



21th World Scout Jamboree England 2007
Southern Region Newsletter Number 1
December 3, 2005

601 Days!!! Yessir.....that's how long it is until we arrive at Hylands Park - Chelmsford, the site of the 2007 World Jamboree in England. By that time we will have already had three great days of touring around the London area and will be ready to meet 40,000 other Scouts and Scouters from all around the world. 601 days may seem like a long time, but it will be here before you know it. As a participant in this event, you will be a part of a truly "once in a lifetime" experience that will exceed everything that you can dream or even imagine. This newsletter is the first in a series of informational bulletins that you will receive from the Southern Region during the next 600 days. Read every word. Twice. Have your parents read it too. Soak it in. Save this and all other mailings that you receive from the Boy Scouts of America for future reference and your collection of memorabilia from this event. There are a "million and one" details to learn and remember. Your leaders will help you, because the better prepared you are when you arrive in England, the more exceptional your World Jambo experience will be. THIS IS PROBABLY YOUR ONLY CHANCE TO ATTEND A WORLD JAMBOREE AS A YOUTH SCOUT....SO PLAN ON MAKING IT COUNT!

I am Russell Smart, your Southern Region Chairman for the 2007 World Jamboree. This will be my fourth World Jamboree experience. I served as an Assistant Scoutmaster at the 18th WJ in Holland in 1995 and as a Scoutmaster at the 19th WJ in Chile in 1998-99 and also at the 20th World Jamboree in Thailand. I live in Greenville SC and am an active volunteer with the Blue Ridge Council. I currently serve as a local Scoutmaster and also as a member of the Executive Board of the Southern Region. Each of you will be assigned to a provisional troop or crew with four adult leaders. I will work with the adults assigned to your troop to help them make your unit as successful as possible. You will learn to count on them in ways you cannot yet imagine. I and ALL of the other adults selected as leaders for the Jamboree pledge to you and your parents that we will "DO OUR BEST" to take you through this great experience safely and help you squeeze out every possible drop of adventure and fun! You will learn more about your adult leaders in later newsletters from the region or from your troop.

So.....start getting excited, pumped, stoked, baked, or whatever term you and your buddies use to indicate the highest possible level of enthusiasm. By the time July 23, 2007 arrives our goal is to have you almost able to fly to England without an airplane! You will remember and talk about this trip for the rest of your life....guaranteed! Just ask one of your brother Scouts who went to Thailand in 2003 or Chile in 1999 or Holland in 1995 or Korea in 1991 or Australia in 1988 or Canada in 1983 or even my friend here in Greenville Mr. Ted Dreibrodt who went to Austria in 1951. IT IS AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE!

Now....let's start your World Jamboree preparation and education with some instructions and basic information. **READ CAREFULLY AND TAKE ACTION AS APPROPRIATE....**

Our goal is to recruit enough Scouts from the 93 councils in the Southern Region to fill at least 20 troops and 2 venturing crews of 36 Scouts/Venturers each. At this moment, you are among a group of over 200 youth from these 93 councils who have submitted applications. It would be great to have at least 2 Scouts or Venturers from each council and that's our plan. We need your help in recruiting more Scouts from your area. Our unit leaders are ready and anxious to visit or talk with ANYBODY who is a prospect. We will be carefully reviewing your application and all of the others we receive soon and the BSA National office says that we can begin sending actual acceptance letters to Scouts in late January or early February 2006.

PASSPORTS: Even more important than the American Express Card. You CANNOT leave home without it! If you already have one, check the expiration date and make sure that you do not need to renew it. It must be valid through our return date from England which is August 9, 2007. If you don't have a passport or it's expired, GET GOING WITH YOUR APPLICATION SOON. You can obtain an application form in the mail or from most Post Offices and Federal Courthouses. In a few months, the annual spring rush will start as people get ready for summer trips overseas and the turn-around time will get longer. When you do your passport, also get an EXTRA pair of passport photos. Your unit leader will also need a photocopy of your birth certificate. Why? To carry with us in case your passport gets "lost" and we have to get you a replacement from the US Embassy in London so you can come home with the rest of us. There is no "fooling around" with the serious folks at the Customs Desk.

NATIONAL JAMBOREE vs WORLD JAMBOREE: Maybe you were at Fort A.P. Hill this past summer at the 2005 National Jamboree. I was there too. You were impressed. Maybe you were even overwhelmed at the sight of 40,000 khaki uniforms at the arena shows. I had fun too and it may be hard for you to believe, but....YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET!! What puts a World Jamboree in a class all by itself is that.....

THE WHOLE WORLD COMES!!!!

That's right, those four little words say it all. After you get home and while you are telling and re-telling your family and friends about your experience and reflecting on what it all meant you will understand and appreciate those four little words. When you go back to school after our return your friends will ask you "how was it?" You will try to describe your experience to them, you will show them your pictures and souvenirs, but it just won't click. You have to BE there to understand. All I can do is to keep telling you this over and over and over again....until you think "old Mr. Smart is crazy." Here's just a "taste" of what you will experience in England.....

- The chance to be among and meet almost 40,000 young people from over 150 countries.
 - At least 15,000 of these participants will be young women.
 - An opening ceremony with uniforms of every conceivable color and style.
 - A party with 40,000 Scouts dancing and singing together in friendship.
 - A closing ceremony where you can't tell who is who because everybody has swapped uniforms with their new friends from all over the world.

What can you do to get more prepared for all of this? Find yourself a good up-to-date map of the world. The political world has changed dramatically in your lifetime. Countries exist that weren't even on the map when you were born. Learn where some of the major countries are. Learn the names of their capital (or major) cities. Learn how to say "hello" "goodbye" "please" and "thank you" in as many languages as you can cram into your brain. (No...despite what you have been told, everyone in the world does not speak English or even want to.) And the best way to make a new friend is to be able to communicate with him or her in their own language. Most bookstores have some basic "phrase" books and a pocket atlas.

WHO ARE WE?: Up to this very moment, you have probably thought of yourself as an American Boy Scout and all of the rest of the world's Scouts as Foreigners. Well change your thinking on that right now and forever. There are no "foreigners" at a World Jamboree. Everybody there is equal...everybody is a "Scout." You really can't think of yourself as an "American" either. The Scouts from South America are just as "American" as you are. They are SOUTH American. The Scouts from Panama and Mexico are CENTRAL American. The Scouts from Canada are NORTH American. We are Scouts from the USA. Yes I know that our scouting organization is the Boys Scouts of America and I can't do anything about the limited thinking of our founders in 1910...but I can do something about your thinking in 2007. Think GLOBALLY instead of LOCALLY and you will be better prepared to be a part of your WORLD Jamboree. More on this topic in later newsletters....

SCOUTMASTER'S MINUTE: Even though this whole newsletter is a "Scoutmaster's Minute" of sorts, let me close with a personal thought or two. When my son Hoke and I decided to attend the 18th World Jamboree in Holland in 1995 as a final "father-son" outing before he went away to college, I fully expected it to be a great experience. After being selected as one of the ASMs for Troop 829 I met Bill Hutters, our Scoutmaster. Bill had earlier attended both the 1983 and 1991 World Jambos. For the next 10 months, Bill kept telling all of us story after story of "magical moments" from his two previous jamborees. I thought "that's great, Bill, but what about this one...will it be just as special?" Simply put, there are very few experiences in my life that I consider as special as my three World Jamborees. If you think that I am exaggerating then just wait. Our first and foremost goal during the next 600 days is to build your expectations as high as possible. Even then, when we finally arrive in England and later drive through that World Jamboree entrance gate you will be just like Alice in Wonderland. And that is exactly how it should be. If within a few hours of arriving there your camp is all set up and you are out there meeting the young people of the other 150 countries of the world, then your other adult leaders and I have been successful !!!!

NEXT NEWSLETTER: Look for it in early 2006. At any time you can check our regional website for the latest information.....www.worldjamboree.net

I bet that you and your parents still have a ton of questions. Great! Start making a list of these and we will answer them in due time. You may not even be sure of what to ask at this point. That's OK too. A lot of the common questions will be answered in future newsletters. But PLEASE do not hesitate to email me about anything that concerns you right now.