

# Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas GSSWT Council's Own Patch Program

## Camp La Jita Magic Patch

**Requirements:** To earn the patch, each age level should complete the following activities:

Girl Scout Daisies – 3  
Girl Scout Brownies – 4  
Girl Scout Juniors – 6  
Girl Scout Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors - 8



1. There are many units that troops/groups can use at Camp La Jita; Capote, Agarita, Encinal, Loga, Nogales, Champuli, Sakapa, Pioneer and Primitive. Visit and compare at least 4 of these units. What are their differences? Are some more primitive than others? Which do you prefer to stay in and why?
2. Visit the Story Book Tree. Listen to or tell one of the Legends of the Story Book Tree. A legend is a story handed down from the past. Have you heard other legends you can share with others? Before leaving Story Book Tree, see how many girls it takes to go around it.
3. Learn about the "terrible lizard", Tyrannosaurus Rex. Stand on Council Rock (or near Wallowing Rock) to find the "tracks of stone" in the river bed.
4. Visit Green Chapel. Plan and/or participate in a Scout's Own at Green Chapel. Be careful of the "critters" that make their home in the logs.
5. Campfires were originally held at Council Rock. In the early 1990's, a new campfire area was created called Constant Friendship. Visit both sites. Why do you think the new site was created? Help plan and/or participate in an evening campfire at Constant Friendship or Council Rock. Invite others to join you.
6. Locate Wallowing Rock. Learn the legend of how it was created.
7. Participate in a camp service project. An example may be to clean up trash left in your unit by others; replace torn or missing shower curtains; repair torn or ripped screens and flaps; clean up a campfire ring left in disarray by others; take a hike and pick up trash and litter that may be found along the way; mark a trail or replace rocks and other trail markings or create your own.
8. Make and enjoy a special treat by campfire. Try one of these ageless favorites; S'Mores, Banana Boats, Cinnamon Apples, Applesauce Cake or Peach Cobbler.
9. Take a hike, locate at least five different types of trees or shrubs and learn their names. Are there any plants that you should be careful not to touch? Why?
10. Learn the meaning of the following unit names: Capote, Agarita, Encinal, Nogales, Sakapa, Champuli and Loga.
11. Help plan and/or participate in a flag ceremony at Program Circle or at one of the unit flag areas.
12. Gather with others at camp for an activity. It could be a swap exchange, a craft or game session, a song fest or other activity of your choice. Make at least one new friend.

For information contact [customercare@girlscouts-swtx.org](mailto:customercare@girlscouts-swtx.org) or (210) 349-2404 ext. 391.

Patches are available for purchase in the Shop.

## Camp La Jita Magic Patch—resources

Sample comparison of units				
Agarita	Cabins with 4-6 beds	Cold water only	No AC	Northeast side of camp
Capote	Cabins with 4-6 beds	Cold water only	No AC	Northeast side of camp
Champuli	Rooms with 6-8 beds	Hot and cold water	AC in rooms	West side of camp
Encinal	No cabins	Cold water only	No AC	Northeast side of camp
Loga	Rooms with 6-8 beds	Hot and cold water	AC in select rooms	Center of camp
Nogales	Cabins with 4 beds	Cold water only	No AC	West side of camp
Pioneer	Cabins with 4 beds	Cold water only	No AC	West side of camp
Primitive	No cabins	No running water	No AC	West side of camp
Sakapa	Rooms with 6-8 beds	Hot and cold water	AC in rooms	West side of camp

### Wallowing Rock

Long before the Native Americans, other inhabitants roamed the land of La Jita. Dinosaurs, or “terrible lizards” stalked the shallows leaving footprints in the limy mud below Council Rock. **From the three-toed type of footprint left, they were probably first cousins of the flesh eating “Tyrannosaurids”.** *Probably an allosaurus, but cannot find source.* Born of a sun-hatched leather shelled egg, this razor toothed saurian lived by capturing and eating other dinosaurs that came within his reach. Evidence of these “terrible lizards” can be seen today. A great lunate-shaped stone in the channel fo the Sabinal River has dinosaur footprints on two sides. We know this stone as “Wallowing Rock”. Folklore has the great “Terrible Lizard” wallowing in the once-soft mud creating the mound that hardened into the stone we see today. A trail of footprints is faintly visible in the shallows.

### Unit Names and Meanings

**Capote**-Mexican Persimmon

**Agarita**-from the Agarita Bush

**Encinal**-Oak

**Loga**-Meeting Place

**Nogales**-Walnut

**Champuli**-Evergreen

**Sakapa**-Cedar



Example of La Jita Projectile Point first identified by Thomas R. Hester of UT Austin in 1971.-[www.projectilepoints.net/points/la\\_jita.html](http://www.projectilepoints.net/points/la_jita.html)

***Camp La Jita Magic Patch—A Brief Overview of History***

**1850 (approximate)**-Ben Biggs House (ranger's home) was built

**January 31, 1946**-Mr. & Mrs. John F. Camp gift Camp La Jita was given to Girl Scouts and dedicated.

**Summer 1947**-First Campers stay at camp

**July 1949**-Great Hall and Ruth Cost Library built

**1950**- Original Infirmary dedicated (near waterfront shed)

**1951**-Radio Free Europe broadcasts from camp to behind the Iron Curtain.

**1956**-Waterfront improvements made

**1958**- 1958 flooding occurs and Green Chapel is created by Counselor in Training program (CITs).

Flood line still visible under Great hall

**1960**-Dabbler's Den Dedicated

**1961**-Little Hall Dedicated

**1967**-Archeological excavations are made and many artifacts discovered.

**1971**- Horse Corral and riding arena added to camp

**1973**- The Soil Conservation Service helps develop the approximately 1.2 mile long Nature Trail behind Encinal where girls can view an abundance of plant life.

**1974**-Camp pool is built; improvements were added a few years later in 1977

**1982** -New units are built and named Loga, Sakapa, and Champuli.

**1990's (approximate)**-Constant Friendship is added near Sakapa

**September 1996**-Tornado causes damage to waterfront, including the canoe shed, and to the Nogales unit.

**June 1997**-The Sabinal River overflows it's banks, causing damage to Agarita and Encinal. Waterline visible under Great Hall.

**July 5, 1997**-Camp celebrates it's 50th anniversary

**June 2002**-Biggest flood recorded in over 100 years. Cabins in Agarita and Encinal once again suffer damage, and Encinal is never to be used again as an overnight sight for camping. Waterline visible under Great Hall.

**2011**-New covered arena is built closer to main camp

**2017**-Covered Archery pavilion is donated

**2019**-Adventure course is built in Encinal

# *Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas*

## *GSSWT Council's Own Patch Program*

### *Camp La Jita Magic Patch—Legends of Storybook Tree*

#### **A Foreword-**

The area of Utopia was settled by Captain William Ware in 1852. Settlers had friendly contact with Tonkawa Indians who had come to plant crops for their people, who were due to come later.

Between 1856 and 1873, the Indians raided the settlers many times; Lipan Apaches captured Frank Buckelew in 1866 and held him captive for eleven months after killing his uncle Berry.

They also raided Mr. Kincheloe's home in 1866 while he was away. His wife, Sarah, Captain Ware's daughter, survived being lanced by seventeen arrows from attacking Kickapoos, and in the same attack Mrs. Ann Bowlin was killed. Both women were protecting several children during the raid, and it was the children who had to secure help after the attack.

Other skirmishes in the area resulted in deaths and wounded on both sides.

With the historical context of these Indian raids on settlers and the effect it had on the children, it is easy to see how the legends pertaining to settlers and Indians came about, especially since the raids were relatively close to Camp La Jita's property.

In the context of modern history, settlers are seen as having taken away lands that Indians had previously roamed for thousands of years. The stories give a glimpse into the struggle and conflict of settling a new land. Some consist of tales of daring escape during times of war or danger, while others tell of the passing on of stories and cultural heritage through generations. While we cannot change the past, we can learn from it and understand the reason for the sentiment behind the stories told. You and your girls will probably prefer one legend over the others; your troop may hear the same story or a different one from another troop visiting. It isn't the legend that is important, it is what the tree represents.

This tree has endured the passing of time, multiple floods, storms, and winds. It's beauty lies in not perfection, but surviving the challenges it has overcome. It is a symbol to strive for strength in spite of weaknesses, as well as a symbol of time, representing yesterday and the promise of tomorrow; It is a place for girls to imagine the past and dream of the future.

Story Book Tree is a huge cypress tree located on the bank of the Sabinal River behind the archery field. The large hollowed out center of the tree makes it stand out from the other cypress trees, but it is slowly closing and healing as it has done for decades after being struck by lightning. Many legends exist about the hollow nature of the tree. Until recently, whole troops could fit inside the trunk, then only a couple at a time, then only the smallest girls one at a time. We will only be able to look at this tree and image all that it once held, and we can imagine it slowly healing from the outside in.

## ***Camp La Jita Magic Patch—Legends of Storybook Tree***

### **Legend of the bear-**

Many years ago, the pioneers were coming to settle in this new land. It was very wild and undeveloped. A young family built their log cabin near the banks of the Sabinal River. The father had gone to hunt for food and the mother was busy in the cabin. The children were playing and before long found themselves in the woods. They became frightened. Father had warned them not to go into the woods alone because there were bears and they were dangerous.

Suddenly, they heard a growl and spied a bear coming towards them! They began to run for their lives. They found themselves trapped at the river because it was too wide and swift for them to swim across. Not knowing where to turn, they began to cry out for help.

A tree on the bank of the river suddenly began to creak and groan. The children heard the words, "Come inside; within me you'll find a place to hide." Then the trunk of the tree opened up. The children climbed inside and the tree closed gently around them. When all danger had passed, the tree opened up and the children ran safely home.

### **Legend with the mother-**

At the time of the last Indian uprising in Bandera area, approximately 1870, a family who lived in the Sabinal Canyon sent their older male family members off to join a larger group of men to put down an Indian uprising.

The remaining family members went about their business until warned by a passing neighbor that the Indians were retreating through the area and they should quickly seek safe shelter. The mother took her two young children and began to look for a hiding place. She found herself facing the river. She knew she could not swim across safely with both children.

Suddenly she noticed a cypress tree on the banks of the Sabinal River. The tree had been struck by lightning and the center of the tree had been burned away with an opening facing the river, leaving ample room for the pioneer family to hide in complete safety. They spent the afternoon and night until the father returned to reassure them that all was now safe.

### **Legend with the Shaman-**

Long ago, an Indian village was situated on the plateau above and behind Story Book Tree. One night, an enemy tribe attacked the village. In the chaos that followed, an old shaman (or medicine man) of the tribe gathered up the village children and took them to the river to escape the raiders. Unfortunately, the river was swollen from the spring rains and the children could not cross without drowning.

The shaman dropped to his knees in front of a huge cypress on the river bank and began to chant and pray to the gods. He prayed for the safety of the children-the future of the village-and asked for a hiding place. Suddenly, in answer to his prayers, the sky lit up with a huge streak of lightning and BOOM! It struck the cypress, creating an entry into the hollowed out trunk. The children and shaman climbed inside and safely waited out the raid.

In the morning, the survivors of the village came to the river and discovered the children waiting safely near the cypress.



## *Girl Scouts of Southwest Texas GSSWT Council's Own Patch Program*

### *Camp La Jita Magic Patch—Legends of Storybook Tree*

#### **Legend of the old man-**

Many years ago there was an Indian village located along the flat lands of the Sabinal river. Years of war and raids had taken many of the young men, leaving the village weak and with little food.

There was an old man in the village, who according to the war chiefs, was no longer useful to the tribe because he could not hunt, nor fight effectively. His youthful skills were gone, and he spent his days reminiscing and telling stories of times long past. The war chiefs considered him useless and a burden to the tribe. He was banished from the village and sent to live his final days alone.

The old man went to the river to ask the gods to end his journey of life. Instead, the gods caused him to sleep and spoke to him in a dream. They told him they would create for him a special shelter near the river where he was to spend many years. His life journey was not through, and he was to become a teacher of young people. The young adults in his tribe were so concerned with the day to day essentials that the children were missing the rich history and traditions of the tribe. His destiny was to teach the young those things that were being forgotten.

As he awoke, he found it hard to believe his dream. How could such an old man be so important to his people? Surely it must be a mistake. Suddenly, the gods opened the heavens and BOOM! A lightning bolt struck the tree beside him, knocking him to the ground. The old man realized this was the shelter the gods had promised and made it his home.

The children of the village soon learned of the old man living in the tree and slowly began coming to see him. He began to tell them the stories of their ancestors and the great traditions of the tribe.

Soon the children were coming every day to hear the great legends. The storyteller gave the children a vibrant view of their past and helped them plan for the future. The adults in the village saw that the children were learning great things from the old Storyteller and soon they were coming to listen, too. It was decided that these were the things that should not be forgotten and from that day forward, the Storyteller was regarded with great honor. A great home was built for him in the village, but he chose to remain at the tree. Thereafter, each generation chose a Storyteller to pass on the rich heritage of the people.

To this day, children still come to hear stories at the Story Book Tree