



# THE TOM LEA TRAIL

## *Explore Texas through Tom Lea's work*

**T**HE designated roadways of the *Tom Lea Trail* form the shape of a large heart in the center of Texas and lead to diverse communities, each with their own unique landscape, history and heritage. Tom Lea's artwork is embedded in many of these communities, and while Hebronville doesn't have Tom Lea's art, its history of Spanish horses inspired his poetry! His famous portrait of a shell-shocked Marine called *That 2,000 Yard Stare* is in Washington, D.C., and the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg tells the story of the Battle of Peleliu. Inspired by Italy's Piero della Francesca Trail, the *Tom Lea Trail* invites visitors to explore Texas, not just major cities but small towns and rural areas. Visitors will learn the history behind the *Paso del Norte* mural in El Paso, see Longhorn cattle in Odessa, and memorize the cowboy song *Little Joe the Wrangler*. They'll see depictions of fearless

Comanche horsemen in Seymour, tour the mammoth King Ranch in Kingsville, and be introduced to the Texas Rangers and Baylor University in Waco. They will also visit the Oval Office of President George W. Bush in Dallas, learn about *Cabeza de Vaca's First Recorded Surgical Operation in North America* in Galveston, see one of Lea's last drawings of a Desert Storm warrior in College Station, and visit his cenotaph at the Texas State Cemetery in Austin.

Senators José Rodríguez of El Paso and Craig Estes of Wichita Falls recently filed S.B. No. 928 in the Texas Senate. El Paso Representative Joe Pickett filed H.B. 1992 in the Texas House. We hope to see formal recognition soon.

Texas history cannot be exhausted, but a good way to get a fascinating start is by travelling the Tom Lea Trail!

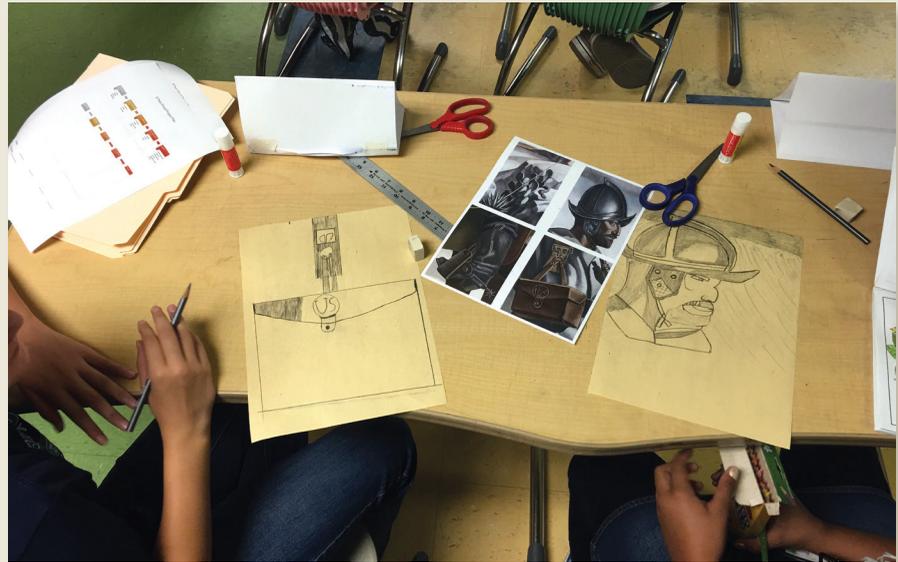
– Adair Margo, President

## Pioneering the Use of Primary Sources for Education

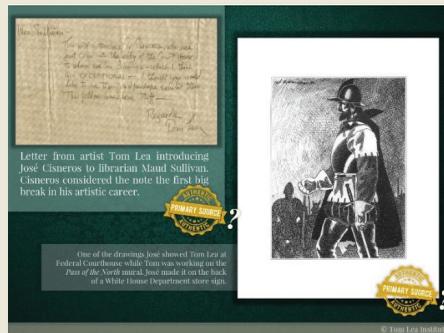
SCHOOLS are excited about using the “primary source” documents in our curricula to teach regional history, blended with art and English language literacy. (Primary sources are unfiltered records produced by people of the time period being studied). Built on the rich legacy of Tom Lea’s art, letters, notebooks, photos, books, and video interviews housed in the Institute’s digital library, lessons enhance academic achievement and build character qualities associated with success in life.

Ysleta teachers have reported increased student engagement with our 4th grade “Awakening the Giants of Our History” curriculum (based on the *Pass of the North* mural). Our second curriculum, “The Mexican Revolution: Through the Eyes of Tom Lea and José Cisneros” will give E.P.I.S.D. 7th graders a very real sense of regional history through extensive use of primary source documents while building pride in their local heritage.

– Holly Packard Cobb, Director of Education



Above: Students work on an art, history, and character activity, focusing on “alertness” to historical details of Lea’s art.



Left: Material from the “Mexican Revolution through the Eyes of Tom Lea and José Cisneros” Curriculum.



### EL PASO MUSEUM OF HISTORY

## ‘A’ is for...

**E**l Paso A to Z is a journey through the fascinating history of our community as told through objects. Visitors can explore the gallery, discover seldom-seen treasures, and learn the stories behind each object. To represent the letter ‘A’, as in ‘A is for Artist’, the curators chose to exhibit a photograph of Tom Lea in his studio. In the photograph, he is seen standing next to an easel that holds the finished work *The Price* (1944).

## Traveling the Tom Lea Trail from Lemmon, SD

**I**N March, the Tom Lea Institute had the pleasure of meeting Lynda and Dennis Drayton from Lemmon, South Dakota. The Draytons heard about the Tom Lea Trail by reading “Lunch with Tom,” an article by Tom Russell in RANGE magazine. They decided to explore the Tom Lea Trail for themselves and made their way to El Paso. While visiting the Institute, they saw some of Lea’s original artwork and were taken on a tour of the *Pass of the North* mural, located in the Historic Federal Court House.

Upon their return from the mural they placed an order for three lithographs to be delivered to their home. They also purchased a copy of *TOM LEA: An Oral History*, notecards, and became members of the Institute. As their time at the Institute came to a close, the Draytons asked staff members where they should go “to eat good Mexican food.” Not only were they given a choice of restaurants in El Paso and Las Cruces, they were supplied with printed directions! The Institute recently received a

gracious thank-you note from the Draytons along with a visitors’ guide for Lemmon, South Dakota. We would love to return the visit and see the sights of the Grand River region.

– Arturo Flores, Finance Manager



Curator Sarah Prezioso carefully unwraps the drafting table as volunteer Paula Denton looks on.

## A Curator’s Treasures

**I**N February, the National World War II Museum in New Orleans returned Tom Lea’s drafting table to the Institute. It was on display during the run of the exhibition *Tom Lea, LIFE Magazine, and World War II*. I was excited as it was the first artifact to be processed since I began working for the Institute in October.

Whenever artifacts are transported in the museum world, collection curators hold their breath until that artifact is unpacked and safely stored away. In transport, you never know what can happen even though there is a less than 15% chance of a problem.

The process of unpacking an artifact is not as simple as opening a box you receive in the mail. Every step

of unpacking or packing artifacts is so detailed that even the smallest nick or scratch is written down and photographed. I guess you could say we have “artifact OCD.” Documentation is a curator’s best friend. Museum professionals always prepare for the worst. In the case of the drafting table, it was with an audible sigh of relief that I saw it was undamaged. The drafting table is nestled back into its home, locked in a dark storage room. Now some might say that we are too obsessive but we are in the business of preserving history!

If you would like to see some of our hidden treasures, please call and schedule a visit to our offices.

– Sarah Prezioso, Curator of Collections

## Volunteer Report

In partnership with El Paso Community College (EPCC), the Tom Lea Institute hosts students from history classes to fulfill their requirement for community service hours. On their first meeting with us, we give them a brief overview of who Tom Lea was and what the Institute does. During their volunteer hours, the students help with a variety of projects including creating community programs, research, putting together educational activities for use with curriculum, leading tours, and learning about the Tom Lea connections to our community.

Currently we have 10 student volunteers from EPCC and all of them have jobs outside of school. Their majors range from history to communications to management and nursing. Although their career paths differ, when asked what led them to volunteer with us, they all mentioned it was their love of El Paso and the rich history we share.

– Sarah Prezioso, Community Outreach Coordinator



Volunteers attend a meet-and-greet and learn about Tom Lea and his work.

## Thoughts from a volunteer



A few weeks ago a classmate walked into class and said "I hate El Paso" as he sat down in his chair. Most of the class nodded and laughed in agreement but it really made me think about how my perspective on the Sun City has changed. Three or four years ago I might have said the same thing about El Paso. However, like Tom Lea, I left El Paso for a while and when I came back it felt as though I was being greeted by an old friend. I had come home. Since I began volunteering at the Tom Lea Institute my view of El Paso has shifted even further. Experiencing El Paso through Tom Lea's work has made me see beauty in what others might find ordinary or even ugly in the Southwest. It has given me the gift of loving the place I call home.

– Shannon George

## BRIEF NOTES

### RANGE Magazine



THE Spring 2017 issue of RANGE magazine includes a reprint of an essay written by Tom Russell titled “Lunch with Tom Lea” The article gives readers a chance to reminisce about days gone by and hear the stories of the city’s favorite son.

According to Russell, Tom Lea was “a man who deeply understood Southwestern history and the spiritual lay of the land.”

### Lone Star Literary Life

EL PASO was recently named a Top Ten Bookish Destination. According to Kay Ellington, editor and publisher of Lone Star Literary Life.

“El Paso makes the list for the third year in a row for several reasons. The Tom Lea Trail is one of the visitable literary and cultural treasures of El Paso, connecting regional histories through art in eleven Texas cities (plus locales in Mexico and the state of New Mexico).

Along the El Paso portion of the trail, Lea’s art can be found at the historic federal courthouse, the El Paso Public Library, the El Paso Museum of Art, the El Paso Museum of History, and the University of Texas at El Paso.” To see the 2017 Top Ten Texas Bookish Destinations list, visit [www.lonestarliterary.com/top-texas-bookish-destinations.html](http://www.lonestarliterary.com/top-texas-bookish-destinations.html)



### Jeopardy! America’s Favorite Quiz Show

YES, we supplied an image of Tom Lea’s artwork to Jeopardy! We’re not sure what the question is and can’t tell you the answer but the category is the “Art of War.” The episode will air on May 18, 2017. A Jeopardy! Watch Party is in the planning stages; keep an eye on our Facebook page and your email for an invitation.

## The Financial Corner

ON the financial side, staff are busy closing out grants, writing new grants and expanding our resource base. We had a positive response to our February membership drive with renewals and new memberships arriving daily and up significantly from 2016. To date we have achieved almost 50 percent of our goal. Upcoming appeals will focus on securing sponsorships for Tom Lea Month and reaching out for funds to support the curriculum project. While some of our local school districts can subsidize the curriculum, most of the smaller districts and private schools cannot. Individuals can sponsor the purchase of customized curricula for a child’s or grandchild’s school.

Another way to support the Institute is to purchase something from us. We have two new publications this year *Tom Lea, Life Magazine, and World War II* for \$49.95 plus tax and *The Notebook of Nancy Lea*, for \$100.00 plus tax. There are a limited number of special edition copies of *The Notebook of Nancy Lea* available for purchase. Please contact the Institute for pricing. Lithographs and original works of art are also available for purchase. Members receive a 10 percent discount on all merchandise excluding fine art.

If you are interested in sponsoring an upcoming event, supporting the curriculum project, or making a purchase of fine art to add to your personal collection, please contact Arturo Flores at 915-533-0048.

### Additional 2016 Contributors

IN the last newsletter, we neglected to recognize the following 2016 Contributors and Sponsors:

Betsy & Dick Behrenhausen  
Ann & Sonny Brown  
Micki Costello  
Robin & Tony Furman  
Linda & John Keck  
Varay Systems, LLC

A sincere thank you for your continued support of the Tom Lea Institute!

– Paola Martinez, Membership Coordinator &  
Arturo Flores, Finance Manager

## And on a Final Note...

ON Wednesday, April 6, I celebrated my four-month anniversary as Executive Director of the Tom Lea Institute. In the February newsletter I noted that “It’s never dull.” Truer words have never been spoken.

The people who support the Institute are simply amazing and the things that staff members have accomplished in the last four months are astounding. We have legislation pending that formally designates the *Tom Lea Trail*. The Curriculum Project is going full steam ahead with both El Paso and Ysleta Independent School Districts committed to purchasing curricula for 4th, 7th and 11th grades. Planning has begun for Tom Lea Month 2017 with a focus on the *Tom Lea Trail*. We have a host of activities for you to choose from with topics ranging from art, agriculture, food, heritage tourism, and science and nature. Programs will take place in El Paso, other Texas communities, and in New Mexico and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. We’re already thinking about the themes for 2018 and



2019 and equally excited about the upcoming celebrations.

Today, Tom Lea’s artwork is on display in numerous museums including the El Paso Museum of Art. His easel and the tools of the trade are highlighted in the El Paso Museum of History exhibition *El Paso A to Z*. Lea’s artwork is being reproduced in text books, non-fiction literary works, and on-line publications. We collaborate with academic institutions, arts and history organizations, and are always on the lookout for potential partnerships. Visitors to the city of El Paso know to contact us when they are looking for unique educational experiences. All in all, whether you’re a staff member, a volunteer, or simply happen to drop by, the Institute is a fascinating place to spend a few hours or an entire day.

On behalf of the dedicated staff and our Board of Directors, thank you for all you do to support our efforts and the work of the Tom Lea Institute.

– Lisa M. Pugh, Executive Director

### EL PASO MUSEUM OF ART

TAKING inspiration from Tom Lea’s celebrated portrait of his wife Sarah, *Female Portraits: A Connection between Artists and Models* focuses on the unique and intimate connections found between artists and models. Each of the twenty works included not only captures an individual but also expresses the artist’s sentiments and embodies Lea’s words on painting portraits: “It gives me a good feeling about my relationship to [a person] when I put down what I feel about him [or her].” This exhibition remains on view in the Tom Lea Gallery until September 24.



TOM LEA *American, 1907-2001*  
*Sarah (Portrait of the Artist’s Wife)*  
/ 1939 Oil on canvas / El Paso  
Museum of Art, Gift of the IBM  
Corporation

### ONLINE

Check out our newly redesigned website at <http://tomlea.com>.

Follow the Institute on Instagram and like us on Facebook.



### INSTITUTE STAFF

Lisa M. Pugh, Executive Director  
Holly P. Cobb, Director of Education

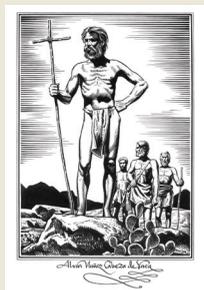
Sarah Prezioso,  
Community Outreach Coordinator  
/ Collections Manager

Arturo Flores, Finance Manager  
Paola Martinez, Membership Coordinator

# The XII Travelers

\$100,000 +

Established by the Tom Lea Institute in 2011 through the leadership of founding member, J.P. Bryan, the Society of the XII Travelers is comprised of the first twelve \$100,000 donors to the Tom Lea Institute. The \$1.25-million-dollar endowment will provide a percentage of the annual operating costs of the Tom Lea Institute.



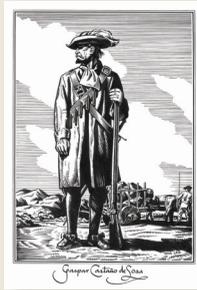
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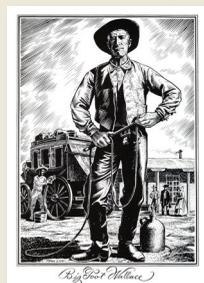
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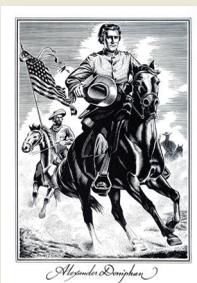
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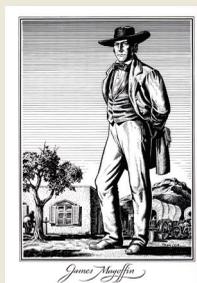
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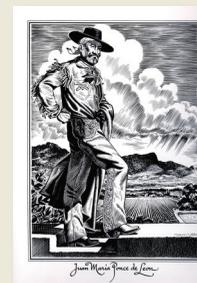
**Big Foot Wallace Travelers**  
YOUR NAME HERE



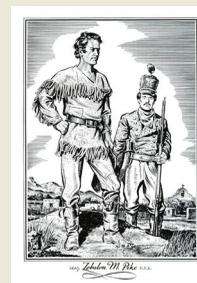
**Alexander Doniphan Travelers**  
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## Friends of Tom Lea Institute Donation Opportunity

Yes, I would like to contribute to the Tom Lea Institute to help fund yearly operations and events. All donations are fully tax-deductible.

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT \_\_\_\_\_

CARD # \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CSC # \_\_\_\_\_ or  CHECK ENCLOSED

made payable to Tom Lea Institute

Please print the name to be used for recognition: \_\_\_\_\_

*Tom Lea*

INSTITUTE

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