



NORTHERN VIRGINIA SHAG CLUB

NVASHAG RAG

Shag Dancer Newsletter



Dedicated to the Preservation of the Carolina Shag and Beach Music

Vol. III, No. 8

Keep on Shaggin'

August 1996

From the President - By Charlie Price

"WOW! WHAT A PARTY! This young shag club went out of their way to provide an enjoyable weekend for all participants. From the time you walked in the door on Friday afternoon until the time you dragged yourself out of the door on Sunday afternoon, if you didn't have a good time, it was your own fault."

This quote from the Richmond Shag Club's July/August 1996 newsletter is typical of the kinds of comments we've received about our First Annual Capitol Shag Classic! Thanks again to everyone who worked so hard to make this party the great success it was. Thanks also to the DJs, the guest Shag instructors, the folks at Howard Johnson's, the caterers, the vendors, the "demo" dancers, and everyone who attended our party.

When you are out of town at other weekends or at SOS, please remember to tell people what a fabulous time we had at our party, and remind them to mark their calendars now for the last weekend in June so that they don't miss it next year.

I hope that you all are as pleased as I am with our new DJ format for Wed. nights. Since making the change, our Wed. night crowds have been significantly larger, and folks are staying later. Remember, if you have any thoughts, suggestions or comments concerning our music, please talk to any of the members of the "Music Committee," **Fred Whitman, Craig Jennings,** or myself. Likewise, if you have any thoughts, suggestions or comments concerning our Wednesday night Shag lessons, please talk to **Chris Pax, Rick Hendrix, Bill Hopkins** or **Janis Grimes,** our "Dance Instruction Committee." As I have said before, this is your club, and it will only be as good and as strong as you are willing to help make it. Every suggestion will be seriously considered, and the committees and your Board of Directors will implement every proposal for change that we believe is in the best interests of the entire Club.

KEEP ON SHAGGIN' AND SEE YOU AT DEJA VU!

News/Info -- please contact:

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S.O.S. Fall Migration

Sept. 6-15 in North Myrtle Beach, S.C.

It's that time of year again, Shaggers -- time to head for Fall Migration at North Myrtle Beach, S.C., for ten full days of beach, sun, party, party, and dance, dance, dance as long as your feet and legs hold up!

For those of you who have not yet been to S.O.S., it is the best time you could ever imagine. Where else can you find over 5,000 friends (old and new!) dancing, partying and generally having a ball, in one place, at one time -- and all because of a regional dance called the Shag? That's right -- for ten days each spring and fall, shaggers from all over the country flock back to Ocean Drive in North Myrtle Beach to celebrate and perpetuate the best party in the world -- S.O.S.

The Association of Carolina Shag Clubs hosts these events by the **Society of Stranders (S.O.S.)**, named after the 35-mile stretch of beach along the South Carolina coast called the Grand Strand. Shag DJs keep the beach music euphoria going from 10 a.m. until *waaay* after midnight (*I've heard it goes on until 2 or 3 a.m. each night, but have not yet lasted that long, myself!*).

You will need an S.O.S. pass (cost \$35) to be able to go back and forth between all the clubs and lounges (last year we counted *twelve* (12) dance floors within a few block radius!). It is well worth the cost, believe me! In addition to the dancing, there are several complimentary buffets throughout the week, as a gift from the clubs to the shaggers. And it's all right there -- at The Beach!

Come join the party at S.O.S. in Myrtle Beach -- Shag Mecca, a dancer's paradise.

HENDRIX, BELT, PRICE PUT NVSC ON THE PARTY MAP (OR, THE FIRST TIME'S A CHARM) By Steve Booth, Richmond Shag Club

Driving north -- from Richmond! -- to Shag. (Say that again; one mo' once.) Driving north -- from Richmond! -- to Shag. Well, the flyer on the Northern Virginia Shag Club's First Annual Capitol Shag Classic presented an enticing weekend: workshops, top ACSC DJs, junior champs **Brent Key** and **Shea Carver**, vendors, instructors extraordinaire **Larry** and **Shirley Jones**, free pours and food . . . but all in the opposite direction of where my Chrysler sedan always autopilots to go Shagging. Not anymore, y'all! The Northern Virginia Shag Club has come of age -- BIG TIME. My first contact with NVSC was through (who else?) **Rick Hendrix**, King of all Schmoozers and Shagger Supreme, originally from High Point, NC. While I've known **Rick** for maybe three years, he -- and **Donna** and **Pauline** and **John** and **Judy** and **Mark**, etc., etc., -- have adopted your Shagging Boy as a brother.

My first encounter with NVSC's plans came in February with a message on my machine from one **John Belt** of the Northern Virginia Shag Club. After several weeks of tag, I finally found out from RSC's "Maximum Joe" Tedesco that **John** and **Charlie Price** were throwing a big party in June, and could we give them advice on building a floor, as many NVSC stalwarts had supported our "Shag Splash" last August in Petersburg. This telescopes the timing and the story to Friday, June 28th, the Howard Johnson Hotel, Alexandria, VA, and the First Annual Capitol Shag Classic (the name alone is strong as new rope, as they say). We had arrived, showered, changed and hit the party. I was warmly greeted at the check-in table by **Valerie Swiger** -- who, I'm told, was critical in pulling this whole throwdown together -- and **Jim Taylor**.

My second cordial encounter was with T.H.E. **Rick** and **Libby Hendrix**; then **Janis Grimes**, then **Christy McNeil** of RSC. I immediately noticed a very young couple arriving; she radiated intense energy; he sported a Samurai ponytail and French lip goatee . . . THE JUNIOR CHAMPS!! Before I could really get oiled up, **Rick** had me introduced and on the floor with **Shea Carver**, the zaftig half of the Junior couple. As we took the start position, the electricity crackled from **Shea** to me -- it was palpable -- and I couldn't take my eyes off of her feet, legs and hips, nor her charismatic smile. Whether I did myself, or her, justice as a dance partner, I don't care: she both energized your Shagging Boy and left me weak in my Boogie-Walking knees concurrently. I went to church Friday, June 28, 1996. But back to the party. **Jerry Canada** was keeping the floor packed with a superb blend of our beloved Shag music. I was surrounded by wonderful friends of NVSC like **Donna Harrington**, **Judy Lance**, **Jim**

Taylor, **Eddy Farmer**, and **John Belt**. As always, strong support for our friends in Northern Virginia came from Virginia Beach, Roanoke Valley, Boogie on the Bay and Richmond. Personally, I have never been made to feel more welcome anywhere than with our brothers and sisters "up North."

From the time I exited the superb Friday night buffet and hit the dance floor (an ultra-smooth 1200 square feet of **Catfish**-dusted playground), I enjoyed innumerable dances with a stunning array of wonderful partners: **Leslie** and **Christy** from Richmond; **Janis**, **Libby** and **Donna** from NVSC; and, of course, **Shea Carver**. The \$10 -- all-you-can-drink deal (both nights!) was a smash hit and pleasant surprise. I must say I took advantage of it with all due speed. A hint of the staggering variety of 6-count dances extant in and around DC soon became apparent as Friday night blossomed. . . **Norman Mills** took up where **Jerry Canada** left off: reading the crowd to perfection, keeping the dance floor packed, thumping and rocking. I had at it till 1:00 a.m., at which time I crashed, overjoyed with the camaraderie of our Shag lifestyle, as well as the knowledge that NVSC's first venture was to be a jam-up hit with the ACSC crowd.

I especially enjoy Saturday mornings at weekend ACSC parties; cognescenti know that Saturdays are also the most productive day in the weekend, with workshops, exhibitions and especially the fantastic breakfast buffet, over which many new friendships are formed, and much BS is slung. Saturday morning's atmosphere at the Olde Town Howard Johnson's was especially convivial amongst my Shagging buddies, a good omen of the day -- and night -- to come. Pedagogues **Larry** and **Shirley Jones** outdid themselves in the Basics workshop. Half humor and all superb technical advice kept the large class riveted. We were all relaxed, loose and limber for **Donna** and **Keith's** intermediate class, featuring their stylish creation known as the KD, a joy to learn and fun to practice. Despite a midday time slot and fluorescent lighting, the electricity in the ballroom ratcheted up considerably as **Brent** and **Shea** entered. Star quality? It's all over this couple. **Shea** took the lead as they showed and taught The Chelsea, a snapping yet sensuous mirror step that left me gasping at the sheer sexiness of it. The gentle politeness and engaging drawls of these charismatic dancers made me glad I'm Southern and (Thank you, Jesus!) that I'm a Shagger. As a surprise cap on our schoolday, **Larry** and **Shirley** had an impromptu, but thorough, pivot workshop.

The charm of Olde Towne drew many of our party people away for the afternoon (as did a nap for your Shagging Boy from too much roistering the previous evening). Excellent vendors such as **Marlene** of Jacksonville and **Judy's** House of Oldies occupied the main hall to the ballroom; shopping these stalls with the esoteric contents is one of the wonderful

"inside" activities on a Shag weekend. Don't get it? Too bad you're not a Shagger!

Saturday night -- the Crown Jewel of the weekend! The gents in their finest baggies and sheened Cole-Haans; the ladies in their finest French braids, glittery earrings and gold Shag shoes. Yes, we were in heaven when **Jerry Canada** eased in with three beautiful slow dance ballads -- a nice touch. Soon after, the Smoothies gave way to the fatback beat of Rev. Al Green's *Jesus Will Fix It*, and they were off! Afternoon DJs **Eddy Farmer** and **Craig Jennings** had set the tone all day with superb material to satisfy Hand, Swing and Shag. **Jerry Canada** and **Norman Mills** continued to handle the crowd as only top ACSC DJs can: with total abandon. Innumerable dances with **Judy** and **Christy** left your reporter ready for the most fantastic exhibition of dancing he'd ever seen. Around midnight (after NVSC's **Mimi** won the 50/50), the top dancers in the House took the floor. When I thought nothing could top the Jam earlier in the evening (**Dan Shames**, The King of Swing!!!), the top dancers in the House cleared the floor with DC Hand Dance, East and West Coast Swing, and my personal favorites, Shaggers **Larry** and **Shirley** and, of course, **Brent** and **Shea**. NOTHING could have prepared me for the Lindy-Hoppers. This cannot be described, it must be seen: the energy, the acrobatics and speed (the danger!). The entire exhibition could not be equaled in variety in points South. It left me simultaneously exhilarated and exhausted. I'm glad I did not miss it . . . thereafter I crashed, happy just to be a small part of this wonderful subculture.

The anticlimax of all anticlimaxes is Sunday morning of a Shag weekend. Sorry, but it's the truth. Sure, you get to dance a few more numbers, chat a while with new and old friends, but you know it's a done deal. You exchange a few phone numbers, thank the hosts profusely and at 1:00 you hit the road, rehashing in your mind the innumerable high spots of the weekend. Then you start rallying. . . where's the next party? How many weeks to SOS? How soon should I call that swell girl from Saturday night? There's hope! There's always hope when you hang with ACSC party people! Northern Virginia Shag Club, Welcome to The Great Southeast!!!!

NOTICE: Studio efficiencies near Cavalier Hotel during Virginia Beach Bash in October, @\$45 per night, sleeps 4. *The Cavalier is SOLD OUT!* Do you need a room? Call ASAP - John Ambrose, 804-428-9021; info - 703-536-7362

Shaggers Do It With Their Feet

A Shagger's Prayer

By Phil Sawyer

*Lord, shoot the gun and raise the flag
At long, long last I've learned to Shag
The Basic I can do with ease
The Boogie Walk with bended knees
The Pivot I now do very well
Though learning it was holy hell
As well as any I Belly Roll
And better than most I'm often told
I Sugarfoot, Studder, Pick and Lean
And as for presence, man I'm mean
Flybacks and Drop-Spins I take in stride
Non-shaggers now I can't abide
Lord look down, that shagger you see
With grateful heart, Lord
That's me, me, ME!*

FOR SHAGGERS ONLY...

Dear Readers: Do you have shag questions or problems that you need help in resolving? Gabby (Shagmaster's alter ego and "better half") will give you the help you need. Call or write to Gabby, c/o the Editor.

Dear Gabby:

I enjoy dancing with Harry at Deja Vu, but he hasn't been there lately. What should I do?--*Sad Sally*

Dear Sally:

Forget about Harry. NEXT!!

Dear Gabby:

I have trouble with the Boogie Walk, and I feel awkward when I do it. How can I overcome this?--

Boogie Blues

Dear Blue:

You feel awkward doing the Boogie Walk? Have you tried dancing with a door knob in tennis shoes on a carpet??

Dear Gabby:

The person I want to dance with is always dancing with someone else. I'm afraid to ask. What can I do to get a dance with my idol?--*Shy in Springfield*

Dear Shy:

Wear shades. They'll hide your inhibition and fear. Then stroll on over and ASK! (P.S. Is it Bill?)

Got a question? Call or write to Gabby, c/o the Editor.

Shagger Profile -- Steve Bethke

Occupation: Systems Analyst

Birthday: July 14

Hometown: Wheaton, MD

Marital Status: Single

Self-Portrait: A homebody whose life has changed for the better because of the dance community.

Motto: "To travel hopefully is better than to arrive." Robert Louis Stevenson

Dream: Peace on Earth

Inspiration: Friends and family who are everyday heroes and role models

Favorite Dance Tune: Moon Dance from Cool Cat Blues by Georgie Fame

Bad Habit: Over-committed

Hobby: Who's got the time? Reading, theater, gardening, home remodeling, . . . Dancing!

Luxury defined: Comfortable place, good book, a day without having to go anywhere

TV Program: Don't have a TV

Drink or Wine: Pink grapefruit juice, gin & tonic, or Strawberry Daiquiri

Books at bedside: No books; reading keeps me awake

Last words: Life is full of precious moments

ATTENTION!!!!

Two (2) Tickets for Sale:
Boppin' on Beal St., Memphis, TN, Aug. 7-11
2 tickets (worth \$70)
for the incredible price of only \$30 for the pair!
For hotel and ticket info
Contact Charlie Price: 703-790-0783

A Worldwide Presentation of Carolina Shag

**CENTENNIAL OLYMPIC PARK,
Downtown Atlanta, Georgia**--On Sunday, July
21st, Shag history was made at the Olympics in
Atlanta.

From 3-5 p.m., Hall of Fame Shaggers presented their dance periods from the 1930s through the 1970s, with legendary shagger **Harry Driver** as the featured MC. Then the "Cream of the Crop" shaggers from Shag clubs throughout the Southeast participated in an Olympic demonstration of our dance. Members **Chris Pax** and **Bill Hopkins** represented NoVA Shag Club at this once-in-a-lifetime event.

Congratulations and thanks to **Chris** and **Bill** for making the trip and putting NoVa Shag Club on the map with the Best of the Best!!

SHAG (The Movie) Revisited . . . by Howard Christie

I was at the video store the other day and **Shag** was on the shelf. I had seen it before, and like an earlier comment in the **Rag**, I thought it was awful. I decided to take it home again anyway to see if there were any steps I had missed the first time around. It surprised me that the picture could be another **GWTW**, in that you see something different in it each time you see it.

The girls were fuller; the crowd was younger, and their actions were not as vacuous as I had imagined -- something about green eyes and blue eyes, I think. The steps were better and I recognized more of them. The on-stage dance competition for Queen of the Sun Fun Festival seemed to be professionally done, and that alone is worth seeing the movie. (!) The contest at the end of the movie was not as primitive as I'd remembered it. The steps were real this time; they just were not done with the precision of a Charlie and Jackie. Also, this time I remember the name of at least one protagonist.

If you have a couple of spare hours, see **Shag** again. I think you will be mildly surprised.



Roving Shag Reporter -- At the Capitol Shag Classic . . . by Donna Harrington

1. Would you be willing to negotiate a trade to induce your partner to shag? That's the savvy approach **Joan Byrnes** from Richmond used when hubby **Kevin** preferred cruising the links to strolling to the dance floor. **Joan's** offer: I'll take golf lessons, you learn to shag. Done deal!!

Now, Myrtle Beach, where all the fun comes in one package, is near Heaven for the **Byrnes**, but from their enthusiastic comments our weekend is a winner with them, too.

Extra motivation to attend: Time with friend, **H.K. Lee!**

2. Geographically desirable? Sure enough! The Capitol Shag Classic weekend provided a get-together for a lady from Charlotte, N.C. and a gentleman from Monsey, N.Y.

Mag and **Don** met at N. Myrtle Beach during SOS Spring Safari in 1995. Since then, their desire to pair their dancing feet have taken them to Fall Migration '95 and Virginia Beach Bash '95. We're thrilled they chose our weekend to meet and dance some more.

This fun couple lingered a day after the weekend to enjoy the sights of D.C. (Hope they took the Trolley Tour and rested those weary tootsies!)

3. Did someone mention New York? And Shag in the same sentence?! You'd believe it if you watched **Gary Rich** and **Glenda Siraquese** on the dance floor. They traveled from Rochester, N.Y. to be with us.

Three years ago at an Open swing event in (of all places!) Alexandria, VA, **Gary** first saw Carolina Shag being performed -- he was excited -- and hooked. Toting "Charlie & Jackie" practice tapes home with them, they learned as many of us have: PLAY, REWIND, RE-PLAY, REWIND, etc., etc. To watch them dance now it's hard to believe they didn't grow up with Carolina sand in their shoes.

Ballroom, West Coast and Country (especially **Glenda**) are also on their dance list; but when it comes to Shag, **Gary** says succinctly, "It's me."

4. **David Lane** traveled north from Virginia Beach to attend his second weekend party. After Boogie On The Bay's "Magic Maydays" this spring he was eager for more! And, as Luck would have it, he was the winner of our SURPRISE DRAWING for FREE LODGING during the weekend!!

David has been dancing and practicing faithfully since February '96 and we look forward to seeing him

out on the floor lots more. This reporter discovered that **David** had met **Phyllis Schulte** and **Pauline Easby-Smith** a year ago at Blackie's (the Country side!) -- perhaps this was his inspiration to learn the Shag?!

A resounding chorus from all who chatted with me -- Northern Virginia's first weekend event was "SMOKIN'" (as were many dancers' feet by 12 p.m. on Sunday!).

THANKS to **Patricia Parrott** for coordinating the filming of our Wed. night dance for Pinky O'Neil's Cable TV show **Dancing Around** (Ch. 10)!! Tapes will be available for purchase soon, and the two 30-minute shows will be broadcast in the fall -- more information as it becomes available about dates and times.

New Members in July

WELCOME, new members!! Nancy Astreve, Norman Beattie, Tilly Clouse, Jack Fitzgerald, Eva Graham, Linda Graham Nancy Harpine, Ralph Hart, Carl Montoya, Mitchell Owens, Ken Phillips, Sandy Powers, David Rodgers, Nola Smith, Bill Squires, and Domenic Valarioti (*Hey, Domenic!*)

GOING TO MYRTLE BEACH??

To Attend S.O.S. Events, YOU NEED THIS:

S.O.S. MEMBERSHIP CARD GIVES YOU FREE ENTRY INTO ALL PARTICIPATING CLUBS DURING SOS

Cost -- \$35 per person

Send your Name, Address, Age, Phone # and \$35 - Renewal or New Member

Mail to:
S.O.S., POB 4688, Columbia, SC 29204

FYI:

S.O.S. Beach Run will take place on the 2nd Saturday of Fall Migration, Sept. 14th

S.O.S. Line Dance Championships will take place during the last week of Fall Migration

