



## Real estate company lends a hand

The concept of helping older adults live safely and independently in their own homes is one that Todd Case knows from personal experience. That's why he is so pleased to be involved in TRAIL.

"I saw how important it was for my parents to stay in their home for as long as they could. It was also clear that to do that they needed help."

Through his friendship with a TRAIL member, Todd learned how he and his company, Westwinds Real Estate, could help. In addition to donating to TRAIL, the Westwinds maintenance team began in 2019 providing some in-kind home repairs for Supported Members.



Westwinds Maintenance Manager Montana V. Hammonds works with TRAIL's Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator Jessica Hahn to

evaluate and assign requests from Supported Members. Jobs completed so far have included installation of new mailboxes and posts, work to prevent mice from entering a garage, and tree limbs cut away from windows.

Montana says, "It's been a pleasure to work with TRAIL the last few years and see the positive impact our maintenance services have

on the lives of TRAIL members. It's also a great way for our team to give back to the community by doing things we're good at."

He adds that maintenance team technicians meet with TRAIL Supported Members about the job needed and discuss how repairs will be made, materials they will use, and potential items that might need to be addressed in the future.

"I've received positive feedback from several techs on the joyous conversations they've had with TRAIL members. The members always show an appreciation of their work, so the engagement ends up being very pleasant for both parties."

Montana says he is proud of Westwinds' work with TRAIL, adding, "Fostering the relationship with TRAIL is truly a team effort, and humbly I think Westwinds has *the* best team!"



Montana Hammonds, Maintenance Manager



Tyler Chavez, Maintenance Coordinator



Ed Cardwell, Jr., Maintenance Technician

## Conversations with Bob



We have not seen very much of each other these last 18 months. During our lockdown, our new director of TRAIL, Bob Untiedt, has worked hard to

keep us humming along. Bob will hold monthly conversations via Zoom with TRAIL members. He'll update you on current happenings at TRAIL and then open it up for your questions, comments, and suggestions. The format will be relaxed and conversational.

[The next conversation with Bob](#) will be Wednesday, March 9.



## Happy 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary

to the Village Movement (of which TRAIL is a part)! On February 15, 2002, Beacon Hill Village was founded in Boston.

Today more than **300** nonprofit, community-based organizations serve as intentional caring communities of neighbors helping neighbors.

More than **40,000** older adults across the country and internationally are part of the Village model that is a cost-effective, sustainable solution for aging in place.

## Volunteer profile

### Meet Pat Smith

Talk about versatile volunteers. Since first volunteering for TRAIL in September 2019, Pat Smith has provided transportation for members, acted as a medical advocate, became a phone buddy during the depths



of the COVID pandemic, and has made friendly visits to members as needed. She took her volunteer involvement a step further when she joined TRAIL's Volunteer Committee in March 2020.

"It's a good group of people," Pat says of the committee, "and it's important that we have enough volunteers."

Pat grew up in Maquoketa, attended Luther College, came to Iowa City for grad school—and she decided to stay put. After a 37-year career in the UIHC Ophthalmology Department as part of the administrative team, Pat retired in 2014.

Volunteering with TRAIL appealed to her for several reasons. She didn't want to commit to a set schedule, so she likes the fact that she can take on assignments that fit her days, leaving time for spontaneous plans. What's more, Pat says, "I've gotten to meet some really great people and developed good friendships. People are very appreciative of what you do and it's been very positive for me." One TRAIL member that Pat met turned out to be a longtime neighbor, but she and Pat had never met in their neighborhood.

In her spare time Pat enjoys reading, jigsaw puzzles, women's sports (she calls herself a "fanatic"), and travel, her companion being a friend whose husband doesn't like to travel. One highlight for them was a group trip to the Galapagos Islands three years ago, and just last summer Pat spent three weeks in Minnesota near Grand Portage. On Pat's to-do list: visits to more national parks.

"TRAIL is a wonderful organization," Pat says. "To help people age in their own homes—that's a great thing."

## Calling for volunteer drivers!

TRAIL members, if you have been thinking about doing some volunteering and you still drive, TRAIL could use your help. With our membership growing and more people venturing out as the COVID pandemic wanes, we need more volunteer drivers.

Maybe you didn't know that members could also be volunteers. It's true and we have quite a few who are both. The great part about volunteering with TRAIL is that after a quick orientation and background check, you can volunteer as you are able to and have the time—no set schedule or commitment to weekly service. (*See Pat Smith's story at left.*) Taking on one or two requests a month would be helpful.



The success of TRAIL as an organization depends on volunteers to provide services, and while we offer many different services, the fact is that almost 80 percent of our requests are for transportation. Driving

members to doctor, dental, and other appointments in and around the Iowa City and Coralville area is the primary need, with most trips requiring two hours or less, so it can be easy to work into your day. And, of course safety of our members and volunteers is a priority as we continue our COVID protocol of requiring masking by all parties and riders sitting in the back seat, with windows cracked.

We'd love to have you join our volunteer team. To get started, call the TRAIL Office (319-800-9003) or email Member and Volunteer Services Coordinator Jessica Hahn at [membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org](mailto:membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org).

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## Focus on your heart health



February is American Heart Month, a time when all of us can focus on our cardiovascular health. Did you know that high blood pressure

affects nearly half of the adult population in the United States? Many people who have the condition don't know they have it.

High blood pressure is often called the silent killer. You might not have symptoms, but it's a leading risk factor for heart disease and stroke. Monitoring your own blood pressure at home can help you keep your blood pressure under control.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), uncontrolled high blood pressure is common. Check out these facts:

- ◆ A greater percentage of men (50%) have high blood pressure than women (44%).
- ◆ High blood pressure is more common in non-Hispanic black adults (56%) than in non-Hispanic white adults (48%), non-Hispanic Asian adults (46%), or Hispanic adults (39%).
- ◆ Among those recommended to take blood pressure medication, blood pressure control is higher among non-Hispanic white adults (32%) than in non-Hispanic black adults (25%), non-Hispanic Asian adults (19%), or Hispanic adults (25%).

Learn more about your heart and how to keep it healthy on the CDC website at [5 Surprising Facts](#).



### IN MEMORIAM

#### Carl Klaus

*TRAIL donor and two-time TRAIL presenter*

*See his obituary [here](#).*

**Caregivers across the country**—paid and unpaid—give their time and energy to help elderly individuals live better lives. [National Caregivers Day](#)—the third Friday of February—is a day to offer special thanks and recognition to these caregivers.

**National Caregivers Day**  
Friday, February 19



Author Ai-jen Poo wrote about a coming caregiving crisis in her 2015 book, *The Age of Dignity: Preparing for the Elder Boom in an Aging America*. In an [NPR interview](#), she talks about the need for comprehensive state and federal policies supporting care of the elderly at home. She can also be seen in a [PBS interview](#) with Kelly Corrigan talking about the future of caregiving.

## TRAIL continues COVID precautions

While COVID precautions and restrictions are in flux across the country, TRAIL is maintaining its COVID protocols. Members and volunteers are asked to stay masked and practice social distancing when providing or receiving volunteer services, especially indoors, and the majority of TRAIL activities are occurring online. In addition, the Iowa City/Johnson County Senior Center requires masks.

**Free at-home COVID tests** are still available from the federal government, four per home. These tests:

- ✓ Are rapid antigen at-home tests, not PCR tests
- ✓ Give results within 30 minutes, no lab required
- ✓ Work whether or not you have symptoms

To order your tests, visit [covidtest.gov](https://covidtest.gov).

## Listen up!

Stuck inside and need something to do? Consider listening to a podcast. You can find them on any subject you can imagine. We suggest these to get you started:



**American Life:** [This American Life](#) (funny, touching, and unique vignettes about everyday life in America)

**Car Talk:** [Car Talk](#) (full of wisecracks and hilarious callers, so you don't have to be interested in cars)

**Wellness & Aging:** [Aging in Full Bloom](#) (dedicated to all forms of wellness as they relate to aging)

**World Travel:** [Travel with Rick Steves](#) (weekly episode of Rick Steves' public radio show and past episodes)

**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.

**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](mailto:info@trailofjohnsoncounty.org).

**"Endless Innovation: The UI as an R1 Research Institution, 1948-1997"** (via Zoom)

**Tuesday, February 15, 4:30 to 5:30 PM**

UI archivist and storyteller David McCartney will dig into UI's storied past.



**Meet Eddie Etsey** (via Zoom)

**Thursday, February 17, 3 to 4 PM**

The extraordinary Eddie Etsey is the UI associate athletic director, chief technology officer, and sports administrator with a mission to bring people together to solve problems.

**Prairie Lights Reading with Author Erin Young** (via Zoom)

**Friday, February 18, 6 to 7 PM**

Erin Young will be joined in conversation by Ace Atkins to celebrate her newest book, *The Fields*, called the first of "a classic crime series in the making."

**Book Club—Read Together "Cloud Cuckoo Land" by Anthony Doerr** (via Zoom)

**Monday, February 21, 1 to 2 PM**

This powerful novel is showing up on many "must read" lists. We'll discuss it over two book club meetings.

**"The UI's Next Chapter" Blazing New Trails, 1998-2047"** (via Zoom)

**Tuesday, February 22, 4:30 to 5:30 PM**

UI archivist and storyteller David McCartney looks at stories of cutting-edge research that have helped make the university a dynamic place.

**Presidential Food: Washington and Lincoln** (via Zoom)

**Tuesday, February 22, 7:30 to 8:30 PM**

A fascinating presentation by food historian Francine Segan.

**If Barns Could Talk** (via Zoom)

**Friday, February 25, 1 to 2 PM**

What's happening to our old barns and why should we care today? Learn more in this program offered by Humanities Iowa, the Senior Center, and TRAIL.

**UI Presidential Lecture**

**Sunday, February 27, 2:30 to 4:30 PM**

Hancher Auditorium, 141 East Park Road, Iowa City

This signature event will feature three distinguished UI scholars: Professors Craig Kletzing, Christopher Merrill, and Patricia Winokur

**"20 Weeks to Preparedness: Learn How to Prepare for a Natural Disaster"** (via Zoom)

**Monday, February 28, 1 to 2 PM**

Hear from Jeff Ritzman, executive director of the Safeguard Iowa Partnership.

**Conversations with Bob** (via Zoom)

**Wednesday, March 9, 2:30 to 3:30 PM • See story on page 1.**

**Iowa History 101: "Bringing Forth the Vision of Strong-Minded Women"** (presented online)

**Thursday, March 10, noon to 1 PM**

Learn the history of Mary Louise Smith and Louise Noun, the founders of the Iowa Women's Archives at the University of Iowa.

**TRAIL Book Club**

**Thursday, March 10, 1:30 to 3 PM**

New members welcome. Registrants will be contacted in advance as to whether the meeting will be in-person or online.