

Amateur operators with vision loss

**Florentine Wallace
VA3FXY (Havelock, ON)**

Florentine wanted to connect with other people with vision loss, both in Canada and around the world. "People who are in your situation can truly understand what you are going through," she says.

A CNIB trainer helped her get started, and Florentine now enjoys talking to people around the globe. She learns about their cultures and customs and shares her own. "It's a very enriching experience."



**Bill McKendry
VE3WMY (Toronto, ON)**

Amateur Radio has opened up a new world for Bill, who attended the W. Ross MacDonald School in Brantford. He spent 10 months training to be an operator.

Receiving his licence in June 2003, Bill wasted little time hitting the airwaves and talking to new friends.

**Jim Kennett
VA7GPD (Surrey, BC)**

Jim was introduced to Amateur Radio at a BC Scout Jamboree in 1973. Overcoming dyslexia to get his licence, Jim is now an Amateur Radio veteran in BC who assists budding Amateur Radio operators who have vision loss.

Amateur Radio is a hobby, open to all, that allows operators to talk to each other worldwide, either through specialized radio equipment or via computer.

The CNIB Amateur Radio Program provides training and helps you obtain equipment to get you on the air.

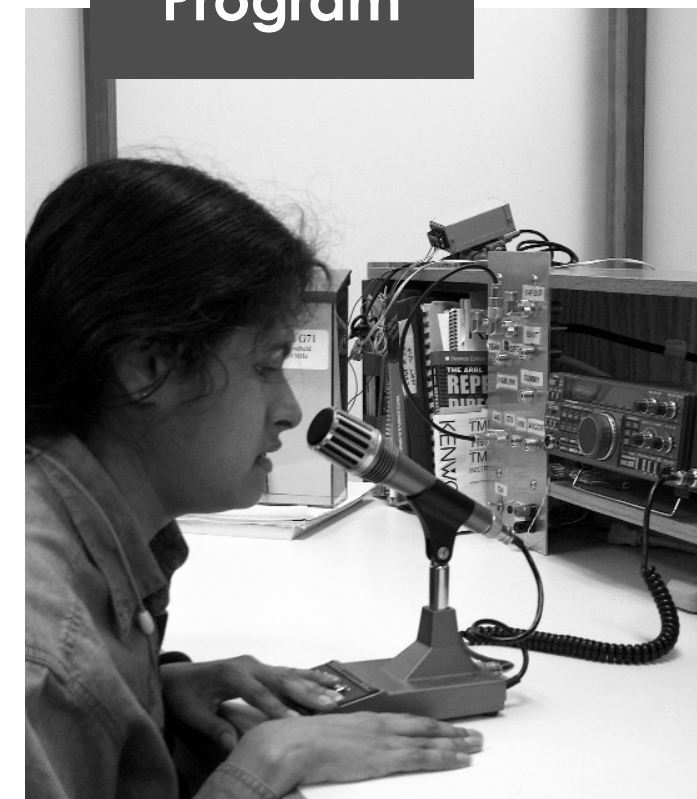
Contact us:
Randy Nelson, Manager
416-486-2500, ext. 7438
amateurradio@cnib.ca

cnib.ca/amateurradio

CNIB Amateur Radio Program
1929 Bayview Ave.
Toronto, ON M4G 3E8



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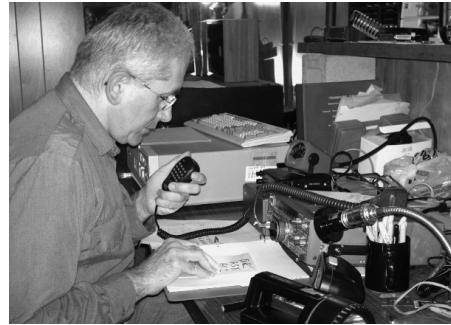


Amateur Radio operators, or "hams," communicate across neighbourhoods and oceans from their own homes using their radios or via the Internet.

Amateur Radio can be used purely for entertainment or for practical purposes like relaying messages in an emergency. Operators often form lasting friendships with the more than one million enthusiasts around the world.

To get you on the air, the Amateur Radio Program can help provide equipment and training materials, and help you prepare for the federal radio licence.

There are no age or citizenship restrictions and language is rarely a barrier since so many cultures speak English. Occasionally, a universal form of verbal shorthand is used.



**Bruce Atchison
VE6XTC**

All operators are on a first-name basis, and everyone is on equal terms; disability, social or financial status are of no importance.

What matters are common interests, passions, pursuits and a genuine interest in the art of conversation.

The benefits of Amateur Radio extend off the air. Membership in local clubs and social events allow operators to carry on their conversations face to face.



**Graham Bennett
VE3GBD**

You can also use your home computer to enhance your Amateur Radio experience. Contact the Amateur Radio Program for more information.

If you wish to support this CNIB-sponsored program through a donation, a contribution of used equipment or by volunteering, contact Randy Nelson.

The CNIB Amateur Radio Program

Established in 1967, CNIB's Amateur Radio Program now includes nearly 500 members from across Canada who have vision loss. The program provides a support network and makes equipment available for lease, sale or loan.

For more information, or to get involved, contact:

Randy Nelson VE3WRN
416-486-2500, ext. 7438
amateurradio@cnib.ca

Or visit
cnib.ca/amateurradio

Steve Schmuker VA3DUN, who has total vision loss, often helps fellow operator Harold Mosher VE3EBK with his antenna work.

