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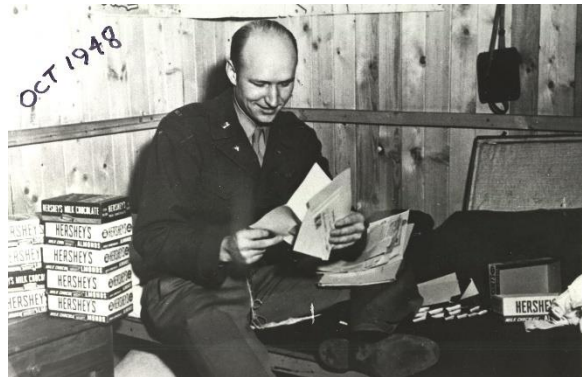
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COLONEL GAIL SEYMOUR “HAL” HALVORSEN (USAF Ret.) TO RECEIVE 2020 ANNUAL OUTSTANDING AVIATOR AWARD

‘Berlin Candy Bomber’ Honored for Bravery and Sweet Generosity

New York, NY – (March 3, 2020) – The Wings Club Foundation, Inc. and IAWA (International Aviation Women’s Association) are pleased to announce Colonel Gail Seymour “Hal” Halvorsen (USAF Ret.) as the recipient of the 2020 annual Outstanding Aviator Award. The presentation of this year’s Award will take place during The Wings Club Foundation’s Annual Meeting to be held on the evening of Wednesday, March 25, 2020, at The Yale Club in New York City. In addition, The Hershey Company will make a presentation to Halvorsen in recognition of the collaboration they shared seventy-two years ago.



Colonel Halvorsen is a retired Air Force officer pilot and spacecraft engineer. Born in Utah in 1920, he is known all over the world as the “Berlin Candy Bomber”, “Uncle Wiggly Wings” or the “Chocolate Pilot” as he gained notoriety for dropping Hershey’s Milk Chocolate bars and other sweet treats in parachutes to German children during the Berlin Airlift from 1948 to 1949. The name of the campaign was “Operation Little Vittles.”

During the Airlift, Halvorsen had the idea to drop candy parachutes to Berlin children he had met at the barbed wire fence next to the runway at Tempelhof airport. After talking to these children and giving them the two sticks of gum he had in his pocket, he promised to bring them more on his next flight into the airport. They would know him because he would “wiggle his wings.”

Overall, Halvorsen and other pilots sourced and dropped 23 tons of candy and chocolate to the children of Berlin. The Berlin Airlift, the largest humanitarian effort in Air Force history, is still remembered for relieving the plight of some 2.5 million beleaguered West Berlin residents.

Halvorsen joined the United States Army Air Corp in 1942 after the attack on Pearl Harbor and trained on fighters with the Royal Air Force in Oklahoma, earning both his RAF wings and US Army Air Corp wings in 1944. Assigned to military transport service, Halvorsen flew in the South Atlantic Theater, including Brazil and Africa, from 1944-47. He flew various transport missions until the Berlin Airlift 1948-49. From 1949-1952 following “The Berlin Airlift,” he received his Bachelor and master’s degrees in Aeronautical Engineering under the Air Force Institute of Technology program. From 1952 to 1970 he was assigned research and development duties with Air Force Systems Command and beginning in 1958, research and development and operational duties in the Air Force Space Program. The Titan III Space Launch vehicle was one of his special projects. From 1970-74 Halvorsen was the USAF commanding officer at Tempelhof Airport, Berlin. Halvorsen retired from the Air Force in 1974 with over 8,000 flying hours. From 1975-1985 he was Assistant Dean of Student Life at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah and is honorary President of the non-profit Halvorsen Foundation.

Throughout his lifetime, Halvorsen received numerous awards and recognitions such as the Cheney Award in 1949; the Legion of Merit and the Distinguished Service Cross to the Order of Merit-Federal Republic of Germany in 1974 and the Congressional Bronze Medal (Civil Air Patrol) in 2014 to name a few. He has been invited back to Germany numerous times over the years and returned last year to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift.

Since its inception in 2010, the annual [Outstanding Aviator Award](#) has been presented to iconic recipients such as: the Tuskegee Airmen, the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP), the Doolittle Raiders, Patty Wagstaff, Robert A. “Bob” Hoover, Suzanna Darcy-Hennemann, Colonel Edward T. Rock (USAF Ret.), Major Heather Penney (USAF Ret.), Major General Patrick Henry Brady (US Army Ret.) and Brigadier General Jeannie M. Leavitt.

[The Wings Club Foundation, Inc.](#) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Its mission is to focus on initiatives aimed at supporting scholarships for students pursuing a career in aviation or aerospace; providing programs to educate in the field of aviation and supporting charitable organizations that use aviation to help those in need. The Wings Club Foundation serves over [1,300 members](#) including industry leaders, pilots, professionals in related service organizations and students of aviation.

[The International Aviation Womens Association® \(IAWA\)](#) is a nonprofit association providing a worldwide network dedicated to promoting the advancement of women in the aviation and aerospace industries at all levels across the globe. IAWA sponsors informative meetings, hosts receptions and connects, publishes newsletters, and keeps its members updated on the latest industry developments.

[The Hershey Company](#) is headquartered in Hershey, Pa., and is an industry-leading snacks company known for bringing goodness to the world through its iconic brands, remarkable people and enduring commitment to help children succeed. Hershey has approximately 16,500 employees around the world who work every day to deliver delicious, quality products. The company has more than 80 brands around the world that drive \$8 billion in annual revenues, including such iconic brand names as *Hershey's*, *Reese's*, *Kit Kat*, *Jolly Rancher*, *Ice Breakers*, *SkinnyPop* and *Pirate's Booty*. For more than 125 years, Hershey has been committed to operating fairly, ethically and sustainably. Hershey founder, Milton Hershey, created the Milton Hershey School in 1909 and since then the company has focused on helping children succeed.

For more information on The Wings Club Foundation visit www.wingsclub.org. Follow us on [Twitter](#) , [Facebook](#) and [You Tube](#).