SIS
SEEKING INSIGHTS FOR SOLUTIONS

# SIS Connections

NOVEMBER 2026
THANKSGIVING ISSUE
*Editors: Pearl Jones and Karen Flaherty*

A NOTE OF THANKS

## Grateful for the Good We Do Together

November is the month when our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving and all we have to be thankful for. And when we look at SIS, there's a lot to be grateful for — what we've accomplished and what's ahead, especially the friendships that keep growing and the community collaborations we've built.

OUR SHARED VISION

*"A society empowered by racial equality, social justice and mutual respect."*

IN THIS EDITION 1 Grateful for the Good We Do Together · Look How Far We've Come · SISters Gather · Honoring November
2 Both Sides of the Bridge · Dues Renewal 3 Grateful to Give Back · What I'm Thankful For · Welcome, New SISters · Our Partners 4 Halloween Bash Recap
5 SIS Book Club · Grateful for Our History 6 Grateful for Honest Conversation · Grateful for Our Roots 7 Grateful for Our Guest · A November Reflection

## Look How Far We've Come

Back in 2020, four women came together with a simple but powerful desire: to better understand one another across racial lines. From that small beginning, SIS has grown into a community of more than 60 women committed to listening, learning, and building meaningful relationships.

Along the way, we've created spaces for honest conversations, published *Where Colors Meet*, established a $30,000 HBCU scholarship endowment, produced original videos, and built strong partnerships throughout our community and beyond. Every one of these accomplishments reminds us of what's possible when we show up with open hearts, a willingness to listen, and a shared commitment to making a difference.

We keep moving toward our vision by honoring history, opening honest conversations across races, and helping build understanding, acceptance, and respect. In this issue, you'll see some of the ways we're putting that vision into practice.

OUR MISSION

*To be a positive force in eliminating racial inequality and social injustice through acknowledging history, fostering interracial discussions, and promoting understanding, acceptance and respect across races.*



*From 4 roots, a growing tree of 60+ SISters*

## SISters Gather

Where we come together as members

**SIS Monthly Meetings**
Held the second Tuesday of each month, in person at Nexus Center, 2199 Commerce Pkwy, Bunnell, and on Zoom.

EVERY THURSDAY @ 9:30 A.M.
☕ **Coffee, Conversation & Sisterhood**
IMBing Lounge Café · 2 Concorde Lane, Palm Coast

NOV 5 · NOV 12 · NOV 19
NOV 26 · THANKSGIVING

## Honoring November

November is Native American Heritage Month. Native Americans serve in the military at higher rates than any other group,[1] and a Smithsonian memorial honoring them opened on Veterans Day 2020.[2] We thank them and our SISter veterans.



[1] *U.S. Department of Defense, via Native News Online (2025)* [2] *Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian (2020)*

## Both Sides of the Bridge

Grateful for the bridges we build

PROJECT UPDATE

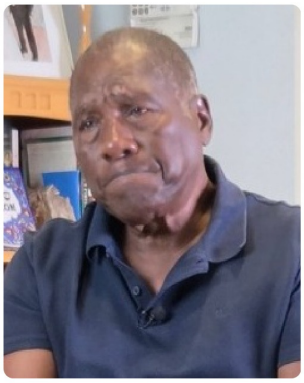
# Voices of Memory

By Jackie Rector

The past several weeks have been busy for the Both Sides of the Bridge committee. We're pleased to share that we've now interviewed 21 longtime residents of the Bunnell and Flagler Beach areas.

Our most recent interview was with Dr. Marvin Dunn, author of *The Kingsleys* and *A History of Florida Through Black Eyes*. Raised in Florida during the Jim Crow era, Dr. Dunn offers a valuable perspective on the history at the heart of our project. As we near the end of our interviews and begin preparing the documentary for its release next year, we knew we wanted to spend time with him and learn from his experiences.

We first met with Dr. Dunn over Zoom on September 10. Cynthia Dodzik, Sean Baker of Coastal Culture Media, Trish LeNet, Debbie Parker, and I asked him about the Jim Crow era and introduced him to our project. We learned so much from that conversation that we decided an in-person interview was essential. After several days of coordinating schedules, we were able to set a date.



*Dr. Marvin Dunn*

On September 30, Sean Baker, Cynthia Dodzik, and I traveled to South Florida to meet Dr. Dunn and his wife, Andrea, at their home in Palmetto Bay. Meshella Woods of the AACS joined us as well.

Despite the severe weather, we made the trip—and it was well worth it. The interview was fantastic, and we're excited to share more about it in the documentary.

Sean and the team are now hard at work preparing for the film's first screenings. We're pleased to announce a private screening for our interviewees on January 17, 2027, followed by the first public screening on **Sunday, February 7, 2027, at 3 p.m. at the AACS**.

We've invited Dr. Dunn and Andrea to join us. Mark your calendars—we hope you'll be there for this special event.

### Help Us Bring These Voices to the Screen

Your support can help us get this project across the finish line. Donations will help us share these powerful stories with our community and beyond.

Every donation, no matter the amount, truly makes a difference.

DONATE ONLINE
seekinginsightsforsolutions.org/both-sides-of-the-bridge

*Every gift helps build another bridge. Thank you!*

## Dues Renewal Is Now Open!

2027 SIS Membership Renewal

*None of this happens without you. We are thankful for every SISter who renews.*

ANNUAL DUES
**$75**

DUE BY
**Jan. 31, 2027**

RENEWAL PERIOD OPENED
**November 1, 2026**

Your continued support helps us amplify our mission, grow our programs, and create lasting change in our community. Thank you for being part of the SIS family!

**Four easy ways to pay:** check payable to SIS · Zelle (sisforchange@gmail.com) · Square · or in person to Karen Flaherty or Valerie Herndon at any SIS meeting.

SCAN TO PAY →

# Grateful to Give Back

Volunteer opportunity

NOV 25–26 · PALM COAST

*Gratitude in action: join SISters in serving Thanksgiving meals to our neighbors.*

## Serve at Our Father's Table

**Palm Coast United Methodist Church · Wed., Nov. 25 & Thanksgiving Day, Thu., Nov. 26**



SISters, please consider helping at Our Father's Table again this year. We expect to prepare **more than 300 meals**, so every pair of hands makes a difference. Here's how you can serve:

DROP OFF WED., NOV. 25

### Bake a Turkey

The church will supply the turkey. Bake it, cut it up, and put it in plastic bags. Bring it to the church on Wed., Nov. 25, ready to serve on Thanksgiving Day.

Want to **donate** a turkey? The same steps apply.

*Marva Jones will share details on picking up turkeys from the church closer to the date.*

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 25

### Prep Day

- Chop vegetables and other ingredients
- Bag rolls and plasticware
- Box or bag desserts

THANKSGIVING DAY, NOV. 26

### Serving Day

- Work the check-in desk
- Be a kitchen cook
- Be a delivery driver
- Serve on the cleanup crew

**SIGN UP** If you're volunteering, please text Marva Jones at **386-237-0473** or email **marvamjones@gmail.com**. We need to know how many volunteers to expect.

*Thank you so much, SISters, for volunteering in this worthwhile endeavor. Your help is greatly appreciated.*

MORE TO BE THANKFUL FOR

### What I'm Thankful For

Celebrating life and longevity: we gathered with family and friends to celebrate my mother's 100th birthday. It was a wonderful celebration! — *Jodi Jones*

### Welcome, New SISters



*Jacque Foy*



*Linda Osborn*

### With Gratitude to Our Partners

IMBing Lounge Café

Moore Cultural Center

African American Cultural Society

Flagler County Historical Society

Flagler Beach Historical Museum

Collective Action to Build Community

Together is Better Alliance

Coastal Culture Media

Flagler County Branch NAACP

Palm Coast Historical Society and Museum

# Halloween Bash Recap

Grateful for a night of fun, food, and community.
See more photos in the Gallery at **seekinginsightsforsolutions.org**.

FRI, OCT 30






Wizards, eight dominoes, a "smoked" fish, a Viking, pharaohs, the Mad Hatter, and the Queen of Hearts were among the 125 guests at the SIS Halloween Bash, our first fundraising event. A butterfly spread her colorful wings, a pair of straw-stuffed scarecrows struck a pose, and pirates, complete with an eye patch and a bright blue beard, roamed the room alongside witches, chefs, and flappers. Even Ike and Tina Turner showed up, he in a shiny silver shirt and she in a red dress and spiky blonde wig.

The Sunshine Room at the Palm Coast Community Center was transformed with skeletons, wispy ghosts, pumpkins, and hay, while floral centerpieces, twinkling lights, and a glittering disco ball added a special touch.

After a delicious Carrabba's dinner, guests paraded in costume and competed for three Carrabba's gift certificates. Rick Jones, a wizard in a starry purple robe with a long gray beard and staff, won Best Costume. A neighborhood group of eight dominoes, including Lee and Tony Ross, earned Most Creative. David Sckolnik's cigar-smoking fish, with sequined scales and orange fins, took Funniest Costume.

The evening also featured the 100 Club Raffle drawing for two $1,000 prizes, dancing with DJ Mike, and a crowd-pleasing performance of "Thriller" by dancers from Bethune-Cookman University.

Kudos to the Fundraising Committee and everyone, husbands included, who helped make the event a success. Proceeds will support scholarships and special SIS projects, including Both Sides of the Bridge. It was truly an evening of creativity, laughter, friendship, and generosity—a wonderful example of what we can accomplish when we come together with a shared purpose!

## SIS Book Club

QUARTERLY · VIA ZOOM

*Grateful for stories that keep our conversations going.*

**SIS BOOK CLUB: RESCHEDULED TO JANUARY 24, 2027. PLEASE UPDATE YOUR CALENDARS!**

Our November discussion of *The Swans of Harlem* will now be our first meeting of the new year.

SEPTEMBER RECAP

### *The Kingsleys*

*by Dr. Marvin Dunn*

Our September discussion of *The Kingsleys* was a special opportunity to hear directly from the author, Dr. Marvin Dunn, who shared his insights on the true story of a mixed-race family's struggle to survive during Florida's era of racial segregation. Thanks to Debbie Parker, who nominated the book and arranged for Dr. Dunn to join us via Zoom.

📚 FIRST QUARTER 2027

### *The Swans of Harlem*

*by Karen Valby*

**Book:** *The Swans of Harlem* by Karen Valby (nominated by Kathy Duffy)

**Date:** Sunday, January 24, 2027, at 4 p.m.

THANK YOU

### A Year of Great Reads

Thank you to everyone who took part this past year, including our September conversation with Dr. Marvin Dunn, author of *The Kingsleys*, arranged by Debbie Parker. Your nominations and discussions make every gathering special. We also welcome Susan Green as co-chair and thank Lee Ross for her service as she moves on to co-chair the Scholarship Committee.

***All are welcome!*** *Happy reading, and we'll see you in January.*

## Grateful for Our History

SISters on the road

MIMS, FL · SEPT 22

*We are grateful for those whose courage paved the way. In September, SISters traveled to Mims to honor two of them.*

### Standing Where Courage Lived

**SISters visit the Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Cultural Center · By Luzibu Nsakala**

On Christmas night in 1951, as Harry and Harriette Moore marked their 25th wedding anniversary, a bomb destroyed their home in Mims, Florida. Harry died that night. Harriette died nine days later.

On September 22, SISters stood on the porch of a replica of that home.

The Moores were educators who refused to stay quiet. Harry helped organize the NAACP in Brevard County and worked to register Black voters when doing so could cost a person everything. Harriette shared his commitment to education and community. Inside the museum, a banner from the NAACP's Moore Voter Registration Caravan still urges, "Support the Moores' Vision: Vote!"

After watching the documentary *Freedom Never Dies: The Legacy of Harry T. Moore*, we talked with Cultural Center Coordinator Sonya Mallard about what the Moores' story means for our lives today.

> *"We went to learn about the past. We left thinking about our responsibility in the present."*

The Moores believed in education, in speaking up, and in working toward a more just society. SIS carries that conversation forward, creating a space where diverse women learn from history and from one another. Change often begins with ordinary people willing to speak up and work together.




*Harriette V. and Harry T. Moore*



*SISters on the porch of the replica Moore home, Sept. 22, 2026*

We ended the day over lunch at Goodrich Seafood & Oyster House. Thank you to Pat, Marva, and the Fun & Fellowship Committee for making it possible.

We learned. We reflected. We connected. We laughed. We enjoyed sisterhood. And we keep moving forward, together.

PLAN A VISIT Moore Cultural Center · 2180 Freedom Avenue, Mims · Mon–Fri, 9 a.m.–1 p.m. & 2–5 p.m.

## Grateful for Honest Conversation

Community screening & discussion

SEPT 20 · AACS

*We're grateful for partners and neighbors who foster inclusion through honest conversations about race and family.*




*My Omaha*

### Finding Common Ground Through *My Omaha*

Seeking Insights for Solutions (SIS), the African American Cultural Society (AACS), and Collective Action to Build Community in Chicago collaborated to screen the documentary *My Omaha*, followed by a community discussion. The film explores the search for truth and common ground, both between a father and son and between Omaha's African American community and the larger, predominantly white community.

Approximately 70 people attended the September 20, 2026, event at AACS. Following the screening, SIS member Lonnie Mathis and Meshella Woods, an AACS leader and SIS member, facilitated a lively discussion. After sharing their own reflections on the film, they invited audience members to discuss themes of race, family relationships, difficult conversations, and the importance of asking questions and sharing personal experiences as part of seeking solutions.

> One attendee offered what he called **"Gary's Good Person Rule"**: Don't judge a person by what others say about him or her.

The conversation continued for an hour, with participants expressing appreciation for the opportunity to exchange perspectives, deepen understanding, and engage in meaningful community dialogue.

*— Trish LeNet*

## Grateful for Our Roots

SISter voices

*Thankfulness often begins at home. Mary Rogers-Grantham shares the roots she carries with her.*

### The Blues, Yellows and Greens of Home

*Center Point Homecoming. "Then. Now. Always." · July 3–5, 2026 · By Mary Rogers-Grantham*

> *"...parents who taught me the blues, yellows and greens of life"*
>
> MARY ROGERS-GRANTHAM

After making a designer playhouse underneath a white oak tree,
After making mud pies as a lunch offering for my doll friends,
After my tomboy days of climbing trees that dared me to fall,
After seasonal wild blackberry, sand plum and peach picking,
After Mother's Sunday dinners from our farm-to-table menu,
After parents who taught me the blues, yellows and greens of life,

I return to the countryside of Arkansas, the Natural State that cradles my childhood memories in landscapes of brilliant roadside wildflowers, forested mountains and fertile plains.

I return to the place where tradition summoned folks to summer evening porch sitting, savor a glass of sweet ice tea and inhale soft scents from the border garden.

I return to the place where Daddy was a farmer, homebuilder, full time worker and Mother, like a conductor, orchestrated the art and science of familial challenges and successes.

I return to indulge my appetite in a deeply rooted culinary tradition of Southern home-cooked comfort food classics like pit-smoked barbecued brisket and ribs, fried chicken and catfish, fresh garden salads and slow-cooked greens, macaroni and cheese, cornbread, cobbler and pound cake.

I return to hear stories buried in bulging memories, like Little Boy who got into Trouble 1 at school and the news traveled home before he arrived where Trouble 2 waited.

I return to every Center Point hometown homecoming when we celebrate a tight-knit community heritage, summon evocative memories and honor fallen treasures.

## Grateful for Our Guest

Special guest · Film project

FROM LOS ANGELES

*We're grateful for friends who travel far to share the stories that shape us.*

### A Love Story Worth Celebrating

SIS members were delighted to welcome **Kelley Purcell**, Senior Vice President at The Recording Academy, as she shared her film project, which tells the inspiring love story of her parents during the Civil Rights Movement. The film celebrates the enduring power of Black love, joy, creativity, and music.

In this season of giving thanks, we are grateful for stories like Kelley's. They remind us that love and joy can flourish even in the hardest of times and that sharing our families' histories brings us closer together.

> ***Thank you, Kelley, for sharing your family's story with SIS.***
>
> *"We are deeply grateful to Kelley for traveling all the way from Los Angeles to share this meaningful and personal story with us!"*



*Kelley Purcell (back row, seventh from left) with SIS members.*

A NOVEMBER REFLECTION · GRATITUDE IN ACTION

***Living in harmony, honoring our past, celebrating the present, and together creating our future.***

HOW TO FIND SIS

Facebook ◆ Instagram ◆ LinkedIn
YouTube ◆ Bluesky ◆ Threads

WEBSITE SeekingInsightsforSolutions.org
EMAIL info@SeekingInsightsforSolutions.org

*Seek insight. Build solutions.*