

# AVIATION WALL OF HONOR



## **First Lieutenant Donald Leonard Kiiskila Pilot US Navy WW II Air Corps**

Donald Kiiskila was born October 3, 1920 in National Mine and graduated from National Mine High School in 1938. He attended Northern Michigan College of Education at which time he started pre-flight training under Sig Wilson at the Marquette County Airport. After attending Michigan State in Lansing, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy Air Corps. He trained at Corpus

Christi, Texas, graduated July 7, and was commissioned an Ensign in the United States Naval Reserve.

Kiiskila was assigned to the Air Transportation Squadron II based in Honolulu, Hawaii. In the subsequent five years, he flew a total of 3,500 hours in PBMs, PB2Ys and C-54 aircraft.

Squadron II was the land plane unit of the huge Pacific Wing Transport Service flying 100 four-engine Skymasters nearly three million miles a month between the Orient and Oakland, California. Toward the end of the war in the Pacific, it was bringing home men who once landed under fire at places like Pelelieu, Guam, and Okinawa.

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Kiiskila ultimately was piloting the Martin Mars flying boat, the largest seaplane in the world.



Following separation from the Navy, he spent time in California before returning to Ishpeming. He managed Bietala's Sport Shop for many years and married Sylvia Sippala. He died in 1993.

TJ Mudge, July 2004