



Shag Rag

Shagger Newsletter

NORTHERN VIRGINIA SHAG CLUB

Dedicated to the Preservation of the Carolina Shag and Beach Music

Vol. V, No. 4

Keep on Shaggin'

April 1998

From the President . . . by Vesta Jones

The Nationals...March 14...Ducks... We were watching the juniors practice on Saturday afternoon ... they are sooooo amazing. Even with the one-legged-spins, drop spins, footwork -- their amazing moves -- the grace is just THERE! I think Janis put it so well when she said, "The beautiful thing about shag is how the men treat the women so gently."

And that's so much a part of the shag world -- this culture we're all a part of. The moves are graceful, the rhythms are so upbeat and enticing, and the dancers' respect is mutual -- when the man is doing one of his "male lead" moves, the woman holds her basic and does not "compete." the mirror steps are done as a flowing team, the woman complements the process with graceful, subtle additions in her own moves. The result is fun to watch, complex, interesting, and -- well -- graceful.

And this permeates the shag world! The people have impressed me as complex and warm and kind and respectful ... funny, definitely funny, and LOVE to party (that's a GOOD thing) ... supportive of family and friends ... and as I've gotten to know many of them at another level, I have found them involved not just in their shag clubs, but in their communities -- their churches -- so many types of organizations. This culture continues to draw me forward into it. You know, it's kind of like finding extra chapters when I've finished reading a favorite book.

We're Havin' a Party



Pre-SOS Dance Party DANCE to BEACH MUSIC

by

**Craig Jennings
and
Dennis Gehley**

FREE SHAG LESSON - at 7:30

TOM VARNEY
with
of the Richmond Shag Club!!

FOOD, DANCING

FRIENDS, FUN

50-50 RAFFLE

Saturday, April 11th

DANCE SATURDAY NIGHT!

Kenwood Country Club, River Road, Bethesda, MD

*Directions: 495 North towards Rockville, take Exit 39 East,
River Road towards Washington. Go to the 6th stop light, at
Springfield Drive. Turn left into the Kenwood.*

8-12 p.m.

Cost: \$10 -- for EVERYONE!

CASH BAR - Light Snacks Provided

Everyone is Welcome!!

News/Info/Ads - please contact Janis Grimes, 703-536-7362; or email JaniGrimes@aol.com
Do you have email? Send your email address to our Communications Committee--vms@olg.com

Whatever Happened to Jimmy Cavallo?

... by Patricia Parrott

If you'd like to see photographs of a young and handsome Jimmy Cavallo with his saxophone, look on pages 42, 43, and 46 of the book, **SHAG**. He's 71 years old now and he's *still* young and handsome.

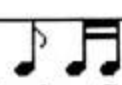
If you'd like to read of his contribution to shag, read page 43. Jimmy was at the beaches with his saxophone when the dance was conceived. Before beach music was identified as such, the sound was jazz. Jimmy mixed a dynamic blend of blues and jazz with the "approved of" big band sound of the day.

... page 43. "One night, the Queen of Shag (Clarice Reavis) met a saxophone player named Jimmy Cavallo. 'He caused that sax to do amazing things,' remembered the Queen. His stage presence was high voltage. He came out of Syracuse, New York late in the war. Cavallo and several musicians formed a combo. The bass drum carried the initials "JC" and a rather primitive, somehow innocent-looking silhouette of a black widow spider, denoting the nickname of the drummer, Bobby Wren. The music they played was originally listed in **Billboard Magazine** under the heading, "Harlem Hit Parade." Cavallo was probably the first white bandleader in the Carolinas to perform rhythm and blues, early rock 'n' roll . . . live! In Carolina Beach, at a night spot called Bob City, Cavallo became a legend. He carried a torch for many years for the Queen of Shag. He and his band lived side-by-side with the dancers, sharing the music. The community of the shag was forming."

If you'd like to know his whereabouts today, he's in Deerfield Beach, Florida, playing his heart out and creating some of the greatest live music I have ever experienced at "one very sexy club," "P.G. Doogie's" -- danceable jazz and blues, and jazzy-blues! Umh! I thought we'd have to call life-support! Three saxophones playing at once, world-class drumming, wonderful jazz piano, bass and guitar. I'm spoiled for life.

During my brief stay in Florida, there were four occasions to hear this wonderful music, two at the club and two on the beach. These were four occasions of heart-stopping, magical, musical, memorable moments that brought chills, thrills and tears, and had the audience hopping. Go Jimmy!

I thought you shaggers would like to know.



SOS Spring Safari

April 24-May 3 in North Myrtle Beach, S.C.

It's that time of year again. Shaggers -- time to head for Spring Safari at North Myrtle Beach, S.C., for 10 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 deejays keep the beach music euphoria going from 10 a.m. until *waay* 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!). Passes will be sold there in NMB, and it is well worth the cost, believe it! 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.

Hotel and Condo Info in North Myrtle Beach:

- Bel-Aire Motel, 102 N. Ocean Dr. 800-342-0078
- Helms Vista Motel, 300 N. OD 803-249-2521
- OD Beach & Golf Resort, oceanfront 800-438-9590
- Summer Sea Inn, 109 S. OD 803-249-4411
- Beachcomber Realty 800-334-3798
- Coastal Condos 803-280-0005

Also try: • *Ambassador*; • *Buccaneer*; • *Sands*; • *Seaside*
-- in NMB!

(Psssst! Pass It On!!)

At SOS . . . NVSC members
will rendezvous at the Barrel
(formerly known as the Pad,
across from the Boulevard Grill)
at 9 p.m. each night . . .

Best Wishes for a complete
and speedy recovery to
Melody Wayland

Shagger Profile -- Janis Grimes

Nickname: Jani

Occupation: Executive Assistant

Birthday: January 9

Hometown: Falls Church, VA

Marital Status: Single Mom -- my youngest is at Clemson University

Motto: Do your best, and don't give up; you never know what's right around the corner...

Dream: Beach property, and Someone to share it

Inspiration: Mikhail Baryshnikov -- I originated the "That Man Moves Like A Big Cat" Recognition Award

Favorite Dance Tune: Beach Music!

Bad Habit: Non-linear conversational style

Hobby: Dance, Theater, Gardening

Luxury Defined: A home in or near N. Myrtle Beach

Drink or Wine: Bailey's; White Zinfandel

TV Program: News; don't watch much TV

Books at bedside: Conspiracy of Dunces; The Civil War Diary of Anne S. Frobel (local history); various humor and wisdom

Last Words: Not yet!

Northern Virginia Shag Club Dance to Beach Music by Craig Jennings

**every Wednesday night at
Lulu's**

at **Blackie's** in Springfield, VA

\$2 Cover

For Directions, call 703-971-4200

FREE Shag Lessons
at 7:30 p.m.

DANCE from
8:30 - 11 p.m.

DIRECTIONS to N. Myrtle Beach -- the SHORTEST ROUTE

Courtesy of **Larry & Shirley Jones** of Richmond, VA (they make 15 trips per year!)

95 South to Lumberton, NC

Take Exit 14 (Rt. 74) -- TURN LEFT at end of exit, heading East...

Stay on 74 @ 26 miles until you get to Rt. 410 South -- TURN RIGHT

Stay on 410 through Chadborne until it dead ends.

TURN RIGHT onto 701 South.

About a mile down the road 701 will bear to the LEFT at Hardee's.

Stay on 701 to Rt. 9.

Stay on Rt. 9 to Rt. 17 South, into N. Myrtle Beach -- then you're HOME!!

Happy, Happy Birthday

April Birthday Babies:

- 1 - Kathleen Clark
- 2 - Charlotte Brussock
- 2 - Dallas Campbell
- 4 - Joyce Braun
- 5 - Ronnie Reid
- 5 - Linda Terry
- 7 - Judy Lance
- 7 - Kitty Senge
- 8 - Lavern Gowin
- 8 - Joyce Kennon
- 10 - Beth Endres
- 11 - John Katon
- 12 - Kathryn Quattrone
- 13 - A.J. Nowasky
- 15 - Fred Griffin
- 16 - Phil Jones
- 22 - Brenda Kenny
- 22 - Kelly Matthews
- 22 - Rita Perrotti
- 27 - Bonnie Torguson

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ATTENTION!

If you (or someone you know) would like to be a vendor at the 1998 Capital Shag Classic, please contact Valerie Swiger at 703-281-9193 for details.

How to Become the Club's Worst Dancer . . . by Hapless Harry

We've all had one of those nights. All you really wanted was to come and sulk at the bar without being bothered, and yet dancer after bright-eyed dancer came over to interrupt your solitude and pull you onto the dance floor. No time to drink, no time to brood on life's empty meaninglessness. No time to brag with your bar buddies about how much worse your life is than theirs. Well, I'm here to tell you the problem is easily remedied: become the Club's Worst Dancer. Only by dancing abominably can you acquire those peaceful, quiet nights at the bar with no interference from those enthusiastic folks who actually carry their shoes in and change them after they arrive... you know the type.

So here are a few tips from me, Hapless Harry, that men and women can both use to get rid of the bothersome reputation of being fun to dance with. First, you want to avoid getting out there on the floor as much as possible:

TIP #1 - If you see someone heading toward you at the beginning of a song, act fast: look at the speakers and scrunch up your face in disgust after the first few notes of the song, as though you thought this clunker had died long ago and you can't believe it's still getting airplay. Look out onto the floor and sneer at the nondiscriminating dancers who have been unlucky enough to get caught out there actually dancing in public to this song.

TIP #2 - If he or she still asks you to dance, look at your drink, then hesitate, then say, "Well, OK, I guess I could put my drink down..." then look back at them to see if they're really going to insist. The more faint-hearted will take the hint and seek an alternate target. These tips are pretty effective. But sometimes you'll just have to bite the bullet and get out there anyway.

Here are some pointers for containing the damage and making sure you won't be asked twice by the same partner:

TIP #3 - Don't be constricted by conventional concepts of courtesy on the dance floor. If it looks a bit crowded, a little pushing and shoving might be just what's needed to liven things up a bit.

TIP #4 - Ignore the music. Dance to the beat of a different drummer. Act like you fully expect your dance partner to join you in your wacko beat, and complain about the music being "off" if they don't.

TIP #5 - Give your partner unsolicited advice on how to improve his or her dancing. Or better yet, insist on

teaching them a new 36-count mirror pattern that only you know.

TIP #6 - If your partner tries a cute new step he just learned, roll your eyes a little and then look away without saying anything. If he dares to try it a second time, ask him, with a bemused smile, "Did you make that one up yourself?"

TIP #7 - Try to find a dance that your partner doesn't know, then INSIST on dancing it with them. If you're the guy, you can get a lot of mileage out of tossing the woman around like a sack of potatoes in steps she doesn't know how to follow. When she starts to look tired, increase the velocity and intensity of your lead, as though you think that will help her have more fun. I guarantee you, she'll never come back for more!

TIP #8 - If you must dance the shag, try to move your feet as little as possible. Never pick your feet up off the ground or let any forward-to-back movement creep into your dancing. Keep each foot (particularly your heels) in full contact with the floor at all times. Ideally, you want to keep your feet firmly rooted in one place, and just wiggle them a bit from time to time. Meanwhile, with your upper body, lean ever so slightly from side to side. Your partner will wonder if he's dancing with a tree. Eventually, word will get around, and you will become a topic of conversation in the bathroom of the opposite sex. If you follow these tips carefully every time you go out dancing, you will soon hold that coveted title, Club's Worst Dancer, and all its attendant glory. (*Actually, you'll have to share that title with me! See you at the bar!*)

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

Dear Blue:

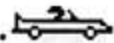
You feel awkward doing the Boogie Walk? Well, that's a step in the right direction... Have you tried practicing with a towel tied to a door knob in tennis shoes on a carpet?

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 Greg?)



33 New Members in March !

WELCOME, new members!! Michael Butler, Anna Carroll, Nancy Christin, Angela Eppler, Cheryl Fahl, Sandra Feromy, Andrew Gross, Curt Guckert, Kathy Guckert, Linda Jaco, Mona Julian, Joyce Kennon, Judy Kunold, Bonnie Mahoney, Ron Maierhofer, Chris Morris, Jeffrey Niemuth, Jim Okonek, Sarah Perry, Jim Peterson, Nancy Polisky, Dorothy Purvis, Ron Purvis, Vaughn Royal, Cindy Schneider, Linda Silbaugh, Arthur Stagik, Lynne Sullivan, Bob Tonkin, Cin Trueheart, Bill Tucker, Ginger Tucker, Tom Varney, Norma Wark

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.

The tapes available at Lulu's on Wednesday nights. See Janis to check out tapes.

PLEASE RETURN OVERDUE TAPES!!

This Newsletter is Interrupted to Bring You an Important Update.....



Our DJs Will Play During SOS at NMB!

Please support our local DJs who will be playing during SOS. The schedule is as follows:

- **Craig Jennings**
MONDAY, April 27: 1 pm - 5 pm at the Boulevard Grill
- **Larry Jones**
SATURDAY, April 25: 5 pm - 9 pm at the Boulevard Grill
- **Larry Jones**
TUESDAY, April 28: 9 pm - closing at the Boulevard Grill

Road Trips With Gypsies by Vesta Jones

Mooresville.... I drove a friend to Charlotte, just to do her a favor since she couldn't drive that far ... and how does Providence pat me on the head? By having a really nice shag party at the skating rink in Mooresville. The Lake Norman Shag Club's 10th Annual Chickin' Pickin' ... and it was such fun!

The dance floor is terrific as you can imagine ... truly, it's a skating rink when we're not shaggin' on it ... and I got to connect with wonderful old friends from Roanoke (I just love to dance with **Fredley** and **Ralph!**) ... and to see many I hadn't seen in awhile (**Mac** and **Nancy**) ... and to make new friends from there. There may be a whole "table full" of Roanoke folks at our Capital Shag Classic.

We might even have a group from Landis! **JT** and **Sandy** and **Wayne** and maybe even **Snoopy!** And wouldn't it be great if we could entice **Jim Wiggins** to come for it (his business card reads "Jim Wiggins Human Being").

So many to see ... **Karen**, **Suzette**, **Big George**, **Harold**, **Clyde**, **Frog Friends** (**Lynette** and **Carolyn**), **Mark** (*we miss you!*) and **Fran**, and new friends and acquaintances that I'll see over and over.

The weekend was warm and wonderful..the music was great, the shaggin was great and the chicken was good, too!

It's A Mystery ...

The Mystery Dancer Contest is underway, and points are being tallied to see who dances the most with new shaggers ... Remember to **TURN IN YOUR MYSTERY DANCER CARDS** to **John Mullen** or **Chris Pax** -- you may be the winner of a free private lesson with **Bill & Brenda Barber!!**

Monthly Sunday Social Coming!

Watch for details! There will be announcements on Wednesday nights, fliers on the table, and a notice in the next **Shag Rag**.

We'll be at Legends in Manassas (directions in the next **Shag Rag**). It will be from 2-6 p.m. one Sunday afternoon per month (beginning in May)...beach music, another chance to relax and dance and see friends ... bring other friends to introduce them to this shag world and share the fun ... stay tuned!

