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November at the History Center: Stories That Soar and Inspire

Discover local heroes, famous Floridians, and 125 years of conservation leadership

This November, the Orange County Regional History Center offers a month of inspiring programs that celebrate Florida's people, history, and natural world. From honoring veterans and World War II heroes to exploring the achievements of famous Floridians and the world of underwater archaeology, each event connects Central Florida's past to its vibrant present. The museum also debuts a new pocket exhibition, *125 Years of Audubon in Florida*, highlighting our state's pioneering conservation efforts. Bring family and friends and learn more at TheHistoryCenter.org/Events.

History Alive: Famous Floridians

Saturday, November 1, 2025, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The author Zora Neale Hurston, artist Bob Ross, and astronaut John Young all called Central Florida home. Learn about their wide-ranging influence as you try your hand at writing with a vintage typewriter, test your zero-gravity skills, and create your own Bob Ross-style artwork!

Guided museum tours: 10:30 a.m., Noon, 1:45 p.m., 3:30 p.m.

Details: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/History-Alive-Famous-Floridians-2/

Free Admission for Veterans

Friday, November 7 – Tuesday, November 11

The Orange County Regional History Center salutes those who have served our nation with courage and dedication. We invite veterans to be our guests and visit the museum with up to two guests for free from November 7 through November 11. Supported by Orange County Government.

Lunch & Learn: Central Florida World War II Heroes

Friday, November 7, 2025, Noon – 1 p.m.

In honor of Veterans Day, join our speaker, historian Thomas Tart, as he highlights the remarkable stories of World War II heroes with Central Florida ties. Discover how these leaders shaped history on the battlefield and beyond. Participate online or in-person. Closed caption available online.

Cost: Free for History Center Members; General Public \$5. Cost with lunch: \$12 for History Center Members; General Public \$17. (Lunch must be ordered by 9 a.m. on Thursday, November 6.)

Details and to register: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/World-War-II-Heroes/

History Takes Flight

Saturday, November 8, 2025, 2 – 3 p.m.

Our newest pocket exhibit, *125 Years of Audubon in Florida*, is ready to soar! On the day the exhibition opens (see below), join us for a lively presentation as Katie Warner, director of the Center for Birds of Prey in Maitland, takes us on a fascinating journey into the world of raptors. You can also meet Maple the Barred Owl up close and discover why these birds are such an important part of Florida's natural history. This program is free with registration.

To register: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/History-Takes-Flight

New Pocket Exhibit: *125 Years of Audubon in Florida*

Saturday, November 8, 2025 – Sunday, February 8, 2026

Developed in partnership with the Audubon Society of Florida, *125 Years of Audubon in Florida* explores the organization's remarkable legacy of protecting birds and their habitats. From battling plume hunters in the early 1900s to restoring the Everglades and safeguarding bald eagles, the Audubon Society has shaped conservation across Florida for more than a century. This pocket exhibition highlights groundbreaking science, bold advocacy, and grassroots action – showing how protecting birds also protects Florida's waters, lands, and communities for generations to come.

More information: TheHistoryCenter.org/Exhibition/125-Years-of-Audubon-in-Florida/

***Finding the First Floridians* Screening**

Saturday, November 15, 2025, 2 – 3 p.m.

Take a deep dive into our state's past with a screening of *Finding the First Floridians*, a documentary that explores a growing industry in Florida: underwater archaeology. Learn how the discovery of submerged prehistoric sites filled with artifacts completely rewrote what we know about the history of people in the Americas – and especially about Florida during the last ice age.

After the screening, producer Rob Diaz de Villegas of WFSU Public Media in Tallahassee will join local archaeology professionals in a panel discussion about the film and current work in the field. Members of the Graduate Anthropology Association at the UCF will also be available to provide information about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. This program is free with regular museum admission.

More information: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Finding-the-First-Floridians-Screening

The Orange County Regional History Center, housed in a historic courthouse at 65 E. Central Blvd. in downtown Orlando, features four floors of permanent and special exhibitions. The museum is a Smithsonian Institution affiliate and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. It is funded in part by Orange County Government through the Community & Family Services Department under Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings and the Board of County Commissioners. The Historical Society of Central Florida Inc. is supported by United Arts of Central Florida and sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. For more information, visit TheHistoryCenter.org.

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