



FOOD FOR THOUGHT
~ A 2017 JAMBOREE *FOOD TEAM* COMMUNIQUE ~
~ MAY 2016 ~

Last month the Jamboree Food Team held a meeting of all its area leadership at the Summit. Unlike prior years, this meeting was the one and only contemplated for our whole Team. The target of this get-together was to plan what has to happen in 2016 to be ready for 2017. That objective was easily met and the meeting in fact went far beyond that. For this issue of *Food For Thought* let me share how a world scope crept into our April gathering.

Earlier in 2016, our 2017 Jamboree Food Team professional director, Rick Diles, was invited to serve as the 2019 World Jamboree Food Lead by the 2019 Director of Logistics, a Canadian gentleman named Kim Derry. With our 2017 Food Team meeting already scheduled, Rick invited Kim to join in and to learn how we plan food for a Jamboree. More than just enlightening Kim on our process, his presence was invaluable to the discussions during the weekend for one simple reason – what we are doing in the next couple years is critical to the planning for the 2019 World when its participants and International Service Team (IST) descend on the Summit.

Turning to what happened, the weekend was principally focused on area by area analysis of what key decisions needed to be made. So everyone is on the same page, Food Team has three primary areas – Food Distribution (feeding the participants), Staff Dining (feeding the staff of course) and Retail Food (all food we ‘sell’ from fancy catered events at Summit Center to snack bars that offer the ever popular pizza, burgers and fries). Each of these areas had several site specific things that needed to be confirmed, from the location of the grocery stores where the units will shop for their food, to the tent size and seating arrangement for the staff dining hall, and even pop-up retail food tent sites.

In the process of addressing these big issues our volunteer area leads had international challenges stirred into the pot as well. Let me start with an example from the staff dining area. In 2013 we had a successful arrangement for serving and seating staff that proved capable of having a short wait in line and an adequate number of seats



for all staff to have a spot to land with breakfast or dinner. To plan for 2017 alone would be straightforward because staff counts in 2017 look to be no higher than 2013 levels and a repetition of the layout would serve well. Then Kim threw the monkey wrench into the staff dining tent by suggesting that the target number of IST for 2019 would be 10,000. Honestly, when he said ten thousand I all but gasped. Aside, I looked back in my 2013 records and the final official staff count was 6,224 – which means we are facing a 60% increase and need to be prepared to feed nearly 4,000 MORE staff daily. That surely could tax the real estate of our staff dining tent, so instead of sitting back on the past successes and repeating the past plan our staff dining area leaders are undertaking a comprehensive analysis of how to maximize the space utilization in 2017 with an eye toward 2019 so we can accommodate five figures worth of staff each morning and evening then. As if that isn't enough change, think about the dietary dynamics of a World Jamboree clientele. Plans are going in place for 2017 to prototype serving lines that accommodate what we are terming 'dietary ways'. These for some are religiously driven, for others medically necessary and for some just a chosen way of life. We know from basic internet research that there will be a large percentage of vegetarians and vegans at the World Jamboree so it seems timely in 2017 to plan that into our staff dining food service along with kosher, halal and gluten free.

One might think we would get a little reprieve in planning for Retail Food at a World Jamboree, because of course everyone won't necessarily like or want 'our' snack bar fare. Instead we gleaned from Kim the major areas that need to plan toward a world venue (such as the Staff Camp Chat 'n Chew) and those that will vary wildly from normal operations. In that regard there will be International Food Houses, hosted by different countries. Naturally Food Team will have to help get them setup and through WV Health Department inspections but then they will run their own shows. Certainly the host countries will have our own Food Houses, but the number will be markedly smaller and maybe that is good because it always seems that finding volunteers to work at our snack bars is the hardest staffing endeavor Food Team faces each Jamboree.

Turning to the final area of Food Team – the participant feeding wing called Food Distribution – it has been challenged at every step of the way in 2017 to watch for 2019 issues as we lock in the new grocery store method of unit feeding. The Food Distribution leadership worked during the meeting last month and resolved refrigerated item storage, stock delivery timing and inventory levels we plan to carry throughout the Jamboree.



Most of what they do in planning 2017 will carry over to 2019, because of course the grocery store design is a world model, except of course the list of items that are stocked in the stores. Though not necessarily done by other host countries in prior World Jamborees, we are dedicated to bringing an international feel to the 2019 World Jamboree shopping markets instead of limiting ourselves to just the host country's commodities.

Hopefully that gives you a bit of the flavor of what our 2017 Jamboree Food Team is doing in preparation for the 2019 World. It will be for many of us an event of a lifetime, considering only once before (in 1967) was a World Jamboree held in the United States and if history repeats with half a century between its return that means few of us are likely to even have the chance to experience that twice. On that brevity of life note, let me close remembering on Memorial Day those who have passed in our country's service to enable us to do what we do with Scouting and in all other aspects of our lives.

