

CALGARY HERALD

Parker: Calgary company eases flight for airline attendants

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Vaughan Payne, president and CEO of Dakota Supplies, and Deborah Humphries, co-founder and chief operating officer.

To many, the life of airline attendants sounds glamorous. They meet and serve interesting people and get overnight stays in locales like Maui or London.

But most people don't think about one of the worst parts of the job — in-flight cleaning of those tightly-squeezed washrooms.

However, Vaughan Payne pondered the limited time and lack of proper tools available for the task while taking many flights, thanks to his leadership roles in the transportation industry. He decided to do something about this problem.

Now, as president and CEO of Dakota Supplies, Payne is able to provide a cleaning system that is well suited for use in any transportation sector where storage space is at a premium or where there is a risk of spills and cross contamination.

Payne was born in Malawi, then known as Nyasaland, where his parents worked for the British Civil Service. He was sent to England for schooling when he was eight, but by the time he was 18 he decided to seek his own adventures in Canada and applied to become a trainee with the Hudson Bay Company.

He says it was a bit of a shock to be dropped off at the airstrip in Tuktoyaktuk, but not long after that he joined Imperial Oil's Northern Operations.

In 1979, Payne became air services supervisor for Dome Petroleum, responsible for fixed and rotary wing air logistic requirements for crew and freight movements involved in the Beaufort Sea operations of Canadian Marine Drilling.

When Dome closed down, it sold a Boeing 737 to PWA which is where Payne met Peter Wallis, then vice-president and legal counsel to the airline, and now board chair of Dakota Supplies.

Payne's career in travel and logistics continued with executive positions at Petro-Canada, Amex and Carlson Wagonlit Travel, along with presidential roles at ATCO Travel and Custom Travel Solutions for six years.

Travelling tens of thousands of miles by air, he says it was easy to feel empathy for the flight attendants who were required by operating procedures to inspect toilets regularly and clean up frequent messes on longer flights.

Payne's concerns have resulted in a revolutionary and "touchless" cleaning solution called Moppitt — a product developed in conjunction with the airline industry to address the occupational health, safety and hygiene needs for both staff and passengers.

At Dakota Supplies, Payne — along with co-founder/COO Deborah Humphries and operations/R&D manager Garner Meszaros — provides a product that can be stored in a small closet or overhead bin. The device is ready to use as a touchless, safer, faster and easier method to deal with messes in-flight, or in any confined spaces such as trains, RVs, hotel rooms and ambulances.

Moppitt consists of a lightweight Extenda-pole and pads that are pre-moistened with Celeste non-toxic, biodegradable cleaners to take care of dust, dirt and spills on galley and lavatory floors, sinks and toilets.

Celeste serves the aviation industry worldwide and is acting as global distributor for Moppitt. Trials are currently being conducted by a major American carrier, a Canadian airline and at the airport in Singapore. And, a Calgary hotel is also conducting an evaluation through staff members who are carrying Moppitts on their cleaning carts.

Dakota continues to innovate the product and extend patents for industry specific applications, while working with leading distributors and resellers.

News and notes

Bellstar — a Calgary-based leader in hotel and resort management — has added The Royal Private Residences Club in Kelowna to its portfolio of Western Canadian resorts. Bellstar Hotels & Resorts now oversees the management of the 70-unit hotel currently managed by Marriott International Delta Hotels brand. The luxury resort hotel is located on the waterfront of Lake Okanagan in the downtown business district of Kelowna.

Other destination resorts managed by Bellstar are in Alberta’s Rocky Mountains and in B.C, at Kicking Horse Mountain and on Vancouver Island.

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Part of the world’s sixth-largest network of audit, tax and consulting firms, RSM Canada has continued its expansion across Canada with new offices in Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer. Collins Barrow is joining forces with RSM Canada and will acquire its assets in Alberta, with the transactions expected to close by early November. David Hird will continue as managing partner of the Calgary office.

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