caller claims to be a member of law enforcement who says their grandchild is in jail and needs money urgently.

Be aware that local authorities will never call to demand money. Hang up immediately and call the police department in your town.

Thank you to the October–November newsletter sponsor



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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.

[Brunch at Iowa River Power Restaurant](#) \$
Sunday, October 15, 10 to 11:30 AM
 Iowa River Power Restaurant, 501 First Avenue, Coralville

[Book Club: The Farm](#) (via Zoom)
Monday, October 16, 1 to 2 PM

[Visit to the University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art](#)
Tuesday, October 17, 1 to 2 PM
 Stanley Museum of Art, 160 Burlington Street, Iowa City

[How Do I Want to Live: Making a Care Plan for My Future](#)
Thursday, October 19, 10 AM to noon
 Iowa City Public Library Meeting Room A, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City



[Fall Houseplant Swap](#)
Sunday, October 22, 12:30 to 2 PM
 Iowa City Public Library Meeting Rooms A, B, C
 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Movie Matinee Day](#) \$
Tuesday, October 24, 11 AM • Location TBD

[Device Advice: Tech Help for Older Adults](#)
Tuesday, October 23, 4:30 to 6:30 PM
 Iowa City Public Library Digital Media Lab, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Picnic Lunch at the Iowa Raptor Center](#)
Wednesday, October 25, 11 AM to 1 PM
 Lake Macbride Field Campus, 3673 Raptor Ridge Road, Solon

[Getting Our Legal, Financial, and Health Care Affairs in Order, Presented by Shelly Kurtz](#)
Thursday, October 26, noon to 1 PM
 Iowa City Public Library Meeting Room A, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Keep Yourself Safe Online: Zoom Session](#)
Monday, October 30, 1 to 2 PM

[Prairie Seed Harvest for Seniors](#)
Wednesday, November 1, 10 to 11:30 AM
 F.W. Kent Park, High Point Parking Area, 2048 Highway 6 NW, Oxford

Daylight Saving Time ends • Sunday, November 5, 2 AM

[Smoke Detector Battery Changes \(& Light Bulbs\)](#)
Sunday, November 5, 3 to 6 PM • See story on page 3

[Member Happy Hour](#) \$
Tuesday, November 7, 4:30 to 6:30 PM
 Orchard Green, 521 South Gilbert Street, Iowa City

[TRAIL Book Club for Men](#)
Thursday, November 9, 1:30 to 3 PM
 Iowa City Marketplace or occasionally TBD
 1660 Sycamore Street, Iowa City

TRAIL office closed in observance of Veterans Day • Friday, November 10