The Heart Behind the Beard

How One Son's Love of Christmas Inspired a Community of Giving





The Campbell family, left; Mandarin Santa in his custom-made suit, right.

A retired Navy veteran and mortgage processor, Frank Campbell transforms into Mandarin Santa each holiday season, bringing joy to children and adults alike — all for a great cause.

For Frank, becoming Santa is much more than putting on a red suit. From his real white beard, which he begins growing in August, to his custom-made Santa suit, polished belt buckle and boots adorned with jingle bells, every detail helps bring the magic of Christmas to life.

But the real magic behind Mandarin Santa began at home.

Frank and his wife, Jennifer (better known during the holidays as Mrs. Claus), were inspired by their son, Zachary, a young adult with Down syndrome whose infectious love of everything Christmas has brought immeasurable joy to their lives. His enthusiasm inspired not only his parents but also an incredible group of friends who volunteer their time to bring his favorite characters to life.

And, of course, Zachary holds the very important title of Santa's Head Elf!

A Community of Giving



Santa and friends, with the Head Elf front and center.



Behind the costumes is a wonderful friendship and a shared passion for giving back.

Mandarin Santa is the driving force behind a busy holiday schedule, with many events booked back-to-back. A close family friend who portrays the Grinch is his most frequent character companion, generously sharing his time and passion for giving back.

At select charitable and community events, Santa and Mrs. Claus are joined by close friends portraying Max, Olaf, Elsa, Anna, Jack Frost and other favorites. All of these close friends also volunteer at Field of Dreams Baseball, all out of love for Zachary and the Campbell family.

All net proceeds from appearances are donated to organizations supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, animal rescue and community enrichment. Past recipients include Field of Dreams of St. Johns County, Alden Road Exceptional Student Center and EPIC Outreach Animal Rescue.



Giving Back Beyond Christmas
Jennifer coaches the White Sox at Field of Dreams Baseball in St. Johns County, a fully accessible league where children and adults with disabilities enjoy baseball at no cost to their families. Frank trades his Santa suit for a baseball cap, serving as pitcher for Jennifer's team.

Jennifer also co-founded IDD United, a task force dedicated to increasing access to quality, integrated healthcare for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Whether bringing Christmas magic to life, creating opportunities for inclusion on the baseball field or advocating for better access to healthcare, the Campbells share a common inspiration — their son, Zachary.

For the Campbells, giving back isn't simply a holiday tradition — it's a way of life.

Christmas Magic Has No Age Limit





Personal moments of connection from previous holiday appearances.

While the group enjoys every opportunity to spread Christmas cheer, the events closest to their hearts are visits to organizations serving individuals with disabilities. These moments of connection are a beautiful reminder that the magic of Christmas has no age limit.

The excitement, laughter and genuine joy shared during these visits are infectious. What began with one young man’s love of Christmas has grown into a community of friends united by a shared passion for giving back and celebrating inclusion.

The Heart of Christmas

A father’s love, a son’s inspiration and the generosity of friends have become a tradition of giving that extends far beyond the holiday season. For Mandarin Santa and his friends, the greatest gift is the joy they share with others.

Thank you to everyone who helps make this Christmas magic possible.

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