

SEPTEMBER – CAN WE TALK? NEW FRIENDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD!

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LEE: Welcome to the September ScoutCast. I'm Lee Shaw, Team Lead, Membership Growth for Southern Region and Director of National Alliances, along with Bryan on Scouting Blogger, Bryan Wendell.

BRYAN: Thank you very much, Lee. OK, listeners, now if you read the Scouting Magazine blog, Bryan on Scouting, as I hope you do, you might recall an entry back in June that I wrote about Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet. These are events held every October. In 2017, the World Scout Bureau reported that the Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet events had more than – get this – 1.5 million Scout participants from more than 160 countries, so you could say it's a pretty big deal.

LEE: It's such a big deal, Bryan, that I don't just want you to have the opportunity to write about.

BRYAN: No?

LEE: But I want us to have the opportunity to talk about it, right here on ScoutCast.

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LEE: So, with us, we have Greg Wojcicki and Jim Wilson, and they are two guys that are on the Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet team with the World Scout Bureau on all things regarding Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet. Greg is Chair of the BSA Jamboree-on-the-Internet Task Force and a member of the International Committee for the Pathway to Adventure Council in Chicago, Illinois.

BRYAN: And I've known Jim for pretty much my entire career. He's been a licensed amateur radio operator for 45 years and since 2011, he's been the National Jamboree-on-the-Air Organizer and Chairman of the BSA National Radio Scouting Committee. He also led the Radio Merit Badge Task Force and has a big role in National Jamborees and teaching Radio Merit Badge there. So, welcome to ScoutCast, both Jim and Greg.

JIM: It's great to be here.

GREG: Thank you.

BRYAN: So, Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet. What do those mean? And kind of just walk us through what those events are all about.

JIM: For Jamboree-on-the-Air Scouts across the world connect with each other using all aspects of amateur radio. It began in 1957, after the World Jamboree where amateur radio operators didn't want the fun to end. They asked, "How about doing this every year?" And since that time, it's been held every year, the third weekend in October, and this year's event is October 19th to the 21st.

GREG: And Jamboree-on-the-Internet, along with Jamboree-on-the-Air, it's the largest free annual Scouting event that you've never heard of. We're hoping that ScoutCast will help change that. Jamboree-on-the-Internet is basically Scouts connecting with other Scouts within their own country and across the globe, and they're making those connections using Internet tools like Skype, ScoutLink, and social media. And I want to repeat Bryan's stats; Last year event had more than 1.5 million participants from 160 countries.

LEE: That's amazing. So, tell me, guys, who organizes the event?

JIM: The World Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet team, supported by the World Organization of the Scout Movement, organizes the overall event. Every national Scouting organization provides a JOTA-JOTI coordinator to facilitate the weekend in their country. In the U.S. the BSA selects separate JOTA and JOTI coordinators – that’s Greg and me – and then it works like every Scouting event. Councils, districts and units organize their local events.

BRYAN: So, a Jamboree takes place at the Summit in West Virginia, but where does a Jamboree-on-the-Air or a Jamboree-on-the-Internet take place?

GREG: That’s kind of the beauty of it because it’s pretty much anywhere and everywhere, and really what that means, like Jim mentioned, it can be a unit event, a district event, or a council event. It can be pretty much any place where you have an Internet connection. It begins in the U.S. Friday afternoon all the way through Sunday night, and that gives anyone who participates a lot of flexibility as to when they want to participate and for how long. So, if you don’t want to get any sleep that weekend, you can participate all weekend long!

LEE: Is this primarily for Scouts or can non-Scouts participate? Who is eligible to participate in the events?

JIM: Any Scout in the world can participate. The key criteria is that their National Scout Association is part of the World Organization of the Scout Movement or that they belong to the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and this is in line with one of the purposes of the event: building a sense of belonging to the Worldwide Scout Movement, and I’ll also mention guests are welcome. Bring your brother, bring your sister - they’re all welcome to participate in the event.

BRYAN: Might even be a nice recruiting opportunity there as well.

LEE: Absolutely.

BRYAN: So, we talked about the who, the where. What about the how? How does one participate in Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet? I think people will be surprised to know the barrier to entry is not very high; you can go out and do this with limited planning, right?

JIM: Oh, that's true. We prefer it if you do plan. You're going to have a more successful event. At the council level, it's the international representative that's responsible for coordinating activities for Jamboree-on-the-Air, Jamboree-on-the-Internet, and they may well have a list of events planned in the council. Also check with your district and your troop to see if anything is planned, and if not - plan your own event. Jamboree-on-the-Air does require licensed amateur radio operators along with the equipment and the antennas to get on the air, so it's a little bit more complicated, but many local ham radio clubs actively participate in JOTA and more would love to be involved. Greg, tell us about Jamboree-on-the-Internet.

GREG: Sure. One place to start is on the website JOTAJOTI.info. That's JOTAJOTI.info, and use the new signup feature, and if you go to that site right now you can already see more than 250 groups that have already signed up. Once you do that you can start collecting names for contacts. That number will grow substantially before the event. The idea with that is that if they use Skype, and you can put those into your Skype contacts. Also too, if you have Scouts that like Minecraft, ScoutLink, which is another one of the channels, they host its own Minecraft server where you can work with other Scouts on the project. ScoutLink also hosts multiple chatrooms the entire weekend and there's also social media. One thing that I found with events that I've helped host is that Skype video calls

really are the best thing because it's face-to-face, you can see uniforms, multiple people. It's probably one of the best ways to participate.

LEE: Wow. So, Jim and Greg, why would someone participate?

GREG: What's in it for them? Fun! JOTA-JOTI also involves science, technology, fun, and it's also kind of the magic of connecting to other Scouts. Not every Scout or Scouter has the opportunity to go to a National Jamboree or World Jamboree, but every Scout and Scouter can participate in JOTA-JOTI. This also fits in with Baden-Powell's vision of Scouts coming together.

BRYAN: I know we're not in this for the awards when we're Scouts but does participation in either Jamboree-on-the-Air or Jamboree-on-the-Internet count toward any requirements or awards of any kind?

JIM: It does! As you well know, nothing happens in Scouting without a patch, and we've got patches! There's a patch for Jamboree-on-the-Air and a patch for Jamboree-on-the-Internet.

BRYAN: And Jim just handed us one of these, so thank you so much!

LEE: Absolutely. Awesome looking patch as well!

JIM: And then, as far as the Scouting requirements; that's a big focus for Scouting as well, the Webelos Arrow of Lights, Building a Better World requirement, includes participating in JOTA-JOTI. In addition, Citizenship in the World Merit Badge requires participating in an international event. This qualifies. Radio Merit Badge is a natural fit for Jamboree-on-the-Air operations. And the International Spirit Award requires JOTA-JOTI

participation at all award levels, from Cub Scout to adult leader, so lots of fit around requirements.

BRYAN: At all levels too, which is really cool.

LEE: Yeah. Are there any resources available to either get more information or what one needs to prepare for participation?

JIM: The go-to website for Jamboree-on-the-Air is [Scouting.org/JOTA](https://scouting.org/JOTA), and it has guidelines for Scout leaders and amateur radio operators, and another website for both events, as Greg mentioned is JOTAJOTI.info. That's the site that's run by the World Jamboree-on-the-Air, Jamboree-on-the-Internet team. And finally, for amateur radio operators there is a ton of information on K2BSA.net, including Cub Scout program helps that focuses on Jamboree-on-the-Air, planning resources, publicity guides, brochures - you name it - it's there. Greg, how about Jamboree-on-the-Internet?

GREG: Sure. Well, once again, [Scouting.org/JOTI](https://scouting.org/JOTI), and just so we can get it out there again, the main website JOTAJOTI.info. And also, there is [Facebook.com/JOTI.BSA](https://facebook.com/JOTI.BSA), and there is also a twitter handle, JOTIBSA, so start following those last two.

BRYAN: Yeah. Jamboree-on-the-Internet is all over social media, which you would expect. And one thing I like about those [Scouting.org/JOTA](https://scouting.org/JOTA) and [/JOTI](https://scouting.org/JOTI) sites is you can look through all the old patches, all the old logos from the previous years. I was looking through those the other day. It's cool kind of going back in time and seeing how much history is in this event. What are some of your favorite memories from Jamboree-on-the-Air? Are there people you've talked to from overseas that really stand out to you and illustrate this event for people?

JIM: Very much! Part of our job as coordinators for this event is to solicit reports after the event and I've got just a couple of examples that come readily to mind. One example mentioned that the station that was filing the report was located in Hawaii and they were speaking to Scouts in Alberta, Canada. They were absolutely astonished that it was actually snowing in Canada. But my absolute favorite story is the U.S. Scouts using a Jamboree-on-the-Internet online chat to communicate with Scouts in Indonesia. The Indonesian Scouts reported that one of their challenges when camping was to avoid komodo dragons. We get mosquitoes; they get dragons.

LEE: Wow.

BRYAN: That's awesome.

GREG: I'll never complain about mosquitos again. *(Laughter)*

BRYAN: Some Scouts have even talked to astronauts on the International Space Station through some of these amateur radio operators and through some of the same technology you could use during this event, right?

JIM: Very much true; satellite communication as part of amateur radio is very popular. There's about a dozen satellites that are in orbit right now.

LEE: That is amazing.

BRYAN: Well, guys, is there anything else about the Jamboree-on-the-Air and Jamboree-on-the-Internet event that you wanted to share with our ScoutCast listeners?

JIM: It might be a little bit too close to the event to actually implement these now, but it's an annual event, (so) put this in your planning for next year. But we recommend when you're planning your fall Camporees at whatever level – council, district, troop, or pack – you schedule it for the third weekend in October. This means that Jamboree-on-the-Air, Jamboree-on-the-Internet is built in to your Camporee schedule as one of the activities. And you can always coordinate with a local ham radio club to bring the equipment or bring your own computers and Internet connections and make it happen.

BRYAN: Great idea.

GREG: I just want to do one more reminder, that this year's event will be the weekend of October 19th till the 21st, 2018, so we look forward to meeting some more Scouts online. And probably just one last thing; this year's JOTI patch was released on August 1st, so it's in your local Scout Shop.

BRYAN: Excellent. We will look for that.

LEE: All right. Well, Jim and Greg, thanks so much. We certainly appreciate you and all of the knowledge you bestowed on our listeners and Bryan and myself as well, so thanks and we appreciate the job you do.

GREG: Thank you guys. We very much appreciate being able to speak to your listeners.

JIM: Thanks for this opportunity, guys.

BRYAN: We'll be right back with Reminders and Tips after this Safety Moment.

Safety Moment – Generators

BRYAN: Thanks, Richard, for generating some food for thought there. Here we go with Reminders and Tips. Your troop open house should be held soon if you haven't done so already, and if you're still using paper applications, remember to submit all new youth and adult applications and registration fees to the Council Service Center. If you're using the online registration, be sure to approve or accept all applications for your unit.

LEE: And remember, for every adult wanting to join Scouting, Youth Protection Training is required. If you can't attend a council-led training session to get your Youth Protection Training Certificate, you can take the training online. Anyone, including parents, can take the online training by creating a My Scouting account. Just go to Scouting.org and click the "My.Scouting" tab at the top of the page.

BRYAN: You can get all the latest and greatest updates about welcoming girls into the program in the September/October issue of *Scouting* magazine. New leaders can draw from nearly 50 tips to get them started down the Scouting trail. In fact, you're doing one of those tips right now which is listening to the ScoutCast and CubCast monthly podcasts.

LEE: Yeah. That's my personal favorite.

BRYAN: Me too!

LEE: Also, check out the September *Boys' Life* cover story that features two of the BSA's top national youth leaders who give readers tips on how to get the most from their Scouting adventures.

Begin music under:

LEE: And you can go check that out right now because the music you hear means the September ScoutCast has come to an end. We want to thank our guests Greg Wajcicki and Jim Wilson for joining us.

BRYAN: Thanks for listening this month, and if there's other topics you'd like to listen to or you want to let us know how we're doing, we welcome your feedback. Send us an email at ScoutCast@scouting.org or you can tweet us. We're @BSAScoutCast. With that, I'm Bryan Wendell.

LEE: And I'm Lee Shaw. We hope to hear from you at the Jamboree on the Air and the Jamboree on the Internet event.

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