



**American Legion
Fallen Heroes Mandarin Post #372
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Greetings Legion Family:

It was the year of our Lord 2020, when Donald Trump presided over the country, Ron DeSantis was our state's Governor, Lenny Curry was Mayor of Jacksonville, and we had just lived through an historic year of empty stadiums, full hospitals, "social distancing" and masks, due to the nuevo coronavirus called COVID-19. It was December 2020.

With all of that, it's easy to forget that the stock market made historic drops **and** historic gains, and Space X's November 15th launch of the Falcon 9 Rocket carrying the Crew Dragon Spacecraft containing the first Americans launched from U.S. soil in decades to the International Space Station. It's easy to forget that the American Legion raised over \$1,400,000 for education and our children and youth. It's easy to forget that, in spite virus related shutdowns, the American Legion continued on its mission to help our veterans and their families. "Veterans helping veterans"... still serving, still caring. Each and every one of you must be proud to belong to such an organization.

Our Post 372 continues to serve the Mandarin Community. In honor of our service, Winn Dixie Mandarin donated \$5,000 to our post to help with our Post activities. Our Christmas food drive for the Mandarin Food Bank is in full swing. Thanks goes out to Executive Committeeman Bill McGraw and all of his food drive elves. We've recently put on another successful Saturday evening "Fireside Chat", a time for us to get together, relax around the fire, toss some corn hole bean bags, roast hot dogs and marshmallows, and just have fun. Our next "Fireside Chat" will be on Saturday, December 19th.

As any that have attended our most recent General Meetings know, we are still diligently pursuing a location for an affordable Post 372 home. I'd like to extend a special thanks to the Executive Committee and Officers for their work in continuing the search. The life blood of any organization is its membership. If we are to ultimately establish A Mandarin Fallen Heroes Post 372 home, we must continue to increase our membership with committed veterans, Sons, and Auxiliary that will faithfully support the mission of the American Legion. I am happy to report that we are ahead in membership when compared to this same time last year. We are ahead of quota and fourth in the 5th District for Legion membership and 3rd in the District for SAL membership! Kudos to all of you who have kept membership 'top-of-mind'. This is so critical because it is impossible to be stationary in membership; that is: "If we're not growing, we're shrinking." With that in mind, keep a sharp eye while you go about your daily activities. If you see someone with a cap or shirt or bumper sticker, etc., that gives you a clue the person has a military connection, invite them to become a part of the American Legion Family. Be proud to tell our story of veterans helping veterans. Let them know we need them to help accomplish our mission of service to veterans and their families.

Lastly, I would like to thank ALL the members of our American Legion Family; Legionnaires, Auxiliary, Sons, and Riders; for your membership and your service. I am honored to be associated with such a dedicated group of people. My sincere wish is for each of you and your families to have a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season and a Safe, Prosperous, and Healthy New Year!

All my best,

Joe