

**LAVERNE GRIFFIN (INDUCTED BY PHS HOF MEMBER RAY GLOECKLER)**

Laverne Griffin graduated from Portage High School in 1946 and volunteered for the military. Two years later, Griffin received his Air Force commission. He was assigned to the 12th Reconnaissance Squadron and became one of the premier aerial reconnaissance operatives in the U.S. Air Force. In 1954, Griffin led the first military reconnaissance over-flights of the Soviet Union. Griffin and his team succeeded, but the flights remained top secret. Although he did not reveal the mission to anyone for decades, Griffin led reconnaissance flights into Russia to determine the nation's nuclear capabilities and threat level. He earned three United States Air Force Distinguished Flying Crosses within 30 days.