

# American Legion Mandarin Post 372 "Fallen Heroes"



Mail: 11250-15 Old St. Augustine Rd-PMB138, Jacksonville, FL 32257  
Meetings: 10415 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville, FL 32257  
904-297-8344 [www.alpost372fl.org](http://www.alpost372fl.org)  
Facebook page: American Legion Post 372, Mandarin, FL



April 2024

Vol. 24 No. 04



## Post Nominations

**Post nominations for the Legion and all families are underway. Current Legion nominations are in the weekly blast. Consider stepping up to put new blood in our Officer positions. With several fundraisers in process, a Quartermaster position will be added. If interested, reach out to one of our Post Officers. Voting will following the May meeting.**

## Membership News

**2024 Membership** – Our 2024 goal is 240 and we have over 222 renewed, putting us over 92.5%! Any questions, contact our membership officer at [Info@alpost372fl.org](mailto:Info@alpost372fl.org). A link apply to join our Post via online application is on our Home page – share with friends and family who are eligible!

**If you have not renewed by now, you are late. If not by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2024, you will be dropped from the membership rolls and your continuous years of service restarts. NOTE: A fee increase for 2025 is coming in 2024.**

**Eligibility Changes** – The July 2019 LEGION Act expands eligibility to all Veteran's honorably discharged from December 7, 1941 to a future date to be determined by the Federal Government. All memberships now require us to verify your service with a DD-214.

If you have friends, relatives or neighbors who served and are not members, please encourage them to join. Email the Membership Officer for assistance at [Info@alpost372fl.org](mailto:Info@alpost372fl.org).

## Annual Membership Dues:

Legion - **\$50 (For 2025)**  
Auxiliary - \$35  
Auxiliary 17 & under - \$10  
Legion Riders - \$15  
SAL - \$35 (21 and over)  
\$11 (under 21 and dual Legionnaires members)

## Sons of The American Legion

We have a great Sons of the American Legion Program. If you are a son of a veteran who served, you qualify to join our SAL. We are 128% for 2024 with 32 members. You can renew your dues at [mylegion.org](http://mylegion.org), or by mailing a check made out to 'Sons of the American Legion Post 372' to the mailing address above. Our 1<sup>st</sup> 50/50 raffle drawing will be April 30<sup>th</sup>. Net proceeds will be used for programs and the

building fund. Information in the weekly blast. The most recent newsletter is available on our page on the website – come check it out! **Final vote for Officers will be in May.**

## Legion Riders

The current newsletter and minutes are posted on the website. The application to join is available from the Legion Riders page on the Post website. Eligibility requirements to become a member are:

- Members must hold membership in, and be in good standing with, The American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, or Sons of The American Legion.
- Members must be legally registered motorcycle owners or be the legally registered owner's spouse within the state of registration.
- All operators must be properly licensed and insured per state laws.
- All members must obey motor-vehicle laws in the state in which they are operating a motorcycle or riding as a passenger.

## Auxiliary News

The current Unit 372 Newsletter is on the Auxiliary page of the website. Please read for important information for upcoming events. Donate your used tennis shoes to be repurposed or recycled. It's time to renew for 2024 - we are over 137%. If you are not already a member and qualify, please consider joining. The application can be found on our Auxiliary page on the Post's website. Any questions, please contact us at [auxunit372@alpost372fl.org](mailto:auxunit372@alpost372fl.org). **Meetings will be held at locations other than the YMCA. Contact us for meeting information.**

## New Non-Profit Foundation

Post 372 is forming a 501.c.3 non-profit organization that will be completely independent from Post 372 to allow us an easier path in securing grants, funding and donations. This foundation – Northeast Florida Fallen Heroes Foundation – is in the process of obtaining IRS approval for the foundation. This organization will reach several counties in the northeast portion of Florida. Updated information on the foundation's status will be included in the weekly blast.

**PER AMERICAN LEGION POLICY, MEETING MINUTES WILL NO LONGER BE POSTED ON THE WEBSITE. DISSEMINATION OF MINUTES WILL BE MADE THROUGH ANOTHER PROCESS.**

<i>Post Officers</i>	<i>SAL Officers</i>	<i>Auxiliary Officers</i>
Commander: Joe Maltese 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Commander: Craig Bernat 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander: Steve Sullivan Finance Officer: Paul Arambula Adjutant: Frank Nichols Chaplain: Mike Montonera Service Officers: Barry Litsky Judge Advocate: Bob Sussan Historian: Frank Nichols Sergeant-at-Arms: Chuck Benham	Commander: Craig Bernat Adjutant: Chuck Benham 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice: Steve Sullivan 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice: Vacant Finance Officer: Paul Arambula Chaplain: Chuck Benham Historian: Vacant Sergeant-at-Arms: Don Crawford Asst Sergeant-at-Arms: Vacant	President: Dee Stewart 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President: Bernadette Montonera 2 <sup>nd</sup> vice President: Vacant Secretary: Lisa Doerler Treasurer: Judy Bernat Chaplain: Robin Maltese Asst. Chaplin: Sandra Smith Historian: Caitlin Bailey Sergeant-at-Arms: Janelle Hemsell Membership: Sandra Smith Member at Large: Sandra Shelton
<i>Executive Committee</i> Bob Sussan, Karen Tracy, Robert Berlandi, Mark Shelton	<i>American Legion Riders</i> Director: June Crawford Asst. Director: Don Crawford Treasurer: Sandra Shelton Chaplain: Joe Maltese Adjutant: Allane Strode Sergeant-at-Arms: Blaine Demmons Road Captain: Charlie McFarland Safety Officer: Tim Bailey Quartermaster: Mark Shelton	
<i>Auxiliary Executive Committee</i> Marilyn Painter, Judy Bernat, Robin Maltese, Reed Bailey		

### WE HAVE A POST HOME

Our Post property on Old St. Augustine Road purchased in 2023 is located on the south side of Old St Augustine Road, across from Whitmore Oaks subdivision (east of Caron Drive).



We are in FULL swing with permitting, ordering the building, fund raising and staffing our committees. Groundbreaking will be soon – stay tuned!!!

If you or someone you know is interested in sponsorship or donating to the building of our Post, please reach out to [info@alpost372fl.org](mailto:info@alpost372fl.org) for information on sponsor levels.

Several committees have been established for our Post Home project. If you are interested in being on one or for information on what each is responsible for, please reach out to the Adjutant ([adjutant@alpost372fl.org](mailto:adjutant@alpost372fl.org)) or general information at [info@alpost372fl.org](mailto:info@alpost372fl.org)

- Communication/Community Relations
- Logistics
- Funding Acquisition
- Exterior Design and Landscape
- Interior Design and Build-out
- Post Brand/Image
- Human Resources and Recruiting

### ??? Where Do We Meet ???

American Legion Mandarin Post 372 meets at the Williams Family YMCA, 10415 San Jose Blvd. The YMCA is located North of Target/Publix.



### Post Home Fundraisers

Several fundraisers have been initiated with funds going towards our Post Home. Additional information, pictures and ordering information are available on our website.

**Memorial Bricks:** Memorial brick/paver Details with pictures and an order form are available on the website via a link from the home page. You can also order online via <https://donate.brickmarkers.com/mfh>.

**License Plates:** Our ALR has Post 372 Fallen Heroes license plates for sale. These license plates are available at \$10 per plate – and a picture is available on the website. Anyone interested can reach out to the Riders Quartermaster at [alr372quartermaster@gmail.com](mailto:alr372quartermaster@gmail.com).

**Metal Tumblers:** The ALR also have engraved tumblers for sale starting at \$30 – personalize for an extra \$5. Contact [alradjutant@alpost372fl.org](mailto:alradjutant@alpost372fl.org) or 904-923-0948 to order.

**Post Coin:** Our membership designed a Post Coin and it was voted on during our February meeting. The coins have arrived. The 2” coins will sell for \$15 each.

## Service Officer News

The VA added presumptive conditions for Vietnam Veterans exposed to Agent Orange. The full list and information can be found on our home page of [alpost372fl.org](http://alpost372fl.org). Contact our Service officer at [serviceofficer@alpost372fl.org](mailto:serviceofficer@alpost372fl.org) for information and to file a claim. **See below for important information about the recently passed Camp Lejeune Justice Act.**

### Camp Lejeune Justice Act Information

Since the passage of the Camp Lejeune Justice Act there has been mass tort firms all over the country saturating the airwaves with advertising offering speeding settlements with no strings attached. However offset rules are being discussed, which means if you are receiving a disability for the recognized disorders or will receive disability payments your VA disability, it may be offset by the amount of the settlement you receive. The law firm of Bergmann & Moore works together with the American Legion to provide veterans with effective legal representation. The firm encourages veterans to file a claim for both the Camp Lejeune Justice Act and the VA. To learn more visit: [www.camplejeunelitigationteam.com/AL](http://www.camplejeunelitigationteam.com/AL) or call 800-898-9450.

### PACT Act Expansion – VA Health Care

Beginning March 5, 2024, the VA expanded eligibility to enroll in VA health care directly without first applying for VA benefits. Any Veteran who served during the Vietnam era, Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, the GWOT, or any other combat zone after 9/11 are eligible. Any Veteran NOT deployed but exposed to toxins or hazards during training or on Active Duty in the US are also eligible. Visit [VA.gov/PACT](http://VA.gov/PACT) or call 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more and apply for VA health care.

### Retired Military Information

Retired Activities Office on NAS Jax provides assistance to the military retiree community regarding many programs and resources. Examples include VA, DFAS/pay questions, Tricare and Survivor Benefit program, as well as many others. Office hours are Tuesday – Friday from 1000-1400. Call 904-542-5790 to speak with staff or leave a message.

### General Information

**Cancelled Stamp Program:** We need your cancelled stamps! Our Post participates in the Stamps for the Wounded Program for rehabilitating disabled veterans. Please bring your cancelled stamps to the next General Assembly meeting.

Enjoy an issue of Bugle Blasts, a newsletter that provides information to current or former Armed Forces member and their family, by following the link on the Important Links page of the website.

Youth Elks Camp - During the 7<sup>th</sup> week, active duty military children can attend for free.

VA Travel Pay Reimbursement – You or your caregivers may be eligible for reimbursement for travel expenses related to approved health care visits. To learn more, visit

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/get-reimbursed-for-travel-pay/>.

### Career Opportunities for Veterans

Deploycare has put together a short article for three ideas to help veterans in any economy. The article can be found on our website under Important Links. Check it out to see if any of the ideas work for you or a veteran you know!

AND - to help Veterans create the perfect Military to Civilian resume, check out this link

<https://www.resumebuilder.com/military-to-civilian-resume-examples/>, also available on our website.

### Veteran Resource Links

There are several online sites with information about financial resources and healthcare guidance. These links are available from our home page under Important Links.

### Military Records Request Information

Do you need your DD-214 or other military records? You can request them from the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, MO. Visit <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/> for guidance on requesting military records online, by mail or fax. The form used is DD Form 180.

### Project:Vetrelief

Mission is to provide a Legion of support for our service men and women as they transition into civilian lives. Backed by the American Legion of Florida, VetRelief ensures that our service men and women have the backing necessary to live successful and thriving civilian lives.

(<https://www.projectvetrelief.org/>) The Jacksonville Icemen have partnered with the American Legion to donate a portion of ticket sales during Veterans Appreciation Night to VetRelief. <https://allevents.in/arena/icemen-hockey-game/200019047449626>

### Blood Donations

You can still donate blood to benefit our Post. The One Blood donation location in Mandarin is:

10501 San Jose Blvd  
M-Tu 7-2:30 pm  
W-Th 11:00-6:30 pm  
F 10-6:30 pm  
Sa-Su 8-3:30 pm

Once you have donated, enter your information in the Volunteer Log on the Legion page of our website. You can find other locations and times for The Big Red Bus at [oneblood.org](http://oneblood.org).

### **\*\*Check Your Email\*\***

You might want to check your SPAM or JUNK folder in your email application to see if any American legion emails were misdirected there. If so, move them to your Inbox and follow the instructions for your applications to verify/validate the email address.



April 2024 – No Fireside Chat due to ALR Unity Ride

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 ALR Fun Run 8:30 register 10:30 – KSU Post 88
7 Poker Run, Dick’s Wing Mandarin. KSU 9:30	8 6:30-8:00pm Executive Committee mtg	9	10	11 7-8:30pm Gen Assembly mtg	12	13
14 ALR meeting 10 am YMCA	15 Tax Day	16	17	18 7-8pm SAL mtg - YMCA	19	20 District 5 Picnic, 1-5 PM
21 Unity Ride Week Starts	22	23	24	25 7-8 pm Auxiliary mtg	26	27 Unity Ride Ends - Rally
28	29	30				

May 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6 6:30-8:00pm Executive Committee mtg	7	8	9 7-8:30pm Gen Assembly mtg	10	11 LEO Awards 4 PM Mandarin Mason’s
12 Mother’s Day	13	14	15	16	17	18 Fireside Chat Armed Forces Day
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 5 <sup>th</sup> District Const. Conf 8:30 AM
26	27 Memorial Day	28	29	30	31	



**American Legion  
 Fallen Heroes Mandarin Post #372  
 (904) 297-8344  
 www.alpost372fl.org**



**Supporting our local First Responders, American Legion Post 372  
 PROUDLY PRESENTS OUR ANNUAL  
 2024 LAW & ORDER AWARDS**

**SATURDAY, May 11, 2024, 4:00 PM**

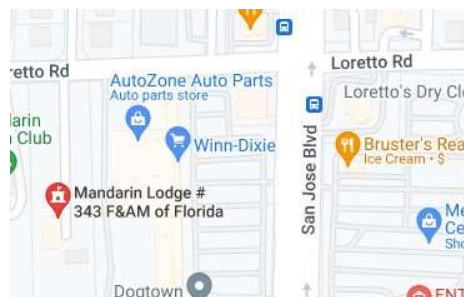
**Please RSVP to [Adjutant@alpost372fl.org](mailto:Adjutant@alpost372fl.org) by April 26th to accommodate all guests.**

**FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR**

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF  
 THE YEAR**



***We want to show our appreciation and thanks to our first responders here in Duval County. Legion members, family and guests are invited for our awards presentation at 4:00 PM at the Mandarin Masonic Lodge, 2914 Loretto Road (see map below). A buffet will be served.***



Post #372 Legionnaire's General Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 1900 hours. Meetings are held at the Williams YMCA at 10415 San Jose Boulevard, Jacksonville, FL.