

## Quick Things

**The pantry is looking for a new space. Can you help us? More to come ...**

### By the numbers:

- 44,000+ pounds rescued from Costco in 2024
- 205,000+ pounds distributed to families in 2024
- 250,000+ pounds of food received in 2024



### What do we need?

We really can use anything at this time, but these items are at the top of the list:

- Toilet paper
- Diapers size 4, 5, 6
- Canned meats
- Boxed meals including mac and cheese
- Canned meals
- Thanksgiving items like stuffing, French-fried onions, cream of mushroom soup

### Coming next time:

- I'd like you to meet...
- Donors / Donations
- Where does the pantry get its money?

## From the Director:

It has been an incredibly long time since I have generated a newsletter. To say it is overdue is an understatement. So, HELLO everyone, and let me introduce myself! Seriously, thank you for coming back and for your patience.

It is hard to remember all the things we have done over the last almost three years, so I am going to go with just the last quarter and update you on some others. If you would like to know more, please give me a holler!

**Pantry restocks schools:** We just wrapped up summer school and summer break. All annexes have been restocked and the first delivery of *Go Fresh!* for the 2025-2026 school year has been completed. We have added another school to this program, Shoreless Lake School in Roxbury. Welcome aboard, SLS!

**Parade showcases pantry's role in community:** The pantry was honored to be the Grand Marshal in the Cow Chip Parade. While I am an introvert by nature, this was a great event and an opportunity to THANK YOU, our community, for all that you have done and continue to help us with. We are so grateful for the honor of being in the parade and recognized in this way.

**We love our helping organizations:** We have also been honored to work with several groups such as St. Al's 5th graders; 4H groups – Active Strivers, the Happy Hustlers, Roxbury Boosters, the Earthlings, and Prairie Busy Badgers; St. John's Lutheran confirmation class and congregation; Blackhawk Bethlehem; Optimist Club; Lions Club; First United Church of Christ; St. John's Leland; Grand Avenue staff; Indivisible Sauk Prairie; and so many other individuals who show up week after week!

**Looking for larger space:** Since our last newsletter, the pantry has been searching for a new space because we are busting at the seams in our current location. I fondly reference Jean Schneller, who has tirelessly worn out a pair of tennis shoes with all the work she has done, vetting several properties, businesses, locations and more. If you know of a space that you think would work, OR have an idea, please let us know!

**Increased need and challenges:** You may wonder how the health of the pantry is. Well, our visitor count is on an upward trend. We see new families every week. Some who have not visited the pantry in a very long time are having to come once again. The pantry food sourcing is much more expensive today because we are paying for items that were once free to us, such as milk and eggs. Some other items we



**Kris Ballweg**



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## Volunteer Spotlight: Marian Kane

Meet Marian Kane. Marian is originally from Chicago and currently lives in Prairie du Sac, has three grown children and is an artist by trade. Her artwork focuses on oil painting, charcoal, acrylic, and printmaking.



Marian began with the pantry when her son Liam was the National Honor Society (NHS) pantry board liaison. Marian, once the treasurer, is now a board member who always brings outside-the-box ideas and suggestions, is a strong advocate for reducing waste, doing more retail rescue, serving our neighbors, and conservation.

Marian shares the distribution manager's duties with one of our snowbird distribution managers and is our resident produce and dry-bean expert. She truly is a valued member!

If you see Marian out and about, say hello, or perhaps you would like to check out her artwork at [mariankane.com](http://mariankane.com).

## Donation Highlights

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

- Elks Club – \$1,000
- St. Vincent de Paul Sauk Prairie/Roxbury – \$7,000
- Members of Indivisible Sauk Prairie – several hundred dollars
- Cases of toilet paper (YAY!)
- Sauk County Youth Resistance – food and cash donation
- First United Church of Christ – food items from Badger Steam and Gas

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

## TEFAP provides monthly commodities

Look at this handsome crew! These are some of the folks who help us with the TEFAP load. TEFAP is The Emergency Food Assistance Program, a federal program operated by the state.

Once per month, we go to Wisconsin Dells and pick up our pantry's allotment of commodities. We have received as much as 7,000 pounds and as little as 1,200 pounds during my tenure as director. Some examples of these products are canned corn, canned green beans, peanut butter, and more. Our pantry does not have a choice in what we will receive. The food only costs us the time and gas to pick up, load, unload, and stow.



This crew and some not in the picture show up in all weather conditions, like the mailman, to help the pantry with this important task. Pictured from left to right in the front row: Tom Enwright, Todd Taylor, Kris Ballweg, Ron McFarland, Andy Arntsen, Jean Schneller, Mary Enwright. Standing in the truck: Ron Schneller. Not pictured: Randy Miller, Gary Rolfsmeyer, Fred Rilling, Cameron Seitzman, Jaime Patterson, John Klabough, and Jeff Eastlick.

## How can you help?

Click on [this link](#) and check out the 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? Send an email to the director at [director@spfoodpantry.org](mailto:director@spfoodpantry.org) or call 608.571.7737 and she will work something out with you!

Maybe you would like to donate in other ways. If so, please check out the [donation page](#) on our website.

## Contact us

**Phone:** 608-571-7737

**Web:** [spfoodpantry.org](http://spfoodpantry.org)

**Email:**

[director@spfoodpantry.org](mailto:director@spfoodpantry.org)

**Site:**

821 Industry Road, Sauk City

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PO Box 652, Sauk City, WI 53583



# What cannot or should not be donated to the food pantry?

This is a common question, so hopefully the following helps:

We absolutely **cannot** accept anything homemade, home butchered, or home processed. Examples:

- Home canned items like tomatoes, jellies, vegetables, etc.
- Venison butchered in your home/garage/hunting shack, etc.

We can accept venison/beef/pork/chicken **IF** it has been professionally processed, so your favorite meat locker like Prem's, Straka's, etc., has butchered and wrapped the items.

**DO NOT** donate any food item that has been opened. No bottles of syrup, spices, shampoo, etc. If it has been opened, **DO NOT** donate it.

If a cereal box has been opened but the inside bag has not been opened, this **CAN** be donated. If the bag has been opened, **DO NOT** donate.

**Dates:** Whether you call them an expiration date, best-by date, use-by date, etc., for canned and some boxed items we will use and can accept up to two years past the date noted on the product. **BUT**, if the can is rusty, dented, bulging or looks gross, we could discard because we do not know if the can was exposed to serious temperature fluctuations such as freezing and thawing. Keep this in mind when going through your or a loved one's pantry.



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used to source no longer are available. We still conduct five distributions per month, but have transitioned to a hybrid model, meaning two drive-thru and three inside distributions. Based on a survey, visitors – even households – were split on whether we should be inside or drive-thru. So, hybrid it is. This has forced us to be more creative and resourceful in not only obtaining food but in packing and storing the packed boxes and bags. These aren't bad things, just different, and more challenging with the space constraints.

**Retail rescue partners:** Also, a big thing since our last newsletter is the partnership with Costco in Middleton and Dollar General in Plain. These two businesses are retail rescue partners. That means we are retrieving good, viable food that would have to be thrown away for various reasons. We are rescuing, processing, and readying these items for distribution. It has been an excellent partnership. Based on the success of these two and others in our area – such as both Kwik Trip locations, Prem Meats, and C2 Juicery – we look forward to adding more to our partnership!

**Henry Ford noted:** “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” Thank you for your support, patience and for coming together, keeping us together, and for working together with us. Again, it takes a village to do what we do and we're doing it together.

Till the next time,

**Kris Ballweg**



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