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February at the History Center: Disney Animation, Black History & After-Hours Adventure!

February at the Orange County Regional History Center blends imagination, history, and hands-on discovery, led by *Animationland*, our new exhibition exploring the art and storytelling behind animation and the remarkable Disney studio that operated in Central Florida from 1989 to 2004. Visitors can dive deeper into that story through a Lunch & Learn program; celebrate Black History Month with living-history experiences, family programs, and a stimulating lecture; and enjoy a fun, immersive evening at History After Dark. Learn more at TheHistoryCenter.org/Events.

Lunch & Learn – Behind the Glass: Disney’s Animation in Florida

Friday, February 6, 2026, Noon – 1 p.m.

Join our curator of exhibitions, Katie Kelley, for an in-depth look at the story of Walt Disney Feature Animation Florida, which made movie magic right here in Central Florida from 1989 to 2004. The Central Florida studio was the creative force behind features including *Mulan* and *Lilo & Stitch*.

Details, registration: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Disneys-Animation-in-Florida/

Bank of America Museums on Us

Saturday, February 7, 2026, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. & Sunday, February 8, 2026, Noon – 5 p.m.

In partnership with Bank of America, the History Center offers free admission on the first full weekend of every month for Bank of America/Merrill Lynch cardholders.

Details: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Bank-of-America-Museums-on-Us-4/ and TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Bank-of-America-Museums-on-Us-3/

History Alive: Soul of the Sunshine State

Saturday, February 7, 2026, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

During Black History Month, meet trailblazers who shaped our region in unforgettable ways – from the musicians who lit up Orlando’s South Street Casino to community builders whose legacies continue today. Join a guided museum tour and enjoy activities that highlight music legend Ray Charles at Orlando’s South Street Casino, the legacy of Mary McLeod Bethune, and the story of the Green Book that helped Black travelers find safe places to stay during the era of segregation.

Details: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Soul-of-the-Sunshine-State/

Brechner Speaker Series – Entangled Histories: Tracing the Nightingale Family and the Legacies of American Democracy

Sunday, February 8, 2026, 2 – 3 p.m.

Join historian Brandon Nightingale as he traces the intertwined histories of the Nightingale family – from enslaved ancestors along the Georgia coast to later generations who navigated Jim Crow, migration, and the continuing struggle for Black freedom.

Details, registration: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Brechner-Speaker-Series-Entangled-Histories/

Hint of History: Stories in Motion

Wednesday, February 11, 2026, 1:30 – 4 p.m.

Discover how animation brings stories to life. Journey through the museum and our newest exhibition, *Animationland*, to explore the connections between art, animation, and storytelling. Designed for children ages 5 to 11 years old, this program is ideal for homeschool or nontraditional students, but families and learners of all ages are welcome to join in the fun.

Details, registration: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Hint-of-History-Stories-in-Motion/

Sensory Sunday: Celebrating Black Storytellers

Sunday, February 15, 2026, 1:30 – 4 p.m.

Explore the art and science of animation while saluting Black storytellers who have shaped the industry. Enjoy sensory-friendly activities for all ages and become the star of your own animated adventure – all in a supportive environment with reduced noise levels and flexible participation.

Details: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Celebrating-Black-Storytellers/

History After Dark: Case Closed!

Friday, February 20, 2026, 5 – 9 p.m.

Step into our historic 1927 courtroom for an unforgettable adult-focused evening where you become part of the story. Watch Central Florida history come to life through dramatic court-case reenactments, cast your vote as a member of the jury, and hear our historian reveal weird and wacky legal tales — then enjoy games, themed cocktails, photo ops, and special activities throughout the galleries. Whether you're a history buff, a true-crime fan, or just looking for a unique night out — the verdict is in: this is one evening you won't want to miss.

Details, registration: TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/History-After-Dark-Case-Closed/

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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