

All six programs presented between October 2016 and April 2017 will showcase lectures and performances relating to Florida history, culture, and people. Performances will begin at 7 p.m. on a Thursday evening, although one concert is slated for a Friday evening.

The season's inaugural event is a lively and often humorous examination of Florida's transportation history presented by the University of Florida's master lecturer, Dr. Steve Noll. On **October 13**, Noll will travel to Vero Beach to reveal how, throughout our history, the challenges of navigating in and around Florida have shaped our past — and promise to shape our future.

On **November 10**, Rick Smith, Jr. will delve into the extraordinary life of his father and Florida's long-time literary ambassador, author Patrick Smith. Since the elder Smith's death in January 2014, his son has assembled an arsenal of insightful video clips, some gleaned from the family's private archives, and interspersed them with personal anecdotes to build a retrospective sure to touch the hearts of Floridians. Explore A Land Remembered, Forever Island, and other Smith classics while learning about an important author who shaped the way the world views Florida as well as the way Floridians view the world.

Just in time for the holidays, we will again welcome The Avenue D Choir with a holiday showcase entitled "Season in Song." This concert begins at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, **December 9**. Come to understand how the excitement, discipline, and joy of making music have brought success to this chorus of St. Lucie County youth. Under the direction of the dynamic Mary Hendricks, this traditional holiday concert in Vero Beach is a perfect way to launch this special season. Complimentary holiday refreshments will follow the performance.

Next, on **January 12**, author and journalist Lynn Waddell presents "Fringe Florida: The Unusual Subcultures of the Sunshine State." Beyond being a magical place in many people's imaginations, Florida has recently earned a reputation for being a place harboring "mud boggers, furries, ufologists, nudists, and other lovers of unconventional lifestyles." Waddell goes behind the sensational headlines to take our audience inside some of the state's most eclectic and daring worlds. She introduces you to the colorful people and lifestyles that make Florida truly unique, while discussing how these edgy subcultures came to thrive here.

During last year's Florida Humanities series, Dr. Michael Frances captivated the audience with a program entitled "Before Jamestown: Europeans, Africans, and Indians in La Florida, 1513-1607." This academic-sounding title concealed an animated look into an important, but misunderstood chapter of Florida's history, related by an expert and master storyteller. At the end of the program, the audience had just one regret — that the evening couldn't last longer. So, The Emerson Center vowed to bring Francis back again with a promise that he will pick up the story where he left off. Don't miss this **March 9** return engagement.

On **April 13**, we will close the series with a look inside a special, private enclave located in our own backyards. Molly Polidoroff and Dr. Jocelyn Bezner will share the podium to tell us about the Treasure Coast's best kept secret, an animal refuge called "Save the Chimps" located in Ft. Pierce. We will learn about the special mission of the world's largest chimpanzee sanctuary and discover how recent legislation, the Endangered Species Act of 2015, has impacted the lives of these magnificent animals and the dedicated people who are responsible for them. Polidoroff is Save The Chimps' Executive Director and Bezner is their Senior Veterinarian.