

# S.O.S.<sup>®</sup> Carefree Times

SUMMER 1992



Phil Sawyer, Sr. S.O.S. © 1992

## S.O.S. ALIVE



Photos by Bill Kelly

S.O.S. came alive Saturday morning during the Spring Safari. More than two thousand stranders gathered at noon in front of the O.D. Cafe to take part in an extraordinary event—a living S.O.S.

Artist Richard Patterson patiently awaited the ebbing of the tide so that the preliminary drawing could be etched into the sand. Confusion reigned as to which was the first "S.," and the pilot and plane which had been reserved for over a month failed to show up.

However, with Bruce Littlejohn directing from the roof of the Cafe, and Phil Sawyer, Jr. scrambling to rent a sightseeing plane, it all came together. The crowds who gathered to make the letters entertained themselves with stadium like cheers of "Esse" "Ohhhhh" "Essssss" "PERIOD," and doing the Wave.

Everyone had a great time, and with this experience, we now know a little more about what we're doing. We'll do another one next Spring.

*Over Two Thousand Strandere Spell It Out*



# S. O. S. in Retrospect *A Brief History*

By Phil Sawyer

"S. O. S." "The Raven is rolling and rocking off the coast. Get in touch with Capt. Earl Bostic aboard the Flamingo and ask him to meet us at Oak Tree in Sept. (Signed) Captain Wynonne Harris . . . June 14, 1896."

The antique bottle was authentic. The message neatly printed on what appeared to be very old parchment was legible. The bottle was found and reported to several museums. The curators believed it and announced the find and the story soon made the national wire services. S. O. S. was hot national copy after a D. J. solved the riddle.

Thus, with a hoax and a hope, Gene Laughter, a former life guard and beach bum on Ocean Drive in the early fifties launched the first S. O. S. in the spring of 1980. September 1980, the magic week-end finally arrived. The migration began and never stopped. They came by the hundreds. Billy Smith's Beach Party, Fat Jack's, The Afterdeck were packed. The Oak Tree Inn sold out early. Gene expected two to three hundred former life-guards, stranders, and beach bums but about 5,000 showed up. Ocean Drive Beach hasn't been the same since; neither has anyone who was at that first, never to be duplicated, experience.

S. O. S. continued but it's future in the early days was by no means certain. The format evolved. At first there were contests and bands. Many of the clubs had a cover charge. Clubs opened and closed. They changed hands from one season to the next. What was, suddenly wasn't. The city fathers didn't quite know what to make of or what to do with it. Encourage or prevent . . . support or squash. No one quite knew what to make of it.

Gene Laughter knew. He, more than any other one person knew the people, the music, the beach, and the potential of the brand new product he had suddenly become the guardian of. But the unbridled joy of everyone who attended told him one simple thing. This is too good to be true . . . keep it going and even expand.

Thus, in September of 1981, S. O. S. II, and September 1982, S. O. S. III followed. Things were now well organized. There was a data base of members, regular publications, and organized and structured events. Membership cards replaced cover charges and entrance to the clubs. The early Boogie Boat proved unworkable. Contest and bands were eliminated. The D. J.s took over. S. O. S. began to look like what we know it is today.

Throughout the mid to late 80s, S. O. S. grew in strength and character. Shaggers and stranders came back to Ocean Drive in the Spring and Fall by the tens of thousands for what everyone who ever had one grain of sand in his shoes agreed the S. O. S. was great for the Grand Strand, and to miss one was unthinkable. Fat Harold's, Duck's, Crazy Zack's, Harold's Across the Street, and the Gallion became shrines to which devout

stranders made pilgrimages many times each year.

Everything was good until 1988 and 1989 when the business interest at the beach became divided. Further, the originator for personal and business reasons could not continue to run S. O. S. The dancing space became smaller as the crowds grew larger and larger. The competition became fierce, and the one thing that had kept it all going was uncertain.

In February 1989, the Association received an offer from Gene Laughter for the sale of S. O. S. The Board of Advisors discussed this offer at length at the Winter Workshop in Moresville, NC and without a dissenting vote approved the purchase of S. O. S. The discussion centered around the desire of the Association to bring unity to all elements involved and to assure that the kind of S. O. S. that we all loved so well would continue for many years to come.

Since there were scarcely six weeks until the Spring Safari, the interim board plunged into the planning and organizing for that event. The Association ran our first S. O. S. with Headquarters at Crazy Zack's. As in any first effort there were mistakes, but we learned a lot. The bottom line is we brought it off, paid the bills, and made a little money. A lot of people worked long and hard and managed to have a good time doing it.

The interim board, with minor modifications became the Board of Directors of S. O. S. and Larry Taylor of Columbia was elected Chairman. The Board then elected officers of the corporation with Phil Sawyer, President.

The new board and officers discussed the goals of S. O. S. at length, and little has changed. Unity, crowd control, high class parties, responsible use of funds, permanence, and outstanding relationships with the North Myrtle Beach municipal officials and residents were then and are still the goals. We are proud to report that we have achieved all of these objectives.

S. O. S. continues unprecedented growth. Many exciting features have been added. The uniformed security at all participating club doors, the Trams, food, and expanded Carefree Times are Association initiatives. Funds from S. O. S. support local club activities, The Association budget, the Mid Winter Beach Classic, and charities. We are committed to a contribution of \$100,000 over time to a foundation to support the national Hospice effort.

S. O. S. is now in its twelfth year. It will soon be a teen-ager. Most of us were teen-agers when we got on this train; many of us have teen-agers of our own now who we have brought through these troubled waters. We know that they can be difficult years. However, with our attention firmly focused on our established objectives and a deep commitment to "do what's right", S. O. S. will grow to a rich and rewarding old age.

*The S. O. S. Board of Directors:* Larry Taylor, Chairman, Phil Sawyer, Bob Wood, Joe McGhee, Shirley Gough, Sandy Braddock, Ken Hudspeth, Donny Way, Hector Pheifer and Speedy Lewis.

*The S. O. S. Officers:* Phil Sawyer, President, Speedy Lewis, Vice President, Ken Hudspeth, Secretary, Pat Smith, Recorder, Foster McKinney, Treasurer, and King Holmes, Council.



# GTS (Good Time Shaggers) at SOS

## 1992 Spring Safari

As I waited and waited for SOS to arrive this year, I started wondering why I enjoy SOS so much. The title of this newsletter, "Carefree Times," sums up my feelings of those wonderful yesteryears when I didn't have any responsibilities, except for myself, and I could relax and enjoy the carefree times. SOS is an attempt to relive those years in a few, bright, sun splashed days at the beach. As I get older, with a wife, two boys in college and in private high school, mortgage payments, etc., I cherish those times when my wife and I can leave all those obligations behind and enjoy the sun, the sand, the water, the friendships, the jokes, the meal times, and especially the shagging. After the holidays in December, I concentrate on working for three and one-half months until April 15th, when I am ready to stop work for awhile and enjoy those carefree times.

Jacque and I left Charlotte on Wednesday, April 29, 1992, for our reunion with the other original members of the "Good Time Shaggers," who are Bill and Emmaday Seymour and Duane and Betty Jean Bruch, at the Seymour's condo at Xanadu III. We got to Ocean Drive Beach in time to take a nap in the sun, listening to the soothing sounds of the waves and the cry of the sea gulls, and to remember those carefree times of yesteryear. Whatever happened to Sonny's at Cherry Grove where a wooden patio on the beach and a juke box playing "60 Minute Man" and "Thank You John" were all that was needed for a teenager who loved to watch the beautiful beach girls shag and who occasionally tried it himself?

Speaking of beautiful girls who are part of the tradition of SOS, whatever happened to April McIntire, the radio announcer from WRDX, 106.5 FM, the official SOS radio station? April had a great voice, infectious laugh, and a super pivot and belly roll. How does this GTS know—because GTS has had the privilege of dancing with April in some strange places, such as the showroom of Dick Brook's Honda dealership while April was broadcasting live in a business suit and high heels. She didn't come ready to shag, but she shagged anyway and became an official member of the Good Time Shaggers. Can the "Fessor" shag too? Next year I think Dr. John Hook should invite April and lead off a late night, early morning shag in the middle of the intersection of Ocean Boulevard and Main Street where

the police car usually sits. Dancing with April or John in the middle of Ocean Boulevard would be fun until the O.D. police moved in. Come to think of it, they would probably stop the traffic and cut in for a dance with April themselves.

Each day we would get up at 10 and have breakfast at 11 with Bruce's Breakfast Club. SOS would not be SOS without this group consisting of Bruce, Larry, Boney, John, and Fred and all the beautiful women they meet the night before and invite to breakfast at their place the next morning. Their specialty is hash brown potatoes with several spices, red peppers, and jalapeno peppers, which are so hot they make you almost forget how hot the Bloody Marys are. After brunch, we get about two hours of sun and then we shag, until we can't move any more, at Ducks, Fat Harolds at the Pad, the new Fat Harolds where Rock Option used to be, Ducks Too, the O.D. Arcade, the Spanish Galleon, and the O.D. Cafe. On Friday we got a booth at Fat Harolds and let the crowds come to us. Someone said that you can see just about everyone at SOS if you will just stay at one place long enough. While we were there, Jo Jo Putnam wandered by and danced a couple of songs to the delight of the crowd. Jo Jo, with his ever present hat, is a real treat to watch, not only because of his masterful dance steps but also because of his facial expressions. He genuinely loves to shag and shows it when he gets on that dance floor.

Sunday morning is always a sad time when the carefree times are about over and we have to re-enter the real world. We were going to pass up shagging and head for home until we decided to say our farewells at Ducks. If anything is better than Saturday afternoons at Ducks for SOS, then it might be Sunday afternoons. The music was great and we simply could not stop our feet from moving. "Just one more dance," I kept saying. It's those times when you especially appreciate the women asking you to dance. I mean, after all, you can't refuse to shag with someone at SOS. That would violate the upspoken rule of SOS where you dance with anyone with whom you want to dance if you can just get up the nerve to ask.

Thanks SOS for the carefree times!

Rich Harris, GTS President

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## August 31st Membership By Mail Deadline

All S.O.S. membership applications to be processed by mail must be **POSTMARKED** by August 31, 1992 to be received in time for the Fall Migration. Any membership application postmarked after that date will be held for pick-up at S.O.S. Headquarters. Every one who plans to be a part of the exciting fall week should join or renew early. All of us know that the mail is often slow and unpredictable. The S.O.S. staff cannot assume

responsibility to assure cards postmarked after that date will be received.

### S.O.S. Carefree Times

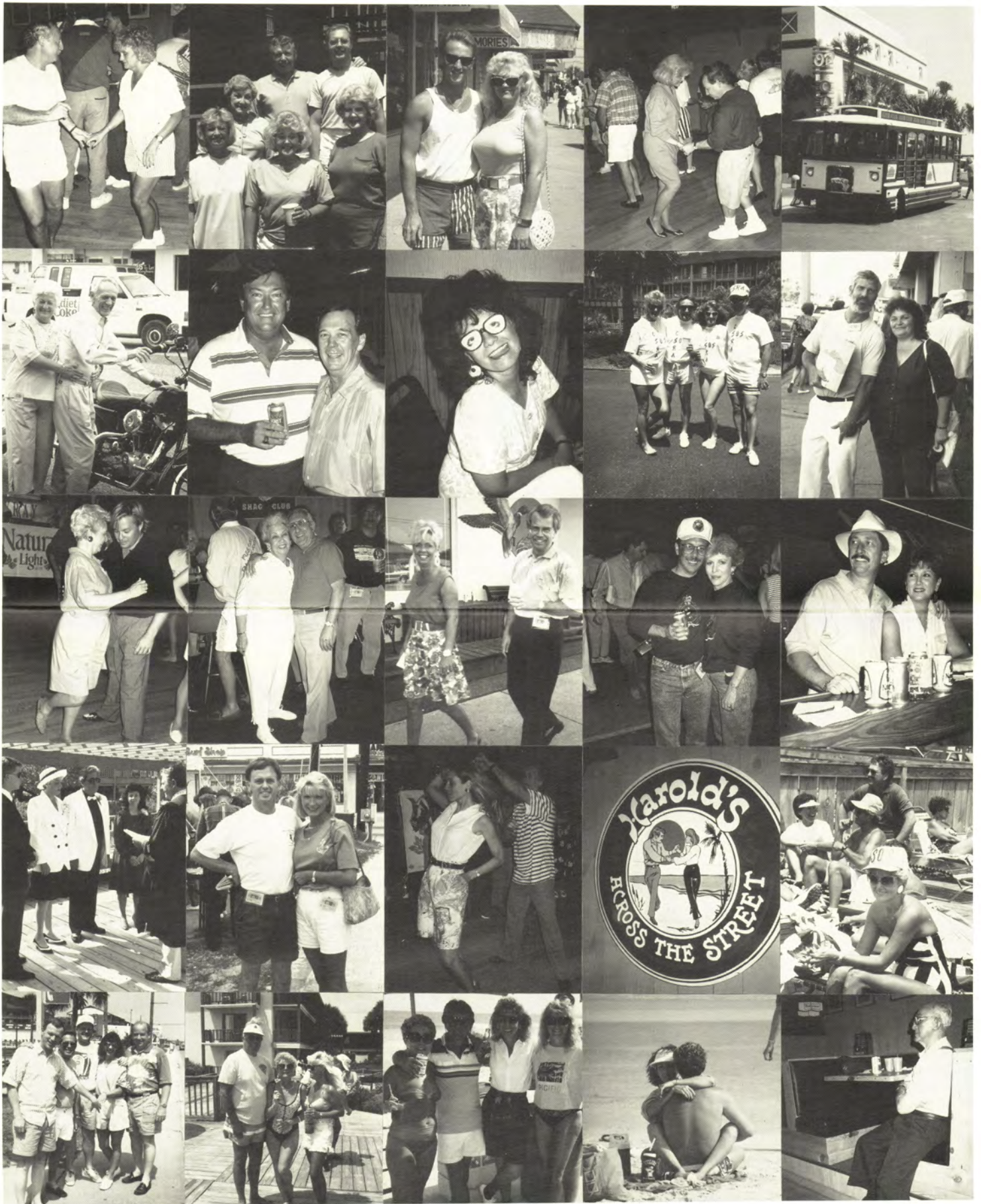
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SOS - Box 4688 - Columbia, SC 29204









Photos by Bill Kelly and Rich Harris



## Fifty Years of Making Men Fit to Fight:

### Serve SOS at S. O. S.

#### A Hearty Creamed Chipped Beef On Toast Breakfast

by Phil Sawyer

Breakfast restaurants abound in North Myrtle Beach, and they are the best to be found anywhere in the country. From Dino's to Don's to the Plantation, your eggs, grits, pancakes, sausage, ham or bacon, will be prepared and served to the state of the art. The coffee is hot and strong, and the toast is swimming in melted butter. The servers are prompt, courteous, and efficient, and the management appreciates and supports all S. O. S. activities.

However, there is a growing throng of loyal stranders who stay in the fully equipped cliff homes of the condominiums or rent houses with kitchens. There are usually six or eight or so from assorted family groups who delight on beginning the day (around noon) with a home cooked breakfast. These are the partiers who were up all night, like to begin the day with a Bloody Mary, and pad around in their pajamas or robes (at best). It is for these stalwart groups that we offer this suggestion.

There is simply no better way to begin an S. O. S. day than with a hearty breakfast of SOS. After all, if it prepared millions of America's fighting men for war, it should suffice for full day of sunning, sipping, shagging, and shenanigans (not necessarily in that order). It is easy to prepare and can be done the day or evening before. In fact, an overnight in the refrigerator actually makes it better. Here are the simple instructions for breakfast to serve eight.

#### INGREDIENTS

One stick (¼ pound) butter or margarine  
½ cup Pillsbury 4 XXXX Flour (regular flour is o.k. but

difficult)

1 quart skim milk (for SOS, whole milk is not desirable—too rich)

2 five ounce jars of sliced dried beef

¼ teaspoon black pepper

#### THE PROCESS

**Day Before:** In a large saucepan, melt butter and heat but do not brown. Add the flour and blend with a whisk. Heat the milk (but do not boil) and add, all at once, to the pot. Stir constantly with whisk. When the mixture comes to a boil, it will thicken automatically. Simmer for five minutes and add black pepper.

Open the dried beef jars and fill with warm water. Let sit for a few minutes. Drain the water, do not unroll the beef. Slice the rolled beef into ¼ inch slices, separate and toss, and add to the sauce. Simmer for a few more minutes (Do not add salt—the beef is salty enough.) Allow to cool and refrigerate overnight.

**Breakfast Day:** Toast and butter about a loaf (you'll need two slices per person) of day old (this shouldn't be hard to do) Old Fashion Light Bread. Bring the SOS slowly back to a moderate heat and serve over the buttered toast.

Begin the breakfast with melon—Western—(slice the day before and keep in tupperware) and serve a side dish of peeled, sliced LOCAL (not bought in a grocery store) tomatoes. There is no way anyone on the beach will be better prepared for the rigors of an S. O. S. day than you will.

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## My First SOS

by Patty "Poo" Killian . . . *Seeing in Motion*

I had asked several people about SOS and what to expect! Well, to say the least they were all right . . . There is NO WAY to explain SOS. I arrived at N.M.B. on Friday so tired. Then I saw Ann Sigmon & Michaele Autry right off. Then Harold & Helen Beaver, Norman, Jennifer, Geoff, Bubba & Mrs. Bubba, Carolyn & Bob Query, Frank & Barbara Jenkins and so-o-o many more. Unpacked; showered; took off! The first thing was to eat at Duck's Two . . . Great!! and very wonderful.

Next was to SHAG & SHAG & SHAG. \*Seeing this "in motion" - there's NO WAY to tell someone except "come along next SOS." Being on WRDX (106.5) on Saturday was a real treat making live SOS. Meeting SO MANY NEW & DEAR FRIENDS up till 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning and little sleep then up around 8 or 9

o'clock the next morning. I personally had 9 hours of sleep from Thursday evening (couldn't sleep) until Sunday night . . . Had a blast. It's really one big LARGE Party. Can't wait till September.

TO: All my friends I've met and ALL the mammories a person could retain . . .

TO: The tee shirt signers - thanks alot . . .

TO: MY OLD AND NEW FRIENDS . . . see you at Fall Migration.

Lake Hickory Shag Club

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## You Are Invited

To the wedding of Bruce Morgan and Camille Newsome from Augusta, GA at the O. D. Arcade at 5:00 PM, Saturday, September 19, 1992. Bruce and Camille invite all of their S. O. S. friends to join them on this joyous occasion.



## Who Brought Back Easter "Ask Someone To Dance"

### Letters To The Editor,

The good merchants of North Myrtle Beach brought Easter back! They brought Easter back with S.O.S. Spring Fest 1992.

S.O.S., to put it briefly, means "the greatest summer there ever was, the sun, the beach, the girls, the beer, the house parties, the caps, the food, dancing and singing, etc.

We saw house parties up and down the boulevard. That in itself brought back memories of Easter weekends. The crowds were back. We had to find a parking place in O.D. wherever we could. Downtown O.D. was packed with people walking the sidewalks and streets, going from shop to shop, from bar to bar, laughing at each other, not worrying about getting locked up unless someone became obnoxious and got out of hand. (Memories of Easter).

We walked up to bars, where sometimes we had to wait in sort of a line to get in. But we didn't mind that! Because we literally ran into people we knew or had met in other bars. (Memories of Easter).

We walked up to and exchanged conversations with a North Myrtle Beach police officer. He was very pleasant. We talked about how crazy the crowd is and how righteous the women are, and how we sympathized with him for having to work. He said, "Just wait 'til I get off." (Memories of Easter).

We saw people on the beach, shagging and drinking beer, bothering no one. (Memories of Easter).

We saw the trolleys. They were running Ocean Boulevard from the Holiday Inn to the point at Cherry Grove. Now why don't they do that Easter weekend or even all summer long? Everyone who attended S.O.S. Spring Fest 1992 and memories of Easter because that is what it was all about. Let's not let the Grinch steal Easter again.

Thanks to all North Myrtle Beach merchants and S.O.S.ers.

*Sincerely,  
Jo Ann Nance and Robert "Grey Man" Grey  
North Myrtle Beach*

Reprinted from the North Myrtle Beach Times May 22, 1992.

I've had several people comment to me in the last few weeks that they go to shag parties and stand around. They claimed that no one would ask them to dance. My response to them was "you need to ask someone"! I've found that very few shaggers turn down the opportunity to dance. If someone does say "no" after considerable persistence on your part, they probably had foot surgery that morning. If so, then go ask someone else! After a few weeks of consistently being seen on the floor, your efforts will be rewarded by more people asking you to dance. This is a shared responsibility for men and women. Do your part!

Other than the traditional "Would you like to dance?" there are many ways to convince someone that the dance floor is where they want to be. How about "Oh gosh, I requested this song and I really have to dance to it . . .". Or, "The Deejay is really going to be disappointed if more people don't start dancing . . .". My personal favorite requires no vocalizing at all. I just point my finger at someone, and then point toward the dance floor.

Make the effort. The more people who participate, the more fun for everyone. And after all, that's what we are there for!

**Pat Brame**  
*Twister's Shag Club*

## Make Your Reservations NOW

1993 Spring Safari  
April 21-26

1993 Fall Migration  
September 15-19

## Twenty-one Minimum Age For S.O.S. Membership

The Board of Directors of S.O.S. has limited membership to persons 21 years old and older. The vote on this matter was unanimous. The board endorsed the philosophy that has prevailed for the life of S.O.S. that the event is and has been from the beginning an adult party. Interests at North Myrtle Beach accept it as a week-end when older beach people can once again enjoy the camaraderie of friends, music, party, and dance.

The core issue in this decision is the feeling on the part of all members of the board and S.O.S. officers that

persons under 21, the legal drinking age in South Carolina, should not have membership in an organization that sponsors events where alcoholic beverages are served. The board did not debate the issue. It simply elected to abide by the laws of South Carolina.

The board requests that all S.O.S. members honor this position and not bring under age persons to S.O.S. events.

With the full agreement and cooperation of the club owners, underage persons will not be admitted to participating clubs during S.O.S. If there are persons under 21 who have acquired an S.O.S. membership card, S.O.S. will be happy to issue a refund of membership dues in exchange for the card.



# Counterfeiter Caught - Reward Collected

A counterfeit card operation was exposed and the person responsible was arraigned by the City of North Myrtle Beach on appropriate charges during the Spring Safari. By now, this is news to absolutely no one in the Shag world. There was a reward offered and a reward has been paid to those who assisted in this arrest. The Association of Carolina Shag Clubs and the S. O. S. consider this matter closed and no further action on the part of either is planned or appropriate. What's done is done, and this is done.

*However:*

Everyone anywhere connected with Shag, Shagging, or any activities of the Association or S. O. S. should understand completely that both the Association and S. O. S. are dead serious on our resolve to eliminate completely any non-authorized sales of our membership cards or any other illegal reproductions and sales of our copywriter logos. There is no need to offer any explanation for this position. It is completely obvious.

We will continue to pursue with all resources available to us anyone, party or parties, trying to make illegal personal gain from inappropriate or non-authorized sales of any protected S. O. S. products, including membership cards.

The reward still stands. We will be on the streets and at the parties looking for any illegal activities. We will consider those who sell and THOSE WHO BUY equally. Refunds will not be made for the purchase of counterfeit cards. They will not be recognized by the clubs.

To be sure you are not taken, remember, Legal, authentic S. O. S. membership cards can only be purchased from S. O. S. through the mail, at S. O. S. Headquarters at the beach, or from the identified participating S. O. S. Clubs. Legal cards are never ever sold on the streets, at pool parties, or at local club parties prior to or after S. O. S.

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**S.O.S. Membership Application. Memberships are for the calendar year.  
\$25.00 per person.**

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

AGE \_\_\_\_\_ WERE YOU A MEMBER LAST YEAR?  YES  NO

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**S.O.S. Carefree Times**

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