

{ Who are the people you see every day? }

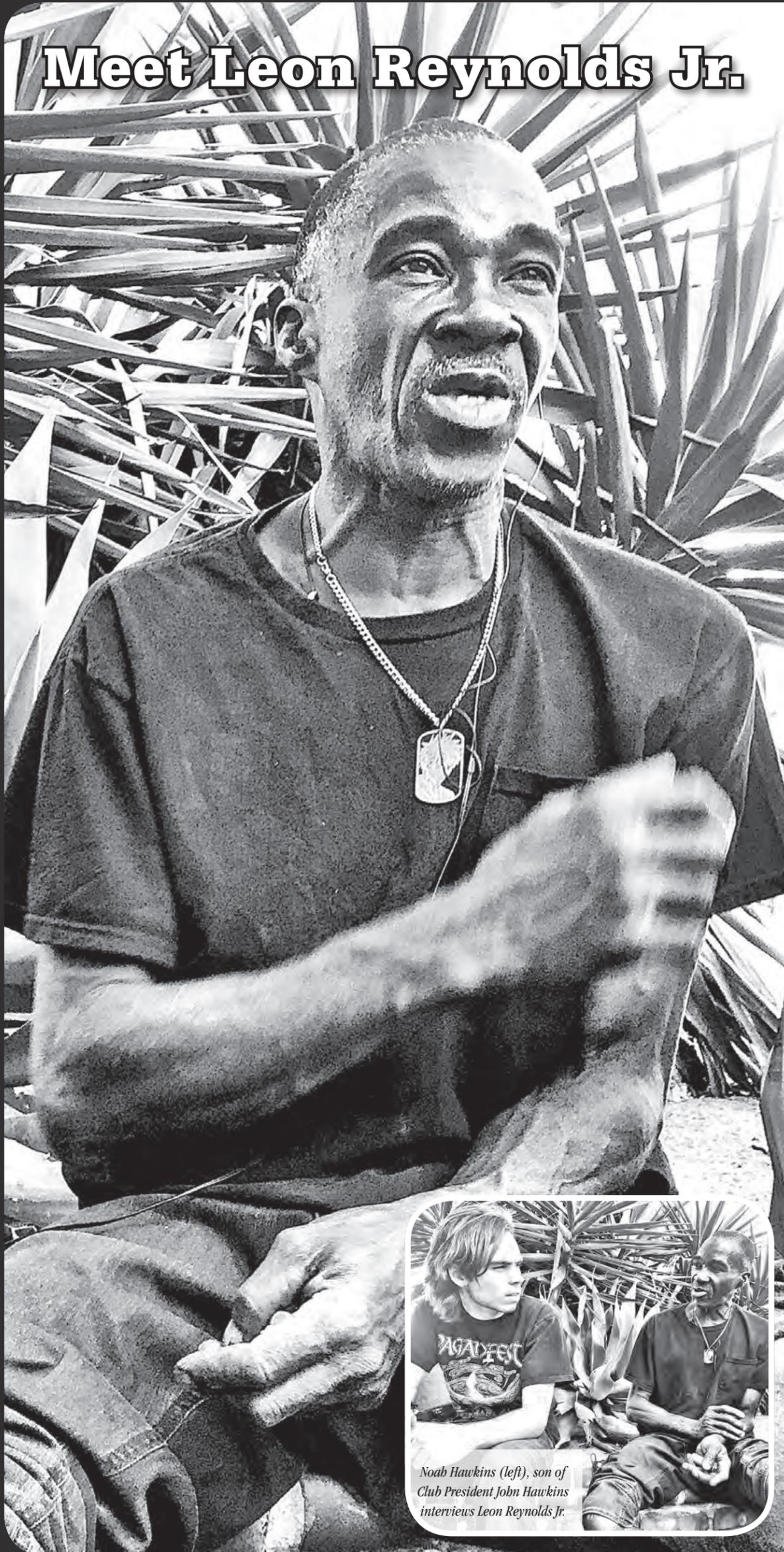
No. 74
in a series.



People We See

an interview on the streets downtown

Meet Leon Reynolds Jr.



Noab Hawkins (left), son of Club President John Hawkins interviews Leon Reynolds Jr.

AGE: "I'm 54."

BIRTHPLACE: "West Dallas, Tex., home of Bonnie and Clyde. Oh, and it's a Superfund site from lead contamination."

"West Dallas is where the RSR Inc. Lead Smelter was, and for 60 years it spewed lead into the atmosphere, where it settled in my town and bound itself to the dirt. Lead poisoning affects IQ scores, being able to pay attention, and I believe it made it hard for me to learn to read."

MARITAL STATUS: "I've never been married."

FAMILY: "I have two brothers and one sister"

PARENTS MARRIED/DIVORCED: "My dad never married my mom."

EDUCATION: "I made it to ninth grade and then I dropped out, mainly because I had a hard time learning to read. I felt like I couldn't continue school because of that, and I felt dumb and embarrassed. In hindsight I should have gotten help. If I got help for my reading I wouldn't be here living shelterless on the street today. By the way, dropping out launched me into all sorts of nefarious endeavors. I ended up going to jail 12 times for burglaries, and then I went to jail for crack cocaine and other drugs."

MILITARY SERVICE: "No."

WHEN MOVED TO LA: "I was living in Texas, and I came out to Palm Springs to visit my mom's sister. That was back in '82. After a while, she said I could stay, but I was a troublemaker, and I bet they regret that decision."

WHERE DO YOU LIVE? "Right here on the street. I'll probably spend the night on the sidewalk over on San Pedro Street."

RELIGION: "I am a Baptist. I believe in God, yes I do."

MEDICATIONS: "I have gout and high blood pressure. I take a lot of Benedryl!"

FAVORITE MOVIE: "I love the Descent series."

FAVORITE TV SHOW: "NCIS."

FAVORITE ACTOR: "Tom Cruise, Leo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Denzel Washington, Jaime Foxx, Will Smith, Sean Connery ... just to name a few."

FAVORITE ACTRESS: "Meryl Streep, Angelina Jolie ... gotta love Angelina."

FAVORITE FOOD: "Barbecue."

FAVORITE CANDY: "Nestlé's Crunch."

FAVORITE MUSIC: "I like all sorts, especially symphonic-type music. I can hear some playing in my head right now."

FAVORITE PLACE IN THE CITY: "I really like Santa Monica beach."

LAST JOB: "I was a fry cook at Carl's Jr., and then I worked for Toyota of the Desert. I was their detailer. But I haven't worked in awhile."

WORST PART OF BEING SHELTERLESS: "It's unsafe. You never know if someone's going to steal your stuff or beat you up. It gets crazy on the street, with people breaking windows and causing mischief."

LAST THING EATEN: "I haven't had anything, but as soon as we're done, I'm going to Grand Central Market and get a burrito, and then cut it in thirds so I can have a third now, a third for dinner and then a third for tomorrow."

MOST PRIZED POSSESSION: "My bible. It's what gets me through."

IF YOU HAD \$1 MILLION: "I would get a place to live in and then help others. Mainly, I would help the elderly and kids."

ADVICE FOR EVERYDAY PEOPLE: "Stay in school. Don't stop learning. Don't hate."

The Club gave Leon a Bucket and a Blanket, a toothbrush and toothpaste, soap, two pairs of socks, shampoo, hand wipes, some food, \$20 and bottled water.

This interview, conducted by Noab Hawkins, son of Club President John Hawkins, took place April 16 in downtown.

{ In this monthly feature, Club CEO John Hawkins, and Director of Sales Angel Gomez, introduce you to people you see every day, but you might not know who they are. The Club reminds you that we all have names and stories to tell. }