

*Toooo Weeet... Attention on Deck... "Saints... February newsletter"... Arriving!*

*ALSO ON SAINTS WEBSITE*

## VA-163 SAINTS GRAM

-I-  
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*KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE*

*Distance and time may separate us*

*but friendship and memories won't*

Dedicated to those who have invested their lives to the cause of Freedom in America! God Bless our Men and Women who are (or Have) in any way or manner served to protect our Great Nation and the freedom we have.

And God Bless the United States of America.



16th Year Edition

Established Nov 2002

VOL 1 Issue 183



## Standing the Watch



Ed Copher, Editor, "Saints Everlasting Keeper of the Flame"

### Saints Tradition

An old Saints tradition is that friends who have not seen or heard from each other for long periods of time never question their friendship. These friendships resume at the same time they left off regardless of distance and time between them. We call these friends "Family".

### Saints Motto

"Fight by Night or Day, Land or Sea"



A-4 Skyhawk  
VA-163  
Saints4ever



ONCE A SAINT, ALWAYS A SAINT



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas\\_A-4\\_Skyhawk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_A-4_Skyhawk)







*Birds of a feather... Flock Together*





# VA-163 "Saints"



[Click Here](#)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/va163saints/sets/>

Also on Saints website, [PHOTOS](#) section

**Contains 80 Albums (Sets)... 4,832 Photos**

**View Counts as of 02 Feb 2018**

### Photos

**777,044** views

### Albums

**30,886** views

### Total

**834,402 views**



[www.Flickr.com](http://www.Flickr.com) charges \$24.95 per year to keep the [SAINTS Photo Albums](#) on their web site.

**\*\*PAID the \$24.95 annual Flickr photo site fee on 15 Nov 2017\*\***



**\*\*\*SAINTS WEB SITE\*\*\***

**THE WEBSITE HAS THE LATEST NEWSLETTERS AND ROSTER**

Saints website [www.va163.org](http://www.va163.org) (password: *Saints4ever* (capital S))

***14,100 Visitors since Mar 09***

[History](#), [Latest Info](#), [Photos](#), [In Memoriam](#), [Miscellaneous](#), [Newsletters](#), [Links](#), [Recall Roster](#)

**\*\*\*Total cost for the Saints Website is \$293.97 per year**

**New Fee: Webmaster Maintenance Fee. \$120 p/year (due Jan 2018)**

Total website fees was \$173.97 p/yr, now plus the new webmaster fee \$120 = **\$293.97**

**\*\*\*Paid the annual webmaster fee of \$120 on 30 Jan 2018\*\*\***

Jim Houston, **Webmaster** for [www.VA163.org](http://www.VA163.org) began charging for maintaining the Saints website. He is only asking \$10 a month (\$120 p/year).

**I am asking for donations to continue to utilize Jim's services.**

Ed Copher

242 Toye Blvd

Canyon Lake, TX 78133



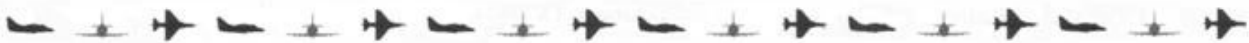
**Saint JC Ferris turned 75 on 30 Jan 2018:** Happy Birthday JC





**Ed Copher & Stella in Hawaii:** Jan 2018

When we were on the small island of Kauai, Stella got a life threatening bacteria in her throat that was blocking her windpipe and she had to be emergency airlifted by small jet to Honolulu. She had to have surgery and was in the hospital there for 6 days. We stayed in the military hotel, Hale Koa, and had to extend the stay for a week until she was able to fly home. The day Stella had surgery; we went through the “Ballistic Missile Attack Warning”. That was a nightmare. But it was always 75-80 degrees in paradise. It got down to 7 degrees with ice back here in Texas during that time. She is still in the recovery mode.



**Skyhawk Journal Winter Digital Edition:**

The winter digital edition of the Skyhawk Association Journal, The A-4ever, is up on the website. To get to the Journal VFR Direct, copy the link below into your browser. Let me know if you run into any problems with either the website or the Journal

Terry Cooney Secretary Skyhawk Association [skyhawkasn@gmail.com](mailto:skyhawkasn@gmail.com)

<http://a4skyhawk.info/sites/default/files/publicsajournals/2017-23-4>.



**China Lake:** Bombs away...

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/\\_dN1SeHA15E](https://www.youtube.com/embed/_dN1SeHA15E)



## [A-4 For Sale:](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/BoneyardSafari/posts/1596938420381701>



## [VA Dental at Randolph AFB, San Antonio](#)

The VA dental clinic's hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday; the appointment line number is [210-652-1707](tel:210-652-1707).



## [New Veterans Admin ID is available to all veterans:](#) Can use for proof on veterans discounts at businesses

The Department of Veterans Affairs has been playing coy since it first announced that new veterans identification cards, wallet-sized IDs that allow people to prove their military service without a copy of their DD214. Now the department has graced us with a little more information. [Military.com](#), which first [broke the news](#) of the new veteran IDs earlier this month, now reports that vets who want one of the new cards must first register online with [Vets.gov](#), a website that authenticates users through the [ID.me](#) system.



## [How a Grumman F - 11 fighter actually shot itself down:](#) Submitted by Ed Chadwick

I would like to add to the following story. I was one of the last students to have the privilege of flying the F11 and loved every second. In 1967 I flew 22 hops in the Tiger before heading to the A4 RAG. We flew the gun pattern at mach 1. The aircraft were so old and tired that when they were flown, emergencies were expect and frequently happened. It was the only time during my training where students got together at night to rehearse emergency procedures, rather than go to the O Club. There was a rule that you were not to go above 30,000 feet due to a problematic pressurization system. Not one for accepting rules, on one of my last flights I zoom climbed my fighter to 50,000 feet. The old lady could still perform. Besides shooting itself down it was the first plane to reach 50,000 feet. The actual reason more were not made was that the service decided to invest in long range fighters and selected the F8 Crusader {which I also flew}. The Tiger was designed to intercept bombers and therefore were small and light for that mission. The designers had a hard time finding room for fuel and ended up with about 17 tanks. Even the intake cheeks each had a tiny tank. My average flight time was 1.1 hours and that was pushing the limit. Like the rest of my time as a hot shit jet pilot, it was a memorable experience.

Here's a detailed look at how it actually happened.

<https://www.popularmechanics.com/military/aviation/a27967/the-fighter-plane-that-shot-itself-down/>

## The Fighter Plane That Shot Itself Down

The plane literally ran into its own gunfire.

In 1956, the Grumman aircraft corporation was testing its new fighter, the F-11 Tiger, off the coast of New York state. The pilot fired a long burst from its guns and moments later suffered mysterious, catastrophic damage that caved in the windshield and mortally wounded the engine. What happened? The pilot had shot himself down. The F-11 Tiger, like all Grumman aircraft, was named after a cat. Fast and nimble, the F-11 was only the second supersonic fighter in the Navy's inventory, capable of 843 miles an hour (Mach 1.1). It was actually [Grumman's first supersonic fighter](#) and the company's inexperience with the consequences of supersonic flight, as well as the fighter's amazing speed, would be one test Tiger's undoing. On September 21st, 1956, [as DataGenetics explains](#), a Grumman test pilot flying a Tiger off the coast of Long Island dropped his nose twenty degrees and pointed it at an empty spot of ocean. He fired a brief, four second burst from his four [Colt Mk.12 20-millimeter cannons](#), entered a steeper descent, and hit the afterburners. A minute later, his windshield suddenly caved in and his engine started making funny noises, eventually conking out as the pilot attempted to return to Grumman's Long Island airfield. The test pilot had assumed he had been the victim of a bird strike, but the accident investigation revealed another cause: in his fast descent, the pilot had actually flown into his own stream of 20-millimeter cannon rounds. Although the rounds had a head start (the air speed of the aircraft plus the muzzle velocity of the rounds) they slowed quickly due to drag passing through the surrounding air. The rounds decelerated, the Tiger accelerated, and the two reunited in the sky, with fatal (for the aircraft) consequences.



## SCUTTLEBUTT

*Latest was heard at the "Gedunk"*

The Smoking Lamp is out due to JP-5 Jet Fuel in the drinking water.

Cold Saltwater showers "only" due to no fresh water.

Remember: The soap will not rinse off in cold saltwater shower....



## The Skyhawk Association has 797 members, 14 Saints are members

*Ed Copher is the Association SDO for VA-163 Saints and VA-125*

### Skyhawk Association Links:

Association main page: <http://a4skyhawk.info/>

**VA-163 page:** <http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/va163>

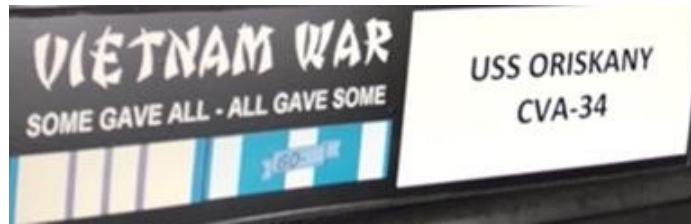
*Please join the Skyhawk Association. A great Quarterly Magazine, allot of A-4's and Saints articles.*

*Only \$30 per year.*

Skyhawk Association Digital Journal: Feb 2017

This year's digital edition can be found at: <http://a4skyhawk.info/article-journal-public/skyhawk-association-journal-public-page1>

Our "Members Only" Journal is published twice yearly and contains excellent textual and color image examples of the historical and current activities of one of the ...



Agent Orange Troop



[Vietnam War Resources:](#)



Below is a link to a web site about the war in Viet Nam. Whether you are a Viet Nam veteran or not, you may find this web site very interesting because it contains an absolutely enormous amount of information about the war. <http://www.cc.gatech.edu/~tpilsch/Vietnam.html>



[Vietnam War Resources, Data Site: Amazing accumulation](#)

**ALMOST ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT VIETNAM AND A LOT MORE:**

This is probably the best search list ever compiled about Vietnam. It would take months to look at everything this site offers.

Click on the link: <http://www-static.cc.gatech.edu/fac/Thomas.Pilsch/Vietnam..html>

[Life Magazine Vietnam War Photography:](#)

<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Life+Magazine+Vietnam+War+Photography&go=&form=QBIR>

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[Newsletters are on Saints Website:](#)

Go to [Saints Website](#), click on [Newsletters](#),

To view the Roster: click on [Roster](#), then [Complete Roster](#), password: **Saints4ever** (capital S)



## **\*\*Websites of Interest\*\***

### **Oriskany Web Sites:**

[USS Oriskany](#)  
(CVA 34)

25 Sep  
1950 /  
20 Sep  
1979

Stricken from Navy List 1989. Sold 9 Sep 1995, but contractor defaulted. Repossessed by the Navy and contract terminated 30 Jul 1997. Sunk off coast of Florida 17 May 2006 for use as artificial reef. [Click on the ship name for a complete history.](#)

1. Great Oriskany Photos from Dive Shop Pensacola: [www.mbtdivers.com](http://www.mbtdivers.com)

2. The best pictures of the reefing. Going to her final resting place: <http://www.irishmansoftware.com/Oriskany.htm>



4. Oriskany Reunion Association: [www.ussoriskany.com](http://www.ussoriskany.com)
5. Video of Big O going under: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1401279762745553286&q=oriskany>
6. Patriot Media "The Mighty O": <http://patriotmediainc.com/>
7. Oriskany Dive Video & Photos: [http://www.oriskanycharterboats.com/oriskany\\_photos.htm](http://www.oriskanycharterboats.com/oriskany_photos.htm)
8. Diving Oriskany Reef, 25 March 2007: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9l-wYnIBZis>
9. Oriskany Cruise Books on CD's: 1. <http://glewis.us/obooks.htm> 2. <http://navysite.de/cruisebooks/cv34-67/index.html>  
3. <http://navysite.de/cruisebooks/cv34-67/index.html>
10. Oriskany 1967 Vietnam Combat Cruise, DVD sale: [http://www.cv41.org/GRS/uss\\_oriskany\\_67/index.html](http://www.cv41.org/GRS/uss_oriskany_67/index.html)
11. Oriskany Information and History/Pictures: <http://www.pnj.com/newsfiles/oriskany/index.shtml>
12. Oriskany model: <http://www.motionmodels.com/ships/cv/>
13. USS Oriskany Photo Galleries: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/7437991@N08/galleries/72157622440145584>
14. USS Oriskany History 1972: <http://www.ussoriskany.com/id17.html>
15. [USS Oriskany digital Cruise Book Project](http://glewis.us/obooks.htm) (<http://glewis.us/obooks.htm>)
16. Oriskany 1970...Flight Ops: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXaKTJIVxHM&feature=email> 10 min
17. [Oriskany Memorial Dive for Saint Ralph Bisz](#): *Saints logo patch placed on Oriskany, 20 Sept 2010*  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqNETwJvF3A> 7:13 min video
18. [Oriskany Dive to put Saint Larry Spear's ashes to rest on Oriskany](#): 03 Dec 2010  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBnOkCrDnQo> 7:25 min video
19. [Saints Video on YouTube](#): *Dennis Lund video filmed on the Oriskany including the Oriskany fire!*  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJ5ykZjRaIM>
20. [USS Hancock](#): Click here: [Scotty Moore - The USS Hancock \("Hannah"\)](#)
21. [Tour of Duty photo site](#): 3000 photos, some Saints <https://www.flickr.com/groups/435090@N22/>
22. [USS Oriskany Fire & Sinking](#): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS2uky8K5Jk> 42 min video
23. [1963 TOUR OF THE USS Oriskany](#): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e92t7kgV\\_Ws](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e92t7kgV_Ws) &  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9Mh975VCII>
24. [O Boat Sinking Video](#): <http://trib.al/t69QQT4>



## [Vietnam Aircraft Losses:](#)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_aircraft\\_losses\\_of\\_the\\_Vietnam\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_aircraft_losses_of_the_Vietnam_War)



### [Vietnam Song:](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/TheVeteransSite/posts/1724893187572582>



### [Blue Angels with A-4's:](#)

<http://www.avgeekery.com/watch-blue-angels-reborn-flew-4f-skyhawk/>



### [How A-4's Ruled the Sky's:](#)

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/how-the-4-skyhawk-ruled-the-skies-21967>



### [Skyhawk Videos:](#)

This is for the A4 Skyhawk enthusiast .Got this from my Nephew in law. I love to see those Bombs and Rockets go off "ON TARGET" and successfully complete the mission. I took many Skilled and brave Pilots and many hard working and skilled crew to do these 12 to 16 hours a day. Hard to believe I used to load the Ordinance so many, many years ago, where did all those muscles go?

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IQymtxjt24](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IQymtxjt24)

[www.youtu.be/1mfdRvzUVtM](http://www.youtu.be/1mfdRvzUVtM)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgwEWSjzwz8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgwEWSjzwz8)



### [VA-164 Video: Miss Jessie and Ghost Rider 401](#)

Dick Perry of the O-boat's VA-164 and the saga of Miss Jessie.

<https://www.facebook.com/DosEckes-Productions-362988187722/?pnref=story>



### [The Blues Flying the A-4](#)

Oh the good old days. Scooter drivers prepare to shed a tear.....

**The best Blue Angel show of all time. A-4's.** Here is a video of them from the '70's. Bear Smith and Skip Umsted are the

last two guys walking towards the camera before they get to their planes. They both died later in aircraft accidents. The crazy solo is Denny Sapp. Best show for the spectators because it was close to show center. Always in sight. **Tightest diamond formation ever.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wk3XSV6H6w0>

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**[Resource Book with details of all aircraft loss on every cruise:](#)** Submitted by Ed Chadwick

Here is a site where books by Rene J. Francillon can be purchased. His "**Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club**" has a section that shows every carrier deployment during the Vietnam. It details each aircraft loss on every cruise, including the date, aircraft type, aircraft identification, squadron, pilots name / rank and well as whether the pilot was KIA, recovered or made a POW. I look at the book when memory fails me. It's a great resource.

<https://www.amazon.com/Ren%C3%A9-J.-Francillon/e/B001HCWSDM>

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**[Detail Thesis on CAG 16 1965-1967](#)**

Commander Fey, who asked my permission to use a Photo I took of Commander Stockdale's Saints A-4 from 1965. He said he did a thesis on CAG 16 and a Manifest. Many of the Saints including Skipper's Compton and Foster were interviewed as well as Mildman and others. It spans 1965 thru 1967. I found it very interesting with insight I never was aware of, worth a read. WE WERE THERE!!! Thanks Bill Tomko

CAG 16 losses and info: [https://www.google.com/?gws\\_rd=ssl#q=Peter+Fey+rolling+Thunder](https://www.google.com/?gws_rd=ssl#q=Peter+Fey+rolling+Thunder)

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**[VN 40 years ago...75 pictures](#)**

<http://www.vintag.es/2015/04/vietnam-war-40-years-ago-75-beathtaking.html>

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**[Legends of the Ho Chi Minh Trail](#)**

<http://www.laosgpsmap.com/ho-chi-Minh-trail-Laos/>

There are many links to the archive by date as well as to specific articles like this one about an F-4 shootdown:  
<http://www.laosgpsmap.com/ho-chi-minh-trail-shot-down-plane/>

This is the homepage:  
[www.laosgpsmap.com](http://www.laosgpsmap.com)

Ho Chi Minh Trail Tours:  
[www.laosgpsmap.com/ho-chi-minh-trail-tours/](http://www.laosgpsmap.com/ho-chi-minh-trail-tours/)

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## [Vietnam War Stories:](#)

<http://cherrieswriter.wordpress.com/category/the-vietnam-war-story/>

Tags : [book sites](#), [books war](#), [cherry soldier](#), [combat](#), [Combat Infantry](#), [digital books](#), [firefights](#), [Grunts](#), [Hispanic](#), [Historical fiction](#), [jungle warfare](#), [Military](#), [novels](#), [The vietnam war](#), [The Vietnam war story](#), [Veteran](#), [Vietnam blog pages](#), [Vietnam book](#), [Vietnam conflict](#), [Vietnam veteran](#), [war books](#), [war stor](#), [Wars and Conflicts](#)



## [Number of Vietnam Vets Still Alive:](#)

This has a lot of the statistics on Vietnam Vets.....

<http://www.nationalvietnamveteransfoundation.org/statistics.htm>



## [1956 Navy All Hands Meeting:](#)

Thought you might find this 1956 All Hands..... interesting.

[http://www.navy.mil/ah\\_online/archpdf/ah195603.pdf](http://www.navy.mil/ah_online/archpdf/ah195603.pdf)



## [A good day to revisit the Virtual Wall:](#)

Vietnam Wall

First click on a state. When it opens, scroll down to the city and the names will appear.

Then click on their names. It should show you a picture of the person, or at least their bio and medals.

This really is an amazing web site. Someone spent a lot of time and effort to create it.

I hope that everyone who receives this appreciates what those who served in Vietnam sacrificed for our country. The link below is a virtual wall of all those lost during the Vietnam War with the names, bio's and other information on our lost heroes. Those who remember that time frame, or perhaps lost friends or family can look them up on this site.

<http://www.virtualwall.org/iStates.htm>



## [Do you remember these?](#)

This will bring back memories

[http://www.youtube.com/watch\\_popup?v=puGQsQux80k](http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=puGQsQux80k)



## [Vietnam Photos:](#)

<http://news.yahoo.com/photos/a-soldier-s-story-never-before-seen-images-of-vietnam-war-slideshow/vietnam-photo--599932980.html?format=embed#mediaphotobobaspotlightgallery=%252Flightbox%252Fa-soldier-s-story-never-before-seen-images-of-vietnam-war-slideshow%252Fvietnam-photo--599932096.html>

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**Military Video** ~ Ending is Fabulous

Please take the time to view this and watch till the end. I was so very touched. And once again....

Thank you to ALL who have served our country! I live in a free nation because of your sacrifice! God Bless you! Because of the warriors of the past, the present, and the future, we Americans can walk tall.

For those of you of may not know, or have forgotten, Lt. Col. Oliver North was wounded in Vietnam many times and never left the men he commanded. I am now passing this on for you to watch. It's not just enjoyable, it is riveting! When you are done pass it on too, I think it's important ... don't you?

If you are a veteran, I say thank you, for everything! You are SO special! Take the time for this one. You won't be disappointed ... the end is a kicker.

<http://www.nragive.com/ringoffreedom/index.html>

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**NAS Lemoore April 1968:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5sRIO4kvjVE&feature=youtu.be>

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**Photos/History of Vietnam:**

Excellent Viet Nam Pictorial History

From the Denver Post.

Click here: [VietamPictorialHistory](#)

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**Vietnam War - Source list**

I am passing this along because it is probably the best search list ever compiled about the Vietnam War. This simply has to be shared with anyone who ever served in Vietnam. It would take months (*more like years*) to look at everything this site offers:

<http://www.cc.gatech.edu/fac/Thomas.Pilsch/Vietnam.html>



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**A-4 Skyhawks:**

<http://a4skyhawk.org/>

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**When the Saints Go Marching In - US Navy Seventh Fleet Band**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgsgUbXCeIA&feature=related>

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**VA Benefits Blog on Facebook:**

**VA Benefit Blog**

[https://www.facebook.com/vabenefitblog?sk=app\\_129722457108553#!/vabenefitblog?sk=wall](https://www.facebook.com/vabenefitblog?sk=app_129722457108553#!/vabenefitblog?sk=wall)

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**Douglas A-4 Skyhawk: 6:10 min video**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAplCSSZqAs&feature=related>

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**Vietnam War Documentary Trailer:**

[http://www.v-prod.com/trailer\\_vietnam.html](http://www.v-prod.com/trailer_vietnam.html)

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**A-4 Skyhawk Photo Galleries on Flickr.com website: Some of our Saints photos are in there!!!**

[www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623353551691/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623353551691/)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623815542532/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623815542532/)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623727604239/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623727604239/)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623854694748/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623854694748/)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623854748712/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623854748712/)

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**RAO BULLETIN Update, 01 Feb** to read the **Articles** go to the web site at: [http://post\\_119\\_gulfport\\_ms.](http://post_119_gulfport_ms.)



# SAINTS ONBOARD (260 Names)

“Muster Call”

Revised 02 Feb 2018

New or changed address:

William Horton

See website roster

*Please advise if you have any additions or corrections.*

**Complete Muster Call can be found on the Saints website – [www.va163.org](http://www.va163.org) (password, *Saints4ever*) capital S**

