



Former legislator recognized Mascher to receive UI alumni award

When a TRAIL member is recognized for their achievements, we want the world to know. And in the small world of Johnson County, who doesn't know Mary Mascher?



Photo credit: UI Center for Advancement.

In her two decades in the Iowa Legislature (1994-2023) as a representative for House District 46, Mary was a tireless advocate for education, mental health, youth, and families. Before entering

politics, she taught in the Iowa City Community School District, where she influenced thousands of students and families as a teacher and counselor before retiring from teaching in 2009.

As a University of Iowa graduate with B.S. and M.A. degrees in education, Mary is being honored later this month as the recipient of the **2024 UI Distinguished Service Award**. The annual alumni awards ceremony will be held on Friday, Oct. 25, at 3:30 PM in the Voxman Music Building. (Registration info can be found [here](#).)

Mary may be officially retired, but she's not stopped serving others. Among the many local nonprofits for which she volunteers—often in leadership roles—are the Altrusa Club of Iowa City, University Club, Habitat for Humanity Women Build, Foundation for the Trades, 5224Good, and several retired-teachers groups.

As for her involvement in TRAIL, Mary says “[I have enjoyed attending TRAIL activities and have participated in numerous events over the years. I am so glad we have this resource in our community, and I appreciate the services our volunteers offer to those who need support.](#)”

Mary, TRAIL appreciates YOU. Congratulations on this well-deserved honor!



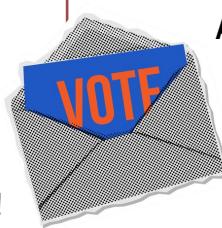
A guide to the November 5 general election

The November 5 election is just three weeks away. Read on for a rundown on the various ways and times you can register and vote.

VOTER REGISTRATION

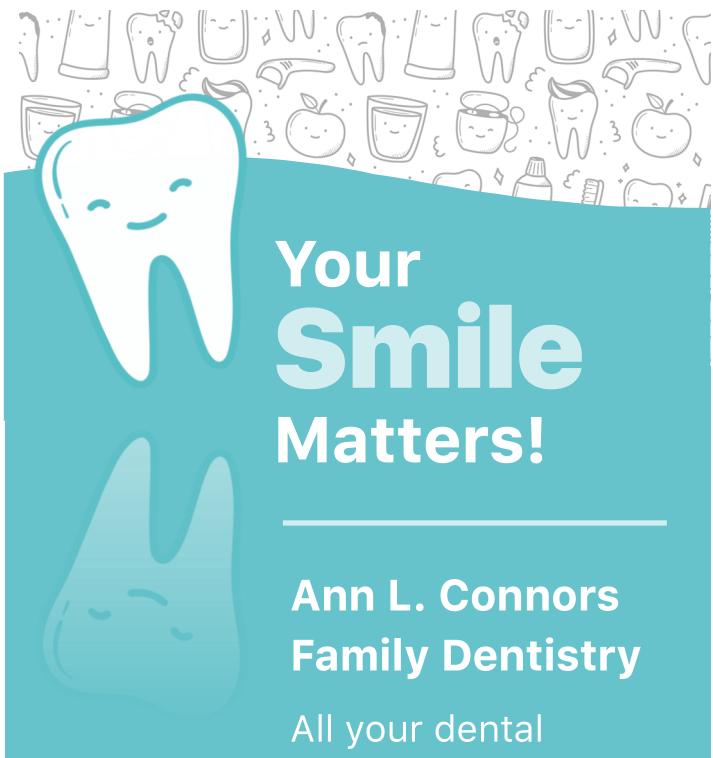
You can register to vote, update your registration, check your current registration status, and check ID requirements on the website of the **Johnson County Auditor's Office**. You can also register in person to vote during early voting or on Election Day.

WHEN TO VOTE



Absentee voting

The deadline to request an absentee ballot is Monday, October 21, at 5 PM.



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Thank you Ann L. Connors Family Dentistry
for sponsoring the October newsletter.

A guide to Nov. 5 general election *continued*

Requested ballots will be mailed beginning Wednesday, October 16. To request an absentee ballot, **complete this form** on the Johnson County Auditor's website. It cannot be submitted online; it must be mailed or hand delivered to the Auditor's Office at 913 S. Dubuque St., Suite 101, Iowa City, IA 52240. More information can be found at: [Absentee Ballot Request Form Instructions](#).

In-person voting

In-person early voting begins Wednesday, October 16.

You can vote in the lobby of the Johnson County Administration Building, 913 S. Dubuque St., or you can use drive-thru voting in the Johnson County HHS parking ramp at 855 S. Dubuque St. Hours (both office and ramp): weekdays, October 16 through November 4, 8 AM to 5 PM. Evening hours, October 28 through October 30, 8 AM to 7 PM. Weekend hours (both office and ramp): November 2, 9 AM to 5 PM, and November 3, noon to 5 PM.

In-person early voting is also available on many dates at satellite locations. These locations are the Iowa City, Coralville, and North Liberty public libraries; Iowa Memorial Union; University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics; and Iowa Health Care at Iowa River Landing and the Health Care Support Services Building in Coralville. For details, visit: [Satellite Voting](#).

WHERE TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY

If you choose to vote on Election Day, check the [interactive map](#) on the Auditor's website to confirm your in-person voting location. It is possible that your precinct and polling place have changed since 2022.

Visit this [Johnson County government webpage](#) and enter your address to view a sample ballot.

Have more questions?

Please contact the Johnson County Auditor's Office:

Phone: 319-356-6004

Email: elections@johnsoncountyauditor.gov

Online: [Johnson County Auditor's Office](#)

Need a ride to a polling place? A TRAIL volunteer may be able to help. Just call the TRAIL Office at 319-800-9003 or email membersupport@trailofjohnsoncounty.org to make your request with the most advance notice possible.

Get vaccinated as soon as you can

Fever. Aches. Pains. Chills. Coughs. Runny nose. They make everyone miserable, but you can reduce the likelihood you'll suffer from them by getting your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations as soon as you can.

Influenza season starts this month and runs through May, while COVID-19 is a continuing threat. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) says about 25,000 Americans die from the flu every year and more than 300,000 are hospitalized. As for COVID, about 35,000 Americans have died from the virus so far this year. Older Americans are especially susceptible.

The CDC says it's fine to get both shots at the same time. The level of immunization won't be affected, and those who tend to get flu or COVID symptoms following vaccinations will not see side effects that are any worse than usual.

Doctors say it's important to get updated shots every year because both viruses continue to morph and

mutate, rendering past vaccinations unable to prevent the diseases. The new shots are designed specifically to combat the latest variations of each.

A special form of the flu vaccine is available that offers additional protections for people over age 65. For those wary of needles, a nasal spray is available for the flu. Your doctor can tell you more about those.

Flu and COVID shots are available at most pharmacies and at University of Iowa Health Care clinics, hospitals, and quick care walk-ins.



Giving at year-end: Consider QCDs

Sometime this month, TRAIL members, volunteers, and donors will receive a letter asking for support of our 2024 annual fund campaign. We hope you'll choose to contribute, of course, but we also want to make sure you're aware of an opportunity to support TRAIL while also offsetting your tax burden.

One of the most efficient ways to reduce your tax burden is to make a gift to TRAIL through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your Traditional IRA. Each year, a Traditional IRA owner age 70½ and greater can donate as much as \$100,000 directly from their IRA to TRAIL without treating the distribution as taxable income. Further, these donations can also satisfy your required minimum distributions.

Why is this a big deal? Unlike the traditional charitable deduction, this benefit is not reduced by the percentage of



income limitation. A donor can now satisfy their IRA's required minimum distribution, lower their taxable income, and benefit TRAIL all at once. For example, if your required annual IRA distribution is \$60,000 and you contribute \$10,000 directly to TRAIL, you would report only \$50,000 of taxable IRA distributions. For certain donors, this could work to reduce both your taxable income and your share of monthly Medicare Part B premiums.

Note: The QCD distributions are recorded on the date distributed from your IRA account, so it's best to execute your QCD contributions **by mid-December** to be safe. Be sure to consult your tax advisor and your IRA provider soon to see if QCDs are right for you.

And when that letter from TRAIL arrives in your mailbox this month, please give generously by whatever means is best for you. **Thank you!**

Personal Experience Using TRAIL's Senior Housing & Services Guide

By Terri Larson, licensed REALTOR® in Iowa, partner at Lepic-Kroeger Realtors, and former chair of the TRAIL Board of Directors



Housing, in its many shapes and forms, is a basic need we all have. TRAIL provides immeasurable assistance to older adults who are in that in-between place: still living independently in their own homes but not quite able to manage some of the day-to-day tasks that come with home ownership. And that need for assistance is a sneaky fellow, creeping up on us ever so quietly, bit by bit.

My involvement with TRAIL began during the COVID era, when it was apparent to everyone that while living in isolation was lonely, it was also the safest way until vaccine help arrived. During this time, TRAIL's first *Johnson County Senior Housing Guide* was created, which provided wonderful insight into the next level of living after independent living isn't a good option. Little did I personally know how useful that guide would become.

My brother, 16 years my senior, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) eight years ago and was very unhappy with the care he was receiving in Colorado. He decided to move back to Iowa, and to Iowa City in particular (even though he's a Cyclone grad), and decided the time was right to look at assisted living arrangements while enrolling as a patient in the MS clinic at UIHC.

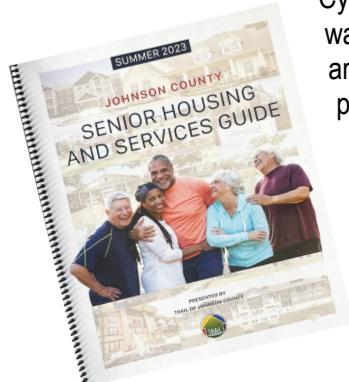
By that time, TRAIL's updated 2023 *Senior Housing & Services Guide* had been published, so we sent him a link to the online guide while

he was still in Denver and arranged several visits to facilities when he came to Iowa City. He settled on FeatherStone, and he was one of the first residents to move in. He is very impressed with his surroundings, and nightly watches the deer from his living room windows. Last week he fell during the night, and two assistants quickly showed up to get him up from the floor. A couple of bruises, but nothing major happened, except maybe to his pride. He feels he made a very good choice.

I would not have known much about FeatherStone if it hadn't been for TRAIL's housing guide. Having succinct information in an easy-to-read format, making it possible to make apples-to-apples comparisons, was great. While TRAIL was envisioned to help us all remain safely and actively independent, TRAIL also showed considerable forethought in creating the guide, giving us a helpful resource for when that sneaky fellow called **time** arrives at our doorsteps.

What I've learned from my brother and in caring for my 90-year-old mother is that it's perhaps better to make plans while you still have control over the decisions rather than giving **time** that control. Utilize the guide while you're still living independently. Tour local facilities and get on someone's prospective resident list. It's good to use our time wisely before needs arise, or worse, before we don't recognize our changing needs and others have to make decisions for us.

Having a plan of action is a reassuring thing.



Do you live in or travel through the Morningside-Glendale neighborhood?

Do you wish it were easier and more comfortable to walk and roll to downtown, the grocery store, school, and work?

Join us for a walking and rolling workshop on October 19.



Iowa City neighborhood wins AARP grant

TRAIL often describes itself as a virtual community for older adults needing more home-based support and social connections. For residents of Iowa City's Morningside-Glendale neighborhood, building those connections is the focus of an innovative new initiative.

This eastside neighborhood, which surrounds and extends north and west of City High School, is the recipient of a 2024 AARP Community Challenge grant aimed at engaging and better serving the neighborhood's older adult population.

Ashley Laux, one of the leaders of the **Morningside-Glendale Neighborhood Association**, explains that she and other neighbors began meeting a few years ago to reenergize the association and its activities.

Those priorities began to look more achievable when a neighbor introduced Ashley and other volunteers to **Plan + Place**, a Virginia-based nonprofit devoted to strengthening and sustaining the health, vitality, and cohesion of communities and the built environment. After some brainstorming, Plan + Place and the Morningside-Glendale Neighborhood Association partnered on the AARP proposal.

The resulting grant will fund two "walking audits" that bring together older adults, students, and other neighborhood stakeholders. The first event, held in September, documented safety challenges along common multimodal transportation routes (e.g., on foot, by bike or wheelchair, etc.) to popular neighborhood destinations, including downtown.

"In this multigenerational neighborhood," says Ashley, **"we want our older residents to know they're an important constituency in everything we do."**

"We identified several neighborhood priorities, including transportation, walkability, and accessibility," she says. "We also want to build stronger relationships. Morningside-Glendale has a higher-than-average proportion of older adults, and COVID was especially hard on them. We've heard from many older residents that they're eager to reestablish social ties with neighbors."

The second mobile workshop, set for Oct. 19 (see **TRAIL calendar listing**), will identify place-making opportunities to enhance walkability and highlight the history of the Morningside-Glendale neighborhood. "Not many people know that where City High is today used to be the Johnson County Fairgrounds," Ashley explains. Calling out these historical highlights can enhance the experience for visitors of all ages.



In Memoriam

Dennis Wieland,

Affiliate Household member Dennis Wieland passed away on Sunday, September 8. Dennis and his wife Ronnye have been members of TRAIL since 2019. Ronnye remains a member.

Read obituary here.



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, and friends. If you have questions or suggestions about the newsletter, email info@trailofjohnsoncounty.org.

Upcoming TRAIL Events Calendar

The TRAIL office will be closed November 11 in observation of Veterans Day.

[Financial Fraud Prevention \(Hills Bank presentation\)](#)

Wednesday, October 16, 10 to 11 AM

Hills Bank, 131 East Main Street, Hills, Iowa

[Senior Seed Harvest](#)

Wednesday, October 16, 10 AM to Noon

F.W. Kent Park, Dam Parking Area, 2048 Highway 6 NW, Oxford

[Adult Child Caregivers Support Group](#)

Wednesday, October 16, Noon to 1:30 PM

Legacy Senior Living, Hoover Room, 1095 Silvercrest Circle, Iowa City

[TRAIL Dine-Around Lunch at Blackstone](#) \$

Thursday, October 17, 11:30 AM to 1 PM

Blackstone, 503 Westbury Drive #1, Iowa City

[History and Place-making Walk](#)

Saturday, October 19, 10 to 11:30 AM

City High School, 1900 Morningside Drive, Iowa City

[Book Club: *The Most Fun We Ever Had* by Claire Lombardo](#) (via Zoom)

Monday, October 21, 1 to 2 PM

[Dine-Around at ReUnion Brewery](#) \$

Wednesday, October 23, 5 to 7 PM

Reunion Brewery, 516 2nd Street, Coralville, IA

[Iowa History 101 - Red Earth Nation: A History of the Meskwaki Settlement](#) (Virtual Event)

Thursday, October 24, Noon to 1 PM

[Disaster PrepWise Preparedness](#)

Friday, October 25, 10 to 11:30 AM

Iowa City Senior Center, Meeting Room D, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Living with Arthritis or Chronic Pain](#) (live or via Zoom)

Monday, October 28, 1 to 2 PM

Iowa City Senior Center, Room 320, 28 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Scott Maiers: Dementia-friendly Community](#)

Wednesday, October 30, 10 to 11 AM

Iowa City Public Library, Meeting Room D, 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[National Town Hall on Scams & Older Adults](#) (Virtual Event)

Wednesday, October 30, Noon to 1 PM

[Member Happy Hour](#) \$

Tuesday, November 5, 4:30 to 6:30 PM

Orchard Green, 521 South Gilbert Street, Iowa City

[Oaknoll: The Dementia Experience](#)

Wednesday, November 13, 10 to 11:30 AM

Oaknoll Retirement Residence, 1 Oaknoll Court, Iowa City