

# From the Director:

Blink! We have already bounced into June. Graduations have taken place for many seniors in the state. All things school-related are slowing down or coming to an end.

Earlier today, the 5th grade class from St Al's came to help out for a bit. They had been trying to do this every other month for the school year. Sometimes the pantry got bounced for other things, like transportation issues or a tour of the Air Force base, etc. Really, work at the pantry or tour the Air Force base, hmmm? Anyway, I digress; these students still made it a number of times to help us this school year. Fifteen students full of energy, enthusiasm, questions, willingness and more. It is exciting, exhausting, loud and exhilarating.



The task today was to assemble 48 boxes, stage product AND pack these boxes. We see a variety of different things including damaged items. These kids checked with us to make sure that a package of mac and cheese was still OK to include in the box for a family, even though the package was damaged. Pretty thoughtful!

Also, a goal at the end of packing the boxes is to not have any left-over items; if we counted right, there shouldn't be any. Well, we had one extra can of something left over at the end. This student looked at me with the item in his hand, then at the 48 boxes we just sealed, and had the look of "Do we need to open these all up to find the one missing this can?"

Reading his face, I said, "No, you can put it in another box or back on the shelf." The look of absolute relief was priceless. The thought of him being willing, albeit overwhelmed, to find the box missing the item was even more rewarding.

I am inspired by these 10-, 11- and 12-year-old students. They are so kind, caring, respectful and compassionate.

WOW, what a good day! I will miss them as they move on to 6th grade, a different school and different activities.

Thank you, Mrs. Hruby, for the idea and starting this service project. I hope you continue it next year!

As you know, I am officially retired, but I technically have a job at the pantry as the Director. Today, like many, many other days, it didn't feel like a job. I was the lucky one to get to work with these young people. We have said it before: We have such a great community. Today, I got to see some of those who are going to be leaders in our community one day. We are pretty lucky!

I leave you with this quote from Ann Landers: *"It is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings."* It doesn't have much to do with food, but it sure fit the bill for today! Ya'll are doing a great job!

Till the next time,

**Kris Ballweg**



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

## Quick things

Drive-through distributions continue as we try to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### By the numbers:

**15,000** — Number of pounds in food donations and purchases that the pantry receives, on average, per month

Per household/per visit, each neighbor receives approximately:

- **35 pounds** of dry goods
- **30 pounds** of dairy, eggs and fresh produce
- **20 pounds** of frozen meats, fruits, vegetables and bread

### What do we currently need at the pantry?

- Size 4, 5 or 6 diapers
- Sure-Jell fruit pectin
- Quart-size freezer bags
- Pineapple
- Mandarin oranges
- Tortilla shells
- Maseca corn flour
- Kids' cereal
- Any personal-care items

### Coming next time:

- I'd like you to meet ...
- More about our donors and donations
- Where does the pantry food come from?

## Meet volunteer extraordinaire Jean Schneller

Jean is one of our longest-serving volunteers at the pantry, having been a part of the volunteer team for 30-plus years. She might hold the record!

Jean is one of our distribution managers and works the first distribution of the month. Her team of volunteers consists of National Honor Society students. Jean is also our building maintenance person, is on the pantry board of directors, and currently holds the position of pantry Treasurer.

Jean has seen many phases of the pantry over the years, from being housed in a church basement closet to prepacking a box or bag (not both) for our neighbors. She has been here for multiple location changes for the pantry, experienced the transition from paper record-keeping to computer processes, and so much more.



Jean is not only passionate about our food pantry, but you may have seen her involved elsewhere in our community such as working on the Friends of Sauk Prairie Parks and Recreation team as a volunteer, the Blackhawk United Methodist Church 4th of July committee, and more. Jean says her Mom is the reason she has so much heart, drive and willingness to volunteer. What a nice legacy!

Jean and her husband Ron live in Sauk City. They have a son Matt who lives in Florida with his wife Siobhan and daughter Serenity. Jean enjoys baking, and she and

Ron enjoy traveling, walking, bike riding and just plain ol' life in general.

It should be said that Ron is an awesome behind-the-scenes volunteer too, by being the invisible handyman, making regular runs to the bank and post office, answering questions regarding the bookkeeping and more "duties as assigned." Together they make a great team, and he is a true asset to the pantry family as well.

Jean, along with her passion, brings humor, objectivity and fun to the table. She is a woman not afraid to roll up her sleeves and get a little dirty or break out in a sweat. We are so fortunate that she shares her time and energy with us.

So many know Jean. If you do, ask her about being a volunteer at the pantry and what it means to her or what made her want to volunteer here. I am sure she would love to share her passion with you!

## School annex programs supplement food items for students and their families

What is the annex? It is a small pantry in each of the schools in the Sauk Prairie School District. Each pantry is very different from the others. For example, the annex at Grand Avenue only has snacks and **Go Fresh!** fruit, while the one at the high school is literally a miniature pantry, which not only has snacks but also full-size products for students to take home to their family in a backpack.

The middle school also provides full-size products and also has a portion of their pantry dedicated to clothing (underwear, socks, sweatpants, jackets, and more) and other personal items for students.

The Bridges Elementary pantry is primarily stocked by donations from staff or students' parents. Our pantry helps fill in the gaps and offers guidance with expiration dates, climate control, etc.

Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry supplies the schools in the district with food for families to take



**Jaime Patterson, pantry assistant at the Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry, restocks items in the annex at the high school.**

*Continued on Page 3*

# Donation highlights

A fun quarter of donations (in no particular order):

**FFA Sauk Prairie Chapter** collected and donated more than 500 pounds of food, which was collected as part of the sportsmen's banquet. Thank you so much to the current and alumni members for your part in this awesome donation.

We also had a group of **FFA members** come and share Earth Day Saturday with us to clean the pantry's racks and walk-in cooler. We are so grateful for your help with this big job.

**Mueller Sports Medicine** conducted a food and supply drive to benefit not only the pantry but our building partner, 6:8, as well! Thanks to this great group of people, they collected over 500 pounds of food ALONG with over \$400 in cash. We are so grateful to you for thinking of us at both the pantry and 6:8.

**Girl Scout Troops 7567 and 7532** came in for a tour AND each donated over 100 pounds of Girl Scout cookies! Our neighbors/patrons are so happy to receive such a tasty treat.

**Heritage Credit Union Legacy Fund and Connexus Cares** made a \$50,000 combined donation/grant. To say we are overwhelmed with this generosity is an understatement. Our board is



**Chelsea Menge (left) of Connexus Credit Union and Ben Maier (right) of Heritage Credit Union present their major donations to the Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry. Representing the pantry are Nancy Klabough, Kris Ballweg, Todd Taylor and Joyce Schoepp.**

exploring a number of options and taking extra steps to ensure we spend this money in a sensible way for our pantry.

Please, if you see any of these people or organizations, be sure to thank them for helping your Sauk Prairie Area Food Pantry, for without events or contributions like these, we could not continue to help those in our community who need a little help here and there.

## Continued from Page 2

home or we help complete what is available for students to take home. The pantry provides snacks, including the **Go Fresh!** fruit, for all the schools.

Each school annex has evolved over the years. Tower Rock, for example, tends to see the highest involvement of food distribution, so we have a volunteer check the inventory each time she delivers the **Go Fresh!** fruit. Merrimac has evolved from having a tiny, tiny on-site pantry to just doing the snacks and **Go Fresh!** today.

This year, the high school annex was reopened in March after being closed since June 2021 due to the construction in that particular wing of the school. The high school annex is now more than double in size. It's no longer a room within a classroom, so it provides

more confidentiality for a student to freely "shop" for food with more dignity. There is space for a refrigerator and possibly a freezer, so even more types of food can be provided by the SPAFP in the future.

This space is wonderful, and we love the ideas that the staff at the high school have and hope to implement. Also, while this pantry was closed, there were up to nine programs that were receiving food, snacks, fruit, etc. each week. Jaime Patterson was very busy gathering, bagging, and delivering to these programs.

ALL these staff members did an amazing job of making sure our – YOUR – students had something to eat during the day so they could concentrate on learning. This entire project was a true team effort and we all have so much to be proud of!

## 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? Email Kris Ballweg: [director@spfoodpantry.org](mailto:director@spfoodpantry.org) or call 608-571-7737 and she will help you make it happen!

## Contact us

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