

From the Director:

Hi, everyone! Well, it is official: The interim manager is now the director. My name is Kristi (Kris) Ballweg and I am the Director of the Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry. I have lived most of my life in the Sauk Prairie area. My mother would argue that I lived most of my life in Prairie du Sac, but that would be a topic for another day!



The last two years, already, have been quite a blur. Considering we have gone from thinking in interim terms, to pandemic chaos, to dust-settling uncertainty, the pantry is doing pretty well. We have a commitment to bridge the gap for individuals and families who need that extra help, maybe for a month, maybe for a year. Even in a pandemic, even in uncertainty, we are here!

Throughout this time, we have accomplished a couple of exciting things such as obtaining a truck to help us with USDA commodity deliveries and expanding the **Feed Our Future** program. We have another new program in the works, **Go Fresh**. We have been fortunate to share in these successes with the help and support of our local businesses, individuals, group organizations, schools and our biggest asset, our volunteers!

As Helen Keller said, "Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much."

Thank you for doing so much with us!

I look forward to what our future holds, what other initiatives we can take on and especially working with you!

Till the next time,

Kris

How can you help?

[Click here](#) and check out current opportunities to help at the pantry. Check back often as opportunities can be added as the need changes.

We would love to meet you and work with you!

Want to have a team-building exercise with your work team? Contact Kris Ballweg at director@spfoodpantry.org or call 608-571-7737 and she will help you make it happen!



**SAUK PRAIRIE
A · R · E · A
FOOD PANTRY**

What's new at the pantry?

Go Fresh! Go what? Yes, fresh! The pantry has started a new initiative, thanks to a teacher who wondered if we could try bananas for a snack instead of the typical pretzels, popcorn and graham crackers, etc.

With the help of Allison Steinmetz and a couple of brave teachers/classrooms at Bridges Elementary, we conducted a pilot program where the school would receive fresh fruit from the pantry, once per week, for students to have as a snack throughout the week. The pantry started by delivering a couple cases of bananas. After a few weeks, we found success and added another school, Grand Avenue.

It is a slow process, but we hope to have all the schools added to **Go Fresh** by March. So far, we have Bridges, Grand and Sauk Prairie High School. With three down, we only have four to go! Yay!

Contact us

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Grant three wishes ...

Well, not really wishes, but we have been fortunate to receive the following grants:

- The **Community Foundation of South Central Wisconsin** provided a grant to help us deliver food for home-bound pantry patrons. With the help of the Community Foundation, we now can provide community deliveries to these individuals.
- **Sauk Prairie Healthcare – Healthy Life Grant:** While we were in trial stages of *Go Fresh*, we applied for a grant to launch the program. I am so happy to say the Sauk Prairie Healthcare Healthy Life Grant Committee agreed with our vision and awarded this grant!
- Finally, **Sauk Prairie United Way** – what can I say? We have been so fortunate to have this organization's support. As an example, during the COVID pandemic, we have had to change our entire way of providing food for families in our community. No longer able to do what we call "choice shop," we now do drive-through distributions, which means packing boxes and bags of food that volunteers load into visitors' vehicles. These boxes and bags all come at a cost. Because of the past and current support of Sauk Prairie United Way, these expenses were less intrusive. The transition to drive-through was *almost* transparent.

We are so grateful to these organizations and truly appreciate the past and current support we at Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry have received.

Kris Ballweg



What do we need at the pantry?

Well, it's winter in Wisconsin, so it's soup and hearty-meal time! We could use:

- Saltine crackers
- Dried beans
- Soup stock
- Your favorite soup ingredients
- Plastic bottles of juice (apple, orange, tomato)
- Canned fruit like applesauce, pineapples, mandarin oranges
- Any personal care items

Coming next time:

- I'd like you to meet ...
- Donations and donors

