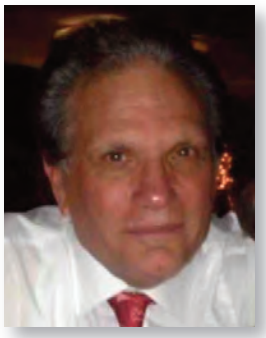
NORTHERN VIRGINIA SHAG CLUB

Shag Rag

OCTOBER 2026

President's Corner

BY JACK JONES



Hi Fellow Shaggers!

As most of you know, **Tom Brett** passed away a few weeks ago. He retired from the US Army as a Full Colonel after serving 30 years which included multiple tours in Vietnam. Tom joined the club in 2005 and remained very active. He taught hundreds of new members basic shag steps, and could always be depended upon to make them feel welcome in the club. He served on the board in 2007-8, and chaired the NVSC Nominating and Elections Committee for several years. He will be sorely missed by all. We will share details of any services as they become available.

During our weekly dance on September 10th, we had a **"Country Night"** theme where we shagged and line danced in our western clothing to country music played by DJ Craig Jennings. We also had an enjoyable Sunday Social at Clare and Don's Beach Shack on September 13, which will be the last one for 2026.

The **2026 SOS Fall Migration** held in North Myrtle Beach started on Sept 18 with several members attending. Our NVSC party was held on Sept 22 from 2-5 PM in the back room of Fat Harold's with Craig Jennings as the DJ. Club members received a free drink and snacks. The **Virginia Shag Clubs Free Pour** was held at Fat Harold's from 1-4 PM on Friday, Sept 25. It was wonderful seeing our shag dancing friends again. Due to the many club members who attended SOS, we cancelled the Sept 24 weekly dance.

October will be a very busy month for us. Our annual **Club Picnic** is scheduled for Saturday, Oct 3 with a rain date of Sunday, Oct 4. Kathy and Loren Kropat have again graciously offered their home in Vienna for the site of the picnic.

We will be participating in the F**airfax Fall Festival** on Oct 10 from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM to promote the club. This will involve three 15-minute sessions of dance demonstrations in front of the main stage between band breaks and manning our info booth. Barbara Ebersole is coordinating the event and recruiting volunteers. Please contact her at *Ebersole_2@yahoo.com* if you are able to help – more volunteers are still needed! The club has ordered promo tee shirts with the club logo, and volunteers for the Fairfax Fair will receive one for free.

Kevin and Trish Goeller have once again volunteered to sponsor our annual Wine Tasting and Auction in support of Capital Caring. This event is scheduled for Sunday, October 25. Finally, our Halloween dance will occur at our last weekly dance on October 29.

We have elections coming up for our board members and Kevin Goeller has stepped up again to handle them. Details to be released soon. Hope you are enjoying the fall season and see you at upcoming club dance events!

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NORTHERN VIRGINIA SHAG CLUB

A Proud Member Of The: National FastDance Association

About Our Organization...

Northern Virginia Shag Club (NVSC) was organized to preserve the Carolina Shag dance and its accompanying Beach music. Visit us at www.nvshag.org

2026 Board Members

General Information		info@nvshag.org
President	Jack J.	president@nvshag.org
Vice President	Dick P.	vicepresident@nvshag.org
Secretary	Linda B.	secretary@nvshag.org
Treasurer	Mark H.	treasurer@nvshag.org
Director at Large	Pamela A.	
Director at Large	Barbara E.	
Director at Large	Kathy K.	
Director at Large	Liz K.	
Director at Large	Bee B.	

2026 Committees/Chairs

Audit	Linda Z.	
Capital Shag Classic	Vacant	
Shag-A-Thon	Vacant	
Dance	Pamela A.	DanceChair@nvshag.org
Music	Vaughn R.	MusicChair@nvshag.org
Historian	Vacant	
Membership	Barbara D.	Membership@nvshag.org
Hello Shagger	Kathy K.	Communications@nvshag.org
Shag Rag Newsletter	Adele R.	Communications@nvshag.org
Facebook	Jack J.	Communications@nvshag.org
Instagram	Adele R.	Communications@nvshag.org
Photographer	Jack J.	NVSCPhotographer@nvshag.org
Public Relations	Vacant	PublicRelations@nvshag.org
	Adele R.	PublicRelations@nvshag.org
Social/Hospitality	Sue Y.	Hospitality@nvshag.org
Webmaster	Loren K.	Webmaster1@nvshag.org
Sunshine	Maryann L.	SunshineChair@nvshag.org

*Denotes Standing Committee

Contact us:

General Inquiries:
shaglist@nvshag.org
Membership:
membership@nvshag.org
Webmaster:
webmaster@nvshag.org
Hello Shagger:
communications@nvshag.org

Through the National FastDance Association, our Club activities are licensed by:

We Create Music ASCAP www.ascap.com

SESAC

BMI

ShagRag
Northern Virginia Shag Club
P.O. Box 2298
Merrifield, VA 22116
www.nvshag.org

Contact us: info@nvshag.org

Follow us!

When and Where to Shag

Join us at the Elks Lodge for dancing every Thursday!

Address: 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax

Open dancing: 7:00—10:00 p.m.

Admission Cost: $10 Members; $11 Non-Members

We will be dancing downstairs in the Fairfax Room. Food and drink may be purchased from the Elks at the bar next to the Fairfax Room. There is an elevator at the rear of the building for those who find stairs challenging.

DANCE INFO

Deejays:

October 1
Cathy Metcalf and Vaughn Royal

October 8
Loren Kropat

October 15
Jack Jones

October 22
Craig Jennings

October 29
Cathy Metcalf and Vaughn Royal

Other ACSC Virginia Shag Clubs

Visit the club websites for venues and schedules.

Battlefield Boogie Club	*www.battlefieldboogieclub.com*
Boogie On The Bay Shag Club	*www.boogieonthebay.com*
Colonial Shag Club (Newport News)	*www.colonialshagclub.com*
Danville Shag Club	*www.danvilleshag.com*
Franklin Shag Club	*Find them on Facebook*
Lynchburg Shag Club	*www.lynchburgareashagclub.com*
Richmond Shag Club	*www.shagRVA.org*
Roanoke Valley Shag Club	*Find them on Facebook*
Virginia Beach Shag Club	*www.vbshagclub.com*

Come dance with us!

Remembering Tom Brett: A True Lover of the Dance

BY THE BARNAS

Tom Brett 1941-2026

Our first learning experience with Shag was in 2010 taking Fairfax County Shag lessons from Janis Grimes, Steve Booth and Tom Brett. Just like many of you, we got to know him sitting with him at the dance. He shared many stories with me and David. We'd like to share some of them with you.

His mother and father were killed in a car accident while he was sitting in the backseat when he was eight years old.

He and his siblings were raised by his maternal grandparents. His grandfather was a West Point graduate and Army General who was rarely home. Tom and his siblings were the responsibility of his grandmother. His childhood was difficult and being accepted at the Citadel was life-changing for him. Through his life, he supported the Citadel wholeheartedly with large donations and regular visits. After graduation, he was commissioned into the Army. He taught recruits, parachuting alongside them many times. He served 30+years, including several tours in Vietnam and retired as a Colonel.

Like his grandfather, his father was a West Point graduate. Tom continued the legacy teaching at West Point for three years.

Tom enjoyed photography and belonged to The Northern Virginia Photographic Society. He traveled the world taking photos. His favorite spot was Africa. You may have seen his photo with a cheetah.

He had a cat and when he traveled his ex-wife cared for the cat.

Tom loved Shag dancing. He took many lessons from Janis Grimes. He talked with her often and last spoke with her the Friday before his passing. He told her he was very tired.

He was pleased with the club and grateful for all of the things that were done to keep it running. He served on the board. He shared his lessons from Janis teaching beginners at our club. He never missed an opportunity to teach. For a few summers, he even brought Citadel students to our dances.

He enjoyed the snacks that Estelle brought each week and was happy to contribute snacks he enjoyed.

When life got more difficult, he called on his friends to help him out. He was thankful when Jack found his lost dance shoe in the Elks parking lot. Kevin and David among others helped him out as well. He was thankful for the Christmas parties and the theme dances. He was always sure to thank everyone involved. My inbox is filled with thank you notes and asking what to wear to theme dances.

NVSC recognized him last year with an award given in appreciation of his years of dedication to our club.

We will miss him.

Linda and David Barna

The Northern Virginia Photographic Society put together a compilation of photos of Tom, and award-winning photos taken by Tom, which can be seen on YouTube.

Watch at ***https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvAh5eV8yfc***

An Interview with One of Our Newer Members: Steve Sedgwick

BY BEE BUERGLER

In August I had the pleasure of chatting with Steve Sedgwick who joined NVSC a year ago and enjoys attending our dances on Thursday evenings. He is a local native and currently lives in Vienna, Va. He was born in Washington, DC, raised in Northern Virginia, and went to West Springfield High School (1973-1977). He was a competitive swimmer growing up in the Northern Virginia Swim League and received a champion title in Individual Medley, swimming all four strokes.

Welcome to NVSC, Steve, and see you on the dance floor!

Steve has a 30-year-old daughter and a 28-year-old son. His daughter lives in Australia where she earned her master's degree in marine biology. She devotes her work to helping coral survive. His son graduated from Longwood University and now lives with Steve. Together they help care for Steve's 93-year-old mother.

Before retiring in 2005, Steve worked 22 years as a building engineer at Hecht's flagship store located in Arlington's Parkington Shopping Center which the owners redeveloped and renamed Ballston Common Mall. Steve kept that Hecht's store operating through renovations and other changes.

Steve had to retire at the early age of 47 because he was losing his eyesight due to a degenerative genetic eye disease. To stay busy, he started working out physically again and helped train others. He trained three boys in how to exercise better; one had never worked out. They would pick Steve up to go exercise at the gym. One woman asked Steve to take her running.

For the past 21 years, Steve has been continually active. His hobbies are physical exercise, swimming and calisthenics, and dancing. In 2015 a friend, Jim Harold, got Steve into dancing by taking him to Gotta Swing.

Steve liked dancing even though learning was challenging. He took East Coast Swing lessons through Gotta Swing and danced with many new friends before classes stopped in 2020 because of COVID-19. After the break from dancing, he returned and tried ballroom dancing with Bonnie, who also bartends at the Elks, for a time. He continued to learn and enjoy dancing with different partners.

During the summer of 2025, Steve heard about our dance club through his friend Bruce Meyers who introduced him to the Elks Club and encouraged him to check out our Thursday evening dances. Steve began attending with Shelly Castle, who had started attending our Thursday dances one week earlier. He also kept running into Jack at JV's while Estelle was playing bingo on Mondays. Steve became a club member that September. He told me he was impressed with how youthful and fit our dance club members are. Yes, Steve can see a little out of his right eye.

Steve met and liked dancing with NVSC member Victoria at Shag dance night. Besides being a good dancer, she is also a member of the local arts society. At the time of Steve's interview, Victoria was out of the country visiting her parents in Ukraine. I hope to interview her in the future.

Important to relay about Steve… he made a point of saying if he had not experienced eyesight loss, he would not have learned to dance. WOW, I say! And interestingly Steve's pre-retirement hobby was working on old muscle cars — 1960s-1970s American made, big engine.

Steve also said he is determined to keep learning new Shag steps and variations of steps. The Sugarfoot pattern came easily to him because he had already learned the Apple Jack pattern, and he noted that dancing with different partners helps him improve his lead.

It is very admirable that Steve keeps learning and dancing. He seems used to learning… and adapting! Welcome to NVSC, Steve, and see you on the dance floor!

On the floor: Yee Haw!

Everybody was a cowpoke in September!

SALOON

Did you know?

COMPILED BY BEE BUERGLER

WITH HELP FROM CATHY METCALF AND VAUGHN ROYAL

Bee apologizes in advance for any errors or omissions in retelling this history.

Our Liz Kestler was one of the 15 founders of the Northern Virginia Shag Club along with her ex-husband Rick Hendrix. They inspired others to learn the Carolina Shag and helped create our dance club which was officially organized in early 1994. Liz was the club's first secretary and both she and Rick were instructors.

Liz remained active in the club for decades, serving many years on the Board of Directors and various committees while continuing to teach shag lessons. She served several terms as secretary and a few years as editor/publisher of the *Shag Rag* and participated on the Dance Committee many years. After taking a break to care for her mother and move, she returned to the club.

Several years ago, Liz introduced her significant other, Simon Shupak, to the club. If you have not met them, be sure to say hello. They regularly attend Thursday dances and other events, and Liz is once again serving on the NVSC board of directors as a member-at-large!

And did you know?

Our club is 33 years old. Back in the early 1990s, a group of social dancers of various types and skill levels started meeting at venues across Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, to dance and learn Carolina Shag steps. Their connections with people familiar with shag clubs in Virginia Beach, North Myrtle Beach, and other areas triggered the creation of our local club.

The first informal meeting was held in June 1993 in the Déjà Vu Room at Blackie's Steak House. That evening, 15 founding members each paid $15 in dues, officially launching the club.

The 15 Founding Members were:

- Keith Abernathy
- Dee Bassett
- Sherri Bassham
- Larry Camp
- Pauline Easby-Smith
- Liz Kestler
- Rick Hendrix
- Donna Harrington
- Debbie Nichols
- Nick Nichols
- Patricia Parrott
- Ruth Rapson
- Dave Rapson
- Sharon Salpini
- Gary Salpini

Soon joined by Larry Boyer, Dickie Gee, and Charlie Price, the founders recruited additional members and formally joined the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs (ACSC) in early 1994. At the first official club meeting in February 1994, the members adopted the name Northern Virginia Shag Club and elected officers. The members named the newsletter and published the first issue of the *Shag Rag* the following month. The *Shag Rag*'s format soon earned recognition as one of the best newsletters among ACSC clubs. The club also initiated a logo design contest.

During the rest of that year, the board of directors established bylaws, held regular monthly meetings, and promoted the new club. Most importantly, they held weekly dances with free lessons. Membership and dance attendance grew and weekly dances continued.

Several of our current members joined during the mid-90s. Can you name any of them? Ask around.

For more fun information, check out our history on our Northern Virginia Shag Club website!

Besides Liz, several of our current members were at those dance gatherings in the early 1990s. Do you know who? Find out when you read the next page...

What we know...

NVSC's Membership List with Place of Residence in February 1994

First published list taken from Inaugural Edition of *Shag Rag*, March 1994

( ) Denotes Feb 1994 Board position or committee chair

* Denotes deceased and year passed if known

Current home location if known

Keith Abernathy—Carrollton, Va
Last living in Virginia Beach area

Dee Bassett (President)—Burke, VA
Now Dee Orlando living in Woodbridge, VA

Sherri Bassham—Rockville, MD

Larry Boyer* 2025—Alexandria, VA
https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/larry-boyer-obituary?id=57929358

Larry Camp* 2024—Alexandria, VA
https://www.msfh.net/obituary/Larry-Camp

Alice Cannon—Springfield, VA

Pauline Easby-Smith (Events Co-Chair) * 2004—Great Falls, VA
https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/legacyremembers/pauline-easby-smith-obituary?id=5516792

Dickie Gee* 2008—Springfield, VA
https://www.pilotonline.com/obituaries/alden-gee/

Michael Getsey—Burke, VA

Janis Grimes (Newsletter Editor)—Falls Church, VA
Now living in North Myrtle Beach area

Dotty & Frank Hale—Woodbridge, VA

Donna Harrington (Events Co-Chair)—Vienna, VA
Significant other of Keith Abernathy

Libby Hendrix (Secretary) & Rick Hendrix—Burke, VA
Now Liz Kestler living in McLean and currently on our club's Board as a Member-at-Large

H.K. Lee* 2018—Rockville, MD
https://www.familychoicefunerals.com/obituaries/HK-Lee-Jr?obId=31575520

Thomas Lufkin—Arlington, VA

Chloe Lynn—Sterling, VA

George Murray—Arlington, VA

Bert Nelbach—Alexandria, VA
Club's first deejay; may be deceased

Debbie Nichols (Vice President) & Nick Nichols—Burke, VA
May now be in North Myrtle Beach area

Pat Parrott* 2026—Fairfax, VA
https://www.virginiacremate.com/obituaries/chantilly-va/patricia-parrott-12115557

Charlie Price* 2021—McLean, VA
https://www.pumphreyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Charles-Albert-Price?obId=21113983

Ruth Rapson & Dave Rapson (Treasurer)—Annandale, VA

Karen & Robert Rogers—Annapolis, MD

Sharon Salpini (Membership Chair) & Gary Salpini—Fairfax, VA

Ellen Werther—Arlington, VA

In addition to Liz Kestler being a current member, Janice Grimes, Ruth Rapson, Dave Rapson, Sharon Salpini, and Gary Salpini continued their membership through the years and are currently members of NVSC. Let's raise a glass and toast to our longest-standing members! And give thankful cheers to all the early members who devoted much time and thought to the development of our wonderful dance club!

Special thanks to Vaughn, Cathy, and Liz for helping Bee with updates to the list.

Northern Virginia Shag Club, Inc.

SHAG RAG

Inaugural Edition

Shag Dancer Newsletter | *Keep on Shagging* | Vol. I, No. 1, March 1994

No. Va. Shag Club Meets

The charter meeting of the Northern Virginia Shag Club was held on Sunday, February 27th, at the home of our President, Dee Bassett.

The following Officers of the Club were elected:

Dee Bassett - President
Debbie Nichols - Vice President
Libby Hendrix - Secretary
Dave Rapson - Treasurer

* * *

From the President

By Dee Bassett

Dear Members:

We did it! A NoVa Shag Club!

Formed to provide pleasure to all who enjoy good company, good music and the greatest of all, dancing.

It was said, "If you don't have a dream how will a dream come true."

Our Shag Club is a dream come true.

For all you do and have done, Thank You.

See you Shaggin',

Dee

* * *

Treasurer's Report

Everything is A-OK -- Full report Next Issue!!

VA Beach Shag Club -- Sunday Social

By Donna Harrington

On Sunday, March 6th, several of our members attended the Sunday Social presented by the Virginia Beach Shag Club. This event takes place at "Steppin Out" on the first Sunday of each month.

Starting at 3:30 p.m., beginner shag lessons were given by Pete and Fran. It was good to be able to review and practice a correct Basic Step. We were reminded how important proper execution of the Basic is to the entire "art" of Shagging.

The instructors followed with an Intermediate level lesson which featured the "Fantasy," a step some of us had seen at the ACSC Workshop in Greensboro, NC, Feb. 18-20. Hopefully, we learned it well enough to share with the rest of our Club members.

At the conclusion of lessons we were treated to a buffet dinner and a great evening of dancing to our favorite beach music tunes.

I think we're already looking forward to the next Sunday Social in Virginia Beach!

* * *

New Shag Headquarters

The search is on! Nick Nichols is presently looking for a new location for us to meet each week for beach music, dancing and fun.

Any ideas and suggestions about a new place to dance should be submitted to Nick, who will do the footwork.

News / Info -- Contact: Janis Grimes, 202-737-2824; or 703-536-7362 - leave message.

Northern Virginia Shag Club, Inc., is a nonprofit organization

Booooooogie on the Bay Shag Club's
Annual Halloween Dance
Saturday, October 31, 2026
6:00 to 10:00 PM
Rattle your Bones with ABSCDJ DJ Gary Barnes!

BYOB and Beer!
Chicken, Setups provided.

Bring a Dish!
Last Name A-H: Main Dish
Last Name I-O: Veggie/Side
Last Name P-Z: Dessert

Eagles Club
521 Maple Street
Chesapeake VA 23324
Directions:
bit.ly/EaglesClub

Tickets
Members $10.00
Non-Members $15.00
Sorry, no refunds but transferable

Licenced through the National Fast Dance Association

ASCAP BMI SESAC

Door and Costume Prizes!

Event Website: www.boogieonthebay.com/halloween

Purchase Tickets:

In Person from George Dean

Purchase Online at: www.boogieonthebay/halloween.com

Pay by: PayPal, Credit/Debit Card, Personal Check/Cash

PAYPAL ACCOUNT NOT REQUIRED (Details). $1 convenience fee added for electronic transactions, online or in-person.

Event Chair: George Dean HalloweenDance@boogieonthebay.com

And the gang gathered! SOS Fall 2026

NOVA
NORTHERN VIRGINIA SHAG

Harolds
beach club
SOS Tue Around Campus Alan 9/22/2026

BOONE SHAG
SOS Tue Around Campus Alan 9/22/2026

SOS Tue Around Campus Alan 9/22/2026

SOS Tue Around Campus Alan 9/22/2026

Eating.
Drinking.
Shagging.
Oh yeah!

It's a Shag-nic!

- **Saturday, October 3**
- **Rain date: Sunday, October 4**
- **12 - 5 pm**
- **Home of Loren & Kathy Kropat**
  2322 Sawdust Road, Vienna, VA

details

Free admission • 600 sq ft hardwood dance floor • yard games
The club provides BBQ Pork and Chicken • soft drinks
You provide adult beverages and a side dish

Members may bring a guest.

Be there!

CLUB INFO

By the Numbers

August

Starting balance: $9,761

Income: $1,182

Expenses: $1,191

Ending balance: $9,752

Active Membership

2018	185
2019	129
2020-21	127
2022	115
2023	90
2024	105
2025	105
2026	96

Please consider a gift to NVSC!

Donate online at nvshag.org

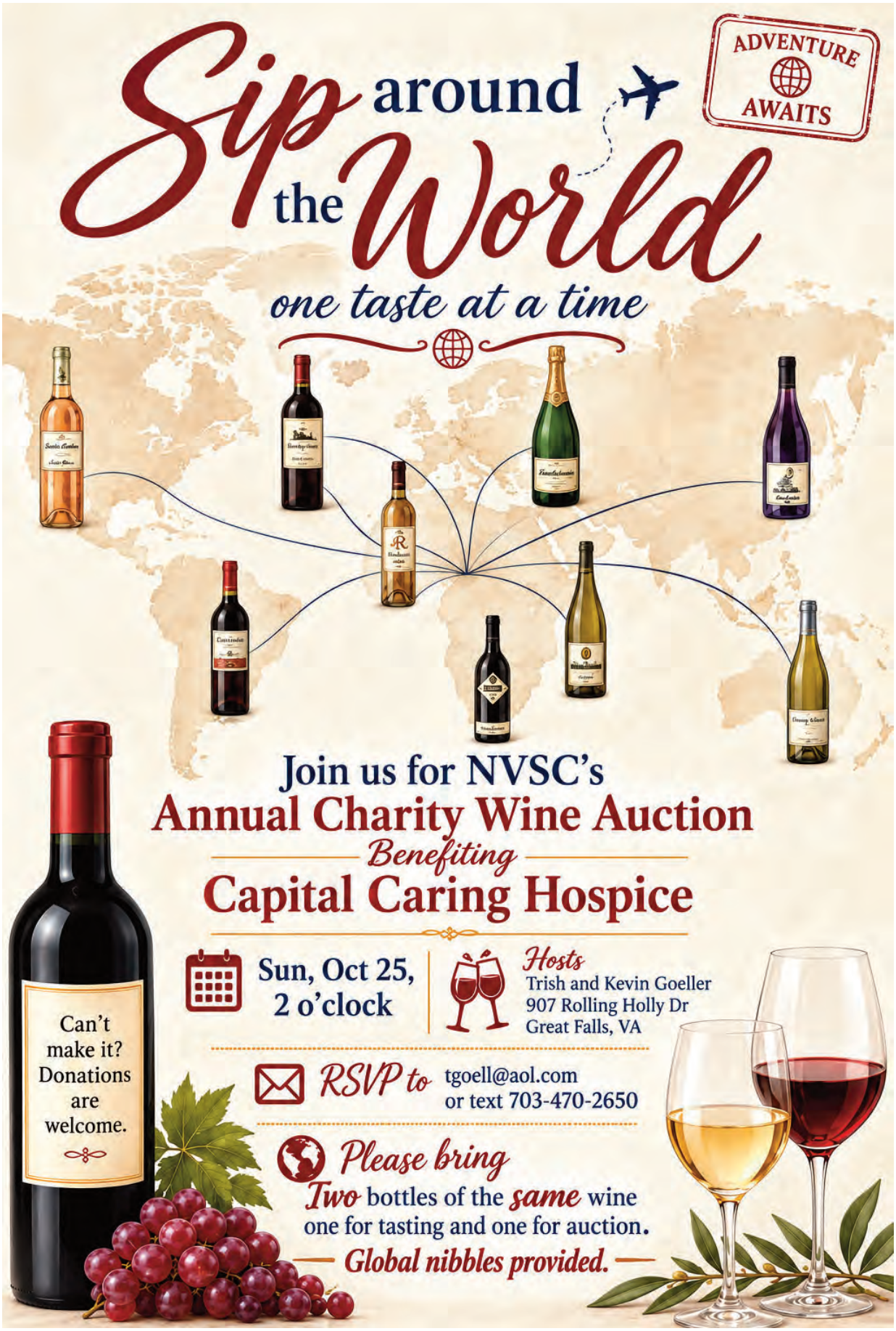
Join us at a dance and bring a friend!

Here's a good idea!

We have Gift Certificates available for purchase for $10 each. Do you know someone who might enjoy coming to the Elks for a NVSC dance? Maybe pre-pay and all they have to do is present the certificate and they are in at the member rate. You can also purchase these for your personal use if you'd like to grab a few when you have cash on you and keep them in your dance bag in case you didn't get a chance to run by the ATM that day. It's a brilliant back-up plan!

Having

of age or older) a free lifetime [illegible]. This means that the yearly membership renewal fee of $25 is waived. These valued members of our group will enjoy all the benefits of a paid in full membership. They will pay the member rate for admission to events and will attend club events with free admission such as the holiday party and club picnic. When we take membership applications, we do not ask for nor do we track the year of birth, so if you qualify, please be sure to make note on your renewal letter or contact us immediately so that we can update our records. If you have any questions, please let us know.


Sip around the World
one taste at a time
ADVENTURE AWAITS
Join us for NVSC's
Annual Charity Wine Auction
Benefiting
Capital Caring Hospice
Sun, Oct 25,
2 o'clock
Hosts
Trish and Kevin Goeller
907 Rolling Holly Dr
Great Falls, VA
RSVP to tgoell@aol.com
or text 703-470-2650
Please bring
Two bottles of the same wine
one for tasting and one for auction.
Global nibbles provided.
Can't make it? Donations are welcome.

Need to Know?

Where do I Get a Copy of the Shag Rag?

Go to ***www.nvshag.org*** and look for the box in the upper right corner.

Hello Shagger Emails

Are you getting the ***Hello Shagger*** e-mails? If not, visit our website at ***www.nvshag.org***. On the right side, click on the blue box that says "Hello Shagger e-mail list" and give us your e-mail address!

Hello Shagger Input

Anyone with information to be included in the ***Hello Shagger*** email (including DJ schedules and menus), please send to ***communications@nvshag.org***.

Keep Your Membership Information Current

Have you moved, changed phone numbers or email address? Let Barbara D. know at ***membership@nvshag.org***.

Shag Rag

The deadline for *Shag Rag* input is the 25th of every month. Please send content (including opinions, humor and recipes) to Adele Robey at ***adelerobey97@gmail.com***

Your ad here!

Phoenix Graphics

Design and production
for print and beyond

Adele Robey
202.841-6457
adelerobey97@gmail.com

Advertising in the Shag Rag

Members may have their business card sized ads added to the *Shag Rag* for free!
Advertise your services, activities or business
Business Card size:

Members	no cost
Non-Members	$60 a year / $10 month

For a quarter page ad, pricing for all is $100 a year or $50 a month.

Dance with us every Thursday!

Inaugural Virginia Beach New Year's Ball

$150pp

ABSC DJ's Gary "U S" Barnes, Jerry Hardy, & Harvey Taylor

Wednesday Dec 30
Beach Party
Dinner/Dance

Thursday Dec 31
New Year's Eve
Dinner/Dance

PHOTOGRAPHER • SHAG & LINE DANCE WORKSHOPS • 2 FREE POURS
DOOR PRIZES • BASKETS • RAFFLES • 50/50 • VENDORS

Wyndham Virginia Beach Ocean Front, Virginia Beach

Ticket Launch July 1, 2026 (9AM)
https://www.vbshagclub.com/new-year-ball

Thank-you to our 2026 Club Sponsors! *Click here & visit them.*

closet factory · Virginia Maid Kitchens · McDrake · Elite Home · Quality Insurance · DanceSport VA · Va. Beach Shag Club

etc.

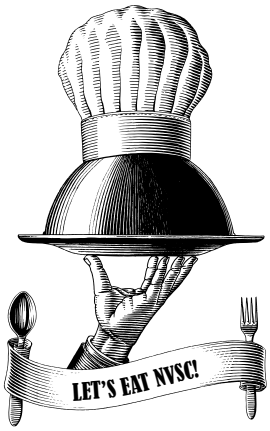
October Birthdays

Pamela Alfano
October 8

Myron Thompson
October 12

Paul D'Amato
October 18

We eat, we drink, we shag. Life is good.



Baked Feta Pasta with Tomatoes and Spinach (serves 2)

From Kathy Kropat

4 oz. frozen chopped spinach
1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes
2 Tbs. olive oil
¼ tsp dried oregano
1/2 cup diced bell peppers
1/2 cup Italian sausage, cooked and crumbled (optional)
4 oz block feta cheese
Bow tie pasta

Preheat oven to 425. Spread spinach in bottom of 8x8 baking dish. Top with grape tomatoes, oil, oregano, peppers and sausage. Season with salt and pepper. Place the feta block in center.

Bake 40-45 minutes until feta is melting and tomatoes have burst. Cook pasta, drain, and mix with tomato mixture.

Eleven Madison Park Granola

from Adele Robey with thanks to NY Times

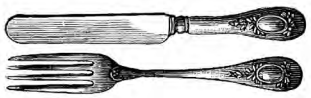
Ingredients

2¾ cups rolled oats
1 cup shelled pistachios
1 cup unsweetened coconut chips
⅓ cup pumpkin seeds
1 tablespoon kosher salt (or less to taste)
½ cup light brown sugar
⅓ cup maple syrup
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
¾ cup dried sour cherries (can use any other dried fruit)

Preparation

Step 1
Heat oven to 300 degrees. In a large bowl, mix together the oats, pistachios, coconut, pumpkin seeds and salt.

Step 2
In a small saucepan set over low heat, warm the sugar, syrup and olive oil until the sugar has just dissolved, then remove from heat. Fold liquids into the mixture of oats, making sure to coat the dry ingredients well.

Step 3
Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat, and spread granola over it. Bake until dry and lightly golden, 35 to 40 minutes, stirring granola a few times along the way.

Step 4
Remove granola from oven, and mix into it the dried sour cherries. Allow to cool to room temperature before transferring to a storage container. Makes about 6 cups.