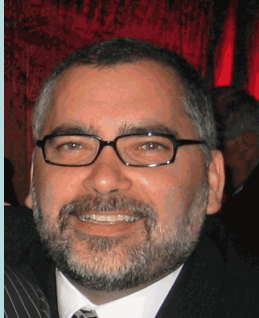




## Member Spotlight: Gary Blair



Gary Blair

### Gary Blair, President, Tele-Page

#### Q: Could you tell us how and when your business began?

**A:** The company was started in 1970 under the name of Alert Answering Service Ltd. by my grandmother Florence and my parents, Ron and Audrey Blair. At the time, my grandmother had been working in the industry for some 30 years and – her words not mine – “at sixty-four years of age it was either retire the following year and wait to die or start her own service.” She decided on the latter, working full-time up until the age of 80, after which she enjoyed 20 years of very active retirement until she passed away in 2006 at the age of 100. The name Tele-Page was adopted in 1980 after we became a licensed Paging Carrier.

#### Q: What are your most common accounts?

**A:** I’m starting to think we have no more common accounts. Actually, that’s not entirely true. We certainly have a strong base of traditional TAS business that represents the gamut of the traditional users, but as time goes on, we have more and more special needs business, much of it requiring more IT emphasis, customized reporting and a more sophisticated level of agent.



Our team - the heart and soul of Tele-Page

#### Q: When did you start using Amtelco equipment and why?

**A:** We installed our Infinity in April of this year and almost immediately began using it for specific stand-alone voice mail and paging applications. We made the decision of going IS from day one for each and every account and have our official cut scheduled for late October. We chose Amtelco equipment because of its reputation for reliability and the company’s commitment to innovation.

#### Q: When did you join NAEO and why?

**A:** We joined NAEO when we signed for our system in November of 2007 in order to learn and share and hopefully, one day, to be able to return the same to others – be they newcomers or some of the long-term Infinity operators – as I’m of the firm belief that everyone has something to contribute and should. In the interim, my contribution is in the form of the quotes used for the *Newslinks* “Be Inspired” section.

#### Q: When did you begin in the business?

**A:** I joined the firm full-time in 1977 after graduation but, being a family business, I had always been active in the business on one level or another. I think my first responsibilities included washing floors, folding and stuffing invoices and anything no one else wanted to do.

#### Q: Tell us a little personal information about you, your family and your hobbies or interests.

**A:** In my precious spare time, my partner Earl and I run a private foundation called the Art for Healing Foundation. We started it six years ago after a good friend of ours died in-hospital. As art collectors, we both felt that the hospital environment he passed away in left much to be desired in terms of a “healing” environment and so the foundation was born. Six years after its inception, Earl now works full-time on the foundation and to date, we have hung just over two thousand works of art in 23 hospitals, geriatric centers and other health related facilities in and around Montreal. We’re also expanding and have just begun our very first project outside Quebec, in Toronto, Ontario. For anyone interested in knowing more about the foundation or to see some of our projects, you can visit us online at [www.artforhealingfoundation.org](http://www.artforhealingfoundation.org)

#### Q: What is one thing about you or your business that is different or unique?

**A:** Tele-Page is located in Montreal, Quebec, the heart of French-speaking Canada. A little known fact outside of Canada is that Montreal is the second largest French-speaking city in the world. As such, our center is fully bilingual and one of our very strong niche markets is providing French language services for other centers across Canada and the U.S.