



Happy (virtual) holidays!

It's hard to be of good cheer when COVID is forcing so many holiday celebrations to happen virtually or not at all. But Thanksgiving allowed a few TRAIL members to test-drive some virtual gathering ideas that could also brighten your holidays:

- * TRAIL members Charlie and Jane Anderson roasted their usual 19-pound turkey at Thanksgiving and were joined by 13 family members for "dining a la Zoom." The many leftovers were shared with the Andersons' grateful neighbors.
- * TRAIL volunteer Amanda Lensing reports that her family and friends play charades, Pictionary, and Scattergories on Zoom. "We've made it a theme party incorporating wine, beer, and/or food as well. So fun! We AirPlay to our TV to make the screen bigger and easier to interact."
- * Another TRAIL friend joins forces with nearby friends and family on a holiday meal menu. Each household is assigned one dish and delivers a serving to other participating households at the appointed hour. At the end of the process, each household has multiple dishes with only a fraction of the prep time, and everyone jumps on Zoom to enjoy the meal together.

Visit this [link](#) for more virtual party ideas.

A message from the TRAIL Board

Before we bid a not-so-fond farewell to 2020, we'd like to reflect on what this year has meant to the TRAIL community.

A global pandemic that disproportionately affects older adults—TRAIL's target audience—seemed like a worst-case scenario last spring. But TRAIL's staff and volunteers adjusted quickly to ensure TRAIL could continue to meet member needs:

- ❖ When the TRAIL Office closed in March, our Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator Sue Mellecker began handling your calls and emails from home, as she's doing to this day. (Thank you, Sue!)
- ❖ TRAIL's Volunteer Committee joined the Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center's **mask-making project**, sewing and delivering face masks to hundreds of households.
- ❖ Our Social and Educational Programs Committee moved **member events online** and arranged other activities to be socially distant.
- ❖ TRAIL volunteers began making **buddy calls** to members in need of a friendly voice.
- ❖ **COVID-protection protocols** were developed, allowing TRAIL volunteers to resume some of their essential member services.
- ❖ The new **Tuesdays with TRAIL** email series added some "lite" content during difficult times.
- ❖ Instead of an in-person housing fair, TRAIL teamed up with AARP Iowa to produce a [Senior Housing Guide](#) that's getting rave reviews.

Best Wishes
FOR A HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR

Through it all, our Board and staff kept TRAIL moving forward. Last month, as you know, we welcomed new **Executive Director Bob Untiedt**, who'll help lead TRAIL into our post-COVID future.* We believe that future is in very good hands. (The TRAIL Board also will say farewell to two longtime leaders this month; see story on page 2.)

TRAIL has stayed the course during 2020, and that's no small thing. But organizational growth must be among our top priorities in the new year. **You can help TRAIL recruit new members in 2021** by spreading the word among your family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. We'll share more information about an upcoming membership drive soon.

Until then, **our thanks to YOU**—our members, volunteers, donors, vendors, and community partners—for sticking with us during this very trying year. TRAIL embodies the "stronger together" philosophy, and we look forward to working with you to build our strength and our value in the years to come.

* See page 4 for the date of a virtual meet and greet with Bob.

WANTED: More volunteers!

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, TRAIL volunteers continue to provide both contact and non-contact services for members and provide organizational leadership on committees and the Board of Directors. We have adjusted—hosting our orientations virtually via Zoom and implementing strict infection control and personal safety measures for volunteers willing to drive or perform activities in a member's home. (Our greatest need is for drivers, particularly for members with recurring medical appointments.)

Volunteers will be assisting even more members in 2021, when Affiliate membership will include a "Birthday Benefit." The new benefit provides one-time access to any TRAIL volunteer service at any time during a 12-month membership, introducing Affiliate members to our dedicated volunteers and the great services they provide.

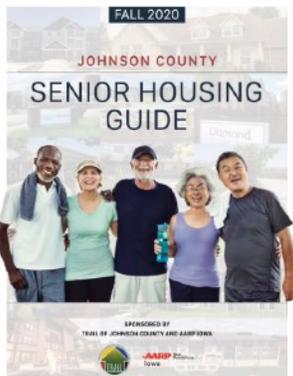
To learn more about volunteering or Affiliate membership, visit our website, trailofjohnsoncounty.org; or contact Sue in the TRAIL Office, 319-800-9003.

New year, new home?

If you're considering a move to a retirement community in 2021, the

TRAIL-AARP Johnson County Senior Housing Guide can ease and inform your decision-making. The colorful booklet features 16 local facilities, from independent and assisted living to memory care, and also includes helpful tips and resources.

[Download the free guide](#) from TRAIL's website or contact the TRAIL Office at 319-800-9003 if you need assistance.



Deep thanks to departing Board members!

Marty Fields joined the TRAIL Board and became chair of our Member Appreciation Committee in 2018. Under her leadership, that committee has undertaken projects large and small to help our members feel valued, from birthday cards to special events. Marty is stepping down from her Board position at the end of this year, but we're delighted that she plans to stay on as a committee member. She's also completed a recent video testimonial about the value TRAIL has brought to her life; you can [watch it here](#). **Thank you, Marty**, for all you've done to enhance the TRAIL member experience!



Joy Smith, one of TRAIL's original founding members, is leaving the Board when her second term expires on December 31. She fits the description of "founder" in every way—in vision, passion, commitment, and ceaseless drive to ensure TRAIL's long-term success. As past chair of our Fundraising Committee, Joy helped lead TRAIL's Start-Up Campaign, and she has contributed to the success of every campaign that has followed. She is also a champion for diversity and for better serving our frail members, and we look forward to her future involvement in special initiatives around these topics and more. **Thank you, Joy**, for your unparalleled loyalty and leadership!



Thanks to our December-January newsletter sponsor

Stirlingshire of Coralville

Opening March 2021!

1140 Kennedy Parkway
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www.stirlingshireofcoralville.com

Offering Assisted Living and Memory Care, Stirlingshire will help you or your loved ones live life to the fullest. Reserve your apartment now!

Contact Anne Alms at 319-325-2896 or anne.alm@fairview.org for full details.

STIRLINGSHIRE  EBENEZER
OF CORALVILLE

Thoughtful gift-giving

As you wrap up your year-end charitable contributions, consider making **honorary gifts** instead of giving traditional holiday presents. Sure, you could buy Aunt Lucy another decorative pillow. But you could also make a contribution to TRAIL in her honor, letting her know that what you might have spent on purchasing and shipping will instead be used to help older adults in Johnson County stay safe, healthy, and socially engaged.



Online gifts can be made securely via the [TRAIL website](#), or you may send a check to the TRAIL Office at 28 S. Linn Street, Room 201, Iowa City, IA 52240.

TRAIL and Aunt Lucy say **thank you!**

The TRAIL Recipe Box

TRAIL Executive Director Bob Untiedt shares a favorite recipe here. "I got really good reviews from a group of six folks, most of them young adults, for a salad I altered slightly from [cooking-spree.com](#)," he says.

MOROCCAN ORANGE SALAD

- 3 navel oranges
- 1 medium red onion, sliced thin
- 1 cup kalamata olives, in oil (you can find them packaged in oil at the Hy-Vee deli)
- 1 tbsp. lime juice
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1/2 cup pomegranate pulps



Peel the oranges, remove the exterior white pulp, and cut each orange into eight wedges. Mix all ingredients and enjoy.

Mental health support—for you or a loved one—can take many forms

If there was ever a year in which our mental health might need some extra-special care, 2020 is it. Many of us have created small COVID "pods," made more use of the telephone and snail mail to connect with other people, and have even learned to Zoom. And as you read on page 1, TRAIL has found new ways to connect with and support members.

But sometimes we need more—if not for ourselves, then perhaps for a loved one. Whether it's the sound of another voice, specific caregiver information, or a helping hand in a crisis, the resources at right may offer just what you want.

- **TRAIL volunteers are making "buddy calls"** to members in need of a friendly voice. To get started, call Sue in the TRAIL Office at 319-800-9003.
- **Iowa Warm Line:** This statewide confidential telephone line provides nonjudgmental support. Available seven days a week, 5 to 10 PM. Call 844-775-9276.
- **Your Life Iowa:** This statewide crisis line provides information, referrals, counseling, and links to mental health services. Available 24 hours a day. Call 855-581-8111.
- **CommUnity Crisis Services:** Trained counselors are available at this Iowa City agency. The crisis line can be reached 24 hours a day, and chat and text services can be reached 9 AM to 2 PM. Call or text 855-325-4296 or chat at [IowaCrisisChat.org](#).
- **Mobile Crisis Outreach Program:** A service of CommUnity that dispatches mental health counselors within 60 minutes of contact. Call 855-800-1239.
- **NAMI Johnson County** (National Alliance on Mental Illness) offers information about support groups and other resources on its website.

NOTE: These events are virtual, that is, they are being held online. More details and registration information for each event can be found on [TRAIL's online calendar](#).

New events are added frequently, so check the online calendar often to stay up-to-date.



The TRAIL Office will be closed:

Thursday and Friday, December 24 and 25, for Christmas

Friday, January 1, New Year's Day

Monday, January 18, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Chat from Old Cap—Dr. Edwin Stone and Vision Research](#)

Wednesday, December 16, 3 to 4 PM

In this Zoom presentation, Dr. Stone will discuss the latest research and discoveries from the UI Institute for Vision Research.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Live Q&A with Raptology](#)

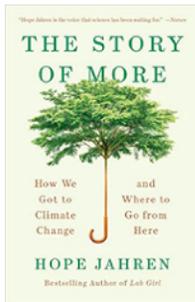
Thursday, December 17, 4 to 5 PM

Check out the online video tour of the Raptology home base and then join the online discussion on this date to hear Joan talking about birds of prey and answering your questions.

[TRAIL Virtual Event Pick: Discussion of Hope Jahren's book, "The Story of More"](#)

Saturday, December 19, 4 to 6 PM

This online discussion of Hope Jahren's latest book, subtitled "How We Got to Climate Change and Where We Go from Here," concerns the current and projected consequences of climate change and actions we can take to counter this threat. Copies of the book are available from the Iowa City Public Library in print and digitally.



[Wonderful Books: Sharing Our Favorites](#)

Monday, December 21, 1 to 2 PM

Have you been doing a lot of reading in recent months? Then join this Zoom discussion to talk about your favorites and learn what others are reading.

[Winter Solstice Celebration](#)

Monday, December 21, 5 to 6 PM

Pour your favorite beverage and join this Zoom call to celebrate a seasonal turning point.

[TRAIL Volunteer Orientation via Zoom](#)

Tuesday, January 12, 4 to 5 PM

In this session, you'll learn more about TRAIL, its mission, and the services that TRAIL volunteers provide—even during the pandemic.

[Collections: Sharing Our Favorites](#)

Wednesday, January 13, 1 to 2 PM

Four TRAIL members will share their cherished collections. They'll talk about how they got started and what they've learned, and they will even share a few of their favorites.

[Special Member Event: Virtual Meet and Greet with TRAIL E.D. Bob Untiedt](#)

Friday, January 8, 3 to 4 PM

An eastern Iowa native, Bob had a long and varied career in the nonprofit field before he joined TRAIL in early November. COVID has prevented him from meeting as many TRAIL members as he would like, so he looks forward to a lively meet and greet on Zoom. Bring your questions and don't be surprised if Bob's two cats try to share the screen.

