

Jammin' and Hammin' With the Scouts

The 58th Jamboree on the Air will be held on October 16, 17, and 18.

Jim Wilson, K5ND

The World Organization of the Scout Movement hosts both Jamboree on the Air (JOTA) and Jamboree on the Internet (JOTI) through the efforts of the World JOTA-JOTI Team that works with the Scouting national coordinators of 157 countries.

During JOTA, Scouts contact other Scouting organizations from their own communities and those from different cultures around the world. JOTA-JOTI also allows many Scouts to participate in an international level activity who might never be able to attend a National or World Jamboree. JOTA provides these Scouts with the opportunity to learn about the traditions and customs of Scouts in other lands while also experiencing the technology, fun, and magic of Amateur Radio.

Jumping JOTA

During the 2014 event, worldwide Scouting participation included 1.1 million Boy Scouts and 200,000 Girl Guides/Girls Scouts, for a total participation of over 1.3 million — the largest Scouting event in the world.

Here in the US, we had nearly 8000 Scouts and 6000 visitors manning 216 stations, operated by 945 Amateur Radio operators. During the weekend, US Scouts communicated with nearly 100 countries and all 50 states, via Amateur Radio and the Internet.

Radio Scouting Update

I'm confident that the ARRL membership



Geoff Haines, N1GY, assistant manager for the ARRL West Central Florida Section, helps a Scout get on the air at K4BOY, the club station of the Camp Flying Eagle Southwest Florida Scout Council. [Photo courtesy of Ken Settlemyer, WW4KS]

includes hams who were first introduced to Amateur Radio either through Jamboree on the Air or the Radio Merit Badge. You'll be pleased to hear that 7208 Scouts earned the badge in 2013, a new record due in part to 339 earned at the National Scout Jamboree. The 2014 number came in at 6665. This overall number has jumped since the early 1980s, when fewer than 1000 Scouts earned the badge each year.

In 2012, the Boy Scouts of America introduced two new Amateur Radio-related badges for wear on the adult and youth uniforms: the Morse Code Interpreter Strip and the Amateur Radio Operator Rating

Strip. An Interpreter Strip denotes proficiency in a language and availability for communication. The new strip features the word MORSE spelled out in code. You can find the requirements at www.k2bsa.net/morse-code.

The Amateur Radio Operator Rating Strip recognizes the Scouting member's availability as an Amateur Radio operator who can help with communications for events and activities as well as emergencies. If you hold a valid Amateur Radio license of any class issued by the FCC, you're eligible to wear the rating strip on your uniform. More information can be found at www.k2bsa.net/operator-rating.

ARRL Amateur Radio Service to Scouting Award

One of the big updates during 2014 was the introduction of the ARRL® Amateur Radio Service to Scouting Award. Recognized by the Boy Scouts of America as part of its family of Community Organization Awards, it allows adult leaders who have earned the award to wear a special square knot insignia on their uniform.

The nominee for the Amateur Radio Service to Scouting Award must meet five of 10 requirements. The requirements range from teaching the Radio Merit Badge, to participating in Jamboree on the Air, to providing communications support for Scouting events. You can find the complete details at www.k2bsa.net/arrl-service-to-scouting-award.

JOTA Founder — Silent Key

Les Mitchell, G3BHK, operated the first Amateur Radio station at the 1957 World Scout Jamboree. In 1958 he founded Jamboree on the Air. In October 2014, Les became a silent key, described in Scouting as "Scouter gone home." Here's some insight into Les' thinking on Jamboree on the Air from a note he wrote on the Radio Scouting UK website in 2000:

Finally, JOTA is great fun, but there is one simple point you must remember — even the most efficient communication system in the world is useless if you have nothing to say. If you put nothing into

European JOTA Frequencies

JOTA is a worldwide event, and JOTA stations in Europe are looking for you! To avoid a conflict with the Worked All Germany contest, European JOTA stations will be active on these band segments:

- 80 meters: CW 3560 – 3800 kHz; SSB 3650 – 3700 kHz
- 40 meters: CW 7040 – 7200 kHz; SSB 7080 – 7140 kHz
- 20 meters: CW 14060 – 14350 kHz;
SSB 14100 – 14125 kHz and 14280 – 14350 kHz
- 15 meters: SSB 21350 – 21450 kHz
- 10 meters: SSB 28225 – 28400 kHz

Remember, band plans between ITU regions differ. US stations should follow the US band plan and work European JOTA stations on the proper mode for the frequency used.

the event you may get nothing out of it! JOTA is your chance to speak to Scouts and Guides over the horizon... Silence makes no friends!

Find Out More

You can find more information about JOTA at www.arrrl.org/jamboree-on-the-air-jota and at www.scouting.org/jota.aspx. World Scouting information can be found

at www.world-jotajoti.info. You can also contact this author, Jim Wilson, K5ND, World JOTA-JOTI Team Member and USA National JOTA Coordinator, at jim.wilson@k2bsa.net.

Jim Wilson, K5ND, an ARRL member, is a retired communications and publishing executive, serving in those capacities with Boy Scouts of America for more than two decades. He continues to serve as a Scouting volunteer in all things related

to Amateur Radio at the international and national levels, including serving as the President of the K2BSA Amateur Radio Association. Jim operates PathForeWord custom writing service and publishes a blog titled "My Ham Radio Adventures" at www.k5nd.net. You can contact Jim at 2605 Valleywood Dr, Grapevine, TX 76051-6584.



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