



SHAG RAG

Shagger Newsletter



Dedicated to the Preservation of the Carolina Shag and Beach Music

Vol. IV, No. 3

Keep on Shaggin'

March 1997

From the President - By John Belt

Our first Sunday Social at Kilroy's seemed to be a lot of fun -- the floor wasn't the best, large crowd, and the delay with getting a mixer were overcome with the great food, good music, and you, the best of the Carolina shaggers.

A special thanks to Pip Thomas, owner of Kilroy's, and his great staff, especially Chef "Old Shoe."

Pip has extended an open invitation to Northern Virginia Shag Club to use Kilroy's for more of our Sunday Socials. On the 23rd of this month, oysters will again be served, along with other menu items yet to be determined.

Charlie Price and I met with the caterer's for our second annual Capital Shag Classic. Start your thinking -- June 26th is fast approaching, and this year's Classic will be as good as last year's. Make those reservations now!

As we said in the past, we, the Board of Directors, work for you. If you have any suggestions to better your club, or want to serve on a committee, please see me or any Board Member. We will listen!

Keep on Shaggin'.

LOST: The color copy of our NVSC club logo! Does anyone have it, or know where it is? Please contact Janis ASAP! Thanks!

FLASH -- Going to Atlanta for the SOS Grand National Dance Championships? Tickets are now available from Continental and Delta for only \$125 round trip airfare. Better book it now!

We're Havin' a Party ♪♪♪

Sunday Social

Sunday, March 23rd
5 - 9 p.m.

Kilroy's
Ravensworth Shopping Center
Braddock Rd. & Beltway

FREE BUFFET

featuring
Oysters on the Half Shell

Buy Your Drinks at the Bar!

BEACH MUSIC
by
CRAIG JENNINGS

NO COVER CHARGE

Everyone Welcome!!

INFO: Call John Belt or Betty Abshire

NVSC Officers and Board Members

President	John Belt	800-374-4434, code 22754
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News/Info -- please contact:
Editor: Janis Grimes, 703-536-7362

Cliques Happen. . . by Patricia Parrott

They are the only two dancers on the floor. Their bodies move in unison to the rhythm of the music, gracefully flowing, turning, twirling. Each stepping to the beat, back and then together again, in perfect mirroring. Moment to moment, it's the perfect dance to the perfect music with the perfect partner! The music ends. OH!! This is the shag club! There are many dancers on the floor! Reality strikes, only now, they are hooked. From this time forward they will persist in private pursuit of the next perfect dance. They will keep coming back. They will keep on dancing.

In response to concerns over the size and stability of the shag club, and to persons who look at the club in general or at individuals and see "*cliques, snobs or good dancers who are unwilling to dance with beginners,*" it would seem that the addictive nature of the dance is not understood. Or, maybe a closer look is in order since casual observation does not reveal that some club members have been together since the club's formation, that some members rarely miss a weekly dance, or that many members have formed close friendships working together behind the scenes to bring about club successes.

The shag club is a dance club for those who want to dance and get the benefit of club association through membership. Everyone is welcome. As a group, we want many dancers on the floor. We want many people to come, join, stay with the club, and love Carolina Shag and beach music. We want to increase club membership and grow in size. We want everyone to have a good time. But, mostly, we want to dance for pleasure and enjoyment because without that, the club has no reason to exist.

Every person who walks in the door has a personal agenda. Some are hooked on dance. Some want to socialize and dance occasionally. Some want only to socialize and make friends. Some want to enjoy the music and watch others dance.

There is something there for almost everyone. There is room for those who want to take the dance to the highest level. There is room for social dancing, and for other types of dance. It's a place to meet wonderful people and a place to hear great beach music. It's a safe, comfortable environment for ladies to come to alone.

It's possible there is a gap between the regular members and the newcomers. Each of us knows what we want to get out of the club. As a group we can bridge the gap if we will individually take responsibility for the successful fulfillment of our own personal agenda. The group will flourish if we

each set out to enjoy every moment to its fullest, heedless of criticisms, and persist in our own personal pursuit, just like the two perfect dancers, oblivious of any others on the floor.

From among large groups, small groups sometimes form. Though they may appear exclusive, they rarely are. If you are a regular member, occasionally step outside your established boundaries to meet someone new. If you are new, step forward and make yourself and your desires known to others. If you are one who wants to socialize and dance occasionally, walk around, mix, talk with people and make friends. Make requests of the deejay for more frequent slow dances. If you're a beginner who wants to become a proficient dancer, then keep coming back, ask others to dance. Head to the dance floor with someone at the first beat of the music. Concentrate on the music as you dance. Check out the free instructional videos. Take the lessons. Practice at home. Ask someone to practice with you. Ask a regular member to help you on the side. They rarely, if ever, say no to anyone who asks them to dance. Dancers love to dance and love to teach.

The club is here for all of us, but the club cannot serve everyone's agenda unless we each take the lead. The shag club will not suit every single person's needs, and not everyone will become a participating member; that position is held mostly by those who give dance a priority position in their lives. But, as life, in marriages, in relationships, in dance, we need to look inward and take responsibility for ourselves. To look outward to another person or thing to bring happiness or enjoyment is to have only temporary success.

Though reserve is sometimes mistaken for snobbishness, it's more likely that fear is the enemy, as it is in all of life's discords. It seems that if each of us will jump in and *be accountable for our own level of fun*, the club will prosper, grow bigger, and better, and meet the individual agendas of many people because everyone will be having such a good time! So, let's keep on dancing.

Editor's Note: Many "good dancers" generously donate their time and energy each week by teaching the lessons and dancing with beginners.

COMMITTEES and Committee Heads:

Capital Shag Classic	Charlie Price
Charity	Pauline Easby-Smith
Dance	Janis Grimes
Hospitality	Vesta Jones
Membership	Valerie Swiger
Music	Craig Jennings
Newsletter	Janis Grimes
Promotions, Sales	John Belt
Social	Betty Abshire; Joan McKinney



Road Trips With Gypsies Headin' South . . . by Vesta Jones

Some of us head south in mid-winter to escape the cold, dreary days and the raging case of cabin fever. Some of us head south to Mid-Winter in North Myrtle Beach for the same reasons. Well, there's a good possibility that North Myrtle Beach may be cold and gray in mid-winter, but there's no possibility of cabin fever at Mid-Winter.

Pauline and I headed south on her birthday, celebrating with laughs and silly cards all the way down. Thursday night those of us from NVSC gave her a surprise party at Ducks Too with a wonderful birthday cake provided by **David Rodgers**. **Shirley** and **Larry Jones**, **Tom Varney**, **Sherron** and **Coleman** from Richmond, **Jerry Canada** and many, many others who have known Pauline for years on the shag circuit.

And therein lies one of the values of shaggin' -- the people -- the wonderful friends -- that we meet at these club weekends, and SOS, and workshops, and Mid-Winter. And the circle grows and grows. Many of these friends are wonderful shaggers, some are only fair shaggers, but they are all wonderful people.

It seems that shag dancing is its own culture -- the beach music; the tradition; the rhythm; the steps (*love* the way those Carolina boys do a belly roll!).

At night the dance floor at Ducks, Ducks Too, the Cove and Fat Harold's seemed as crowded as at SOS, but the afternoon dancing was as great as ever with beach music starting at noon. The difference with Mid-Winter is that only members of sanctioned shag clubs can even get into the dance clubs, and on Saturday night the O.D. Shag Club serves dinner for all who migrated to Mid-Winter. The friendliness, the shag shoes, the glitzy blouses and earrings, the khaki pants and starched shirts, the love of shag dancing, it was all there -- oh yes, and the smiles, lots of smiles.

Treat yourself! Start going to other clubs' weekend parties and workshops. They're a good deal, fun, and a great way to meet many new friends.

Shaggers Do It With Their Feet

Shagger Profile -- Mona

Occupation: African Art Dealer

Birthday: Never cared for them -- even as a child!

Hometown: Brownsville, PA.

Marital Status: NEVER AGAIN!

Self Portrait: Happy

Dream: Enough \$\$\$ to help make a worthwhile one for me, or for those I love to be -- and getting organized!

Inspiration: My Grandmother

Bad Habit: (a) Nail biting; (b) Running late

Favorite Dance Tune: "Honky Tonk I & II" - the original

Hobby: Looking for comfortable dance shoes!

Luxury Defined: Sleeping late; not commuting

TV Program: Don't watch it -- it's in my closet for emergencies or guests!

Books at Bedside: African Art; Dandelion Wine, Lives of a Cell; Architectural Design books

Last Words: I lived; I loved; I laughed; I cried; and when I did it ALL, I died!

FREE **FOR MEMBERS ONLY** Instructional Shag Videos

Instructional Shag videos by **Charlie & Jackie**; **Sonny & Judy Carver**; **Sy Creed & Dana Brown**; and **Mirror Steps** from the **Virginia Beach Shag Club** are available ON LOAN to members only wanting to brush up on their Shag steps. The Club will LOAN you a video **for one week, FREE OF CHARGE**. A refundable \$10 deposit permits you to view the tape for one week. A small charge of \$5 for each additional week is required.

See **Karen Wagley** or **Trelle Shaw** - they're available at DeJa Vu on Wednesday nights.

ACSC and The Carolina Shag Lifestyle . . .

The Association of Carolina Shag Clubs is an organization that allows presidents of shag clubs to come together so that they can share ideas and exchange information . . . to promote the ideals and lifestyle of the Carolina Shag.

You may be asking, "What lifestyle? I thought that the Carolina Shag was a *dance!*" You are correct. Carolina Shag *is* a dance, but it is also much more than that!

The Carolina Shag is a vehicle by which people come together to have a good time. It is caring about what happens to those around us. It is a *gentle spirit* that has culminated from years of wonderful music, great people, and the laid back atmosphere of the Beach.

We are privileged to be a part of an extended family that reaches far beyond our local shag club. Just imagine wandering into a lounge in a strange city and you hear "our" music playing. Right about then, someone with a big smile on their face approaches you and says, "Welcome!" and you find out that you have stumbled upon a shag club's party night. When they find out that you are part of a shag club "back home," you are instantly made to feel as if you were the Prodigal Son (or Daughter) that has been lost and has just come home! "It can't get no better than this, y'all."

Reprinted from the Richmond Shag Club's Newsletter

* * *

New Members in February

WELCOME, new members!! Helen Bacumpas, Mona Gavigan, and Jerry Zevin


SAVE \$5
IT'S TIME TO JOIN
SOS!!!

NVSC members can join SOS (Society of Stranders) at a discount rate of \$30 through our club. This is a benefit of your NVSC membership and the club's membership in the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs. Your SOS membership must be purchased through NVSC to receive this discount. See **Valerie** to order yours. She must send in the order by March 1st. You can join SOS for \$30 at *Deja Vu*, or wait and pay \$35 at the beach!!!

Best Wishes for a Speedy Recovery to **Sharon Shipp** who has had recent foot surgery, but is now on the mend!

Happy, Happy Birthday

March Birthday Babes:

- 18 - Linda Arthur
- 4 - Howard Christie
- 14 - Tilly Clouse
- 2 - Raymond Farris
- 17 - Ralph Hart
- 3 - Rick Hendrix
- 27 - David Jones
- 18 - Doug Levitas
- 15 - John Mullen
- 8 - Chris Pax
- 23 - Sally Riskin
- 22 - Robert Wilson
- 4 - Hilikka Windborn

NVSC
TEE SHIRTS (\$10) & POLO SHIRTS (\$25)

LIMITED NUMBER REMAINING

If you are interested in purchasing one,
please see **Valerie**

The DJ Booth.....

by Craig Jennings

A new year is here and along with it comes much new music to dance to. The Weekend of March 6-9 will be a good opportunity to hear many different styles of music. Ducks in N The Association of Beach and Shag Club DJs are sponsoring Throwdown VI. Thursday, March 6, the Love Dogs ("*Big and Hot*") will provide the entertainment at Ducks. Friday, Saturday and Sunday there will be numerous DJs spinning tunes for your dancing pleasure, and free food each day at 1 p.m. There will also be a reverse raffle with a grand prize of \$5,000. Please see me to purchase a raffle ticket for the weekend (you need not be present to win). Please help out the DJ Association by purchasing one of these tickets.

On Wednesday evenings I often get requests to play a song. I am happy to keep your favorite songs playin' -- just let me know what you wish to hear. My job is much easier when you can request a specific song (artist and title). If you hear a song that you like, but don't know the artist or title, please come ask me when I'm playing, and I will gladly provide that information. Then, when you want to request that song in the future, you can make my job easier if you know the artist and title. If you have many favorite songs, make a list and share it with me. I will do my best to keep everyone happy. It is my job as a DJ to play what you the dancers and audience want to hear.

National Shag Dance Competition Preliminaries In Myrtle Beach... by Chris Pax

About a week before a competition is when I start to seriously consider having my head examined. At about this point, the steps that had seemed rock-solid begin to develop odd quirks, and the newer, questionable steps have made it quite clear that they will require someone else's feet—not mine—to execute them.

What? Did really I say I was going to do that? Travel eight hours by car to a little town in the south, to spend all afternoon and evening for several days in a smoke-choked bar? (Wouldn't it be easier to just plead temporary insanity and back out of this whole thing?) Did this shagger wanna-be actually agree to get up in front of that very southern crowd and do *their dance*? Excuse me, there must have been some terrible mistake here..... what on *earth* could I have been *thinking*?

But after all the gentle, mature discussions with my dance partner about which steps to include ("you try that one, Bill, and I swear I'll just walk right off the dance floor!"), and all the weighty and significant decisions to be made (like, *what to wear*?), it seems the only possible course of action is to follow through with the plan. And somehow the bags get packed and we're on the road.

This time we're off to the Preliminaries for the National Shag Dance Championships, held at the Beach Music Cafe in Myrtle Beach on January 24th-25th. Twenty-six non-pro dancers competing to fill eight openings in the non-pro division. Those eight lucky couples get to compete at the Nationals in March: including our neighbors from Virginia Beach, **Larry and Shirley Jones**. Also in attendance at this exciting event were the pro dancers (including four future NVSC guests: **Sam and Sarah West**, and **Bill and Brenda Barber**) and previous Virginia State Swing Competition guest **Michael Norris**, dancing with his partner, **LeAnn Best**. And one other very notable junior dancer. Do you remember **Dennis Melton**, from Wilmington, who visits NVSC from time to time. . . well let me tell you, his daughter can *dance*!!! She and her partner brought the house to its feet with their hot, flashy steps and cool grace on the floor.

Once we get down there, there's no turning back. Many of the dancers that go to these competitions—and it seems to be basically the same core group of 40 or so dancers every time—have two qualities that make the trip worthwhile. They are friendly, and they are awesome dancers. It no longer matters what happens during that time when the shaggers from Maryland are out there competing, because we are now *watching*. Trying to soak it all in. The competitions have a different feel to them than the large SOS parties. These people are not so much dancing to meet people, as meeting people to dance. It may seem a subtle distinction, but it's a significant one. I love going to these competitions not because I enjoy getting out in front of all those eyes, but because it's the only way northerners like us can go to witness a lot of extraordinary shagging in just a few short days. And much to my surprise and delight, the event this year was NON-SMOKING! It turns out that the dancers themselves have been requesting a smoke-free

environment for the competition, and the event organizers this year decided to give it a try. (*Hooray!*)

After the competition comes my favorite time of the entire weekend. Everyone cuts loose a little, has a drink or two, and takes that rush of having accomplished something out on to the floor to party. Well OK, to be fair it's true that in some cases maybe all we accomplished was that we didn't trip over our own feet, but even that is an accomplishment of some kind... If you've been to Ducks during an SOS event, try to imagine what it's like without the pushing and press of so many people, and instead just a moderate-sized group of dancers, who have room on the floor to really dance, and are out to have a great time with each other.

See you at the Nationals in March!

* * *

FOR RENT: Nice CONDO in North Myrtle Beach: 2 BR, 2 Baths, 4 blocks from Fat Harold's, 2 blocks from Ocean. Sleeps 6. Swimming pool, washer/drier. (*SORRY-- not available during S.O.S.!*) **Valerie Swiger's** condo is at CANVASBACK -- Contact Beachcomber Realty, 800-334-3798



WINNER -- Cool Condo Award

The Shagmaster Says....

- New Members, Please Note:
- The reason for the evolution and existence of shag clubs throughout the South is to preserve and promote Carolina Shag dancing and Beach Music.
- Our Club is dedicated to the preservation of Beach Music and the dance that we love, Carolina Shag.
- *Keep on shaggin'.*

From the Editor....



The Cookbook is approaching a state of readiness! It will soon be available to add to your collection! Also, VOLUNTEERS are NEEDED to help fold, staple, label, stamp and mail the newsletter each month. Would you like to help with this considerable task? **Please call Janis.**

Do you have an idea, a suggestion, a thought? Would you like to submit an ad, an article, a column, your *Shagger Profile*? Just let me know, okay?

See ya Shaggin'

BULLETIN BOARD

LOOK!

Shaggers Network
Place your ad here

Business card size; \$5 for one month; \$50 per year
Contact: Janis Grimes - 703-536-7362

NOTICE! Members Only!! NVSC Shag Video Library

Instructional Shag videos are now available ON LOAN to members only wanting to brush up on their Shag steps. The Club will loan you a video for one week, **FREE OF CHARGE**. A refundable \$10 deposit permits you to view the tape for one week. A small charge of \$5 for each additional week is required.

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