



Food for Thought
~~ A 2017 Jamboree *Food Team* Communiqué ~~
~ February 2017 ~

This monthly Jamboree Food Team newsletter has traditionally gone out at the end of each month. Realizing there were likely topics to be covered early in July, it seemed timely to shift to an earlier in the month publication time now which will continue for the next half year so we have six chances (instead of five) to share important details before the Jamboree itself. The hopping topic that we want to discuss is the recently published unit meals and Jamboree grocery store items lists. Let me set the stage for those who may not have received this information directly or lost it in cyberspace.

On Saturday, January 28th a total of 43,661 emails were sent out by the Jamboree Food Team (with the help of the Jamboree Division who provided the recipient list). A simple message went to all registered participants, all staff and naturally to parents of those registered who were 13 and under. The request was a short one:

The initial drafts of the inaugural BSA Jamboree Grocery Store menus and supporting item lists are ready for your review and feedback by March 1st. Final menus and lists will be posted March 15th, along with an online menu-planning tool. To access the draft menus and lists, as well as other Grocery store info, go to <http://jamboreefoodteam.org/grocery-store-info-for-units/>

If you have not followed that link and looked at all the information now available about how the grocery stores will operate, what items will be stocked, what meals you can easily make from those item, and more, please do so. The comment period remains open until March 1st and we want feedback.

As you prepare to comment let me share a few thoughts that may help put our unit feeding plan in perspective. First we have used the word ‘menu’ because that is what is always published in advance of a Jamboree. Menu however may not be the best word now, for that was derived from the past. In prior Jamborees we have distributed food items for the units to make their meals, so the menu was an indication of what you get to eat and all you would get. This Jamboree we will have grocery stores where the units will have the opportunity to shop. They can therefore choose their meals day by day instead of having to merely take what was given. From that viewpoint let me suggest then that the ‘menu’ just published is really more akin to a ‘cookbook’.

Since some of you may be wondering what I mean, let me expound a little. Basically put, a cookbook is reference tool comprised of a list of meal options that one can choose from among, follow precisely or not, discard completely in favor of another book in your library, or another meal planning tool online, or even ditch totally by adopting the old too common method of winging it while shopping. Does any of this sound familiar either at home or when helping the patrol of young scouts plan for a campout? The one certainty of a cookbook is that you don’t have to make a meal you don’t like. The Jamboree meals for the units are a lot more like that now, for there are known items in the store (see the link above to find those) and a list of meals that may be made from them. The meal choice thereafter is solely the unit’s to make.



As you peruse the meal alternatives offered and review the list of items that will appear in the stores, think about how a unit is likely to function. I hope you will comment based on reality and not solely on the lines shown in the meal suggestions. You will see that with so many item options in the Jamboree grocery stores, naturally some items are only going to appear in one menu listing. The method to the madness of having more items in the store is option and variety and the menus listings are not designed to curtail a unit's choice but simply to give them good ideas of what to make. Here is how it may work in practice. Let's take the breakfast sandwich concept in the Mountain Man Breakfast (B#2) for example. The meal planner states it is to be made with sliced bread, egg patties, sausage patties and cheese slices. So one unit may actually follow the meal list precisely and get only bread for that given breakfast because that is what is listed on the cookbook. Of course they can choose white or wheat or both. I bet though that another unit may well decide to be more proactive and may select half the amount of bread and add then English Muffins or bagels. Under the grocery store model that's fine! As part of the plan they could also consider swapping out bacon for the sausage and they will find they have a slightly different sandwich yet. Ham could be the meat choice instead as well. Guess what, that just morphed B#2 into B#7, but with other different breakfast items accompanying the unit's breakfast sandwich selection. I hope that helps show the many options and variety available to all units as 'they' plan their 'menu' – not 'us'.

The other meals have the same flexibility for a unit and all of its members. Actually lunch has the greatest ability for each person to choose what he or she desires among the unit's choices while shopping since all components are individually packaged. A unit should gauge its store purchases along the lines of the desires of its membership and thus if fresh fruit is preferred over canned that is what to get. If soft tortillas are favored over crackers (so everyone can make a wrap sandwich), that's what can be chosen. If half soft tortillas and half crackers are desired instead – that's up to you. If the unit senses the suggested meal options are too sugary, chose options that are less. If the scouts do in fact want some of the sweets included, they can put some in the mix. This is no different than at home and the unit is just a big scouting family of sorts.

There will be two practical limits on what a unit may do in their meal preparation. The first is the equipment, so please understand that we are not advocating short order food service or trying to make too many options since after all the Jamboree plan is for unit dining. Also units comprised of several Venture crews from different councils will have to work together on a common meal plan because the unit site will have only a single cooking kit setup. With thought about what can be made with the issued equipment, variety can still be achieved. The second limit on the unit meal selection will be a points system. This is detailed in the *Jamboree-Grocery-Stores-Overview* which is the first item to be found when you follow the link above. If you missed it, here is a direct path to it: <http://jamboreefoodteam.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Jamboree-Grocery-Stores-Overview-1.pdf>

One final topic worthy of special mention is the Jamboree's accommodation of various dietary ways. The grocery stores will have food to aid those scouts and leaders who observe Kosher and Halal religious dietary restrictions as well as food that is vegetarian, vegan and made without gluten. As indicated in the menu review process, these items will be detailed in March for review and feedback.

Please let us know what you think! We are trying to deliver quality options under a new model and that is exciting, but doesn't just happen without care in the planning. We appreciate your time to contribute to that process.