



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!



TRAIL is going to the movies—and the community is invited!

We're partnering with the Johnson County Livable Community for Successful Aging Policy Board for a special Older Americans Month presentation you won't want to miss. Join us at FilmScene at The Chauncey on Thursday, **May 7**, at **6:30 PM** for a screening of the award-winning documentary, *I Like It Here*.



This free or pay-what-you-can event (suggested donation: \$10) is part of Film-Scene's Community Collaborations series. We

recommend securing your general-admission tickets in advance via the TRAIL calendar or at [this link](#). All proceeds will benefit TRAIL and its mission. Plan to arrive early to visit tables staffed by local senior-service agencies.

About the film: Many of us gripe and laugh about the aches and pains of aging, but rarely do we confront the reality of death or being left alone. And we often

overlook the lightness and calmness that can come when the race seems not so crucial. *I Like it Here* (88 minutes) is about all those things and, finally, about the pleasures of being alive.

Acclaimed documentary filmmaker Ralph Arlyck conveys how it feels to look back on your own life as he spends time with older friends from his past and present, and his children and grandchildren. Woven in with these scenes are personal reflections on the challenges of getting old as the camera confronts—both seriously and humorously—the obstacles that face anyone experiencing later life.

"[Arlyck] is doing precisely what great memoirists do: invite us into their stories as a way of making space for us to reflect on our own . . . I've seen the movie twice, and both times I found myself moved near tears." — Alissa Wilkinson, *The New York Times*

Invite your friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors to join us for this special screening. A brief panel discussion will follow the film, moderated

We're on

Cloud
NINE

about
celebrating

TRAIL's

9th Anniversary

Please join us in marking
this latest milestone!

Thursday, May 21
4:30 to 6 PM

Unitarian Universalist Society
2355 Oakdale Road
Coralville, IA

Please RSVP no
later than Friday, May 15, via
the [TRAIL calendar](#), or by
contacting the TRAIL office at
319-800-9003 or at
rsvp@trailofjohnsoncounty.org

by TRAIL Board Chair Patricia Heiden and featuring TRAIL Executive Director Christine Scheetz and representatives from Johnson County Livable Community and the Iowa City Senior Center. We hope to see you there!

MEMBER/VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Discovering our inner adventurer

One of the delightful surprises of late life is the moment when many of us discover that we have an inner adventurer. Phyllis Black, one of the first members of TRAIL, is a trailblazer from way back.



A great fan of the TRAIL kayaking outings, Phyllis was inspired to take a further leap by signing on for a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) “yak” trip through a lock and dam on the Mississippi River.

She recalls wryly, “I didn’t tell my family until I was actually on the river; I texted a photo and the message, ‘guess where I am’.”

Of course, all too often, becoming a pathfinder is a necessity rather than a choice. After Phyllis lost not only her husband, but also several dear friends, she recalls that TRAIL “seemed like a perfect fit for me.” She was impressed by the membership options, the mission to help people remain in their homes, and the warm welcome into a growing community.

Volunteering is one way Phyllis forms new friendships. She’s delivered mail for TRAIL members, checked on members’

homes while they traveled, and answered phones in the main office. She’s also taken advantage of TRAIL activities, including trips to both the Stanley and Cedar Rapids Museums of Art, the Fish Barn in West Branch, the Chimney Swift Tower in National, Iowa (like we said—adventurous!), the book group, the fiber arts group, and many of TRAIL’s workshops.

These days, Phyllis is one of the generous volunteers organizing such activities. She encourages people who would like to get more involved in TRAIL to join the Social and Educational Programs Committee, led by Ana Peterson. The committee arranges dine arounds, brunches, workshops, and new adventures for members.

How can you find your inner adventurer? Phyllis encourages everyone to dig into the [TRAIL website calendar](#) as well as the events listing that appears in members’ inboxes each Friday. She adds that all most people need is **“a little bit of encouragement, and a little bit of putting yourself out there.”**

More to the point, she adds cheerfully, as she heads outside for a little birdwatching—**“Use it or lose it!”**

Left: Phyllis’s view from her kayak.

Right: Phyllis attending an event at Carver-Hawkeye Arena.



 **Welcome**
new TRAIL members!

These individuals and households have joined TRAIL since October 2025. Join us in making them feel welcome!

Mary Brewster
Carol Clark
Linda Eastman
Gretchen and William Enke
John Fauke
Dorothy and Don Fowles
Louise Fritz
Barb and Harold Goff
Janice Goldsmith
Scott Hovland

Drew and Jean Ives
Lisa Kattchee
Kathleen Leutner
Sue Luloff
Mary Maxwell
Claudia and Robert Moffitt
Nancy and Steve Pohlman
Sandy and Terry Poldberg
Nancy and Neil Quellhorst
Bill Radl

Marjorie Reid
Joanna Robbins
Jack Robinson
Gayle Royar
Raija Starck
Kathryn Stepp
Susan Sullivan
Steven Ungar
Nancy Williams

ACTIVE LIVES, HEALTHY BRAINS



Want to maintain your brain health as you age? Michelle Voss has some important advice:

- Stay physically active. What's good for your heart is good for your brain.
- Make time for social connections.
- Keep learning and challenging your cognitive abilities.



Professor Voss (left) is the Ronnie Ketchel Faculty Fellow in UI's Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences and Director of the Health, Brain and Cognition

Lab. She likes to say that her research involves "your health below the neck and how it affects everything above the neck."

In her March 13 presentation entitled "Active Lives, Healthy Brains: Wellness Tips for Brain Health," Professor Voss said that brain health is **"our next big challenge."** From 2000 to 2022, she reported, deaths from heart disease, stroke, cancer, and HIV have decreased, whereas deaths from Alzheimer's disease have increased by more than 142%.

Current research into Alzheimer's disease is focused on two troublesome proteins in the brain: amyloid and tau. Amyloid creates a toxic environment for the brain's neurons, while tau attacks neurons from the inside, and research shows that these processes can begin up to 20 years before symptoms appear. Treatments for both proteins are being developed, says Voss, as well as blood tests that could detect these proteins at an early stage.

But you can take steps on your own to protect your brain—starting with Prof. Voss's three tips above. In addition, be aware that hearing and vision loss increase your risk for dementia because they limit the positive "inputs" that your brain needs. And if you are ever concerned about your mental acuity, ask your primary care provider for a neuropsychology exam.

Professor Voss's presentation was cosponsored by TRAIL and the Senior Center. It can be viewed on the [Senior Center's YouTube channel](#).

Home **safe** home

Is your home keeping up with your needs as you age?



Are your door handles easy to open? Do you have bright lighting where you need it? Do you have grab bars in the bathroom?

AARP offers a free HomeFit Guide that helps you scrutinize every room in your home with an eye to making it comfortable and safe.

The guide, available in five languages, can be downloaded from the [AARP website](#) or a printed copy can be ordered from AARP. Room-specific videos are also available on the same website.

Thank you,
volunteers!

TRAIL appreciates
our volunteers all year
long, but we especially
want to recognize you
in April, which is



National Volunteer Month. You are the heart and soul of this organization, and we are forever grateful to you for the kindness and generosity you show our members every day.

From providing direct assistance for Full members—driving, chores, medical advocacy, life transition planning, and friendly visits—to serving on committees and the Board of Directors, **nearly 100 dedicated volunteers give freely of their valuable time and talents to accomplish TRAIL's mission.**

To recognize your tireless efforts and selfless devotion to our mission and our members, all TRAIL volunteers are invited to attend our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, Thursday, April 23, 2026, from 11:30 AM to 1 PM at Big Grove Brewery & Taproom, 1225 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City. We ask that volunteers RSVP for this special event via the [TRAIL calendar](#) or by calling the office at 319-800-9003 by Friday, April 17.

We look forward to seeing all TRAIL volunteers on April 23 to thank and acknowledge your good work on TRAIL's behalf. We could not achieve all that we do without you!

“At its core, volunteering is about selflessness. When you focus on the needs of others rather than your own, you create a ripple effect of positivity and change. This is the kind of impact that motivates people to keep volunteering.” - Anara Whitley

Writing for Advocate Justice



Above, (left to right) Jack Robinson, John Hudson, co-owner Carmen Black, and Connie Peterson at Sundog Farm near Solon, on March 27.

THANKS to Iowa City Dental Health for sponsoring this month's newsletter.



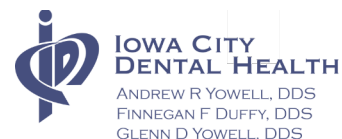
**Say everything
with your smile.**

2109 Rochester Ave, Iowa City, IA 52245

Phone **319-338-0707**

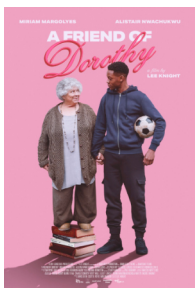
Email admin@icdentalhealth.com

Web icdentalhealth.com



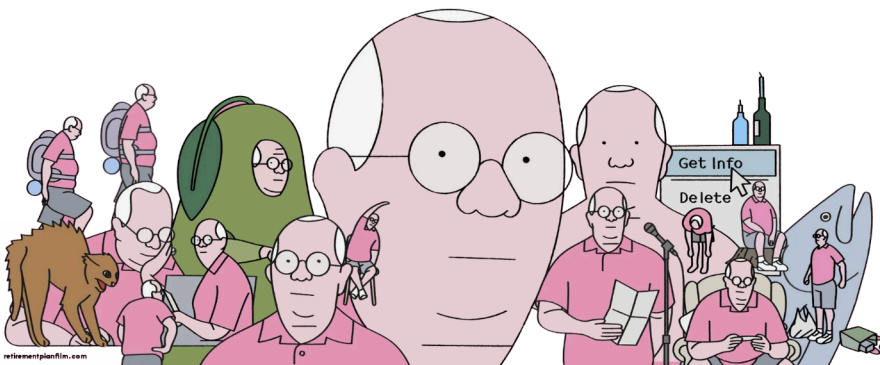
Looking at late life

This year, Hollywood was especially attentive to themes and characters of interest to those of us in our vintage years. *Sentimental Value*, directed by Joachim Trier, landed an Oscar for Stellan Skarsgård. The distinguished Swedish actor plays a famous filmmaker who has sacrificed his family for his art. But you might have missed two short Oscar-nominated films that offer equally moving stories about late life.



A Friend of Dorothy, written and directed by Lee Knight, was nominated for a Best Live Action Short Film award. The 21-minute film features Miriam Margolyes.

You might know her as Professor Sprout, from the Harry Potter films (or for her often randy remarks on the popular British talk show hosted by Graham Norton). Margolyes plays Dorothy, a woman in her 80s who is determined to remain in her London home as long as possible. Ignored by her son and grandson, Dorothy befriends a teenager in her neighborhood struggling with his



retirement plan

own outsider status, and the two of them bond over a love of theater. The film is a gently comic reminder that when our immediate families fail us, we can find joy in the families we create.

Another film, *Retirement Plan* (above), took first place in the Best Animated Short Film category. The film was produced by *The New Yorker* magazine and directed by John Kelly, who co-wrote the script with Tara Lawall. In a voiceover, Irish actor Domhnall Gleeson lists the serious and whimsical plans the main character will (or won't) pursue when he retires. The film invites us to consider our own deferred plans:

"When I retire, I will get a dog. I will get a cat. (sudden bang) I will start with a fish."

Over a mere seven minutes, we watch the character age through the lightest pen strokes as his large and small dreams shape a life of humor, resilience, purpose, and pleasure.

Watching these two films together reminds us that sometimes the best things do come in small packages. You can see all the Oscar-nominated films in the three "shorts" categories (Narrative, Animated, and Documentary) at FilmScene each year the month before the Oscars. But it's not too late. Add to your retirement plans watching *A Friend of Dorothy* on Kanopy (via the Iowa City Public Library) or YouTube and watching *Retirement Plan* on *The New Yorker* YouTube channel. You can also see both on Disney+.



TRAIL will proudly take part in

Johnson County Great Give Day on **Wednesday, May 6,**

celebrating the vital work of local nonprofits. You can help support older adults aging in place in our community by making your own gift to TRAIL that day at trailofjohnsoncounty.kindful.com.



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? Full members can call Jessica at 319-800-9003 or email her at membersupport@trailofjohnson-county.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

TRAIL office closed May 25 in remembrance of Memorial Day.

[Alzheimer's Association Virtual Education Series](#) (via Zoom)

Thursday, April 16, 11 AM to noon

[Coffee and Conversation](#)

Friday, April 17, 9 to 10:30 AM

Home of Barb Stein

[Book Club: *The Last Remains* by Elly Griffiths](#) (via Zoom)

Monday, April 20, 1 to 2 PM

[TRAIL Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon](#)

Thursday, April 23, 11:30 AM to 1 PM

Big Grove Brewery (back room), 1225 South Gilbert Street, Iowa City

[Intro to Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#)

Friday, April 24, 10:30 to 11:45 AM

IC Public Library, Digital Media Lab (2nd floor), 123 South Linn Street, Iowa City

[Levitt Lecture: David Axelrod](#)

Tuesday, April 28, 7:30 to 8:30 PM

Hancher Auditorium, 141 East Park Road, Iowa City

[Member Happy Hour \\$](#) ◀◀◀◀◀

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

The Bistro, 901 Melrose Avenue, Iowa City



[I Like it Here Film Screening](#)

Thursday, May 7, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

FilmScene at The Chauncey, 404 East College Street, Iowa City

[Hancher Auditorium Tour](#)

Wednesday, May 13, 10:30 to 11:30 AM

Hancher Auditorium, 141 East Park Road, Iowa City

[Book Club: *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni](#)

(via Zoom)

Monday, May 18, 1 to 2 PM

[Salad Potluck On My Porch](#)

Tuesday, May 19, 11:30 AM to 1 PM

Home of Betsy Fisher, Iowa City

[TRAIL's 9th Anniversary Celebration](#)

Thursday, May 21, 4:30 to 6 PM

Unitarian Universalist Society, 2355 Oakdale Road, Coralville