

**MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

Proudly Honors

JOHN FRANCIS O'GRADY

**UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
COLONEL (O-6)**

**APPOINTMENT TO ANNAPOLIS – JUNE 1948
COMMISSIONED – 1952**

**MISSING IN ACTION – APRIL 10, 1967
DECLARED DEAD – MARCH 15, 1977**

as

PURPLE HEART PATRIOT

MAY 2026

Tristen Winston, Honoring His Service and Sacrifice

Sponsored by: Prairie Chapter, NSDAR



John Francis O'Grady was born on August 31, 1929, in New Hyde Park, New York, the only child of Irish immigrants.

He graduated from La Salle High School Military Academy at the top of his class and was ranked among the top ten students of all high school military academies nationwide. His outstanding academic record secured him an automatic appointment to Annapolis: The United States Naval Academy. He entered the Academy in June 1948 and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1952. That same year, he married his childhood sweetheart, Diana Pascale.

He majored in Aeronautical Engineering and graduated with honors at the top of his class in 1952. He later earned his master's degree in Aeronautical Engineering. In addition to being an engineer, he also became a jet fighter pilot with specialized training and expertise in the anti-ballistic weapons systems on the F-4 aircraft that he helped design. He also worked on the Saturn and Jupiter rocket booster system at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama, which put the first monkeys into space.

He completed many additional trainings and was promoted through the ranks. Major O'Grady was deployed to Southeast Asia in January 1967, where he served as an F-105 pilot with the 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Takhli Royal Thai AFB, Thailand, from January 1967 until he was forced to eject over North Vietnam on April 10, 1967. It is believed that he was captured immediately, dying that same day, but he was officially listed as MIA. He was declared dead on March 15, 1977, and posthumously promoted to Colonel. His remains have never been returned to the United States.



He left behind his wife of 14 years and their seven children.

During his four months in Southeast Asia, he earned the Silver Star, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, two Bronze Star Medals, and a Purple Heart.

Colonel O'Grady is memorialized on the Courts of the Missing at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii. His name is also inscribed on Panel 18E, Line 12 on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, DC.