



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

This month's *Food for Thought* I hope you read as a reality check about staffing. Too often people are prone to rely on hope as the only plan for staffing their area of the Jamboree but Food Team is definitely not in that camp. We are actively working every angle to try to identify and sign up staff, but at the end of the day we are mindful that hard decisions will have to follow from volunteer staff levels and council unit participant sign-ups that are below target levels.

Let me first take the time to explain where the Jamboree Food Team stands in detail with respect to our staffing successes and shortcomings. Our organizational chart has several key areas and their staffing levels, in descending order, are as follows:

Chat 'n Chew: 100% of 2017 goal  
Pop-up retail staff: 100%  
Summit2Go lunch team: 100%  
Food Service Support Team: 100%  
Food Distribution: 95%  
Staff dining area: 49%  
Ice Distribution: 47.5%  
Catering staff: 25.8%  
Snack bar staff: 22.9%

Overall the Jamboree Food Team is currently at 82% of its actual staff in 2013 and in the big picture we are quite pleased with that. However the disparity in percentages, with almost half our areas at less than half their goal, causes two questions to mind from those numbers. The first question is: how does this affect the plan for food in those areas as it relates to the participants, staff and visitors? The second and corollary question is: how does this affect the plan for the Jamboree Food Team itself in those areas?

Naturally these are interwoven, for the Jamboree Food Team can only deliver a plan it can support with volunteer staff. We can't and won't overwork our Food Team staff in the process, so a reduction in services or some form of change in the plan will result. It may not come immediately, as hope springs eternal at all levels of Jamboree planning. At some point though, when unit count and staff numbers have to be contractually set with direct financial costs, then we will implement measures as necessary. These will not only keep the Jamboree Food Team within budget but also within Jamboree leadership promised happy staff working conditions and schedules. The one thing that will make the difference between now and then to the Jamboree Food Team is this: if everyone on our team would land just ONE friend each to join our staff then the choices become more financially driven and less personnel driven.



So pretend you are in a Dickens' novel and I'm the *Ghost of Jamboree Future*. Absent a change from the current course of staffing, I see snack bars that are fading to black. Not just a few, but many. Base camp burger fare is already on the bubble in all four locations and the dreamed expansion to offer an Oasis snack bar is drying up and could disappear as quickly as a mirage if we can't find staff to sell the healthy fare there. Though some may be glad for the lack of pizza boxes piled to the sky, Action Point snack bar is next on the list to cross the bridge to oblivion. I hope you are getting the picture that there has to be a reverse order of elimination if staffing the snack bars is not possible. Admittedly this is but a volunteer's portending, but I'd say an educated guess of events to come if we don't change something with staffing that is languishing on many levels.

Now as the nightmare continues, picture yourself flying with this apparition around the Staff Dining complex as I'll point there with a gnarled finger than represents the next set of cross hairs for cuts. From 2013 we know that a short wait and lots of food choices were welcomed and the objective for Jamboree's future. This is harder to forecast, for everything we consider reeling back has a direct and negative impact on the rest of the staff. We can't however work to death our Staff Dining members of the Jamboree Food Team, so something has got to give and absent staff it will. Envision a smaller tent with more room outside for lots of garbage cans so diners themselves deal with trash. I can picture how much time the beverage service took, so that scales back mercilessly. Salad and fruit bar variety requires volunteer staff time to replenish, so the number of selections is reduced to the staff replenishment capability. Pies take longer to serve than sheet cake, so pecan pie goes poof. All this because we are about 30 persons short in of last Jamboree's staff and 50 short of the corresponding 2017 need with the leadership promised time off.

Food Distribution, Ice and the Jamboree Grocery stores are next in the portending of future doom. Though our staffing levels are better in these areas, lagging council unit participant count is trickling down to the Jamboree Food Team budget and the financial guillotine must be raised on some things. We can save a lot of money by closing the second grocery store in Base Camp C. It was an objective and came to being so that scouts from camp C4 would not have a longer walk than others to shop. Close C4 and Food Team will eradicate an entire grocery store from the Jamboree budget. Ah, point the finger at ice merchandisers and watch them evaporate. Longer walks for ice and longer waits for replenishments from a staff sparse ice team, which applies both to units and to staff venues, but at least the Summit is a lot cooler than the venue of Jamboree's past so the loss isn't as poignant.

So please look at the chains that are holding you back from asking a neighbor, friend or fellow scout leader to join our team. We will have fun, for this *Spirit of Jamboree's Yet-To-Come* will assure that for our Jamboree Food Team staffers. As the dawn of a new day comes and this dream ends, I thank all of you who have volunteered to serve and we look forward to sharing together a great Jamboree in 2017 however it ultimately is structured. You will not find that the lack of staff means we overwhelm those who raised their hands, for my primary role in Jamboree Food Team staff management is assuring that our plan is deliverable by you without destroying your own Jamboree experience or that of the friend you invited...oh, and you'll need this link to share with your new recruits: <http://www.summitbsa.org/events/jamboree/volunteers/>