



SHAWANO AREA MATTHEW 25, INC. NEWSLETTER

105 E. Richmond Street
Shawano, WI 54166

SAM25 Resource Center: Open Year-Round;
Open to the public; Mon-Fri. (9am-2pm)

SAM's House Emergency Shelter:

October 15-May 15;

Daily Check-In (5pm-7pm)

SAM's Closet Thrift Store: Open to the public

Thurs, Fri, & Sat. (9am-2pm)

SAM25 Free Health Clinic: Thurs, (4pm-8pm)

Free Optometry Clinic: 3rd Monday each month (6-8pm)

Phone: 715-851-7252

Website: www.sam25.org

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www.facebook.com/SAM25.org

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www.sam25.org/newsletter or email

executivedirector@sam25.org

Please be advised that effective 4/2026, SAM25 will no longer be using our P.O. Box for correspondence. Kindly update your records to reflect our physical mailing address.

Hope Starts Here Guest Spotlight: Scott

On October 15th, the first day of shelter season, Scott walked through the doors of SAM's House during a dark time in his life, seeking support and a fresh start. Scott immediately began working with staff to create a plan for moving forward. Within just one week, he secured employment at a local factory, riding his bike to work every day despite the snow and cold. He also began connecting with community resources to support both his physical and mental health. Although his search for housing initially brought no luck, Scott refused to give up. He continued showing up to work consistently and was eventually able to purchase a car. Throughout his journey, Scott remained engaged with staff and focused on his goals. Last week, he reached an incredible milestone, receiving the keys to his new place! Scott's words of advice for everyone are simple but powerful: "Treat others how you want to be treated."



A Note from the....

Executive Director

As always, SAM25 is a busy place! First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our donors, volunteers, supporters, and community partners. SAM25 is truly blessed to be part of a community filled with such wonderful and caring people, and I am incredibly grateful for each and every one of you.

In response to the growing needs in our community, SAM25 has expanded our team by adding a part-time Office Specialist. We are excited to welcome Skylla Szczerbak, who joined us this month and will be serving as the friendly face at our front desk. Skylla will assist with day-to-day administrative tasks. If you stop in, be sure to say hello and welcome Skylla to the team!

I recently attended the annual Wisconsin Balance of State CoC Conference, a statewide gathering of coalitions working together to end homelessness. It was a valuable opportunity for networking, collaboration, and learning from partners from across Wisconsin. As part of our continued collaboration efforts, SAM25 has been working with Jack Young, Alderman of District 4 for the City of Shawano, to help bring a local homeless coalition to our area. Building strong partnerships is essential, no single organization can address homelessness alone. SAM25 continually looks for ways to collaborate with other organizations to better serve our guests and address the root causes of their homelessness. Each guest who walks through our doors has unique needs and requires individualized support.

Again, thank you for your support, it truly takes an entire community working together to make a difference.

Kendra Brusewitz
Executive Director

Board President

Hello and Happy February, the month of love and gratitude. On behalf of the SAM25 Board of Directors please know how very grateful we are for you. You make it possible for SAM25 to provide Hope, Health and Housing to people in our area who are struggling with poverty and homelessness, helping them find direction and encouragement to get back on their feet and keep going. The Board continually strives to improve all four SAM25 programs while working with Kendra, the Executive Director, to insure there is needed funding for all programs to thrive. We will soon launch a SAM25 Endowment Fund - it is exciting to be at this point! Please stay tuned for ways you can help to ensure the work at SAM25 will continue long into the future. We are also gearing up for our spring, summer and fall fundraisers! Coming soon is our Annual Flower Sale! Orders for those beautiful flowers with payment will be due at the end of April with flower delivery mid-May. Also watch for SAM25 at Thursdayz at Franklin Park, Shawano Farmers Market, Charlie's Red Barn, and of course our 2026 annual, signature, fun "Empty Bowls, Caring Hearts" Fundraiser in September! More information on all of these and more will be posted on our website (sam25.org) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/SAM25.org) so check in or stop in at SAM25. It is a great group of staff and volunteers, so please come volunteer with any of our four programs and/or at our many fundraisers. We need you and will LOVE to have you! Take care and thank you for your continued support - we are grateful for you. Peace and many thanks, Muffy



What's Happening at SAM25

Emergency Shelter

Shelter season is now a little more than halfway complete, and SAM25 continues to provide warmth and safety during some of the coldest months of the year. This is our first season operating with extended dates and it has shown that the need is there, already serving 58 unique individuals. During the frigid temperatures in January, SAM25 was able to remain open all day on a Sunday, when most public buildings were closed and guests would have otherwise had nowhere to go. This was made possible because generous volunteers graciously gave their time to ensure the shelter could stay open. As we look ahead, the current shelter season will close on May 15th. Until then, staff continue to work closely with guests, providing support and resource on their journeys to becoming self-sufficient.

The shelter is currently in need of additional volunteers to assist with intake shifts, helping check guests in for the evening. There are also several open dates available for individuals, families, businesses, or groups interested in providing an evening meal for our guests. To sign up or learn more, please visit sam25.org, email executivedirector@sam25.org, or call 715-851-7252. Your time and generosity help make shelter and support possible!



LACES group from Safe Haven serving a meal for our shelter guests.

Resource Center

SAM25 resource center is open year-round to help anyone in need of resources and to help connect folks with other agencies and individualized services. During the overnight shelter season, we facilitate case-management for the overnight guests & the resource center is utilized by an average of 35 walk-in guests per week. I am grateful to share that we strive and are very successful in meeting guests "where they're at" and do our best to individualize meeting their needs. We have become a community resource, as SAM25 is a "go-to" referral by other agencies. In the past couple months, the Red Cross has sent 4 families that experienced fires to us for clothing and household needs. As I'm writing this, one of those families came in to donate the surplus of donations they had received. We collaborate with other community agencies from the school district, assisted living facilities, probation & parole, sober living, The Salvation Army, law enforcement, those with community service requirements and many more. We helped two guests enroll and move into sober living homes and 5 guests move into permanent housing solutions. Within the past couple months we offered the public, in collaboration with Foundations, a Rent Smart, 6-part presentations by UW Madison, Division of Extension. We also had Julia, Case Manager with FSET & W2, Forward Service Corp in for a presentation regarding the food share changes that took effect this February.

Thank you for your generosity and support in helping those in need improve their circumstances.

Come in for a tour to see all SAM25 is doing and be a part of it, come volunteer.

Give me a call, 715-851-7252 and THANKS! Chris



What's Happening at SAM25

SAM25 FREE HEALTH CLINIC

Our clinic is celebrating our 4-year anniversary this month and we are seeing increasing and steady use of the clinic by our community. We are fortunate to have a great team providing care on a weekly basis including nurses, support people, lab tech, pharmacy, medical and optometry providers.

Both of our clinic managers have decided to officially retire again after many years in health care. They have been with us since the beginning in 2022 when they were persuaded to put their retirement on hold and help set up the free clinic. They have been instrumental in organizing the clinic and achieving our Silver Seal of Excellence from Wisconsin Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (WAFCC). Sue Hanson RN retired in November and Carol Kary RN will retire in May. We are very appreciative for their hard work, patience and dedication and wish them all the best! We will be recruiting for their positions in the next few months but know that they will be difficult to replace.

We are grateful to be able to offer the community medical and optometry care. Our donors have been very generous and their contributions have been made the clinic possible. ThedaCare allows us to offer our patients discounted medications. They also allow us to view Epic Medical Records for our patients and order labs at the hospital to supplement the lab tests we offer in-house at our clinic.

The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation Grant has made it possible to pay for these discounted lab tests. We are also working on providing PAP smear testing and mammograms as part of a state program for our low-income population. Thanks to SAM25 donors we have been able to continue to offer free eye exams and glasses. We could not do it without the community support-thank you! Dr. Kevin Culhane, Clinic Medical Director

SAM25 Thrift Store

SAM's Closet, located at 105 E. Richmond Street, is a thrift store open to the public Thursday through Saturday from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Spring Change over will begin on March 5.

We offer a variety of reasonably priced clothing and are committed to clothing those in need at no cost. All sales from the thrift store go directly toward helping the homeless in our community. it's always nice to see our REGULAR customers as well as NEW ones!

We also host a drawing on the last day of every month, and the winner receives \$20.00 worth of free merchandise. We hope to see you soon!

End of Winter Sale
50% OFF
**Winter Clothing,
Winter Coats,
Boots & Blankets**
MARCH 5th until everything's gone!
Excludes socks, underwear, and spring & summer clothing.
SAM'S closet 105 E. RICHMOND ST., SHAWANO
OPEN: THURS, FRI, SAT 9AM-2PM

Donor Spotlight:



Knights of Columbus held their annual Coats for Kids drive and donated over 80 coats to SAM25.



Marion Body Works held a PTO raffle for their staff, offering an extra day of paid time off to the lucky winner. The proceeds from the raffle were donated to SAM25.

Carrie Beilfuss and her staff from American Family Insurance organized a cleaning supplies drive to support SAM25.



The Wisconsin Deerhunter's Inc. - Shawano Chapter donated proceeds raised by their organization.

Volunteer Spotlight: Snow Removal Crew

Thank you to Kyle Alexander and Trevor Clark for their generous help with snow removal. Kyle volunteers his time to shovel our walkways and sidewalks, and Trevor donates his time to plow the driveway. Their dedication means so much, especially during Wisconsin winters! We truly appreciate you both for helping keep everyone safe.

If you would like to be added to the list to assist with snow removal, please call 715-851-7252 or email executivedirector@sam25.org.

Upcoming Fundraisers

COMING SOON!
SAM25'S ANNUAL
FLOWER SALE

ORDER AND PAY BY END OF APRIL
FLOWER PICK UP IS MID MAY

Summer Fundraisers: Thursday @ Franklin, Farmer's Market

Fall Fundraiser: Empty Bowls, Caring Hearts

Dates: TBD

By The Numbers

Shelter Guests

10/15/25-1/31/2026

TOTAL # OF GUESTS: 58

Nights of Stay: 1,176

Age:

Adults(18+): 48

Children(0-17): 10

Gender:

Female: 29

Male: 29

Race/Ethnicity:

Caucasian/White: 20

Native American/American Indian,

Alaska Native or Indigenous: 23

Black, African American,

or African: 8

Hispanic/Latina/e/o: 1

Multi-Race: 6

Total Exits: 45

Exits to Permanent, Positive

Destinations: 2

Resource Center

7/1/25-1/31/2026

Individuals Served: 663

Resource Sessions Provided:

1,439

Free Health Clinic

7/1/25-1/31/2026

Unique Medical Patients

Served: 50

Total Medical Visits: 82

Optometry Patients Served: 26

Clinic Volunteer Hours: 313.5

Thrift Store & Clothes Closet

7/1/25 -1/31/2026

Persons Clothed At

No Charge: 435

Pre-tax \$ provided to

SAM25 Programs:

\$ 9,702.23

Meals & In-Kind Donations

7/1/25 - 1/31/2026

Total Meals Served: 3,524

Food, Shelter/Guest Supplies,

Gas/Restaurant vouchers

donated: \$10,784.24