

# 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



October 2024

Vol. 24 No. 10



## Membership News

2024/2025 Membership – We have surpassed our 2024 goal of 240 and are starting to receive 2025 renewals! Our date to meet 50% was met with 128 renewals/new members. Any questions, contact our membership officer at [Info@alpost372fl.org](mailto:Info@alpost372fl.org). Welcome to our new members! If you have friends, relatives or neighbors who served and are not members, please encourage them to join. Email the Membership Officer for assistance or apply to Join our Post via a link to an online application on our Home page at [www.alpost372fl.org](http://www.alpost372fl.org).

**RENEW BY OCTOBER 13<sup>TH</sup> FOR A FREE EARLY BIRD DINNER AT OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY!**

**If you have not renewed by now, you have been dropped from the membership rolls and your continuous years of service restarts.**

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.

## 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 132% for 2024 and already is 3<sup>rd</sup> in the district for 2025! 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 next 50/50 raffle drawing will be October 31st. 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!

## 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. Start looking for renewals for 2025 - we are over 137% for 2024. 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).

## 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. The new website address is <http://www.neffallenheroes.org/>. Feel free to share this site with anyone interested in donating who will need to donate to a 501.c.3 organization.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Post Officers</i></p> <p>Commander: Craig Bernat  1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander: Dan Hemsall  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: Daniel Taszarek</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Executive Committee</i></p> <p>Karen Tracy, Barry Litsky, Mark Shelton,  Alan Painter</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>SAL Officers</i></p> <p>Commander: Charlie McFarland  Adjutant: Vacant  1<sup>st</sup> Vice: Joe Streett  2<sup>nd</sup> Vice: Billy Decker  Finance Officer: Paul Arambula  Chaplain: E J Wojciak  Historian: Vacant  Sergeant-at-Arms: Blaine Demmons</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>American Legion Riders</i></p> <p>Director: Allane Strode  Asst. Director: Billy Decker  Treasurer: Sandra Shelton  Chaplain: Joe Maltese  Adjutant: Heidi Riddle  Sergeant-at-Arms: Blaine Demmons  Road Captain: Charlie McFarland  Safety Officer: Tim Bailey  Asst. Safety Officer: E J Wojciak  Quartermaster: Mark Shelton</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Auxiliary Officers</i></p> <p>President: Daleana “Dee” McFarland  Vice President: Bernadette Montonera  Secretary: Lisa Doerler  Treasurer: Patricia Madonna  Chaplain: Esther Sills  Historian: Caitlin Bailey  Sergeant-at-Arms: Grace Arambula  Membership: Reed Bailey</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Auxiliary Executive Committee</i></p> <p>Marilyn Painter, Judy Bernat, Robin  Maltese, Reed Bailey</p>
---	--	---

### 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). Our address is 13000 Old St. Augustine Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32258.



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

Our 10-set was finally approved by the COJ and we now have permits to proceed with land clearing and site preparation. If you know of a company that can provide these services either as a donation or at a reduced cost, contact [projects@alpost372fl.org](mailto:projects@alpost372fl.org) with their information.

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. The brochure detailing our project can be downloaded as a PDF from our website’s home page.

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

### 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 \$10. Contact [alradjutant@alpost372fl.org](mailto:alradjutant@alpost372fl.org) or 904-923-0948 to order.

**Post Coin:** Our membership designed a Post coin. The 2” coins are available for purchase for \$15 each.

**Post Bottle Openers:** The ALR has bottle openers with our Post name engraved in several colors for \$5 each. Contact [alradjutant@alpost372fl.org](mailto:alradjutant@alpost372fl.org) if interested.

### 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.

### Camp Lejeune Justice Act Information

The deadline to submit a CLJA claim has passed.

## **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.

On June 14, 2024, three cancers were added to the presumptive list. For additional information, reach out to the contact site/number above or talk to your VA Service Officer.

## **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. Located in Building 13 Yorktown Avenue (across from the USO), 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.

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>

A benefit ride will take place on September 8<sup>th</sup> that starts in Mandarin. Additional information is available on the flyer in the weekly newsletter.

## **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.

## **National and Florida Department Info**

The latest issue of the American Legion Department of Florida Legion Link is available at <https://www.floridalegion.org/news-events/legion-link/>.

Stay abreast of the progress the American Legion is making with legislative issues brought before Congress at <https://www.legion.org/legislative>.

### ??? 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. The Auxiliary meets a different location – reach out to them for more information.





October 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 6:30-8:00pm Executive Committee mtg	9	10 7-8:30pm Gen Assembly mtg	11	12
13	14 Columbus Day	15	16	17	18	19
20 10:00 am ALR meeting - YMCA	21	22	23	24 7-8 pm Auxiliary mtg 7-8 pm SAL at YMCA	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Halloween 		

November 2024 – Date & Time for Auxiliary and SAL meetings TBD

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 	4	5 Election Day	6	7	8	9
10	11 Veterans Day 6:30-8:00pm Executive Committee mtg	12	13	14 7-8:30pm Gen Assembly mtg	15	16
17 10:00 am ALR meeting - YMCA	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving 	29	30