



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

It has been a very busy spring 2022. Our post has participated in numerous Legion Family activities, and enjoyed the accomplishment of many goals.

The spring began with our Legion Riders participating in the Florida Department's annual month-long Round Robin competition in which Riders from all the districts in the state compete for points to aid the PROJECT: VetRelief efforts to turn the tide on Veteran suicide. All ride miles and PROJECT: VetRelief donation dollars count for points. I am proud to report that our own Mighty 5th District won the trophy for leading the state in points and fund raising for this worthy cause. It has been five years since the trophy resided in the 5th District.

Our Sons of the American Legion Squadron, in addition to exceeding its 100% membership goal, has continued to advance the progress of fielding a Junior Shooting Sports team. The range has been completed and all of the adult volunteers and coaches have been trained in the operation of American Legion shooting ranges and range commands, as well as the skills for the standing, kneeling, and prone competition shooting positions. The competition air rifles and required slings are in inventory and are sighted in. The Junior Shooters program is a local, state, and national competitive sport, designed to train youth on gun safety, marksmanship, and competition. Shooters that progress to the National Championship level will compete at the USA Shooting range facilities at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. The program is open to area youth, regardless of Legion affiliation, ages 13 – 18. (19 if still in high school).

Our Legion Auxiliary continues to grow and support our Legion Family. They finished the year exceeding their 100% membership goal. This spring they ran a successful FSCJ H.O.P.E. drive that collected and donated non-perishable food items for Florida State College, Jacksonville's food pantry to help students with proper nourishment. Their current project involves creating *Boggy Bears* to help sponsor children with serious illnesses to attend **Camp Boggy Creek** in Eustis, FL and have some fun. (Camp Boggy Creek was founded by Paul Newman and Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf)

All of our family members have held elections for the new Legion fiscal year beginning July 1st, 2022 to June 30th, 2023. These officers will be installed at our **installation ceremony** by representatives from our 5th District Leadership team on **July 14th at 1900 hours**. Please plan to attend to celebrate the installation and show your

Meetings are held at the Elks Lodge at 4280 Oldfield Crossing Drive, Jacksonville, FL.



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support. Thank you to all stepping up to be leaders of our Legion Family in the coming year. I know you have the support and loyalty of those you will lead. And, of course, you will have my support and loyalty as well.

On Memorial Day weekend, our Legion Family participated in the Heroes Honor Festival at the Daytona International Speedway, that was attend by over 35,000 veterans and spectators. This 3-day celebration was to finally welcome home our Viet Nam Veterans. The weekend was filled with music, programs, and speakers to thank and honor these veterans who often were shamed for their service rather than being welcomed home. Among the musical performers were Justin Moore and Toby Keith, and some of the featured speakers were Ann Margaret, Oliver North, Maj. Gen. Patrick Brady, and Florida Governor LCDR Ron DeSantis. There were flyovers and sky divers as well. The event culminated with police escorted motorcycle procession with over 1000 bikes. If there is a repeat of this event, I cannot over-encourage all to attend.

Also on Memorial Day weekend, members of our Legion Family held a membership event at Ace Hardware. This was the first such event since the pandemic suspended this activity. Thank you to all that participated.

Your 2023 membership renewal begins July 1st. All that renew by September 30th will be our guests for a free early bird dinner and dancing event to be held at the Mandarin Garden Club on December 2nd, 2022. Please renew your membership now.

Our Legion continues to grow and I am proud to report that our Legionnaires exceeded 100% of their membership goal for this year.

Our leadership team is still looking diligently for a permanent post home. I am happy to report that we now have a city councilman, a zoning executive, and a representative from a local commercial real estate leasing company assisting us in our quest.

I am looking forward to a successful and productive 2022-2023 fiscal year. Please get involved with your Legion Family. I will make two guarantees: First, you will be needed and appreciated; and second, you will have fun.

I thank all that aided in making 2021-2022 a successful year for our Mandarin Fallen Heroes Post. God bless you all.

For God and Country,

Joe

Joe