

OneLegacy Donate Life Rose Parade® Float

Example of an Honoree Biography

A biography is required for every honoree therefore we have included a sample below for your reference. If selected, the full biography will be featured on each individual honoree's page in addition to an edited capsule version when featured with other honorees.

John Patrick O'Laughlin was passionate about life. His family recalls a hardworking, honest, loyal man with a fun sense of humor ... the trickster and firecracker in the family. Anything he did became a passion, including serving the USA, enjoying his Ford trucks and Mustangs, teaching sailors and Marines how to care for F14 and F18 jets, dancing competitive country western, and just having fun with family. This devoted father and husband loved it all.

During nearly 34 years of active duty in the Navy and then the reserves, John saw the world stationed aboard ships including the USS Enterprise, Ranger and Forrestal. His numerous awards included the Navy Humanitarian Service Medal and recognition for tours of duty in Desert Storm and liberating Kuwait.

Despite having open-heart surgery several years earlier, John continued to make a difference as a Naval contractor. Three days after returning from a routine 6-month deployment to Saudi Arabia, this active 61-year-old died suddenly and unexpectedly from a stroke. His family knew his wishes. He had always said, "When I go, donate my organs to those who need them. When I am gone I won't need them and someone else will."

While he wouldn't consider himself a hero, John's family and friends do. So do the two people who can see because he was a cornea donor, the nearly 50 people he helped heal as a tissue donor, and the three people whose lives he saved as an organ donor, including a kidney recipient at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, MD. (Through the Department of Defense Share Program, military donors in San Diego can designate a kidney to save the life of someone on the waiting list who is active duty military, a retiree or dependent.)

John O'Laughlin's family also knows this long-time mariner would have loved sailing on the Donate Life Rose Parade Float catamarans dedicated to teammates.