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## **Opera, Animation Legends, and Women in Sports Take Center Court This March at the History Center – Plus Free Admission on March 8**

March at the Orange County Regional History Center brings together art, environment, imagination, and inspiring community stories – including Free Access Day on March 8, when guests can explore the museum at no charge. Visitors can enjoy a special Lunch & Learn preview of *The Secret River* with Opera Orlando performers and composer Stella Sung; explore Florida’s natural world during History Alive; and take advantage of Free Access Day, which includes a program featuring Walt Disney Feature Animation Florida artists who helped shape Disney’s animation renaissance.

The month concludes with the 7th Annual Women’s History Breakfast, hosted by the Orlando Pride at Inter&Co Stadium, honoring trailblazing women and teams who helped build Central Florida’s sports legacy. Learn more at [TheHistoryCenter.org/Events/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Events/) and mark your calendars!

### **Lunch & Learn: *The Secret River* with Opera Orlando**

***Friday, March 6, 2026, Noon – 1 p.m.***

Adapted into an opera, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings’s acclaimed children’s book *The Secret River* will be presented at Mead Botanical Gardens on March 6 and 7. Enjoy a sneak peek of the performance from Opera Orlando singers and hear from composer Stella Sung and Rawlings specialist Prof. Kenneth Kidd of the University of Florida. Participate online or in person. Closed captioning is available for virtual attendees.

**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, March 5.)

**Details & registration:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Lunch-Learn-the-Secret-River/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Lunch-Learn-the-Secret-River/)

### **History Alive: Florida’s Natural World**

***Saturday, March 7, 2026, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.***

From towering mammoths to mysterious swamp dwellers, Florida’s environment has shaped life here for thousands of years. Step into our exhibit to uncover ancient artifacts, test your knowledge of local wildlife, and celebrate the natural forces that make Central Florida truly extraordinary.

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/History-Floridas-Natural-Environment/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/History-Floridas-Natural-Environment/)

### **Free Access Day**

***Sunday, March 8, 2026, Noon – 5 p.m.***

Enjoy free admission to the History Center thanks to our sponsor, Orlando Health Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children. Explore our special exhibition *Animationland* and its companion exhibition, *Drawing Magic: Walt Disney Feature Animation Florida*. Activities are available on a first-come, first-served basis until 4 p.m. Join us for the Walt Disney Feature Animators Panel at 1 p.m.

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Free-Access-Day/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Free-Access-Day/)

### **Walt Disney Feature Animators Panel**

***Sunday, March 8, 2026, 1 – 2 p.m.***

Explore the history of Walt Disney Feature Animation Florida, the groundbreaking studio that operated at Disney-MGM Studios from 1989 to 2004. Meet artists who contributed to such beloved films as *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, *Mulan*, and *Lilo & Stitch*, and learn how the studio helped define Disney’s animation renaissance. This program is free as part of [Free Access Day](#).

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Animators-Panel/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Animators-Panel/)

### **Women’s History Breakfast:**

#### **Power Players – Women in Central Florida Sports**

***Wednesday, March 25, 2026, 8 – 10 a.m.***

This inspirational morning, hosted by the Orlando Pride, celebrates Central Florida women who opened doors in the sports industry and made their mark on history. The 7th Annual Women’s History Breakfast honorees include Mimi Chan, martial arts champion; Cari Coats, former executive vice president of the Orlando Magic and nationally recognized business leader; the Orlando Pride, the city’s professional women’s soccer team; and the Orlando Rebels, the legendary women’s fastpitch softball team that helped put Central Florida on the national sports map.

Doors open at 8 a.m. with buffet, coffee, and conversation, followed by a program at 8:30 a.m. This year’s event takes place at Inter&Co Stadium – West Club, 655 W. Church St., Orlando.

**Details & registration:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/WHB](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/WHB)

**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](https://TheHistoryCenter.org).

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Advisory: February 24, 2026