



NORTHERN VIRGINIA SHAG CLUB

# Shag Rag

Shagger Newsletter

*Dedicated to the Preservation of the Carolina Shag and Beach Music*

Vol. IV, No. 12

Keep on Shaggin'

December 1997

## From the President

Congratulations to your new Officers and Board Members, I want to take a moment to wish them the best for the upcoming year. I know, having worked with most of them over the past three years, that our Club is in good hands. They all know what it takes to run a great club like ours. I ask that you support them -- by joining a committee -- lend them your ideas, and by attending your dances.

I do not have to tell them of the many long hours and miles they will put in to continue to make Northern Virginia Shag Club one of the most successful clubs in the Association. **Good times to you:**

President - **Vesta Jones**

Vice President - **David Rodgers**

Secretary - **Beverly Sgroi**

Treasurer - **Dennis Gehley**

Board Members at Large: **Betty Abshire, Audrey Borja, Janis Grimes, Craig Jennings, Dave Shipp**

Our Club Charity is **Hospice of No. Virginia**

I offer my support in any way you feel I can contribute.

To those of you who have supported me, I just want to say thank you.

Remember -- shaggers do it with their feet.  
**John Belt**

## HOLIDAY PARTY DANCE to BEACH MUSIC w/Myrtle Beach DeeJay Steve Baker!!

**FREE SHAG WORKSHOP - at 6:30!!**

**DINNER, DANCING  
FRIENDS, FUN  
DOOR PRIZES  
50-50 RAFFLE**

*Saturday, December 13th  
6 p.m. - 12 midnight  
McLean VFW*

*Old Dominion & Spring Hill Road  
McLean, Virginia*

**BRING** your favorite ~~Fancy~~ Covered Dish  
Appetizer, Salad, Entrée or Dessert

**BYOB** - Wine and Liquor ONLY  
**FREE BEER** and Set-ups Available at the Bar

Tickets: **Members - \$10 - Advance Purchase Only**  
**At the door - \$15; Non-Members - \$15**

**DIRECTIONS:** Take Beltway 495 to **Exit 12B**, Dulles Airport  
**Exit/Route 267 West**. Take Route 267, the toll road (25c). Take  
**first Exit 17, Springhill Rd.** Turn right onto Springhill Rd. Go  
through stop light, continue for 1.1 miles, VFW is on the right  
just before intersection of Springhill Rd. and Old Dominion.

## Everyone Welcome!

**CALL NOW! Betty, 703-680-5115 - Food Coordinator**

## You Who Watch. . . by Chris Pax

OK, I've done this competition thing now both ways. Usually I compete. This last time at the VA State Swing Competition, I watched. I sat on the sidelines and watched **Rick, Cecile, Bill, Melody, Janis, and Dan** go out there and dance like they've never danced before. They danced their fool hearts out. They all were fabulous. I mean, they were an INSPIRATION. Meanwhile, I sat in my seat, and watched. Just watched. Let me tell you, I simply do not understand how anyone can just watch. I nearly went nuts. I'll be out there competing again next year. This watching is for the birds!

How can you stand it, You Who Watch? How can you miss out on all that excitement out there on the floor? The thrill of walking out when they call your name, and having the whole club hooting and cheering for you, hoping you'll do well and hoping you'll make our dance look good. The practicing finally over, and now, the moment you have been both dreading and dreaming about. The thousand little details you worked to improve all dissolve away into a kind of mush in your brain: all you have now is instinct and habit. The music starts, you look at your partner with what you hope is a winning smile, and you're off!!!

People, YOU DO NOT REALIZE WHAT YOU ARE MISSING! Competing is incredibly fun! It's the biggest blast! Ask **Steve Mitchell!** He had cramps in his leg that would have stopped wild horses, but that couldn't stop him from hopping out there on one leg to finish the last round of his hand dancing competition! (Remembering that scene still brings tears to my eyes.)

The secret to being able to enjoy yourself out there is not to take the word "competition" too seriously. Don't "compete," as though the goal were to win. Instead, compete because you want to dance better than you've ever danced before, and because you know that having a deadline -- an event with an audience to provide adrenaline and to cheer you on -- is one excellent way to do it. It gives you a reason to practice a little harder. It motivates and provides discipline. Within the framework of the long-term goal of becoming a better dancer, it gives you a short term goal to shoot for.

I can't understand why we have so few shag couples in the competition every year. I have heard several dancers say something like, "Well... I would compete, but I think it would take all the fun out of it." While I must say that I respect the fact that they want to keep their dancing fun (that is, after all, the very most important thing about dancing, first, always and forever!), still I also wonder, what do

they think competing is all about? Do they think that they must win it all on their very first time out, or they will hang their heads in shame? That is an awfully tall order! In case you're wondering, the prize money in many cases won't even pay you expenses for the weekend. And the glory of placing first lasts about a week, or until the next dance...really not something worth getting bent out of shape over. And the scoring, in the end, really says more about the judges and what the judges liked, than about the dancers and how well they danced. Sometimes victories are established by only a few points' margin. You just can't take the results too seriously.

But the personal victory, knowing that you did your best, now that is something that lasts a little longer. And the things you learn while you're preparing to compete...well, ask any of the dancers who competed. I'm pretty sure they'll tell you they are dancing much better now, after the competition, than they did several months before the competition. Personal improvement is genuinely satisfying.

**Look at the bigger picture:** When you compete, you support this dance and our club in a dramatic way. The organizers of swing competitions are always experimenting with new formats. Shag has been added to several competitions lately along the East Coast. But in all the swing competitions I have attended, the shag division is struggling. The story is always the same: not enough competitors. Often there are so few shaggers that a competition that had offered two shag divisions, open and amateur, will end up having to put all the competitors into one single division in order to have a shag division at all. The state of shag in the swing competition world is not by any means secure. Shag may turn out to be a short-lived experiment, if we can't rally to get a few more shaggers out there competing.

That would be a shame because every year, for several months after the competition, we get a little surge of brand new shaggers wandering in, who first saw the shag at a swing competition. It's excellent exposure for the club and for the dance in our area. So if you'd kinda like to compete, but you're sitting on the fence, shadow-boxing with your ego, look at it as a service you do for the club or for shag in general. Egos tend to behave themselves a little better in the name of performing a service for a good cause. And this is a cause that absolutely needs our help. At the Virginia State Open Swing Competition over the past three years, the Lindy and Hand Dancer divisions have grown by leaps and bounds. Not true of the shag division.

**Now picture this:** It's October of 1998. There are not one, not two, but THREE HEATS of shaggers out there for the amateur division. That's nine couples!

And six couples for the open division, as well! People in the audience are murmuring to each other, "Wow, a lot of shaggers this year. I wonder where they dance around here?" And, "You know, that is a dance I'd really like to learn -- it looks so cool. I love the smoothness... and that footwork is something else!..."

What do you say, folks, can we make it happen?

Editor's Note:  Golden Keyboard Award Winner for Excellence in Journalism!!

## FOR MEMBERS ONLY

### Instructional Shag Videos

*The New Charlie & Jackie instructional videos are here!*

Instructional Shag videos by **Charlie & Jackie; Sy Creed & Dana Brown; Ellen Taylor and Sonny & Judy Carver** 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 Trel Shaw** - they're available at Lulu's on Wednesday nights.

**\*\*Please Note:** Several of our instructional videos are **OVERDUE** or missing! **PLEASE TURN IN THE TAPES!!**

## NVSC ROSTERS AVAILABLE! (FOR MEMBERS ONLY)

It's almost Christmas card time! Order your NVSC roster now. On Wednesday nights give your name (and \$2.00) to **Val Swiger** or **Vesta Jones**. The following week you will receive your club roster, updated the week of your order. (*Please note: rosters are available to club members only.*)

### NVSC COMMITTEES and DIRECTORS:

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

## Shagger Profile -- John Mullen

Occupation: Operations Research Analyst

Birthday: March 15th

Hometown: Bailey's Crossroads, VA; (born: Norman, Oklahoma)

Marital Status: Single

Self-Portrait: A great person trying to get out

Motto: Make today a happy day

Dream: Meet someone who loves me as much as I love them (long term)

Inspiration: Dire Straits

Favorite Dance Tune: Been There, Done That by Francine Reed

Bad Habit: Smoking (I'm trying to stop)

Hobby: Camping; horses; reading; computers; travel

Luxury Defined: No debt (house, car, credit cards)

Drink or Wine: Coffee, Coke, beer (once in a blue moon)

TV Program: Murphy Brown; Law & Order

Books at bedside: Mars/Venus; Detective (female authors, please); Clancy, Science (not fiction); Science & Sanity (Korsorbski)

Last Words: I accept myself as I am; try to change those things that I can; and accept myself afterwards.

\*\*\*\*\*

## NVSC Clowns Around at VA Beach Bash!

Cheers! and Applause!! to the stalwart "clowns" who gave up their snooze time to serve Saturday breakfast at the Virginia Beach Bash on Nov. 1st.

As Bonnie Mabry, weekend organizer, said in her speech, "It's rare when members of one club contribute efforts toward another club's weekend." Her praise for your help was genuine and effusive.

A tremendous thank you for your smiling faces, "red noses," and generous spirits. *Thanks from Donna and Keith*

P.S. M  Ducks!!

## Humor Corner

### Regionalisms - (This is English?)

#### Atlanta

Ahm feelin' puny (*I don't feel well*)  
Fizzshoe (*If I were you . . .*)  
Mash the button (*Press the button*)  
Tick a rat (*Make a right turn*)  
Warshin' patter (*Laundry detergent*)

#### Charlotte, N.C.

Cement pon (*A swimming pool*)  
Hose pahp (*Hose pipe: A garden hose*)

#### Dallas

All y'all (*a collective plural of y'all*)  
Ah stay (*Iced tea*)  
Flustrated (*Flustered and frustrated*)  
Pa (*Pie*)

#### Jacksonville, Fla.

Aint (*Married to your uncle*)  
Baiches (*Beside the ocean*)  
Churn (*Children*)

#### Nashville

Hail (*Opposite of Heaven*)

#### New Orleans

Poach (*The platform in front of the house where the rocking swing is*)  
Where yat? (*What's up?*)

#### New York City

Cawna Fish Treat (*Corner of 5th Street*)  
Gnome sane? (*Do you know what I'm saying?*)  
Huh (*Opposite of him*)  
Mel pew? (*May I help you?*)  
Reg you la caw fee (*Coffee with milk, no sugar*)  
Washda closendaws (*Warning from the subway conductor*)  
Whaddya, whaddya? (*I am dumbfounded by your audacity*)

#### Raleigh, N.C.

Rat chair (*Right here*)

#### Richmond, VA

Spacial (*Special*)  
Whale (*Where you get water from the ground*)

#### Washington, D.C.

Amma lambs (*Emergency vehicle for the sick and injured*)

## MARC FISHER'S LATEST CD

### "Blues On The Loose"

### Nominated for CAMMY AWARD!!

Club member Marc Fisher has teamed up with well known Myrtle Beach deejay Judy Collins to produce the latest compilation of funky R&B and beach music available on the dance scene. "Blues On The Loose" was nominated for a prestigious Cammy Award (honoring the Best in Beach Music) only six weeks after being released! The front and back covers of this volume were shot at our club's "home," Lulu's at Blackie's -- and you may recognize the dancers pictured shaggin' there. "Blues On The Loose" will be sold at various shag and swing events around the country (it sold out at the recent Virginia Beach Bash!), and can be found at Judy's House of Oldies in North Myrtle Beach. Marc has made copies available for us to sell on Wednesday nights at Lulu's -- cost is \$15, at the table by the deejay booth. It's a great gift idea!

No. VA Shag Club On The Web!

<http://www.sbolnet.com/shag>

### AND THE WINNER IS . . .

CONGRATULATIONS to Jake Willingham, who got lucky and won the 50-50 last month!

PLEASE SUPPORT THIS IMPORTANT EFFORT TO RAISE MONEY FOR OUR CLUB'S CAPITAL SHAG CLASSIC WEEKEND PARTY! Tickets are just \$1 for one, or seven for \$5!! YOU might be the lucky one the next time!

\*\*\*\*\*

## CAROLINA SHAG CLASSES

now offered by the  
Fairfax County Recreation Department

Shag lessons will soon be offered through the Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation Services. Beginner classes will be taught by Janis Grimes at 7 p.m. on Thursday nights at Woodburn Elementary School, on Gallows Road in Falls Church, VA. Members who want to brush up on their basics are encouraged to sign up for the six-week course beginning on January 8th. Details will follow. Info -- call Susan Weinsheimer, Fairfax County Recreation - 703-324-5540.

## New Members in November

WELCOME, new members!! Carol Adler, Joyce Braun, Laverne Gowin, Alexandra Manolatos, Jim Murray

\*\*\*\*\*

## Happy, Happy Birthday

### December Birthday Babies:

- 2 - Diana Demadalen
- 6 - Barry Kumar
- 7 - Debbie Surniak
- 9 - Jane James
- 9 - Melody Wayland
- 12 - Shawn Lapinski
- 12 - Joe Laws
- 13 - Helen Bacumpas
- 13 - Frank Del Piano
- 13 - Fred MacAdam
- 14 - Gayle Brock
- 14 - Larry Jones
- 19 - Lorenzo DeVera
- 19 - Robbin Ebb
- 19 - Dotty Hale
- 19 - Dave Rapson
- 20 - Lynn Lowry
- 21 - Michael Browne
- 21 - Kent Edie
- 22 - Robert Gardner
- 23 - Patti Chisholm
- 23 - Gaye Proctor
- 24 - Reid Ellis
- 27 - Sheri Jackson

# HELP!!

## Help! Help!

## ASAP! Now!!!

## DONATIONS NEEDED!!

We need **DOOR PRIZES** for our **Holiday Party**. *Can you help?* Please call **Betty Abshire** with suggestions and donations, 703-680-5115. **PLEASE DONATE** something *good* that *you'd* like to win -- maybe *you'll* get lucky!!

## Living Legends Hall of Fame

Just back from Little Creek NAB near Virginia Beach where we witnessed the induction of new honorees into the Living Legends of Dance Hall of Fame.

This event honors individuals who have made a significant contribution to any form of dance, including Carolina Shag. **Steve Booth** of the Richmond Shag Club was the Master of Ceremonies for the awards ceremony on Saturday night.

Among the 17 new inductees were some familiar faces -- the lovely **Susie Beaver**, dancer and shag instructor extraordinaire; **Carl Taylor** (Ellen's husband); and **Norfleet Jones** of Ducks in N. Myrtle Beach.

This invitation only event was attended by about 400 dancers from around the country, and we saw many shag Hall of Fame members, including **Earl Robinson**, **Ellen Taylor**, **Bobby Kellam**, and others too numerous to name. Junior shaggers **Norman Aldridge & Leslie Melton** performed a splendid shag demo, delighting the crowd of legendary dancers. These talented youngsters will dance this year in the shag division at the U.S. Open in Anaheim, California.

Congratulations to all!

### SHERRY WINTER

has moved to Hilton Head and we miss her!! She would like to hear from her friends, and can be contacted by email at [sherrywinter@compuserve.com](mailto:sherrywinter@compuserve.com).



*From the Editor....*

Hey Y'all! I hope everyone had a splendid Thanksgiving, and that your Holidays will be warm, wonderful, and filled with love. Wherever you are, please be safe.

**MID-WINTER CLASSIC** in N. Myrtle Beach is coming up January 16-18! This "mini-SOS" weekend event is FREE to all SOS members -- but you need a "dot" on your SOS card to get in to the clubs. **GET YOUR DOT from Valerie or Vesta on Wednesday nights.** (*\*NISC card!*)

As always, this is YOUR newsletter. 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' .....*

