

The Gazette

Columnist turns love affair with old planes into a series

by [Lyle Muller/Gazette editor](#) :: UPDATED: 18 July 2010 | 6:50 am :: in [Blogs](#), [Mulling it over](#) :: [No Comments](#)

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Last year at this time we reminisced about the 40th anniversary of human beings from Earth landing on the moon for the first time. Of particular interest to Eastern Iowa was the role [Rockwell Collins of Cedar Rapids](#) played in that flight, creating the telecommunications system that allowed those of us back here on the mother ship to see and hear Neil Armstrong speak the first words from the moon on July 20, 1969.

This summer our attention goes back 100 years, to the first manned flights in Iowa. I hope you have been following [Dave Rasdal's](#) columns on this.

Dave launched a series of columns on this marker in Iowa history [two weeks ago when he wrote](#) about that first flight by Art Hartman, which amounted to going 10 feet into the air on May 10, 1910, in Burlington.

The columns are running in The Gazette on Mondays. This week's installment includes the burst in air activity in Iowa during the 1920s and commercial flight in this state. Iowa City had a significant role in the state's commercial flight history, even though [passenger service at the city's airport ended in 1972](#). Dave explains that role.

Dave clearly has a love affair with these old flying machines and we are glad that passion is coming through in his columns. He has come up with some interesting nuggets. For example, last week he told us how the first black man to get a pilot's license in the United States, J. Herman Banning, faced prejudice but still was able to find someone who would teach him how to fly. That teacher was Ray Fisher of Des Moines, [who gave the lessons in Iowa](#), Dave told us.

If you enjoy this kind of rich Iowa history, the columns will run through Sept. 6. If you want some hands-on fun, aviation enthusiasts are to gather in Burlington on Sept. 18 for an event called Fly Iowa to celebrate 100 years of flight in Iowa.

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About Lyle Muller


Lyle Muller is Editor of The Gazette. A native Iowan and University of Iowa graduate, he has held various reporting and editing jobs with The Gazette since 1987. He became Editor in February 2009.

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