

{ *Who are the people you see every day?* }

No. 52 in a series.



People We See

in downtown Los Angeles.

Meet Johnny Mueller.



AGE: "I'm 49."
BIRTHPLACE: "Bayonne, N.J."
MARITAL STATUS: "Married twice, divorced."
FAMILY: "I have one sister, but she's not with us anymore. I have a little brother who's 43 and a foster brother who's 56."
PARENTS MARRIED OR DIVORCED? "My dad was never around. He was never in my life. But I had a step-father who was awesome."
MILITARY SERVICE: "I served in the U.S. Army for three years. I dropped out of high school to join the Army. I was in a combat brigade."
WHERE DO YOU LIVE? "Not sure right now. I just lost my apartment yesterday."
WHEN DID YOU MOVE TO LOS ANGELES? "I moved to Alameda back in 1977. My dad at the time was a recruiter for the Navy."
EDUCATION: "I have my GED."
PLAYED SPORTS IN HIGH SCHOOL? "I played 'em all – football, baseball ..."
RELIGION: "I'm Catholic but not practicing."
FAVORITE T.V. SHOW: "*Married, with Children.*"
LAST THING EATEN: "Pizza, last night."
FAVORITE ACTOR: "Jack Nicholson."
FAVORITE ACTRESS: "Demi Moore"
FAVORITE MOVIE: "*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.*"
FAVORITE CANDY: "Jujubees."
FAVORITE FOOD: "Chinese."
FAVORITE MUSIC: "I like it all, rock and roll ... anything with a good beat."
FAVORITE PLACE IN THE CITY: "McArthur Park."
LAST BOOK READ: "It was a book about a father and a son ... I can't remember the name."
HIS STORY: "I seriously got off to a bad start in high school. It started when we were the only two white families living in the projects in New Jersey. I hung around the wild crowd and ended up doing drugs, recreational at first and then ultimately I became addicted to heroin. The heroin habit got me into even more trouble because then the need for quick cash became a constant. I began stealing, petty theft and such. I ended up in prison four times. At one point, back in 2001, I got off heroin and became very productive. I bought a house in Palmdale, had my own PT Cruiser and was making good money in a multilevel marketing business. But that didn't last long; heroin has a vice grip hold on you that lasts forever. You never shake it. I ended up using again, and my life spiraled downhill from there. Currently I'm on methadone. It has helped, but all in all it's just another addiction but without needles. Now I'm back on the streets, making sure I stay out of jail. The heroin addiction is still there, but I do notice that as I get older, now approaching my 50s, the need slightly decreases."
MOST HELPFUL ORGANIZATION: "The VA."
WHERE WILL YOU BE IN FIVE YEARS? "Dead, in prison, or living good."
ADVICE FOR EVERYDAY PEOPLE: "My stepdad, who was awesome, always said, 'Never be fooled by a smile and a handshake.'"
MAKE A WISH: "A million dollars, and then I would parlay it."
MOST PRIZED POSSESSION: "My mind."

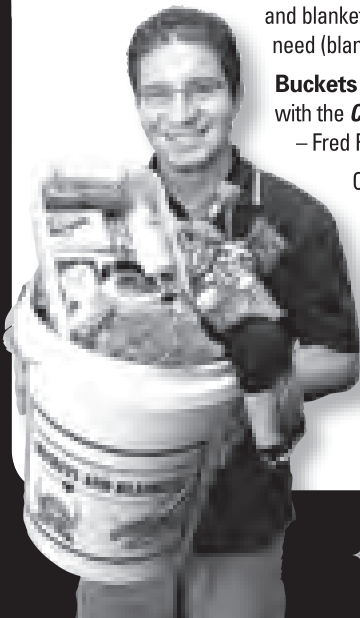
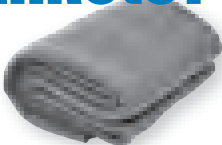
The Club gave Johnny a Bucket and a Blanket (see left), a toothbrush and toothpaste, soap, two pairs of socks, shampoo, band wipes, some food, \$20 and bottled water.

The interview took place July 19 at Hill and Fourth Streets downtown.

Photos by Angel Gomez and John Hawkins.

Buckets and Blankets!

Join us as we help those who live on the streets with Buckets and Blankets. Donate to the cause as the Club distributes food, toiletries and blankets to those in need (blankets cost \$7 each).



Buckets and Blankets is produced in cooperation with the **Club Angels** program and **Creative Solutions** – Fred Fowiks and Sue Manzo, LAFD.

Contact John Hawkins or Angel Gomez, and we'll take it from there:

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{ In this monthly feature, Club CEO John Hawkins, and Director of Member Services 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. }