

{ Who are the people you see every day? }

No. 81
in a series.



People We See

Shelterless in Los Angeles.

Sponsored by:
Terry Yeager and Associates

Meet James Shaw.



James Shaw (left) and
Club CEO John Hawkins.

AGE: "I'm 48."

BIRTHPLACE: "San Diego."

FAMILY:

"I have a step-brother, a sister and another sister, but she died when I was younger. My grandma always said that I have lots of siblings."

MARRIED?

"I've been married three times. Back in 2010 I was due to get married again, but my fiancé died from heart issues. That was back in Vegas."

EDUCATION:

"I graduated from High School, but I was put in the special ed classes. It was hard for me to learn as fast as the other students. Immediately after graduating I joined the Job Corps."

RELIGION: "I am Christian."

MEDICATIONS:

"I'm on a couple of antidepressants."

WHERE DO YOU LIVE: "On the street. Last night I was up on Arcadia and Spring, sleeping on the sidewalk. It's hard to get a good night's sleep. And this morning the police woke me up because I overslept. My phone had died and I didn't realize it was 5:30 a.m., which is when I need to get off the sidewalk."

WHEN MOVED TO L.A.:

"It's a long story, but this most recent time I got here from San Diego on the first of this month."

WHY MOVE TO L.A.:

"Mainly because it's easier to get help, and the streets are kinder. It also helps because I have food stamps for L.A. County, and I can't use them in any other county. It's easier to get my general relief, too."

FAVORITE MOVIE: "Urban Cowboy."

FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Reba."

FAVORITE ACTOR: "Burt Reynolds, of course."

FAVORITE ACTRESS: "Jennifer Aniston."

FAVORITE MUSIC:

"Country, but not the new stuff ... I like the old country."

FAVORITE FOOD: "Carne asada."

FAVORITE CANDY: "I don't eat candy anymore."

FAVORITE BOOK:

"My eyesight is so bad right now that I can't really read."

LAST JOB:

"I have had a lot of different jobs. I worked at a car wash. I washed dishes, was a security guard, dug trenches in Tennessee ... you name it, I did it. But my latest job was back in 2010 when I was a medical caretaker. Now, though, with no transportation and my scoliosis I can't really work. And I'm not an alcoholic or drug user, so that's not the reason. My only vice is chewing tobacco. I prefer Skoal when I can afford it."

LAST THING EATEN:

"A bean and rice burrito last night."

FAVORITE CHILDHOOD MEMORY:

"It was going to see Smokey and the Bandit when it first came out. I remember the theatre was packed and the only place to sit was on the floor in the front."

IF GIVEN \$1 MILLION:

"I would get a place – an apartment. But first I would head right to my favorite restaurant down on Skid Row and order me their carne asada burrito."

IF YOU WERE MAYOR:

"I would make a hotel that is exclusively for the homeless. But I would make it homeless-friendly, not like the missions. At the missions you can't have a cell phone, no cigarettes, no chewing tobacco. In my homeless hotel, I would allow all these things, maybe even some alcohol flow ... not too much, just a little. Everything in moderation, my ma would say."

MOST PRIZED POSSESSION: "My cell phone."

MAKE A WISH: "To have my own place."

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

The interview, conducted by John Hawkins, took place March 16 at the corner of Temple and Spring Streets, on the northwest corner of City Hall 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. }