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## **May at the History Center Brings Free Family Fun, the Story of a Citrus Wizard, America 250, and More!**

The Orange County Regional History Center invites visitors to explore a wide range of stories this May, from the legacy of Chinese American horticulturist Lue Gim Gong to America's 250th anniversary and the fun and quirky ways past generations celebrated national milestones. This month's lineup includes a Lunch & Learn on the "Wizard of Citrus," a free America 250 celebration with music and family activities, a Brechner Speaker Series talk on bicentennial fashion and memorabilia, and a sensory-friendly Summer Soiree for families. Also, don't miss a last chance to see our special *Animationland* exhibition, closing May 3. Whether you're looking to learn something new, enjoy a special outing, or celebrate with family and friends, there's something for everyone at the History Center. Learn more at [TheHistoryCenter.org/Events](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Events).

### **Lunch & Learn: Lue Gim Gong – A Chinese American Pioneer and the Citrus Wizard of Florida**

***Friday, May 1, 2026, Noon – 1 p.m.***

Chinese American horticulturist Lue Gim Gong helped shape Florida's citrus industry through his development of a cold-resistant orange variety and other valuable plants. Born in China in 1857, he immigrated to the United States in the late 19th century and later settled in DeLand. Known as the "Wizard of Citrus," he was honored as a "Great Floridian" by the Florida Department of State 75 years after his death. In this Lunch & Learn, Prof. Wenxian Zhang of Rollins College will explore his remarkable life and legacy.

**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, April 30.)

**Details & registration:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Lunch-Learn-Lue-Gim-Gong/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Lunch-Learn-Lue-Gim-Gong/)

### **Free Access Day: America 250 Celebration**

***Saturday, May 4, 2026, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.***

Celebrate 250 years of American history with the History Center during this special Free Access Saturday with free admission all day. Visitors can enjoy an outdoor concert by CFCArts featuring classic American hits, as well as mock trials in our historic courtroom, a panel discussion with local

journalists, a theatrical performance by the Children of the American Revolution, guided museum tours, and hands-on activities throughout the day. Bring the whole family and experience a lively day of history, music, and community celebration.

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Free-Access-Day-America-250-Celebration/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Free-Access-Day-America-250-Celebration/)

### **Mother's Day: Free for Caregivers**

*Saturday, May 10, 2026, Noon – 5 p.m.*

Mother's Day is a time to celebrate all the important women or caregivers in our lives. It might be your mom, your grandma or anyone who has played an important role. On this special day, the History Center offers free admission to any caregiver accompanied by their loved one.

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

### **Brechner Speaker Series: The Fun and Quirky Side of Centennial Celebrations**

*Sunday, May 17, 2026, 2 – 3 p.m.*

As America approaches its 250th anniversary, join fashion historian Bonnie Hansen for a lively look at how past generations celebrated the nation's milestone birthdays. Drawing from her own collection of authentic bicentennial and sesquicentennial-era clothing and souvenirs, Hansen will explore fashion, home furnishing trends, locomotives, fire hydrants, and other fun and quirky pieces of Americana.

**Details and registration:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Brechner-Series-Centennial-Celebrations/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Brechner-Series-Centennial-Celebrations/)

### **Sensory Sunday: Summer Soiree**

*Saturday, May 24, 2026, Noon – 4 p.m.*

Long days, sandy beaches, and splish-splashing in the water make summer a great time to throw a soiree with your family and friends! Step into a sensory-friendly experience the whole family can enjoy as you celebrate the beginnings of summer and Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander month. Learn about the blending of cultures here in Central Florida and beat the summer heat with a day of indoor family-friendly fun! Admission is free for this event.

**Details:** [TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Sensory-Sunday-Summer-Soiree/](https://TheHistoryCenter.org/Event/Sensory-Sunday-Summer-Soiree/)

**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: April 27, 2026