

ACCORD NEWSLETTER

Chit, Chat & Chew with Attorney Robert Saalfeld

The ACCORD Civil Rights Museum hosted a special Chit, Chat & Chew on April 7–8, 2026, welcoming visitors for museum tours and a powerful firsthand account from Attorney Robert Saalfeld. More than 60 years earlier, while visiting Florida as a high school student from Salem, Oregon, Saalfeld unexpectedly witnessed a Civil Rights Night March in St. Augustine. He saw Black and white demonstrators peacefully march around the Old Slave Market while facing jeers, threats, and violence from segregationists—an experience that profoundly changed his life.



During the event, Saalfeld shared his memories of that historic night and reflected on the courage and dignity of those who participated in the St. Augustine Civil Rights Movement. His personal story offered guests a unique connection to the history preserved by the ACCORD Civil Rights Museum and highlighted the lasting impact the movement had on those who witnessed it firsthand. Guests also toured the museum, enjoyed light refreshments, and had an opportunity to engage in conversation about St. Augustine's important role in the Civil Rights Movement.

"The Splash Heard Around the World" Meet & Greet

On June 18, 2026, ACCORD presented "The Splash Heard Around the World" Meet & Greet, an evening dedicated to remembering one of the defining moments of the 1964 St. Augustine Civil Rights Movement. Featured speaker Robert Swan, Jr. shared his firsthand account of witnessing the historic "swim-in" protest at the Monson Motor Lodge. Swan was a young college student traveling through the segregated South with his brother, Nick, who photographed the protest. Those rare color photographs captured a pivotal moment in St. Augustine's civil rights history.

Swan also recalled meeting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., attending his press conference, and sharing lunch with him at the Iceberg Restaurant during that historic period. The evening included Swan's keynote presentation, a display of the historic color photographs, America 250 birthday cake, and performance by St. Augustine High School's The ROYAL HIVE Royals dance team. The gathering provided guests with a unique opportunity to hear history directly from someone who witnessed it and to reflect on how the demonstrations in St. Augustine helped build national support for the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



ACCORD Freedom Trail & Accord Civil Rights Museum

ACCORD Hosted a Special Guest at the Museum: Mrs. Lillian Twine Roberson

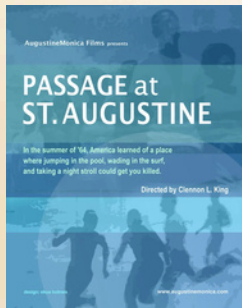


On February 17, 2026, the ACCORD Freedom Trail and Civil Rights Museum welcomed Mrs. Lillian Twine Roberson and her family for a memorable visit. Mrs. Roberson and her husband, Bungum, courageously sent their sons to help integrate Fullerwood School in 1963, resulting in their Gault Street home being firebombed by the KKK in 1964. During her museum visit, Mrs. Roberson reunited with fellow Civil Rights Movement participants Cora Tyson, George Smith, and Irwin Brunson, who planted a flower in her honor in the Rosalie Gordon-Mills Memory Gardens. At 96, Mrs. Roberson continued to share a remarkable message of faith, forgiveness, and love, giving God the glory for protecting her family during those turbulent years. Mrs. Lillian Twine Roberson passed away on May 1, 2026.



Passage at St. Augustine Film Screening & Discussion

Also on June 18th, ACCORD welcomed critically acclaimed filmmaker Clennon L. King back to St. Augustine for a special screening and discussion of his award-winning documentary, *Passage at St. Augustine*. Held at St. Paul AME Church, the free community event provided an opportunity to revisit the courageous struggle for civil rights that unfolded in St. Augustine during the 1960s.



The hour-long documentary chronicled what has been described as one of the bloodiest campaigns of the Civil Rights Movement and highlighted the pivotal role St. Augustine played in the national struggle for equality. Following the screening, King discussed the film and the historic demonstrations that drew Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to St. Augustine and helped build momentum for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The event brought history to life while honoring the individuals whose courage and sacrifices helped bring about lasting change.



ACCORD Civil Rights Museum Premiered New Self-Guided Audio Tour

On July 2, 2026, the ACCORD Civil Rights Museum premiered its new self-guided audio tour, sponsored in part by the St. Johns County Cultural Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. The tour offers visitors another way to experience the powerful history of St. Augustine's Civil Rights Movement. The approximately 30-minute tour was introduced by 103-year-old Cora Tyson, Vice President of ACCORD, and narrated by noted St. Augustine historian and author David Nolan, along with Irwin Brunson, an author, artist, and one of the first students to integrate Fullerwood School in 1963. The ACCORD Civil Rights Museum is free and open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted to help support the museum's mission of preserving and sharing St. Augustine's civil rights history.

