

Jamboree On The Air 2000

You may be sweltering now, but October is closer than you think. This is the time to prepare for Jamboree On The Air 2000, better known as *JOTA!*

Hams all over the world have been reserving the third weekend of October every year to participate with Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts in JOTA. This year JOTA begins October 21 at 0001 local time and ends October 22 at 2359 local time, though some activity continues over from Friday to Monday to take advantage of DX time differences. JOTA is *not* a contest; it is an opportunity for Scouts to communicate with each other and experience Amateur Radio.

You don't have to be a Scout to participate. Why not invite Scouts and Scout units to your station? You can obtain contact information about the Scout councils in your area on the Web at: <http://www.bsa.scouting.org/councils/index.html>. You can also find local councils in the phone book under "Boy Scouts of America" or "Girl Scouts of America." How about volunteering to set up a station at a district or council camporee, Scout show or other event? Contact the nearest local council for more information. If nothing else, just get on the air and call "CQ Jamboree," or respond to such calls.

The Radio Merit Badge

The Scouting program provides several applications for ham radio. The radio merit badge is just one of them. Although this badge includes commercial radio, there is a strong emphasis on Amateur Radio. For some scouts, that's all they need.

The ARRL Atlantic division director Bernie Fuller, N3EFN, is a perfect example. As a young Scout in 1947, he earned his radio merit badge. I asked Bernie if he needed to know Morse code. "Not only did I have to learn the Morse code, but was examined by the merit badge committee leader who was a Merchant Service shipboard radio operator. Learning the code was a plus for me. It led to the CW operator course when I entered the Army during the Korean War ... I spent a large part of my early service even before going to CW school teaching the code to others. (The CW course later was a real piece of cake for me)."

For the next 36 years, his life was filled with an Army career, a wife, and family.

The ham radio bug resurfaced in 1983 and Bernie finally earned an Amateur Radio license. Today he takes special interest in sharing ham radio with young people.

Not Just for Boys

JOTA is for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. You will notice both of these stories come from Boy Scouts. Unfortunately, I have very little information on JOTA and Girl Scouts. Each year I receive many JOTA pictures and surveys from the Boy Scout population. The participation numbers grow rapidly. On the other hand, in 1998, I received only two surveys that included Girl Scouts. Last year I received about five. I am hoping you will

Suggested Scout Frequencies

Band (meters)	Phone (MHz)	CW (MHz)
80	3.740 & 3.940	3.590
40	7.270	7.030
20	14.290	14.070
17	18.140	18.080
15	21.360	21.140
12	24.960	24.910
10	28.390	28.190

work with me to make JOTA an annual event in the Girl Scout program.

For more information about JOTA on the Web, see <http://www.arrrl.org/ead/#scout>, or e-mail jota@arrrl.org.

A Lasting Legacy from Humble Beginnings

During the first JOTA in 1958, 13 countries and fewer than ten stations participated. As the years passed, JOTA became more popular with both hams and scouters. In 1999, the World Scouting Bureau reported 110 countries and about 270,000 participants!

Have you participated in JOTA in the past? If you have you may be wondering if the time you spent with Scouts ever produced ham operators. You may never know, but here are a few people who owe their Amateur Radio enthusiasm to hams who found the time to participate in JOTA and/or the Scouting radio merit badge. Larry Wolfgang, WR1B, relates this story:

"I was 16 and a Novice (WN3JQM) for less than a year. Two other Scouts from Troop 180 in Gordon, Pennsylvania were also new Novices: Garry, WN3JQL and Terry, WN3JQK. Assistant Scoutmaster Jack, W3AMD, had turned us on to ham radio a few years earlier. He passed away before we earned those licenses, so in many ways, we were on our own.

"The excitement ran high as we made our plans for JOTA 1968. We set up an old canvas wall tent salvaged from summer camp to use as an operating shelter. There are no floors in those Scout tents, so the feed line from my 80/40-meter dipole snaked in under the sidewall, along with an extension cord from the house for ac power. We used my Knight-Kit T-60 transmitter (crystal controlled, of course) and Terry's Hammarlund receiver. My parents' large canvas "cabin" tent would serve as the sleeping quarters a few yards away. With the help of three other interested Scouts, we would operate as teams throughout the night, with each team taking a two-hour shift on the radio and a four-hour rest period.

"I don't remember how many contacts we made or how far we reached. I do remember that we had a sense of excitement and anticipation followed by some disappointment. There was still a great sense of accomplishment, though. I've operated JOTA stations many times since then, and really enjoy sharing my hobby with Cubs, Scouts and Leaders at every opportunity."



JOTA in the "good old days"—1968. The enthusiastic boy in the center is Larry Wolfgang, WN3JQM, who would later become WR1B and a Senior Assistant Technical Editor at ARRL Headquarters.