



Older Americans Month



Powered by Connection

For TRAIL members, living at home and maintaining independence is a priority. That's why they're members, after all.

But living alone can put people at risk of isolation, and studies show this lack of a social life can lead to numerous physical and mental health issues. Individuals with limited social lives are at greater risk of hypertension, coronary artery disease, cardiac failure, depression, anxiety and dementia. Humans are social animals, so spending time with others is important to our overall well-being.

In fact, regular socialization is one of the most effective ways for seniors to improve their mental health. Research shows that spending time with others improves mood, cognition, and memory recall, and is associated with other healthy behaviors, including exercise. It gives us a sense of purpose as part of a wider community. And the more the merrier, as a Harvard study from 2019 found that having a wider social circle enhanced many of these benefits.

But socialization isn't always easy for seniors. We don't spend time at the office with co-workers anymore. Friends and family move away. Physical limitations make it easier to just sit in front of the TV all day. Seniors may need to be more proactive in including social activities in their calendars. Cheap and easy activities to avoid becoming sedentary include walking groups, swimming and exercise classes, or playing bingo or other parlor games at senior centers. Volunteering is a great way to help others in the community while socializing with others.

And be sure to take advantage of the many social events TRAIL plans throughout the year specifically to provide members with the kind of activities that exercise the social muscle and keep your brains busy. They're not only fun, but they help you stay strong and healthy both mentally and physically.

Please join us!

TRAIL'S 7th *Anniversary Celebration*

You'll enjoy light hors d'oeuvres,
beverages, a short program,
and some surprises.

Thursday, May 30, 2024
4:30-6:30 PM

Unitarian Universalist Society
2355 Oakdale Road
Coralville, Iowa

Please RSVP to
trailRSVP@gmail.com

Your invitation will
be arriving soon!





Thank you Volunteers!

35

Number of active monthly volunteers
—up from 18 in 2022.

1,247

Total number of service requests in 2023.

104

Average number of service requests/month
—up from 74 in 2022.

We wish to recognize our TRAIL volunteers in April, which is National Volunteer Month. We could not do what we do every day without our dedicated volunteers.

As we reflect on the past year, we wish to express our deepest gratitude for your unwavering commitment and outstanding contributions. These numbers are impressive and show that TRAIL is an extraordinary organization, and this past year, in particular, has highlighted just how vital our mission is.

It's you who makes TRAIL a responsible and effective organization. Your tireless efforts and selfless devotion to our mission have not gone unnoticed. We continue to celebrate the human connections you make, the reliability you offer, and the service you do. Your commitment to making a positive impact on our members' lives is inspiring, and our members thank you for all that you do to support them!

Thank you for your hard work, passion, and support. You are the heart and soul of TRAIL, and we could not achieve all that we do without you.

If you would like to join us in 2024 as a TRAIL volunteer, contact the TRAIL office at 319-800-9003, or email Jessica Hahn, member and volunteer service coordinator, at membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.

Accolades from TRAIL members:

“Your volunteers are **absolutely lovely.**

So gracious, so nice. I am really happy with you all.”

“We have **enjoyed talking to all of our volunteers.**

It is wonderful finding something in common to share.”

“TRAIL makes **my life so much easier** and so much better!”

“I've told my family, joining TRAIL is the **best thing that ever happened to me!**”

Help secure TRAIL's Future



When TRAIL opened its doors seven years ago, its founders had their eyes on the future. Their intent was for TRAIL's aging-in-place services to be available not just for today's Boomers, but for Johnson County seniors decades from now.

As members, volunteers, and donors, you contribute yearly to our success. But you can also help secure TRAIL's long-term sustainability by making TRAIL part of your estate plans.

"Planned giving, or including TRAIL in your estate plans, can provide ongoing support for TRAIL and the unique services it provides to older adults in our community," says **Vincent Gaffney** (pictured above), an attorney and trust officer at Hills Bank, and member of TRAIL's Board of Directors. **"Creating an estate plan helps ensure your wishes are followed, and documents your desire to help TRAIL serve our community far into the future."**

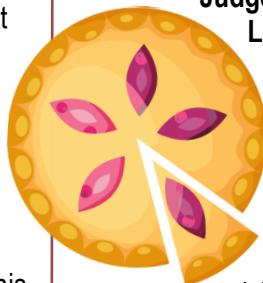
To learn more, review TRAIL's charitable giving guide at this [LINK](#) which describes planned giving options available to all of us. If you are ready to proceed, contact Executive Director Bob Untiedt at **319-800-9003** to discuss your philanthropic goals.

PI DAY Means Pies!



March 14, known as Pi Day (referring to the ratio "pi," which is roughly 3.14) is celebrated by many across the nation. TRAIL has annually celebrated Pi Day the past few years by holding a pie raffle. All TRAIL members, members of TRAIL committees, and all service volunteers are eligible.

Members and volunteers receiving a Kathy's Pie (a Cedar Rapids business) this year were **Joyce Erkel, Anne Judge, John Kane, Paula Laube, Amanda Lensing, Jefri Palermo** (pictured above), **Sandra Pelkey, Connie Peterson, and Lillian Vancel**.



One member commented, "I never win anything, so this is a real treat. I even have ice cream in the freezer!" Another was glad to receive the pie since she had a sister visiting from Alaska. The sister, she said, was impressed by what TRAIL was doing and the services available to members.

Thanks go to members of the Membership and Volunteer committees who delivered the pies.



Kam Atwater and Lindsey Reed from Oaknoll Retirement Residence recently offered training to TRAIL's Life Transition volunteers, including a Dementia Live simulation activity. Participants learned about the basics of dementia, communicative strategies, signs of dementia, and community resources.

TRAIL volunteers enjoyed the experience and said that it provided them with greater insight as they consider how they interact with our members. Learn more about the program in this [news video from KCRG-TV](#).

In Memoriam

Joyce Leff

TRAIL member since 2017.



See her obituary [here](#).

Request a Volunteer Service

I NEED
HELP

TRAIL members are asked to **request volunteer services at least one week in advance**, so that staff have time to connect members with the volunteers whose schedule and skills are the best match. All service requests are subject to volunteer willingness and availability.

To request a volunteer service (**Full members only**) should contact the TRAIL office at **319-800-9003** during office hours (9 AM-1 PM, Monday-Friday) or send an email to Jessica Hahn, member and volunteer service coordinator, at membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.

Affiliate members have once-yearly access to any TRAIL volunteer service (the “birthday benefit”).



MEMBER PROFILE

Meet Marie Evans

Marie Evans knew that she would “lose her mind” if she didn’t reach out to others and get out of the house. That’s when a nurse at Mercy Hospital told her about TRAIL of Johnson County.

“I found out they could help me with drives to appointments and other things, but also, I could get out and

do things and meet new friends,” said Marie, a TRAIL member since 2022. “It has been a godsend.”

Like many TRAIL members, Marie lives by herself in a single-family home. For many years, it was full of life with her husband, Roy, three children, and her in-home day care business. But by 2014, when Roy died, her two surviving sons were adults with their own busy lives, and she was out of the day care business. Life was too quiet.

“I did OK for a while because I could walk most everywhere I wanted to go. If it was too far, my sons, neighbors, or my brother would drive me,” said Marie, who never learned to drive and does not have a car.

But, as her health declined and walking to her favorite socializing places became more difficult, Marie grew lonelier and more isolated. “I knew if I didn’t find ways to get out to meet and talk with people, I would be in trouble,” she added.

So, in addition to the services that volunteers provide for Marie, she LOVES the social and educational opportunities that TRAIL schedules.

She attends as many TRAIL member events as she can, not letting transportation be a barrier. “I call Jessica at the office and let her know I want to go, and she helps me find a ride.”

“I am just so grateful for Jessica and all the people from TRAIL who have helped me. I don’t know what I would do without you all,” she added.

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Welcome!



NEW TRAIL MEMBERS

Kurth Boyce
Randy Brown
Bhanumati Dasgupta
Soura Dasgupta
Diane Glanville
Ruth Izer
John Kane
Kathleen Kearney
Neera Khera
Jane Kinney
Tom Kinney
Lynn Mennenga
Barb Kinsinger Miller
Kenton Miller
Carol Nordquist
Terry O'Brien
Barbara Schwartz
Janet Trimble
Lillian Vancel
Michele Vosteen
Tom Vosteen

Experienced. Friendly. Professional.



ALEC R. FOWLER

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Fowler Law P.C. | Fowler Tax

1102 Park Avenue | Muscatine, Iowa 52761
563-770-5365 | fowlertaxandlaw.com

TRAIL is grateful for the ongoing support provided by
Alec and Fowler Law P.C. | Fowler Tax.

Members should have received this year's TRAIL member survey. It is short and should only take a few minutes to complete. If you haven't completed the survey, this [LINK](#) will take you to the survey.

Surveys give TRAIL valuable feedback on what members think about the organization and its services. The TRAIL Board and its committees look forward to taking a deeper dive into the results. Thank you for your participation!



On our March 26 TRAILevent, we visited the Recovery Room in Iowa City. The owner, Patrick Krier, toured us around his facility. His focus is a peaceful place to enhance wellness through floating, sauna, and red-light treatments. **Theresa Tometich, Patrick Krier, owner of the Recovery Room, Peggy Hartzell, and Alfieta Monagan** in front of the newest floating tank.



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.

TRAIL EVENTS CALENDAR

April and May

TRAIL office closed for Memorial Day • Monday, May 27

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (via Zoom)

Tuesdays, April 16 thru May 21, 1 to 2:30 PM

Book Club: North Woods by Daniel Mason (via Zoom)

Monday, April 22, 1 to 2 PM

Marcia Wegman: An Artist's View of Iowa (in-person and also via Zoom)

Tuesday, April 23, 2 to 3 PM

Iowa City Senior Center Room 302, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

Iowa History 101: The Story of the Herbert Hoover Family (via Zoom)

Thursday, April 25, noon to 1 PM

Coralville Library Book Sale

Friday and Saturday, April 26 and 27

Coralville Public Library Lower Level, 1401 Fifth Street, Coralville

Prescription Drug Take-Back Day

Saturday, April 27, Various times and locations

Jane Smiley: Author Presentation

Sunday, April 28, 2 to 3 PM

Iowa City Public Library Meeting Rooms A, B, C, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City



Let's Make a May Day Basket

Tuesday, April 30, 3:30 to 4:30 PM

Home of Lorraine Bowans, Iowa City

Mini Medical School: How Technology Is Changing the Future of Health Care

Wednesday, May 1, 5:15 to 8:30 PM

Medical Education and Research Center, 375 Newton Rd, Iowa City

Container Gardening at Forever Green Nursery \$

Thursday, May 2, 10:30 AM to noon

125 West Forever Green Road, Coralville, IA

Member Happy Hour \$

Tuesday, May 7, 4:30 to 6:30 PM

Orchard Green, 521 South Gilbert Street, Iowa City

Day Trip to Kalona \$

Thursday, May 16, 10 AM to 5:30 PM

Bus departs from Menards, 2605 Naples Avenue SW, Iowa City

Dinner at Lighthouse Supper Club \$

Friday, May 17, 4:30 to 7 PM

6905 Mount Vernon Road SE, Cedar Rapids (meet at Hobby Lobby, Iowa City)

Book Club: Heaven and Earth Grocery Store by James McBride (via Zoom)

Monday, May 20, 1 to 2 PM