



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

~ A 2019 WORLD SCOUT JAMBOREE FOOD TEAM COMMUNIQUÉ ~

~ DECEMBER 2018 ~

This holiday season I am thankful for teamwork. That includes all of you who will help deliver, as part of any of our teams, one of the most critical components of the 24th World Scout Jamboree – all the food. Hopefully each of us will bring a willing spirit to this common cause and I know well that many of us also will give much in terms of our time and talents on countless levels to design beforehand our operation for success.

There is one resource on the Food Team that I would like to bring to your attention now because they are very much behind the scenes at this point in time. In fact this team does very little advance planning and yet happens to be a squad that everyone on Food Team (and I surmise countless at the Jamboree who won't even know of their existence) will be truly thankful we have. So in the spirit of appreciation for a mission critical component of our food operation, let me introduce to our readers the Food 'SWAT' Team.

If you look up SWAT you will find that acronym stands for 'Special Weapons and Tactics'. On the Food Team, the *weapons* are things like hand trucks, forklifts, pallet jacks, gator utility vehicles and refrigerated lorries. The *tactics* are doing whatever is necessary day or night to get the product to where it is needed, most importantly when it is needed. The team is small and comprised of Jamboree Food veterans. These volunteers were chosen not only for their equipment handling training and skills but also because of Jamboree Food experience that gives them an understanding of all aspects of the Food Team operations so they can cross assist every one of our teams whenever an issue arises.

I mentioned that they don't do a lot of planning and perhaps you can envision why. At the risk of stating the obvious, it is a bit difficult to know what the challenging or even quasi-concerning food issues will be until they actually happen. They will happen though so we have and continue to train to react to them even though we can never know in advance what they will be. So part of our solution standing ready is that when something happens that needs to be fixed, the SWAT team is the one that will be dispatched undoubtedly. They will have their tools of the trade to make things better than anyone else can and, though we can't solve everything, most of the time they make a bad situation good again.

You may be wondering what type of food related events happen that they solve and I'll gladly give you a glimpse from the history books. Thinking about it, one of the most memorable was the time when, during a troop food delivery, a whole pallet of milk was knocked over accidentally. As you might easily picture, cartons collapsed and a river of white liquid was flowing across the parking lot almost immediately. Sadly, breakfast



depended on that item – so the SWAT team was dispatched to the rescue. How do they fix something like that? Easily is the usual answer for them. Together we identify where the replacement is on site – it might be in the Food Team warehouse or another Troop Food Market or even possibly a little from each of several other Markets. Immediately a lorry, or several if required, head out to collect the needed product. The SWAT team moves the product onto the trucks (with the food handling *weapons* I mentioned they are adept at using) and proceed straight to the store where the issue occurred, unload and problem solved. Let's take another example so you get the idea of the diversity of things that can come up to be resolved, even if it is just to keep the quality of life nicer for the Scout participants. As part of the daily inventory of items that are running short, one Troop Food Market identifies in the evening that it is going to run out of bagels the next morning. They have plenty of the other breads but that one seems more popular in their camp. They call SWAT. There are team members there who can identify which Markets may have a surplus or, as happened last time, they look to the Staff Dining Summit2Go lunch team that had bagels galore and was happy to help by letting SWAT move them overnight to the location where they would be put to good use. That may seem petty to some but replace bagels in that example with a Kosher, Halal or Made Without Gluten meal that an IST or scout in the Base Camp absolutely needs and you will realize where a major portion of the SWAT team time goes. These meals and items have to be in the right place at the right moment and that often requires relocation which they just make happen, day after day after day.

Now food relocation isn't the all that the SWAT team does. Sometime non-food things arise and it is usually the SWAT team that comes to the rescue. Again from the history books, I'll ask you to picture what we do when a Market forklift operator accidentally backs his machine off the roadway and gets stuck in the mud. Yes, SWAT will get the call. Likewise if a pallet jack starts acting up at one of the markets, which may severely limit the ability to effectively serve the thousands of scout shoppers – SWAT will be there to investigate and implement repairs or even to swap out the machine for one that works pending purveyor replacement. Keeping the entire Food Team functioning over hurdles is their hallmark. I know the SWAT team volunteers will be on call 24/7 during the Jamboree to make the lives of others better and that is something all of us will be thankful for then, as I certainly am now while I count holiday blessings.

On that note let me wish all of you and yours a very joyous holiday season, whatever your observance is around the world. We are united in Scouting, and sharing the similarities of our cultures while learning of our differences will make it a special World Jamboree next summer for all on our Food Team. May peace be yours in the month ahead as we prepare to welcome a magic year . . . 2019.