

# Native Wings

Lofty goals, airy ambition, the urge to fly high with one's dreams -- a part of life that many court but few realize.

Antilles Air Boats Capt. Svend Oveson's dream was too vivid, too real to be allowed to fade and yield to the dedication required to lift himself into the clouds. His vision is now reality as he sits at the controls of a Grumman Mallard shuttling passengers between islands here in his homeland.

Oveson's climb is a success story which not only marks a personal and professional milestone for him but signals a new era within the company he works for.

Oveson is now the first native Virgin Islander to captain an Antilles Air Boat. His achievement is the culmination of a dream by another man -- Capt. Charlie Blair -- who founded the commuter airline with the idea that someday, Virgin Islanders could be found doing productive work at every level within the company's system.

Though Capt. Blair was not alive to see Oveson make that first takeoff

as an Antilles captain, he was the one who originally encouraged Oveson to take up flying.

Preparing himself for the post wasn't an easy task. After acquiring his private pilot certificate, Oveson took advantage of the G.I. Bill to earn his commercial and multi-engine sea ratings.

Armed with those credentials and 200 hours flying time, he was able to lock in on a part-time first-officer spot with Antilles in 1976. He still had his regular job as manager of Marriot Food Service on St. Croix but was able to continue building up hours and experience on weekends.

We couldn't be happier to see Oveson breaking ground under the new direction at Antilles of the internal promotion program.

Capt. Oveson made the climb the hard way on a dedicated path which often leaves others discouraged and beaten. We congratulate him and Antilles management in this achievement and look forward to knowing that we're safely in the hands of a pilot who knows what it means to hold tightly to his goals.