

## **Tom Lea Trail Mobile Tour Launches as Statewide Celebration Kicks Off - Press Release**

EL PASO, TX (September 12, 2023) — The Tom Lea Institute and Texas Historical Commission, announce a new era in Texas tourism with the release of the Tom Lea Trail Mobile Tour. Visitors explore 12 cities and 24 sites from their phones with the art of Tom Lea as their guide. Lea's paintings are slices of history from diverse regions: Apache, Spanish, Mexican and Anglo archetypes in El Paso's federal courthouse; Cabeza de Vaca's first recorded surgical operation in 1535 at UT Medical Branch Galveston; the origins of Western beef cattle at the Museum of the Big Bend in Alpine; and the horsemanship of Comanches in the Seymour Post Office. The tour takes people to big cities and rural towns rarely visited by tourists. Tom Lea lived in a tri-state region, and though Texas is the first to add the trail to its Texas Time Travel Tours, New Mexico and Chihuahua will follow

Kay Bailey Hutchison, former U.S. Senator and Ambassador to NATO, hosted a program on the Tom Lea Trail after learning its' inspiration came from Italy's Piero della Francesca Trail. "I enjoyed having my friend Adair Margo (Chairman of the President's Committee on the Art and the Humanities under George W. Bush) speak about Tom Lea at Truman Hall, joined by an art history scholar introduced by Italian Ambassador Bisogniero," said Hutchison. "The Tom Lea Trail is a great way to share Texas. After the event in Brussels, my colleague from Slovenia wanted to visit Hebronville!"

First Lady Laura Bush said, "Tom Lea's optimistic words about living on the sunrise side of the mountain and his Rio Grande painting were important to George and me when we lived at the White House. They still are, and we invite visitors to come to Dallas to see the Oval Office just as it was when George was there."

The mobile tour includes the annual Tom Lea Celebration that enlivens regional history through events. "We have walking and gallery tours, great music, and special presentations across the state of Texas this year," said Holly Cobb, Executive Director of the Tom Lea Institute. "We invite travelers, both in the US and Mexico and from overseas, to discover Texas through the art of Tom Lea."

This year's Tom Lea Celebration runs from September 2023 through April 2024. For planning purposes, [click here](#) to RSVP for celebration events.