



Member tip o' the month:

Be careful when playing Facebook quizzes



Answering silly quiz questions is a popular way to waste time on Facebook and other

social media sites. While many questions are innocent fun, many more are helping scammers gain more personal information about you than they should have.

For instance, if you answer what the number-one song was the day you were born, you just unwittingly gave your birthdate. And questions like hometowns, the name of the street you grew up on, or what kind of car you drive can provide access to personal accounts because people often use those as part of their passwords.

How can you make sure that quiz actually is just for fun? The Better Business Bureau offers these tips.

- **Be skeptical:** Before answering a quiz, figure out who created it. Is it a brand you trust?
- **Adjust privacy settings:** Review your privacy settings and be strict about what information you share and who you share it with.
- **Remove personal details from your profile:** Don't share information like a phone number or home address.
- **Don't give answers to common security questions:** Be cautious if the questions ask for things like your mother's maiden name, favorite foods, or the name of your high school.

Survey says members value TRAIL

We had a roughly 36% response rate to last month's member-satisfaction survey, which is about average for a mail survey. To the TRAIL members who took time to fill out and return the questionnaire: *Thank you!*

The good news is that replies to the questions we've asked in prior surveys are all trending positive in 2021. For example:

- ✓ "TRAIL provides the services I currently need to age in place"—85% agree or strongly agree, compared to 65% in 2018
- ✓ "My TRAIL membership experience has met or exceeded my expectations"—85% agree or strongly agree, compared to 75% in 2018
- ✓ "I believe TRAIL benefits are a good value and worth my membership fee"—88% agree or strongly agree, compared to 72% in 2018

Members also continue to appreciate TRAIL volunteers, social events, and the *TRAIL Guide* newsletter, and they give high marks to TRAIL staff helpfulness and the quality of TRAIL as an organization.

There seems to be room for improvement in a few categories, including

TRAIL's list of prescreened service providers. According to the survey, not many of you use that list, and those who do would like to see more vendors and other enhancements. Look for changes to our vendor program sometime next year.

Some members also would like to see TRAIL play a bigger role in assisting with major life transitions, such as changes in health or a possible move into a senior living facility. A special TRAIL committee is now at work on these issues as well.

We're gratified that the survey confirms what TRAIL does best and has identified areas where we can do better. You spoke, we listened, and we're committed to being both responsive and proactive when it comes to helping you live your best life in the place you call home.

"We think TRAIL is really valuable to the community."





Caring for the Caregiver

Have you ever wondered where to turn when you or your family need help caring for a loved one? There are plenty of online resources, such as the national [American Association of Retired Persons](#) or the local [Heritage Area Agency on Aging](#).

But there is also a brick-and-mortar location just for caregivers—[Mercy Cedar Rapids Family Caregivers Center](#). The center offers free support, education, and social opportunities for caregivers assisting adults with chronic medical conditions.

All of these organizations promote independent living and seek to improve the quality of life for older Iowans and their caregivers.

BY THE NUMBERS Are you a caregiver? You might be if you miss work to provide care; take on legal or financial responsibilities; coordinate professional care services; assist with daily living activities like eating and dressing; or provide medication management, among many other tasks. In the United States, according to the [National Alliance for Caregiving](#) and AARP:

- ▶ Approximately 43.5 million caregivers have provided unpaid care in the last 12 months (2015).
- ▶ At \$470 billion in 2013, the value of unpaid caregiving nearly matched the value of the sales of the world's largest company, Walmart (\$477 billion).
- ▶ 34% of caregivers are 65+ years old (2015).

According to the Heritage Area Agency on Aging/AARP:

- ▶ Iowa's 317,000 family caregivers provide 295 million hours of care per year. That's an economic value of nearly \$4 billion (2018).
- ▶ About 20% of caregivers quit their job earlier than planned (2018).

November is National Family Caregiving Month. Take a moment to thank a caregiver you know, or if you are a caregiver, celebrate yourself and recharge your energy (visit [recharging your caregiver energy](#)).

CELEBRATING GENEROSITY November 15 is National Philanthropy Day, which annually celebrates the doers and donors among us. If you've not yet made a gift to TRAIL this year, this is also the week you're likely to find our annual fund appeal in your mailbox. *Don't toss that envelope!* Please take a moment to read the letter from Executive Director Bob Untiedt, and learn how charitable contributions help make a positive difference in our members' lives.

Half of TRAIL's annual budget relies on donations from members, volunteers, and friends like you. We hope you'll choose to mark National Philanthropy Day by [making a donation to our 2021 annual fund](#). Thank you!

READERS WANTED The TRAIL Book Club, which began as a men's reading group several years ago, is welcoming new members. The group meets on the second Thursday of each month at 1:30 PM via Zoom or in person, as COVID permits. For more information, visit the [calendar page](#) on the TRAIL member website or call David Rust at 319-351-7710.

HAPPY HOUR HIATUS Given the arrival of colder temperatures, plus the fact that many TRAIL members are uncomfortable gathering indoors due to COVID, we are suspending our monthly TRAIL member Happy Hours during the winter months. We hope to begin meeting again when the weather warms and the pandemic wanes, whichever comes first. (And we hope both come soon!)

Thanks to our **NOVEMBER—DECEMBER** newsletter sponsor



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On October 14, nearly a dozen TRAIL members enjoyed colorful sights like this during a fascinating tour of Kloubec Koi Farm near Amana, followed by lunch at the Kava House Cafe in Swisher. Kloubec Koi Farm is the largest koi farm in the country, shipping koi throughout the U.S. and Canada. Participants learned how the farm began and what it takes to raise healthy fish, and they were able to tour highlights of this beautiful, 80-acre property.

Volunteer benefit is waiting for you

You may have a lot on your plate this month: Raking, garden cleanup, simple repairs, or dragging out boxes of holiday decorations. So this could be just the time to rely on volunteer assistance from TRAIL:

- ◆ Full members have access to volunteer assistance year-round
- ◆ Affiliate members have access to volunteer assistance one time per year—called the “birthday benefit.”

To request volunteer services, just call the TRAIL Office at 319-800-9003 during office hours, 9 AM to 1 PM, Monday through Friday.

There’s good news, but COVID remains

All Iowans age 5+ are now eligible to receive COVID vaccinations. That’s one positive piece of information from the [Johnson County Coronavirus Information Hub](#). Here is another: In Johnson County, 98% of residents age 65 and older are fully vaccinated.

The CDC recommends booster shots for individuals age 65 and older and its recommendations also allow for mixing and matching the three types of booster shots (Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson) with the original vaccinations.

But with flu season and winter approaching, not to mention the occurrence of breakthrough COVID infections, caution is still important. Remember to mask indoors, maintain social distance, and get your flu shot if you haven’t already done so!

MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

REMINDER: The Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center has SHIP volunteers ready to assist you in navigating options for prescription drug plans and Medicare Advantage plans during open enrollment, continuing now through December 7, 2021. In-person appointments are available in several locations, as well as virtual appointments via Zoom or phone.

Specialized SHIP counseling for University of Iowa employees/retirees and their spouses is also available.

Visit www.icgov.org/ship to make an appointment.

AmeriCorps offers home energy audits



Iowa City AmeriCorps is conducting home energy audits for Iowa City residents who live in stand-alone houses or duplexes that do not share air circulation infrastructure such as vents and air conditioning. During an audit, the team will verify the kind and amount of insulation in the attic, identify the amount and sources of energy leakage, and test for any gas leaks. They may install outlet cover insulators, LED light bulbs, low flow aerators in the sinks, and low flow shower heads that help save on water bills. The team also can provide basic energy-saving measures such as caulking windows, applying weather stripping around doors, installing door sweeps, and insulating hot water pipes. If you are interested in having your own home energy audit done, contact Ursula Ferrier at greeniowaic@gmail.com or by phone at 319-339-5399.

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.

Calendar key: **BLUE** events are those hosted by and for TRAIL members. **GREEN** events (virtual) and **YELLOW** (in-person) are hosted by other organizations but may be of interest to TRAIL members.

The TRAIL Office will be closed on Thursday and Friday, November 25 and 26, for Thanksgiving.

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.

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

Monday, November 15, 1 to 2 PM (Zoom presentation)

[Book Discussion: "On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity and Getting Older" by Parker Palmer](#)

Tuesday, November 16, 12:30 to 1:30 PM (Zoom presentation)
Parker Palmer offers thought-provoking ideas about reflecting on your own experiences. This discussion will be held in two parts.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "Holiday Coping Strategies"](#)

Tuesday, November 16, 1 to 2 PM

[Dewey the Dog: Exploring the Possibility that Creatures Can Communicate with Human Language](#)

Wednesday, November 17, 11 AM to noon
A fascinating Zoom presentation by Lindsay Mattock, a UI Library and Information scientist, who will discuss her own research and her dog, Dewey.

[Fall Walk](#)

Wednesday, November 17, 2 to 3 PM
Iowa River Landing Wetland Park/Sculpture Park, 300 East 9th Street, Coralville

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: "Historic Downtown Iowa City Movie Theaters"](#)

Thursday, November 18, 1:30 to 2:30 PM

[International Writing Program Panel Series Conclusion: "Images of America"](#)

Friday, November 19, noon to 1 PM
Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room A, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Gourmet Tour of Italy/Food Historian Lecture](#)

Tuesday, November 23, 5:30 to 6:30 PM

[Small Business Saturday](#) • Community-wide

Saturday, November 27, 10 AM to 5 PM

[Eastside Artists Show and Sale](#)

Friday, December 3, 10 AM to 8 PM
Masonic Building, 312 East College Street, Iowa City

[Books for Your Own Reading and Gift Giving](#)

Friday, December 3, 10:30 to 11:30 AM (Zoom presentation)

[New Member Orientation](#)

Friday, December 3, 1:30 to 3 PM (Zoom presentation)

[Holiday Thieves Market](#)

Saturday, December 4, 10 AM to 5 PM | Sunday, December 5, 10 AM to 4 PM
Hyatt Regency Conference Center, 300 East 9th Street, Coralville

[Lori Erickson Book Talk](#)

Wednesday, December 8, 2 to 3 PM (Zoom presentation)
Lori Erickson will talk about her new book, "The Soul of the Family Tree."

[TRAIL Book Club](#)

Thursday, December 9, 1:30 to 3 PM
Location TBD • New members welcome; see story on page 2.