

Francis (Nick) Lung



In choosing members to feature, it seemed right to start with our eldest member which we did and this month we are honored to feature our Membership Chairperson click, as he will be inducted into the Illinois Aviation Hall of Fame on May 25, 2011. He will be inducted during the Illinois Aviation Conference May 25. Nick has the following ratings: CFII, CFII Multi Engine, Commercial Glider, Sea Plane, ASEL, ASMEL, British Private Pilot, Flight Engineer (Reciprocating and Jet). Type ratings: DC-3, DC-6, DC-7, Boeing, 727 DC10.

Nick started the Ogle County Pilots Association in 1975 and was the first President. He served for many years as secretary and is presently on the Board of Directors. The Ogle County Airport C-55 was also founded by him in 1978. In 2007, the airport received "The Airport of the Year in Illinois."

In addition he was the founding member of the Rock River Flyers, which is still in operation, he started the Aviation Division of the Ogle County Sheriff's Department in 1984, and was the primary pilot (on a volunteer basis). Nick has operated his own RLA airport on his farm near Leaf River, Illinois since 1975. He was also one of the founders of the Illinois Council of Independent Airports and the Illinois Ultralight Adviser Council. Nick Retired from United Airlines with over 26,000 hours of flight time.

Other Aviation Activities include: Member of EAA Chapters 22 and 23 located at Cottonwood and Rockford. Member of Ogle County Airport, Mt. Morris and newsletter editor since 1966. Volunteer at Air Venture, Oshkosh over 20 years. Served as chief judge of Ultralights and light planes for 12 years. Newsletter editor for Ogle County Pilots from 1976 to 1990. Received his CFI rating in 1969 and is currently an active pilot. Received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award June 2006. Frank Murray Award from EAA Chapter 22 in 2005 for volunteer work within the chapter. He is a volunteer for the EAA aircraft raffle at the convention that he aided in starting in Rockford. In 1953 he was flying F-86's in Korea for the USAF. Completed 12 solo crossings of the Atlantic in single engine jets and is a charter member of F-86 Sabre Pilots Association. Member of the Airborne Law Enforcement Association from 1966-2005.

Most of his aviation activities other than the airlines has been on a volunteer basis. Nick became a private pilot in 1948 and says "he has been flying for 58 years and is still going strong—it's been a good ride".