

## Update: Mission Moment—Rex Fuller

### Fuller's Journey to Recognition

Just the mention of Rex Fuller's name around any of the LUM staff elicits a smile. Currently Rex Fuller is the "go to" volunteer at the St. John's/LUM Food Pantry because he is reliable, flexible, and hardworking.



Rex has a genuine desire to serve his community through the food pantry. It

***"If You Try to Help Someone You Will Be Blessed for It."***

is this record of service to the community that was recently recognized with a prestigious award presented to him by both Mayor Roswarski and Mayor Dennis at an appreciation luncheon. Rex Fuller's journey to a volunteer has not been easy though.

Born in Jasper County and raised in Newton County on the border of Goodland and Kentland, Rex was married and divorced twice and suffered a serious injury while working on a farm in Illinois in the mid-1970's. In addition to the physical trauma from the accident Rex suffers from seizures since 1985. Since then, his disability has made it difficult to pursue a career of any kind. From 1986 through 2003, Rex applied for disability benefits from Social Security three times, was denied three times, appealed three times, and was denied his appeal three times. In 2003, he hired another attorney, applied and was granted disability. Unfortunately during this time, Rex was not able to pay his rent and needed to take advantage of the LUM emergency shelter.

Rex was a guest of the LUM emergency shelter for eight months. During that time, Rex eagerly volunteered for kitchen duty. He assisted with meals, washed dishes, and scrubbed pots. Eventually he began to volunteer to do more. Rex also enjoyed and took advantage of his case management meetings. It was during this time that he was reminded of his favorite motto – "God helps those who help themselves." Rex eventually qualified for housing through Transitional Housing, was awarded disability benefits, and found his own apartment in downtown Lafayette. All of his perseverance and hard work was finally paying off and his life was beginning to stabilize.

Today, Rex is a big fan of LUM. He knows firsthand why LUM's services are needed in this community and how helpful they are to getting people back on track. Rex stated that "if people need help, I feel if they go to LUM, the staff will either give them help or find someone to help them. If someone is about to get evicted – LUM will take them in or find them a place – but they have to be willing to do their part." Rex thinks this is a vital part of the LUM expectations. Again – "God helps those who help themselves."

Rex also shared that he was raised mostly by his grandparents; and his father lost his leg due to an accident and complications after surgery. He credits his compassion and empathy for the elderly and individuals with disabilities to these life experiences. Rex believes everyone should be treated with dignity and made to feel valued. He also believes that we all deserve to smile and laugh every day. He practices this in his work with the St. John's/LUM Food Pantry. His grandmother would often tell him that "if you try to help someone you will be blessed for it."

Rex takes pride in the fact that he is known as reliable and hardworking with the supervisors at the food pantry. Rex only has one scheduled shift a month but he works often because he fills in when volunteers don't show up or can't make it in. Rex also feels good that his work is needed and appreciated, he is good at working at the food pantry, and it is something about which he is passionate.

From his own personal experience he knows that not having enough money to buy food can happen to any of us. When you can't work, don't have enough money, and are on a limited budget – the food pantry is there to help – it's a grocery store alternative. Rex stated that he is "helping the St. John's/LUM Food Pantry do God's work by volunteering." When he works a volunteer shift, he is constantly looking for things to do. He uses his storytelling skills and good humor to make the clients feel welcome, comfortable and happy. He makes sure that he serves each

client well and particularly enjoys helping people load their food into their cars. Rex is willing to do whatever it takes to make their day and to meet their needs.

Rex has turned his life around and is now truly paying it forward. He is a great example for all of us and a testament to the impact of the mission of the Lafayette Urban Ministry.

A special thank you to Rex for his 20+ years of service to the food pantry and sincere congratulations on his recent and well deserve community service award.



### St. John's/LUM Food Pantry

The St. John's/LUM Food Pantry is the largest volume food pantry in the 26 counties of west central Indiana. The Food Pantry provides emergency food to hungry children and adults who live in Tippecanoe County. In 2013 thus far, 2450 clients were served which is equivalent to assisting 7468 individual family members.



### St. John's/LUM Food Pantry Mission Statement

To serve God & God's people by providing a caring food distribution facility. All strive to serve as Christ would serve. We respect the dignity of every person who comes to the Food Pantry. Food is provided in a courteous way & with minimal hassles & questions.



St. John's/LUM Food Pantry

### HOT Needs

The St. John's/LUM Food Pantry relies on individuals to donate food and make monetary donations. The current HOT needs for the Food Pantry are as follows:

- Toilet Paper
- Healthy Boxed Cereal & Breakfast Bars
- Boxed Meals (Hamburger Helper, Zatarain's)
- Peanut Butter
- Canned Meals: spaghetti & meatballs, beef stew, pork & beans

Please bring your donations directly to the Food Pantry which is in St. John's Church on the corner of 6th and Ferry Streets in downtown Lafayette during their operating hours — Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Look for the red door under the green awning.

[More Details](#)



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