

Toooo Weeet... Attention on Deck...“Saints...March newsletter”...Arriving!

ALSO ON SAINTS WEBSITE

VA-163 SAINTS GRAM

—|—
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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 196



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"





ONCE A SAINT, ALWAYS A SAINT



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_A-4_Skyhawk







Birds of a feather... Flock Together





[Click Here](http://www.flickr.com/photos/va163saints/sets/) <http://www.flickr.com/photos/va163saints/sets/>

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

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

View Counts as of 14 Feb 2019

Photos

874,365 views

Albums

31,201 views

Total

933,499 views



www.Flickr.com charges \$49.99 per year to keep the [SAINTS Photo Albums](#) on their web site.

****PAID \$49.99 annual Flickr.com photo site fee on 15 Nov 2018****

NOTE: Flickr went up on their annual fee from \$24.95 p/yr to \$49.99. They say because we were over the 1000 picture limit, and that they had been giving us a discount in the past. So, they doubled the price...go figure! We presently have 4,832 pictures on the site.



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

THE WEBSITE HAS THE LATEST NEWSLETTERS AND ROSTER

Saints website www.va163.org (password: *Saints4ever* (capital S))

15,598 Visitors since Mar 09

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

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

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

***** Paid 22 Feb 2018: Domain Registration \$26.90 for 2 years, next due 31 Mar 20**

***** Paid 31 Mar 2018: Domain Protection \$4.50**

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

Ed **Copher**

176 Landa Street #315

New Braunfels, TX 78130

Any donations are appreciated

Folks that have sent in donations 2017-18: A big shout out..."Thank You"

Ed **Chadwick**

David Farley

JC Ferris

Tom Harwood

Bill Houk

Tom Kline

Dan Lestage

Pete Munro

Floyd Oakes

MA Petty

John Roosen

Bill Sargent

Russ Stickley

James Thompson

Bill Tomko

Anthony Stable

James Marcely (VA-164)



[Ed & Stella made the front page of the New Braunfels newspaper: 26 Feb](#)

It's a long rough road to recovery, but better than the alternative! We did not have any symptoms, felt like teenagers, went to the gym 3 times a week, and just went in for routine test. The doctors said we both were heart attacks looking for a place to happen. Known as "The silent killer" or "Widow Maker". Thanks for all the thoughts & prayers, and thank God for the blessings.



Two Hearts Brought Together: Stella & Ed Copher married on 9 May 2018. Less than nine months later after the couple married, the two both did cardiac tests that revealed they would both need open heart surgery. Stella's surgery was done on 7 Jan and Ed's on 21 Jan. (two weeks apart). Ed gave up his slot so his wife could receive treatment first.



[Oriskany from Crows Nest: 1967](#)

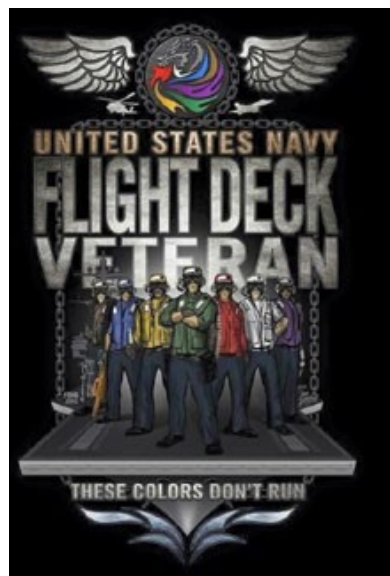
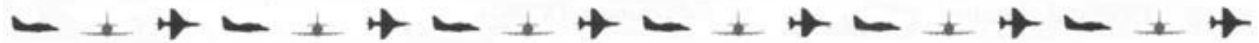


[Oriskany Cat: 1967](#)



[Saints Bombing 1967:](#)





Oriskany Fire Poem by Saint Robert Lee:

26 October 1966 (Over heard at a Saint's reunion)

The morning fire ball lit the sky
It was another day for us to fly
Two sorties each pilot had to make
Twenty four hours we must work without mistake
We slept and ate when we could
It was never long but it was always good

The pilots were exhausted like their crew
We had been like that a month or two
The night flights were done and the birds were all back safe
The Oriskany turned into the wind to begin another race
We were preparing for the daylight raids that now would take nights place
Bombs were on the hanger deck with fuel hose strung to the planes
Munitions not exploded were parked into their lanes

Magnesium flares 4 feet long had come back on that night
We hung them from a copter to light the way for troops down in the fight
We would drop them from a jet to light the folks below
So we could lay down Napalm, it made a lovely show
Death from above is clean and sweet
When it is people you will never meet
The flares were made safe by a key removed when they were load

A key someone forgot to get when they came back unexploded

The ship was turned into the wind the crew was in a race
A dead tired crew, with explosives new, in that crowded space
Not to play with matches is what I heard my mother say
But the Navy told two teenage boys to stow those flares away
They did what they were told and put them in the explosive locker
Until the last one just ignited it really was a shocker
The boys did not know what to do
So they did the wrong thing that is true

They threw it in the locker and they batten down the door
I guess they thought it would go out when the air was no more
The ship sounded general quarters and the fire control team was on the spot
But when they got to that locker it was burning bright and hot

They could not get inside it no matter how they tried
The steel was burning red hot and all that touched it soon was fried

Fire travels fast throughout a ship that's made of steel
Steel is no barrier to heat transfer, it is a deadly deal
Pressure grew inside that locker till it could hold no more
Then it blew across the hanger deck into the quarter's door

A fire ball shot down the corridor where the officers stay
And burned the lungs of anyone that dared get in its way
It lit up crafts on the hanger deck and they began to burn
Smoke jammed down the corridor because we made that turn
Into the wind that now brought smoke and death we very soon would learn

Cabins were now death traps were men died from smoke before they burned
One commander that I knew said "This is not my day to die"
He stripped down to his skivvies, then got naked as could be
And he squeezed out of his port hole, that's the way that he got free
Then he jumped into some fire gear and helped us in our fight
He worked just like an enlisted man well into the night

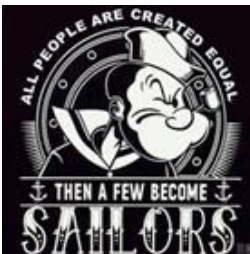
We finally got the fire out and the ship was still afloat
We transferred dead and dying on to another boat
We limped back down to Subic Bay where we patched her up again

We transferred dead and dying on to another boat
We limped back down to Subic Bay where we patched her up again
Then sailed her home to Hunters Point where they put her damage to an end

I think about these events and I cannot let them go
I dream about the men we lost and the ones I did not know
In early morning when I wake, particularly each fall
I see them in the ceiling and shadows on the wall
Forty Four souls died that day, and submitted to Gods call
Why did it have to happen? Where would you place the blame?
It was not those teenage sailors that the Navy soon would name

If you would listen to my tale I will tell you what I think
It was those fools in Washington that drove us to the brink

Robert Lee



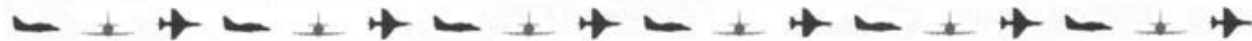
SCUTTLEBUTT

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.

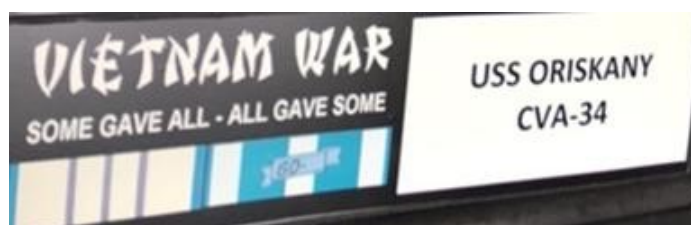
Skyhawk Association Digital Journal: Feb 2017

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

[Skyhawk Association Journal - THE A-4ever](#)

a4skyhawk.info

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:



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.
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1. Great Oriskany Photos from Dive Shop Pensacola: www.mbtdivers.com
2. The best pictures of the reefing. *Going to her final resting place:* <http://www.irishmansoftware.com/Oriskany.htm>
3. Oriskany Reunion Association: www.ussoriskany.com
4. Video of Big O going under: <http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-1401279762745553286&q=oriskany>
5. Patriot Media "The Mighty O": <http://patriotmediainc.com/>
6. Oriskany Dive Video & Photos: http://www.oriskanycharterboats.com/oriskany_photos.htm
7. Diving Oriskany Reef, 25 March 2007: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9l-wYnIBZis>
8. 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>
9. Oriskany 1967 Vietnam Combat Cruise, DVD sale: http://www.cv41.org/GRS/uss_oriskany_67/index.html
10. Oriskany Information and History/Pictures: <http://www.pnj.com/newsfiles/oriskany/index.shtml>
11. Oriskany model: <http://www.motionmodels.com/ships/cv/>
12. USS Oriskany Photo Galleries: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/7437991@N08/galleries/72157622440145584>
13. USS Oriskany History 1972: <http://www.ussoriskany.com/id17.html>

14. **USS Oriskany digital Cruise Book Project** (<http://glewis.us/obooks.htm>)
15. Oriskany 1970...Flight Ops: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXaKTJIVxHM&feature=email> 10 min
16. **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
17. **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
18. **Saints Video on YouTube: Dennis Lund video filmed on the Oriskany including the Oriskany fire!**
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJ5ykZjRaIM>
19. **USS Hancock: Click here: Scotty Moore - The USS Hancock ("Hannah")**
-
20. **Tour of Duty photo site: 3000 photos, some Saints** <https://www.flickr.com/groups/435090@N22/>
21. **USS Oriskany Fire & Sinking: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS2uky8K5Jk** 42 min video
22. **1963 TOUR OF THE USS Oriskany: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e92t7kgV_Ws &**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9Mh975VCII>
23. **O Boat Sinking Video: http://trib.al/t69QQT4**
24. **Oriskany Video: With F-4's https://youtu.be/e92t7kgV_Ws**
25. **USS Oriskany Alumni: "facebook page" and gallery has some great photos. Go to Facebook to join the group.**

Oriskany Link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/28616026909/permalink/10155705239611910?sfns=mo>

Oriskany Sinking Article & photos:

<https://fighterjetsworld.com/naval/the-u-s-navy-blows-up-aircraft-carrier-sets-world-record-that-still-stands/10506/>

181 Pictures from Oriskany, including inaction Fire photos:

No need to log in.

<https://genelewis.smugmug.com/SLIDE-GALLERY-FROM-JAMON-KENT-PH2/>

[ADM Stockdale History:](#)

<http://usnhistory.navylive.dodlive.mil/2015/11/13/navy-legend-vice-adm-stockdale-led-pow-resistance/>

[49 plane flyover:](#)

Click here: [Arrowhead Stadium, 49 plane flyover - YouTube](#)

[Great Military Commercial:](#)

https://www.youtube.com/embed/uoABty_zE00?rel=0

[Skyhawk Association:](#) Scroll down for articles about VA-163 and other units. Also about NAS Lemoore.

David Weber (AKA “Twidget”) one of our website volunteers has developed a site map for the Skyhawk Association website. Dave has written the computer code which will allow users to simply click on a particular link and go directly to that location on the web. There is also a “Glossary” located in the Ready Room under the heading “Finding Stuff”. We hope you find these latest web tools useful. Thanks to all for volunteering to be an SDO. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Thanks as always, George

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article/aviators>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/page/civilian-skyhawks>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/collings-foundation> Collings Foundation <http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/vac>

Valiant Air Command <http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/tass> TASS <http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/a4llc> A-4L

LLC <http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/draken-international>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/va125>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/va163>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/nas-lemoore>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/vmt103>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/vmat203>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/faq>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/mcas-el-toro>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/mcas-kaneohe-bay>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/aes12>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article-unit/mcas-cherry-point>

<http://a4skyhawk.info/article/skyhawks-around-world>

[Navy Commercial:](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/USNavyAircraftCarriers/videos/10156139765898669/>

[Article about Stockdale:](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/Tailhook.Association/posts/1613398878698053>

[Vietnam Wall--THIS IS AMAZING!](#)

This is really sobering. First click on a state. When it opens, scroll down to the city where you went to high school and look at the names. Click on the name and it will give details of the person's death, a picture 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. Pass the link on to others, as many knew wonderful people whose names are listed.

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

[Vietnam Aircraft Losses:](#)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_aircraft_losses_of_the_Vietnam_War

[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

www.youtu.be/1mfdRvzUVtM

www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgwEWSjzww8

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>

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>

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

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

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

[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

Ho Chi Minh Trail Tours:

www.laosgpsmap.com/ho-chi-minh-trail-tours/

[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

[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>

[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#mediaphotosbobaspotlightgallery=%252Fflightbox%252Fa-soldier-s-story-never-before-seen-images-of-vietnam-war-slideshow%252Fvietnam-photo--599932096.html>

[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>

[NAS Lemoore April 1968:](#)

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

[Photos/History of Vietnam:](#)

Excellent Viet Nam Pictorial History

From the Denver Post.

Click here: [VietamPictorialHistory](#)

[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>

[A-4 Skyhawks:](#)

<http://a4skyhawk.org/>

[When the Saints Go Marching In - US Navy Seventh Fleet Band](#)

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

[VA Benefits Blog on Facebook:](#)

VA Benefit Blog

https://www.facebook.com/vabenefitblog?sk=app_129722457108553#!/vabenefitblog?sk=wall

[Douglas A-4 Skyhawk: 6:10 min video](#)

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

[Vietnam War Documentary Trailer:](#)

http://www.v-prod.com/trailer_vietnam.html

[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/

www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623815542532/

www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623727604239/

www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623854694748/

www.flickr.com/photos/45586426@N06/galleries/72157623854748712/

[RAO BULLETIN Update, 01 March](#) to read the [Articles](#) go to the web site at:

http://post_119_gulfport_ms.tripod.com/rao1.html



SAINTS ONBOARD (260 Names)

“Muster Call”

Revised 06 March 2019

New or changed address:

Ed Copher: newsman242@gmail.com

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 (password, *Saints4ever*) capital S