

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Florida Humanities Council Awards Grant to Lake Wales Museum for 2018-2019 Speaker Series



**LAKE WALES, Florida** – The Lake Wales Museum has been awarded a Community Project grant of \$5000 from the Florida Humanities Council. These funds will be used to support a six-part speaker series, a project designed to present a range of topics by Florida expert historians, storytellers, researchers and authors to the community. Each presentation focuses on different cultural themes throughout Florida's history. The speakers' topics can cover a range of topics that are thought provoking, funny, nostalgic and many times challenging subjects to hear about such as slavery and cultural oppression. Each presentation is designed to bring individuals closer to history.

This project would not be possible without the support of the Florida Humanities Council, the nonprofit statewide partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities that each year awards federal funds to community organizations to create a variety of cultural resources and hundreds of free public programs across the state. These programs and resources help preserve Florida's heritage, promote civic engagement, and foster connections among humanities scholars, cultural

organizations, and community groups across the state. Florida Humanities grants also leverage thousands of dollars annually in local matching funds from non-profit agencies.

"We are delighted to have been selected as a site for the Florida Humanities Council speaker series again this year," said Jennifer D'hollander, director for the Lake Wales Museum. "We hope these presentation will help our community and visitors gain a deeper understanding of our shared history and culture."

The speaker series will include the following presentations:

### **October 11, 2018 - Stories of Florida—Con Sabor! By Carrie Sue Ayver**

Our stories have never been the same since Ponce De Leon first arrived on our shores in 1513. Flowing seamlessly between Spanish and English, Carrie Sue Ayvar chooses from her large

repertoire of personal, historical and traditional Florida tales to connect the people and cultures of Florida, con un poquito de sabor Latino — with a little bit of Latino flavor!

### **November 15, 2018 - Alligators in Florida Culture by Jeff Klinkenberg**

Few states have a relationship with an animal in the way that Florida does with the alligator. Whether it's a school mascot, being wrestled at a tourist attraction, or sunbathing on a golf course, these reptiles are ubiquitous to our state. After hearing Jeff Klinkenberg's lecture, and watching his accompanying video, you'll agree that there can be no Florida without alligators. Hey, keep your hands inside the canoe.

### **January 17, 2019 – Cypress Gardens: America's Tropical Wonderland by Lu Vickers**

When Dick Pope transformed the swampland on the edge of Lake Eloise in Winter Haven into Cypress Gardens, he created an attraction that would become world famous, and in the process, cemented Florida's reputation as the land of sun and fun. He achieved these feats with the unlikely combination of flowers, water skiers and Southern Belles. Lu Vickers' talk on Cypress Gardens will feature a slide show of vintage photographs from the Garden's archives that will take the audience on a journey through Cypress Garden's history from the 1930s to 2009 when it was sold to Legoland. Vickers will discuss the creation of the world famous waterski show, the Gardens, and the iconic Southern Belles, and will explain how Dick Pope, Cypress Garden's flamboyant owner, became known as the "Man who Invented Florida."

### **February 21, 2019 – Strange Fruit in Florida by Tameka Hobbs**

Despite its reputation as the "Sunshine State" and a tourist destination, Florida harbors a lengthy and painful history of racial violence. Dr. Tameka Hobbs examines the history of lynching and racial violence in Florida, outlining the overall arc of the "lynching era" in the United States, normal dated between 1882 and 1930, as these instances of extralegal violence became more sporadic in the 1940s. She also highlights the role of Harry T. Moore's advocacy against lynching and in favor of civil rights for African Americans in Florida.

### **March 21, 2019 - Florida's Female Pioneers by Peggy Macdonald**

"Florida's Female Pioneers" examines some of the women who have shaped the Sunshine State. Dr. Esther Hill Hawks, a female doctor during the Civil War, visited Florida during the war and ran the first racially integrated free school in Florida during Reconstruction. She wrote lyrical descriptions of the St. Johns River and documented the aftermath of the Civil War in Florida. Harriet Beecher Stowe is credited with kick-starting Florida's tourism industry with her 1873 book, "Palmetto Leaves." Florida First Lady May Mann Jennings, married to Florida Governor William Sherman Jennings, was a suffragist and conservationist who was known as the "Mother of Florida Forestry" and helped establish Royal Palm State Park, which later became the nucleus of Everglades National Park. This talk focuses on these Florida pioneers and other, lesser known female firsts.

### **April 25, 2019**

### **Modern by Tradition: Innovation and the Transformation of Seminole Culture by Andrew Frank**

Between 1700 and the present, the culture of the Florida Seminoles has remained remarkably connected to its roots while also innovating in dramatic fashion. This lecture explores this dynamic

to show how the Seminoles have embraced this dualism of being both modern and traditional. It examines, among other things, their origin stories, dress, cuisine, housing, ceremonial life, and family life.

This program is sponsored by the Florida Humanities Council with funds from the Florida Department State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture and Visit Central Florida. Each program begins at 6 PM, is free to the public and will include light refreshments. Please RSVP to the Lake Wales Museum at 863.676.1759.

### **About the Florida's Humanities Council**

The Florida Humanities Council sponsors community based projects, facilitates important conversations among Floridians, and shines a spotlight on Florida's history, art, and culture. Established in 1973, we are an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. For over forty years we have developed and funded public programs that tell the stories of both Florida and those unique individuals that call this state their home. For more information, visit [www.floridahumanities.org](http://www.floridahumanities.org).

### **About the Lake Wales Museum**

The Lake Wales Museum is open Tuesday – Saturday from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission is free. Parking is free and the first floor is accessible for persons with disabilities, wheelchairs and strollers. For more information contact the Lake Wales Museum, 325 S Scenic Highway, Lake Wales, Florida 33853; 863-676-1759 or visit [www.cityoflakewales.com/439/Depot-Museum](http://www.cityoflakewales.com/439/Depot-Museum).