



# S.O.S. Carefree Times



Winter '99 - '00



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION  
of the  
SOCIETY OF STRANDERS  
and  
THE ASSOCIATION OF  
CAROLINA SHAG CLUBS



*Rich and Jacqueline Harris  
Charlotte, NC*

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

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603 29TH AVE NE #147  
HICKORY NC 28601

THIRD CLASS  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Permit #90  
Conway, SC 29526



## Message From the Editor

Y2K Cometh...

Can you believe it?!? Here we are in the Year 2000, where we can actually see what we read about in the comics and saw in the science fiction films when we were growing up! We have participated in the greatest millennium to date ... can't even imagine what will come in this new one! I wish everyone a wonderful 2000 and that it be filled with prosperity, happiness, and good health.

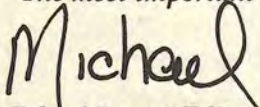
Once again, thanks to our many wonderful contributors, we're sure you'll find this issue informative and entertaining. We encourage submissions for upcoming issues from anyone who would like to write a feature article, short story, poem, humor, or just send your favorite S.O.S. photos or memories. If you have anything like this that has general appeal to our community, please send it to us. With over 10,000 S.O.S. members, there has to be some really good writers out there we haven't heard from!

Pictures... Everyone likes to see their own picture in the paper; however, I must have your picture before I can run it. Send your pictures to me. Individual submissions get first priority in which pictures I use. Group shots are favorable. I try to get as many people in the picture section as I can. Dancing shots are also desirable. These are the things that I consider while laying out the pictures.

Upcoming submission deadlines for 2000 *Carefree Times* issues are shown at right. Submissions may be sent by either regular mail or e-mail to:

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*"The most important part of dancing is having fun!"*



Michael Payne, Editor

### S.O.S. Carefree Times Winter Mailout

Volume 4, Number 14, Winter 1999 - 2000

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## S.O.S. Carefree Times 2000 Upcoming Deadlines

EDITION	SUBMISSION DEADLINE	DISTRIBUTION
Spring Safari	March 3	March 31
Summer Mailout	May 19	June 19
Fall Migration	August 11	September 8
Winter Mailout	November 17	December 18





Ron and Peggy Whisenant

**H**ello again, and welcome to the new millennium. Let's hope this next thousand years will be as good to us as the last thousand years. Someone will let us know that in 3000. "I hope I'll be giving the report."

By now, you have welcomed the new year 2000, and if you are a shag club member, you are making plans

## Message from the Chairman of the S.O.S. Board

to attend the Midwinter party at NMB. It should be even better than last year's party. It just keeps getting better and better. I am really excited about being there.

Spring will be upon us soon, and that brings us to Spring Safari 2000. It is time to migrate to North Myrtle Beach for some fun in the sun and reunite with all of our old friends that we have not seen since last year. Reunions are such fun—hugs, kisses, and smiles are abundant. What great friends that we have made through this dance and music.

Spring Safari 2000 will bring you the A.C.S.C. parade of clubs—something to look forward to. It will be on the second Saturday as usual. Get

ready. Have your group put together a float or marching troop and participate. That is more fun than watching.

The A.C.S.C. and S.O.S. boards, along with the Enhancement and Parade committees, have worked hard to make S.O.S. the event that it has become; but you, the S.O.S. members, are the heartbeat and support that keeps it alive and well.

Thank you for your support. Help us to keep the heartbeat strong. Get your memberships early so that you won't miss out on the greatest adult party of all times—ten days of pure adult, "middle aged crazy" pleasure.

I look forward to seeing all of you on April 7th, 2000. — Ron Whisenant

## 1999 Fall Line Dance Competition Finals

— by Carol Worrell

"Staying Alive" ... and that's just what the Sass with Class Line Dance Team from Sanford, North Carolina did by winning the 1999 Fall Line Dance Competition.

The music, steps, costumes, and team spirit were outstanding from each team participating. Sanford won Best Over-all and Most Original, with the Raleigh Jive Cats, complete with poodle skirts, winning Most Enthusiastic and the new category this year, Crowd Pleaser. The Atlanta Hot Flashes and Their Studs took home Best Choreography.

The long hours of practice and team effort were certainly apparent during competition. Several teams have already expressed an interest in next year's event, and the three-time champs from Charlotte, The Upbeats have promised their return in 2000.

Many thanks to everyone who made the Line Dance Competition a great success—from everyone who served on the Line Dance and

Enhancement committees to the deejays, Mike Rink and John Wilson.

And what would a great event be without a great emcee? Thanks to Mike Lewis and all of his verbal talents that helped to raise approximately \$1800.00, portions of which will be donated to Caring For Kids and also to flood victims from Hurricane Floyd.

The Sanford Spice Girls—and boy were they s-p-i-c-y—entertained during Saturday's finals, which also aided in raising money. Various shag clubs got involved and matched \$100 pledges. What a great group of people who support S.O.S., Fun Monday, and line dancing ... and especially a great big thanks to Elaine Hunter at the O.D. Arcade for Friday's competition and to Ed Moore at the new Spanish Galleon for Saturday's finals.

Get your teams ready for 2000 Line Dance. Next year should be full of surprises and more teams than ever competing. We'll ... meet you on the dance floor ...

For information regarding line dance competition, contact: Carol Worrell, P.O. Box 771, Whiteville, NC 28472 or phone 910-642-2868.

### S.O.S. Dates

2000	Mid Winter Classic January 20-23
	Spring Safari April 7-16
	Fall Migration September 15-24
2001	Mid Winter Classic January 18-21
	Spring Safari April 27-May 6
	Fall Migration September 14-23
2002	Mid Winter Classic January 17-20
	Spring Safari April 12-21
	Fall Migration September 13-22





Mike Rink

**I**t's the coldest time of the year. But throughout the Southeast, dance floors are hot. Thanks to shag deejays, great music is available for our listening and dancing pleasure throughout the year. Even in cold weather, the music helps keep thoughts of the sun and the surf in the backs of our minds.

Jackie McGee once told me that competitive shaggers are just regular shaggers who like the dance "a little more than most people." Well, I think most shag deejays like the music "a little more than most people."

Believe me, a shag deejay does not play music for the money. Ever see a rich shag deejay? I rest my case. It's all done for love of the music and dance. So, I hope you will start 2000 by patting a deejay on the back for making your beach nights

and shag parties possible.

With so many shag events on the calendar, you won't have withdrawal symptoms due to lack of opportunity. Shag clubs in the Association and all their members will start 2000 with their annual trek to O.D. for Mid-Winter. Club officers spend part of the weekend meeting and gathering information for their membership.

Then in March, it's the first officially sponsored shag cruise in many years. It's open to everyone, and a few berths are still available. At \$475-\$545 (which includes all taxes, tips, and port charges), this six-day cruise is one of the biggest bargains ever offered. Call 704-892-5144 for more information.

April brings the S.O.S. Spring Safari. As if the event itself isn't enough, there is a huge parade the last Saturday that has become a crowd favorite. In fact, a professional video of the 1999 parade is available at our Company Store. We plan to have this year's event filmed, too!

In September, the Fall Migration promises to be even bigger and better than ever. We'll have to wait

## Message from the A.C.S.C. Chairman

and see what the S.O.S. Enhancement Committee has planned for Fun Monday. We know from history it will be great. The best way to get a preview is to join the group and help make the 2000 event the best ever!

These are just a few of the many, many shag events available to you. There are nearly 100 shag clubs that host parties and weekly beach nights. You'll find information about these events, the many shag clubs, places to go dance, radio stations that play our music, and much more on our official web site: [www.shagdance.com](http://www.shagdance.com). It's a great way to keep in touch.

Finally, if you haven't already ordered your 2000 S.O.S. membership, do it today so you don't miss any issues of this publication and you can continue to be part of our fun at O.D.

You can get discounts at many beach businesses throughout the year by showing your membership card, too. Join today, and encourage a friend to join, too.

Shag-4-Fun!  
—Mike Rink

## Spring Safari 2000 Parade Update

The end of 1999 is upon us and also the beginning of the new millennium. What it holds in store for us, we can only wonder. But one thing is for sure ... as long as there are shaggers and OD and spring-time, there's a parade not far behind.

For the past three years, I have had the honor and privilege of serving as your ACSC/SOS Parade Chairman and have enjoyed every minute of it—well, almost. Sure, it gets frustrating at times and patience wears thin, but you guys who participate have been a pleasure to work with.

I think the main problem we have is that there is no dress rehearsal, and we all want to get it right the first time. But together we're doing something right, because it just keeps getting bigger and better each year.

This coming April will mark our 6th Annual Parade, my fourth as chairman, and the first of the new millennium. The clubs who win in this parade will certainly have some great bragging rights; winning a category in the first parade of the 21st century can only happen once.

It will be the biggest, best, most

competitive parade ever, with media coverage even surpassing that of this past spring. Already, I'm excited! And for the second time, we will have a parade video, which seems to be a hit with everyone.

A big thank you once again to all of the participants of the previous parades and to my committee for the past three years—the Magnificent Seven—with whom I cannot do without.

So, guys and gals, get your heads together. Start planning now for the biggest, the best, and the first of the 21st.

See you in the parking lot! —Don David, ACSC/SOS Parade Chairman



## Fun Monday Enhancement Committee Update

The \$10,000 winner of the Reverse Raffle at Fun Monday 1999 was Darren Currie. Ed Farris won \$200 for being the first ticket drawn. In addition, there were 90 winners of \$50 each.

The winners for most ticket sales were O.D. Shag Club \$300, 2nd MASS \$150, 3rd (tied) Winston-Salem and Palmetto \$37.50 ea.

For seller of winning ticket: Carol Worrell \$200, and as a member her club O.D. received \$100.

— Bobby Brooks, Fun Monday Enhancement Committee



Darren Currie, \$10,000 Reverse Raffle winner



Fun Monday Enhancement Committee members (front L to R) Becky Rice, Shirley Ward, Carol Worrell, (top L to R) Chuck Ward, Bill Rice, Judy Collins, John Worrell, Dwayne Baggett, Hollis Britt

## Fun Monday wins award

S.O.S. Fun Monday won the Best Event Award at the 1999 Cammy Awards on November 14. Fun Monday has only been in existence for three years and has been nominated all three years, winning for the last two years.

S.O.S. and the Enhancement Committee are to be commended for their work in giving this great event to the members of S.O.S.

Make your plans now to attend the 2000 Fun Monday event. It will be bigger and better!





1-888-SOS-3113 • 1-888-767-3113

## ***Trials and Tribulations of a Hot Line Answerer***

— by *Phil Sawyer*

**S**unday afternoon about 5:00 o'clock. We're just home from another wonderful weekend at the beach. Tired and partied out. We check on the dog, see how much the garden has grown, and then I check the messages.

The little red light on the answering machine is blinking eleven times which tells me I have eleven messages. I grab a yellow legal pad and red pen and sit down to decode. That's right—decode.

Some of the messages are bold, slow enough to understand on a recording, and easy to respond to. But along about message number four I hear:

"Thisismarysmithinbridgeport connecticutiwantsomeinformationon thefallmigrationandyouknowofany goodplacetostaythatdon'tcosttoo muchpleasecallmeat7@3\$289]03." (Buzz—the hang up sound). The whole message delivered in slightly under ten seconds. No repeat of numbers or names.

We begin the process of stop, reverse, and replay. Since my machine has no indicator of where messages start or stop, we wind up going over the process four or five times, listening to parts of other messages all the while.

All of this is just part and parcel of answering the S.O.S. Information Line. Eight to ten calls on slow days, ten to twenty as the events get closer. Most of them we take in person; but when we're out of the house, the machine gets lots of work.

Calls come in at seven in the morning and after midnight—a lot

of callers think we have an answering service and are quite surprised when they reach a real live person.

The calls cover the entire range of S.O.S. activities from ordering memberships with credit cards, questions as to why my card has not come even though I sent my check in last week, who's playing at Pivots in Charleston tonight, what are the dates of the Fall Migration in 2001, where is a good place to find shagging in Chattanooga, and whatever else you can think of that has to do with our sport.

All of this is what we're here for, and we welcome all of your calls. Any time day or night. If you get the answering machine, we'll call you back in a couple of hours—the next day if it's too late at night.

Since many of the calls are looking for the dates of S.O.S. events next year, we put that up front for your convenience. The toll free number is 1-888-767-3113—that is 1-888-SOS-3113 if that will help you remember.

The S.O.S. Information Line has been a great asset to S.O.S. and the people who use it. We also provide an essential service to people who want information about the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs and local shag clubs.

But the main thing is we do want to serve you. And we can only do that if we can get in touch with you. A few simple hints will help us greatly. When you leave a message, speak slowly and clearly. Give us your name and phone number if you want us to call you back. When you give a number, please give it slowly and repeat it. Then sit back and relax. We'll be back to you soon with



the information you need.

But as for Mary Smith in Bridgeport, Connecticut, we have tried and tried, but the system just will not give us any number that will connect us with her.

Also remember that the web site [www.shagdance.com](http://www.shagdance.com) is packed with just about everything you ever wanted to know about the shag world. Call it up and you will be amazed at what you find.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you at the millennium party and/or at Mid-Winter. If you have any suggestions as to how the information line or the web site can serve you better, please let us know.

(Note: The "we" of this article includes Miss Chick, who answers the line and performs other S.O.S. services with me. I could not do without her.)

*Phil Sawyer is the president and CEO of S.C.S.*

**Have you renewed  
your membership  
yet for 2000?  
If not, do it today!  
The application is on  
the back cover.**



# Come Hell or High Water

— by Anne Jernigan Henry

**A**nother S.O.S. has come and gone and a very significant one at the—the last party before the millennium—and having come so close to being canceled because of Hurricane Floyd.

Attendance was a little off because some had to cancel their plans when I-95 closed, as well as others who, unfortunately, were having a more personal experience with flood waters.

Eastern North Carolina was hard hit, thereby prompting S.O.S./A.C.S.C. to donate \$10,000 to flood relief and encouraging S.O.S. members and shag clubs to make a donation. About \$2000 was raised Saturday afternoon alone during the Line Dance Competition.

One of the funniest quips I heard (you do have to maintain a sense of humor at a time like this) was made by Harold Bessent at the Association meeting when he said the two best things he saw the previous week were, and I quote: "Floyd's ass leaving town and shaggers coming into town."

Some of the clubs were flooded—OD Arcade, Boulevard Grill, and Pirate's Cove—but they managed to bail water, as much as 18 inches in some instances, and still get ready for some party-hungry shaggers.

Some shaggers arrived only to get as close as nine miles from North Myrtle Beach and then face a two-hour delay and detour. After we arrived there on Sunday, they literally closed the road behind us.

The Myrtle Beach *Sun News* reported that "come hell, high water, hurricane, or highway detour, die-hard shaggers have descended on Ocean Drive for some smooth dance moves at the annual Society of

Stranders Fall Migration. It takes more than Hurricane Floyd ... and accompanying floods to stop a shag dancer."

They quoted Phil Sawyer, S.O.S. President, "Shaggers love this dance, and they'll go through anything to get here."

Fun Monday festivities went on as planned under gray skies and drizzle. Once the bands had performed, the rain began in earnest; but it was a good party, all things considered. The winner of the \$10,000 was Darren Currie of Whiteville, NC. Ann Blake of ShagAtlanta was a \$50 winner.

Winter Workshop 2001 was awarded to Electric City (Anderson) Shag Club and Summer Workshop to Moore Area and sister clubs.

Chairman's Awards went to The Association of Beach and Shag Club DeeJays, Ellen Taylor, and Harold Bessent (Fat Harold). Pavers (bricks) are again available at a 15% discount through January 2000.

Saturday marked the Line Dance Competition finals at the Spanish Galleon, after preliminary competition on Friday at the OD Arcade.

Atlanta made a really good showing with its first line dance team under the new format (this is the 4th year of the S.O.S. competition) and won the award for Best Choreography. Cathy McDaniel was the choreographer and has since been tapped by the S.O.S. Enhancement Committee as its "Line Dance Ambassador" to promote more interest in the competition.

Coming out on top this year and placing first overall was the Sanford Area team, SASS with CLASS.

Our group, the Atlanta Hot Flashes and Their Studs (I suggested that they could call themselves



the Atlanta Hot Flashes and Their MENopauses), presented such an aerobic number that Alan Halpern suggested that maybe the judges might want to add another category next year: Survival. Congratulations, team, for a job well done and for representing ShagAtlanta with such a degree of excellence!

*Anne Jernigan Henry has been involved with ShagAtlanta since moving to Atlanta from Jacksonville, Florida and marrying Allen Henry in 1994.*

*She has served as secretary, vice-president of communications, editor of the "Peach Beat" for three years, and president in 1998.*

*Reprinted (in part) from the "Peach Beat" Fall 1999.*

## The Importance of Correct Punctuation

Dear John:

I want a man who knows what love is all about. You are generous, kind, thoughtful. People who are not like you admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me for other men. I yearn for you. I have no feelings whatsoever when we're apart. I can be forever happy—will you let me be yours?

Gloria

Dear John:

I want a man who knows what love is. All about you are generous, kind, thoughtful people, who are not like you. Admit to being useless and inferior. You have ruined me. For other men, I yearn. For you, I have no feelings whatsoever. When we're apart, I can be forever happy. Will you let me be?

Yours,

Gloria



## TURNING THE TABLES



# News from the Association of Beach and Shag Club Deejays

**W**hile colder weather brings a short lull in beach and shag activities for some folks, your Association of Beach and Shag Club Deejays is busier than ever!

We have just completed two of our most important projects of the year—Inland Throwdown in the Pines 6 in Southern Pines, North Carolina, and the Festival of Trees event in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The first benefits Special Olympics and the second a children's hospital there in Virginia Beach.

Our deejays were proud to lend their co-sponsorship and donate time and equipment to these charitable projects again. While we love taking your money when you hire us, we also are generous with our work and time when the cause is right! Projects associated with children are especially high on our list.

In that connection, I am pleased to announce that we will once again do the S.O.S. Music Quiz for Charity in 2000. Music stores, entertainers, bands, record companies, shag clubs, and others, as well as our own members, donated compact discs of beach, shag, rhythm and blues, jazz, and other music last year to this fun project. *The Carefree Times* published an entry blank and information on the contest.

All you have to do is answer three ridiculously easy (on purpose, of course!) trivia questions, send three dollars (\$3.00) per entry, and have a chance to win 50 CD's—a veritable music library even the most serious collector would enjoy having! Last year's winner from Atlanta,

Georgia still calls me raving over the music. Now, in truth, she is a novice and was thrilled to win.

We appreciated the donations from Ripete Music, Shag Archives Records, The Wax Museum, Coastline Band, The Fantastic Shakers, Nicki Ard, J. D. Cash & Edwards Music Network, The Holiday Band, The Flashbacks Band, Peerless Music of Canada, Phil Sawyer (for S.O.S.), and many, many others. We also appreciate the sponsorship of Tyn-dall's Formal Wear (800-672-1612) and the wonderful Eno Beach Shag Club in Durham, North Carolina.

And now we are going to do it all over again in 2000! Monies collected are forwarded to the S.O.S. Caring For Kids charity in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and put to very good use in their projects. We just want to send more!

This year's efforts were split between them and the Flood Relief projects for Eastern North Carolina. Hopefully, no similar natural disasters will occur in 2000—keep your fingers crossed and hope for the best here.

I hope to see you all at Mid-Winter, the world's best cold-weather "icebreaker" party. Fewer of us can get away to the party, so there is always more room to dance, clearer paths to the bars, lower prices for accommodations, shorter lines for food and restaurants, and so on, ad infinitum.

If you haven't made it to a Mid-Winter, go! Check out our deejays in the participating clubs' booths and say "Hello," make a request, etc. We

Mike  
Lewis



are glad to get to the beach, too!

What is the biggest, most fun non-S.O.S. party at the beach? Why it's our own DJ Throwdown at Ducks /Ducks Too, always the first full weekend in March each year. The 2000 edition of this great free weekend is March 5th, 6th, and 7th. Free food each day courtesy of the Ducks folks, 40-50 deejays playing two or three at a time in both clubs, a \$10,000 Reverse Raffle that culminates Saturday night, great split the pot contests, vendors, and more.

Need Throwdown info? Contact Ducks, me, or any member of our organization. Past president Steve Baker (919-676-2159) is working on another live band performance for Thursday night (when there is a small fee to help us pay the entertainers).

Questions about our deejays? Need help with your club's charitable event? Just call or e-mail me at 919-942-4498 or <beachdj@email.unc.edu>.

Our current President is Harold Beaver of Statesville, North Carolina, and he will also be glad to respond to your questions. Another contact is our Vice-president, Wilkie Whaley, who can often be found entertaining you in the Fat Harold's Beach Club deejay booth.

*Mike Lewis is the three-time past president of The Association of Beach and Shag Club Deejays, the Senior Member of the Beach DJ Hall of Fame, and the 1999 winner of the Richard Nixon Cammy for Lifetime Achievement.*



# 2000 S.O.S. Music Quiz For Charity

## Here we go again! Win 50 CD's!

— Mike Lewis, Contest Coordinator

We did it last Fall S.O.S., and a very happy lady from Atlanta was the proud winner of 50 beach, shag, rhythm and blues, and other CD's, all donated by Association of Beach and Shag Club DeeJays, music stores, record companies, Phil Sawyer, and many bands, too. You sent in your entries, enclosed a donation to the designated S.O.S. Caring For Kids charity of Myrtle Beach, and we forwarded your donations to them. Easy!

It went so well that we are going to do it again for the Spring Safari 2000. Enter as many times as you wish—use the entry blank below, a copy of it, or write your answers on a brown paper bag—we just want your donations! Send a donation of at least \$3.00 for each entry—cash or check (to SOS Caring For Kids).

The lucky drawn winner's prize is 50 CD's, and there are more intermediate prizes of CD's, depending on how many CD's are donated. We gave away a total of more than 90 last Fall, so you may get a nice surprise in the mail, even if you don't win the grand prize.

Remember, donate as much as you wish! It's for a great cause; it's fun; you might win!

**Our thanks to these generous sponsors for their help in this charitable project:**

Tyndall's Formal Wear (1-800-672-1612, discount to SOS'ers)  
 RIPETE Music Group (803-428-3358)  
 The Eno Beach Shag Club, Durham, NC (919-471-6861)  
 Shag Archives Music (Ducks, Smoothies CD's)  
 The Wax Museum (704-377-0700) Beach Music Store  
 Edwards Music Network (Bad Boys of Beach Music CD)  
 The Fantastic Shakers  
 Coastline Band / Flashbacks Band / Nicki Ard  
 The Sugar Bees / The Mighty Kicks Band / Flash from Calabash  
 Big John Ruth (Oldies 100.7 Radio, Raleigh, NC)  
 The Members of The Association of Beach & Shag Club DeeJays  
 DJ Bob Graves, Durham, NC / DJ David Sessoms, Fayetteville  
 DJ's Dan Ballance & Ricky Viverette, Rocky Mount, NC  
 DJ's Mike Tewell & Rommie Tyndall, Durham, NC  
 The Fabulous Jellyrolls  
 Other donors & sponsors noted after this issue went to press

Questions? I'm at <beachdj@email.unc.edu> or at Mike's SOS Music Quiz, Box 1111, Carrboro, NC. 27510.

### 2000 S.O.S. MUSIC QUIZ FOR CHARITY ENTRY FORM

ENTRY DEADLINE: APRIL 1, 2000 • ENTRY DONATION: \$3.00 (minimum) • Photocopies Accepted

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

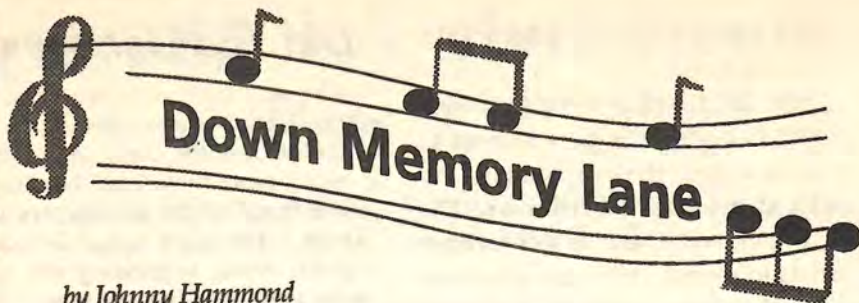
#### FILL IN THE ANSWERS TO THESE THREE QUESTIONS:

1. South Carolina's State Dance is "The \_\_\_\_\_."
2. Phil Sawyer's trademark is \_\_\_\_\_. (Pick one: sunglasses, pierced ear, tattoo, suspenders)
3. Beach Music Hit: "\_\_\_\_\_ Me" by Gary Bass. (Pick one: Kiss, Swing, Soothe, Whack, Squeeze)

Donation of at least \$3.00 is enclosed by:  Cash  Check (made payable to SOS Caring For Kids)

SEND ENTRY TO: Mike's S.O.S. Music Quiz • Box 1111 • Carrboro, NC 27510





by Johnny Hammond

Once upon a time, long, long ago, we enjoyed the jungle beat of beach R&B. Along with this great, fast-paced rhythm was some of the best belly-rubbin', slow music ever recorded. This unforgettable "honey, hold me close" music developed into what would later become known as soul.

Many artists, including Ray Charles, Chuck Willis, the great Sam Cooke, and Johnny Ace were all, at one time or another, credited with the introduction of this gospel-based, blues ballad style of music. Of them all, the least known today is probably Chuck Willis.

In a way, it's hard to believe because his R&B hits go back further than most. His lack of exposure is probably due to the fact that his early years were limited mostly to the South and his career as a recording artist covered only seven years.

He was born in 1928 in Atlanta, Georgia and lived most of his life there. He started writing songs and singing as a teenager, performing wherever he could.

It was in the late '40s when the theaters in Atlanta started having talent contests on Saturday afternoons. Chuck was winning contest after contest, singing songs he had written himself.

He was also singing with local bands and gaining a reputation as a pretty good blues singer. As his reputation became more and more widespread, he was spotted by Columbia Records and signed to their OKEH label in 1951.

Chuck was with OKEH for five years, and I think this is when he did his best work. The first side he cut was *It Ain't Right to Treat Me Wrong*. It took off like a hot rod Ford. Zoom! Number Four on the R&B chart.

He became the label's first nationally successful R&B artist, with five Top Ten R&B hits between '52 and '54. Four of those he had written himself.

He also had his own TV show in Atlanta—and believe me, that was quite a feat in those days for a black man. It was a weekly show and featured every R&B artist who passed through town. He co-wrote the show, developing story lines that worked around the five or six songs he would sing. He really was a good writer, and he knew how to put his guests at ease.

He thought he needed a hook or gimmick, so he started wearing a turban. He was soon known as "The Sheik of the Blues."

Chuck wrote most of his own material, and I say his early stuff was his best because it reflected his roots. It was soulful and drenched in melancholy. *My Story* and *You're Still My Baby* show not only a painstaking craftsmanship but a deep well of feeling. They were both Top Ten numbers.

When Chuck wrote a song, he worked it, polished it, and gave it his all. No one helped him. I mean, a lot of people helped him in life because he knew nothing about money or the management of it. Plus, he knew



Johnny Hammond

nothing about taxes ... He died broke. But when it came to his music, he did it all and he did it alone.

In 1956 Chuck signed with Atlantic Records. Commercially, he was riding high. His self-penned *It's Too Late* became his first Atlantic R&B hit at Number Three.

Somewhere about here, Chuck underwent a change. His after-hours feel disappeared, and he slipped into a kind of soft rock 'n roll style.

The year 1957 was not only the year Chuck made Number 1 on the R&B chart but climbed to Number 12 on the Pop chart. The song was an old blues song that, at one time or another, was recorded by just about every blues artist in the business.

It was C.C. Rider and, man, was the timing right. American Bandstand host Dick Clark was introducing a new dance he described as a cool, modern-day version of the Virginia Reel.

Two lines formed, boys on one side, girls on the other, then the end couple would kind of wiggle-wobble down the corridor between the two lines, separate, and become the couple on the other end of the line.

It was called the Stroll, and I'm telling ya, it was hot in '57. Kids would pack the floor because it was so easy. I mean, kids who had never even tried to dance were taking part.

(Continued on Page 11)



## Down Memory Lane

Clark said Chuck's version was perfect for the Stroll.

Yes, Dear Hearts, it was the song that made Chuck Willis a star in both R&B and Pop. He appeared on Bandstand early in '58 to promote his newest song *Betty and DuPree*.

Clark dubbed him "King of the Stroll." The title stuck, but the singer wasn't able to stick around long enough to enjoy his newfound royalty. He succumbed to a perforated ulcer April 10, 1958. After many years of one-night stands and heavy drinking, his dues were paid in full.

About a month after Chuck's death, Atlantic released a double-sided blockbuster ironically titled *What Am I Living For?* backed with *Hang Up My Rock 'Roll Shoes*. This haunting double sided epitaph is my all-time favorite Chuck Willis record.

And it still gets a lot of play on the oldies stations.

Had he lived, I believe Chuck would have become more famous as a songwriter than a singer. He tailored tunes for Ruth Brown, The Cardinals, and The Five Keys. Other artists to record Willis compositions over the years include Solomon Burke, The Cadillacs, The Drifters, Delbert McClinton, and many more.

His songs, then, are his legacy. You may be familiar with his work through any one of the countless versions of his songs that have been recorded by R&B artists.

So many of us mortals have asked, *What Am I Living For?* Alas, the answer lies somewhere in limbo and changes *As Time Goes By*.

*Johnny Hammond is a member of the Electric City Shag Club in Anderson, SC. This article was first published in their newsletter, "Shag 'N Tales," Oct. 1998.*

## Did You Get Some?

The next time someone asks, "Did you get some?" answer this way:

Let's look at the whole word, "some." It means more than "one" but does not give a "sum" of the number, nor is it a "whole." The word "some" is basically a plural word, expressing the saying "more than once but not many"; however, it could be construed as "multiple." "Some" can be used numerically as well as referencing "time," as in "someday," "sometimes." Some also can be used to reference "who" as in "someone." Note that "someone" is actually a funny definition, if you think of "some" as a "many" used with "one" to reference an individual. An individual is "one," a singular, not a "group" or "multiple." Some can also be used to make a statement, as in "Somehow I got some, who knew?" Now, something is an entirely different matter, and we'll go there sometime.

So, on the whole, are you asking if I had some multiples or a singular something sometime in the recent past with someone, somehow, someway?

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# The Laughter – Sawyer Connection

— by Rich Harris

In the 1999 Spring Safari edition of *The Carefree Times*, I wrote about the Gene "Swink" Laughter – Kays Gary – Jerry Bledsoe – *Charlotte Observer* connection in describing how the idea of S.O.S. became a reality. Kays Gary wrote in the *Charlotte Observer* about the first S.O.S. bottle, as follows:

"In August of 1978 Deeb Fadel, a Charlotte teen, brought to the newspaper office an old bottle found in the Myrtle Beach surf; and inside on obviously ancient paper was penned a note signed by men aboard the shipwrecked whaling ship *Ann Alexander* in 1887.

"The curator of Charlotte's Mint Museum judged it to be authentic, and we ran the story ... The next day the Whaling Museum of New Bedford, Mass. declared it a fraud, noting that the *Ann Alexander* had sunk more than 30 years earlier than the bottled message ... Meanwhile, a Charlotte switchboard operator overheard a mobile phone conversation between a laughing friend of Richmond attorney Bob White and White himself as the friend gleefully reported that the *Observer* had fallen for the story ...

"Tipped by the operator, a phone call quickly found White and his prankster colleague, Gene Laughter, Albemarle native ... Laughter not only confessed to this hoax but recounted it as a rather elaborately planned annual tradition of the White and Laughter families. Each year they brought their families back to the summertime place of their youth, the Grand Strand, and enlivened the weeks by casting old bottles containing purportedly centuries-old notes into the surf."

By 1980 the *Observer* reporters, and especially Kays Gary, would call Laughter about any unusual matters along the Carolinas' coast "and they were soon aware that the executive in his mid-forties was simply a

sentimentalist about The Strand, especially grand as a teenage lifeguard there in a world of golden girls and crazy, beloved buddies and their glorious Grail, the shag."

"And so, in the Spring of '80 when fellow-columnist Jerry Bledsoe wrote a piece conjecturing on the history of evolution of 'The Shag,' Laughter was the first responder of many ... Immediately Laughter also phoned me (Kays Gary) with an idea. He wanted to figure a way to bring all those great beach kids of the '40s and '50s back for a reunion." Swink remembered their names and nicknames, their home towns, the clothes they wore, the cars they drove, and "most of all the dancing nights."

Gary then said that "Laughter even had a name for the reunion ... either the 'Society of Shaggers' or the 'Society of Stranders' ... Many *Observer* columns by Bledsoe or me (Kays Gary) about the planned reunion brought baskets of mail to Laughter's home in Richmond ... That first September migration of 1980 brought them in ... some flying, some driving, by the thousands with estimates ranging from 3,000 to 10,000."

The second S.O.S. bottle which Laughter purposely cast into the surf at Ocean Drive in the summer of 1980 was a thinly veiled attempt to get some publicity for the first S.O.S. The note in the bottle read:

"SOS. Reward for Delivery. Please see that this gets to Captain Earl Bostic of the USS Flamingo in the Port of Charlestowne. Raven is rocking off Carolina Banks. Migration is underway. Due at Oak Tree September 11th. Contact Wynonie Harris. 14 June 1897, James Ricks, Capt., USS Raven".

On August 25, 1980, *The Sumter Daily Item* ran the story of the SOS message in the bottle which had been washed ashore, picked up by a Sumter resident, and was under investigation as authentic by the

Williams-Brice Museum and Archives, the Institute of Archaeology at the University of South Carolina, and the Naval Institute in Annapolis, Maryland. Swink held a national press conference in Richmond on August 26, 1980, to confess to the hoax and to advertise the first S.O.S. Fall Migration.

On August 28, 1980, Kays Gary added to his column the story about the "Incredible Hoaxer" and said that when he read from the Sumter newspaper report that experts were pouring over the evidence of an SOS message in a bottle, he knew Laughter had struck again.

## Formation of the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs

Ken Hudspeth, then of Rock Hill, had the idea to form an association of shag clubs. Ken and Phil Sawyer met in Columbia in the winter of 1983 and discussed the idea of an association of the five South Carolina shag clubs which had been partying together on Sunday afternoons.

They began to meet with the club presidents and hammered out some basic, fundamental concepts for the organization. Phil wrote a set of bylaws based on his experience in the Jaycees and Sertoma Club, because no other similar shag club association existed.

They did not want the Association to be a dictatorial body, telling the local clubs what they could and could not do, so they created a Board of Advisors instead of a Board of Directors. They did not want "to go to work" by giving awards to clubs who got the most members or who raised the most money for this or that. It was organized "strictly for fun." The first president of the Association and the current S.O.S. Board Chairman is Ron Whisenant of Rock Hill.

The name "Carolina" modifies





*Rich and Jacque Harris*

the word "Shag" to signify that the various clubs are bonded by their love for the "Carolina Shag;" it was not intended to describe the membership as shag clubs located in the Carolinas. The Association of Carolina Shag Clubs has become the organization to preserve the heritage of the shag dance which originated in the Carolinas.

The Association was chartered as a non-profit South Carolina corporation in 1984 with five shag clubs being the initial members: Charleston, Columbia, Florence, Greenville, and Winnsboro.

In 1987 Phil Sawyer became Chairman of the Association when it had 18 shag clubs, with three not really functioning. He continued as Chairman in 1988 and 1989 and was the catalyst for the birth of numerous shag clubs throughout the Southeast. Phil originated most of the present structure of the Association, including the workshops, since organizational skills are one of his greatest assets.

The Association of Carolina Shag Clubs had 93 Full Member shag clubs listed in the 1999 Spring Safari edition of *The Carefree Times*. In order to be a member of the Association, a shag club has to have a charter, by-laws, elected officers, membership dues, a newsletter, regular meetings, and attendance at the Association workshops.

The Association has created an interest in other associations, such as the Competitive Shaggers Association and the Association of Beach

and Shag Club DeeJays, 31 of which are listed in *The Carefree Times* as Associate and Subscriber Members/Supporters.

### **Association's Purchase of S.O.S.**

Phil Sawyer met Gene Laughter at the first S.O.S. in 1980 and got to know him better when Laughter allowed a group of shaggers to sponsor a shag contest under the auspices of S.O.S. at the Shrine Club in Columbia, where Phil and his lovely wife Chick live.

Sawyer and Laughter began a business relationship when the person who was supposed to prepare Laughter's mailing labels for S.O.S. II in September of 1981 didn't do it. Sawyer helped out Laughter and did the mailing labels in 1981 and again in September of 1982 for S.O.S. III.

In 1984 Laughter incorporated S.O.S. in South Carolina and Phil stopped doing the labels, but they had become very good friends. Laughter continued promoting the S.O.S. party for the next several years until his business and his health forced him to consider selling S.O.S. When I contacted Laughter about this article, he said, "I could have sold S.O.S. for a lot more money to other groups or people, but I had great admiration for Phil's ability, honesty, and integrity. I felt that he would keep it going. It was more my dealing with Phil than the Association because to me, at that point in time, Phil was the Association." The only problem was that the Association had no money. Phil met with a lot of resistance because of the lack of funds and the effort it would take to run S.O.S.; but he was able to convince the Association that the purchase of S.O.S. was necessary to help preserve the shag dance and the greatest beach party of all time—every year then and now twice a year.

Phil has stated that, "My proudest accomplishment in the shag world was the acquisition of S.O.S. by the Association, especially since at the

time it signed the contract, the Association did not have a nickel." Phil worked out the details in 1989 with Swink Laughter at Laughter's house on the Potomac River.

The Spring Safari in 1989 was the first S.O.S. to be run by the Association and was a real learning experience. The dedicated Association members who worked that first event shared the vision and worked hard to make S.O.S. a success beyond anyone's wildest dreams. Phil was elected by the Board as the first President of S.O.S. and has continued in that job since then.

S.O.S. is a for profit corporation which pays taxes and produces a financial statement for each Board meeting. There is also an annual audit by an independent C.P.A. firm. S.O.S. funds support local club activities, the Association budget, the Mid-Winter Beach Classic, and charities. S.O.S. has committed to contribute \$100,000 for Hospice over a period of time and is about two-thirds of the way there.

S.O.S. has members in about 27 states and in Canada. In 1999 there were over 11,000 members on the rolls. S.O.S. has grown because of the way it was organized and the way it has been run to meet its goals of "unity, crowd control, high-class parties, responsible use of funds, permanence, and outstanding relationships with North Myrtle Beach municipal officials, businesses, and residents."

### **Conclusion**

Thanks Gene Laughter for making the idea of S.O.S. a reality. Thanks to the Board of Directors and the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs for making S.O.S. a permanent, lasting institution. Thanks to the many shag clubs and members who love the dance, the music, and the fantastic parties and the reunions with our family of shaggers. Thanks S.O.S. for the good times shagging.

*Rich Harris, a member of the Good Time Shaggers, is an attorney from Charlotte, North Carolina.*





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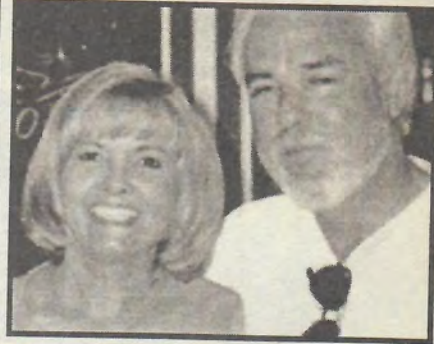
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## Shag Dance Courtesy 101

— by J. Mike Honeycutt

It's a great party. The deejay is playing some of your favorite tunes, and people are really having a good time. There's a large wooden floor that's just right. You're dancing almost every song. The floor has been full but "no problem." These shaggers have learned Shag Dance Courtesy 101 over the years.

Shag Dance Courtesy involves many of the little things, like looking behind you before you do some kick that requires a five foot radius. One of my favorites is the lean with the big arm flair. There is nothing wrong with the step. But graduates of SDC 101 know that it just won't fit on a crowded floor.

Back to the story ... The first few bars of your all-time favorite song fill the room. You step out on the floor ready to boogie. After a perfect start and a reverse pivot, you're in Shag Dance Heaven.

But something is different this time. Oh no, it's that couple you've had to dodge all night! You know the one I'm talking about. Then suddenly, without warning, they get

side by side, shoulder to shoulder, and do some kind of back promenade that parts the floor like Moses parting the Red Sea. They started it at one end of the dance floor and then travel somewhat diagonally about 20 to 30 feet in your direction. Look out!

Did I miss something? What happened to staying in your space? And where are these folks going? The shag is a "North-South" dance. When you do a turn, the person on the North side winds up on the South side and vice-versa. It's not supposed to be North-West to some uncharted compass heading!

So, bruised and battered, and sometimes even bloodied at the shin, you leave the floor and return to your table to socialize with your buddies. Just about the time you get deep into a war story about some party your friends missed, guess who crams in between the tables where you are standing to show someone this wonderful new step? You guessed it!

Oh goody, now the fun is multiplied. Three more dancers are now

bound and determined to do this step if it kills them ... and several more dancers in the area, too!

I guess it's best said that "there's a time and place for everything." A crowded dance floor is certainly no place for steps that require a lot of space.

I have asked several shag instructors if they told their students about being courteous, and all of them said they did. From my observations, there are a few dancers that need a refresher course.

I'll end my thoughts with a few definitions of things I have observed at shag events:

**Mirror Step:** Something designed to wreck a marriage or cause heated arguments in public.

**Tacky:** Walking out on the floor and pointing at someone with your index finger indicated "come here and dance."

**Very Tacky:** Dancing beyond your partner's ability and intimidating them.

**Southern Gentleman:** Extending your hand to say, "May I have this dance?"

*Reprinted from the Twisters Shag Club newsletter.*

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## Event Planning Calendar

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<b>JANUARY</b> 20-23 Mid-Winter Classic, NMB, SC 	<b>FEBRUARY</b> 4-6 Foothills Winter Boogie, Hickory, NC 5-6 Inland Jr. Shagger Weekend, Irmo, SC 11-13 Winter Classic, Hilton Head Island, SC 11-13 Shag Blast, Atlantic Beach, NC 25-27 ACSC Winter Workshop & Party	<b>MARCH</b> 3-5 DJ Throwdown, N. Myrtle Beach, SC 11-16 Shag Cruise, leaves from Tampa, FL 17-19 Shag Classic, Augusta, GA 30-2 Smoky Mtn. Boogie, Gatlinburg, TN
<b>APRIL</b> 7-16 SOS Spring Safari, N. Myrtle Bch., SC 	<b>MAY</b> 13 Electric Storm, Clemson, SC tba Shaggin for Dollars, Monroe, NC	<b>JUNE</b> tba Summer Sizzle, Smithfield, NC
<b>JULY</b> 7-9 ACSC Summer Workshop & Party 14-16 Cool Me Out, Florence, SC 21-23 Capital Shag Classic, Alexandria, VA 28-30 Shag Party, Santee, SC tba Shag Blast, Goldsboro, NC	<b>AUGUST</b> 12 Cotton Pickin Chicken Eatin, Gastonia, NC 25-27 Boogie on the Bay, Clearwater, FL	<b>SEPTEMBER</b> 15-24 SOS Fall Migration, N. Myrtle Bch, SC 

## Upcoming Event Details



JAN

- 20-23 **MID-WINTER CLASSIC** at North Myrtle Beach. Hosted by the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs exclusively for shaggers in Full Member ACSC clubs.

FEBRUARY

- 4-6 **FOOTHILLS WINTER BOOGIE** in Hickory, NC. Hosted by the Lake Hickory Shag Club. Tickets \$30 until 12/31, then \$35. DJ's Norman Mills and Harold Beaver. Shag workshop with Ellen Taylor available. Unusual fashion show, Camp Kemo fundraiser and more. Call 828-323-1000 for rooms and ask for the party discount. Call 828-256-6025 for more information.
- 5-6 **INLAND JUNIOR SHAGGER WEEKEND** in Irmo, SC. Hosted by the Palmetto Shag Club. Music provided by ABSCDJ's. Shag workshop, gospel hour and more. Donations accepted to support junior shaggers. Call 803-808-9681 for info. E-mail mikerob@mindspring.com
- 11-13 **WINTER CLASSIC** in Hilton Head Island, SC. Hosted by the Hilton Head Island Shag Club. Tickets are \$35 until 12/1. DJ's Gar, Rass, Judy Collins, Jerry Munson, EZ Zommerfield. Free shag workshop by John and Joan English. and Rufus and Carol Wactor. Rooms include midnight breakfast and dinner Saturday night. Call 843-671-6242 for info. E-mail eajap@aol.com
- 11-13 **SHAG BLAST** in Atlantic Beach, NC. Hosted by Capital Area Shag Club. Tickets \$30. Call 919-832-9737 for info. E-mail cascnews@aol.com
- 25-27 **ACSC WINTER WORKSHOP AND PARTY**. Hosted by Twister's Shag Club. Multiple DJ's, free munchies, meals, shag workshop, and continuous free pour. Call 704-892-1114 for more info. E-mail tscwebpage@aol.com



## MARCH

- 3-5 **DJ THROWDOWN** in North Myrtle Beach, SC. Hosted by the Association of Beach and Shag Club DJ's. Free. Various DJ's. Special concert with Lil Ronnie and the Grand Dukes on Thursday.
- 11-16 **SHAG CRUISE** hosted by the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs. Leaves from Tampa, Florida and goes to Cozumel, Playa del Carmen and Grand Cayman. Visit [www.shagdance.com](http://www.shagdance.com) for more information.
- 17-19 **SHAG CLASSIC** in Augusta, GA. Hosted by CSRA Shag Club. DJ's John Smith, Granville Elliot, Walter Upchurch, Judy Collins, Dennis Hydrick and Murl Augustine. BYOB, Long Island Iced Tea Friday, Liquid Sunshine on Sunday, and free draft all weekend. Meals provided. Call 803-652-7407 for info. E-mail [murl472@aol.com](mailto:murl472@aol.com).
- 30-2 **SMOKY MOUNTAIN BOOGIE** in Gatlinburg, TN. Hosted by the Smoky Mountain Shaggers. Tickets are \$30 until 12/31/99, \$40 until 3/1, then \$50. DJ's Gary Bass, Doug & Sandy Brown, Joanne Johnson and Ed Timberlake. Dance workshops available. For rooms call 800-362-9522. For more information call 423-539-2275. E-mail [betty2275@aol.com](mailto:betty2275@aol.com)

## APRIL

- 7-16 **THE SOS SPRING SAFARI** at North Myrtle Beach. Hosted by the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs and SOS. Free shuttle service provided by SOS. Free food in participating lounges also provided by SOS. Lots of great DJ's and more. The Spring Safari includes a great parade on Saturday. The SOS Company Store and Headquarters should be your first stop the latest info, and the latest SOS memorabilia. More SOS membership info is available on [www.shagdance.com](http://www.shagdance.com). E-mail questions to [martha@starfishnet.com](mailto:martha@starfishnet.com)

## MAY

- 13 **ELECTRIC STORM** in Clemson, SC. Tickets \$20. DJ Mike Lewis. Call 864-225-7950 for info. E-mail [kjb2g0@carol.net](mailto:kjb2g0@carol.net)
- tba **SHAGGIN FOR DOLLARS** in Monroe, NC. Hosted by Monroe Shag Club. This is a charity fundraiser. DJ Ray Scott. Call 704-233-9238 for more info.

## JUNE

- tba **SUMMER SIZZLE** in Smithfield, NC. Hosted by the Johnston County Area Shag Club. Call 919-934-2194 for info.

## JULY

- 7-9 **ACSC SUMMER WORKSHOP AND PARTY**. Hosted by Twin Rivers Shag Club.
- 14-16 **COOL ME OUT** in Florence, SC. Hosted by Florence Shag Club. Tickets \$30-40. DJ's Bill Jones, Anthony Weeks, Eddie Collins, etc. Shag workshop, golf and two meals. Call 843-678-8908 for info. E-mail [peedeemt@aol.com](mailto:peedeemt@aol.com)
- 21-23 **CAPITAL SHAG CLASSIC** in Alexandria, VA. Hosted by Northern Virginia Shag Club. Call 301-765-0995 for info. E-mail [vjones@olg.com](mailto:vjones@olg.com)
- 28-30 **SHAG PARTY** in Santee, SC. Hosted by the Orangeburg Area Shag Club. Call 843-563-7694 for info. E-mail [dkshag@infoave.net](mailto:dkshag@infoave.net)
- tba **SHAG BLAST** in Goldsboro, NC. Hosted by Sugarfoot Shag Club. Handicap dance and more. Call 919-735-4355 for info. E-mail [slweaver@mail.icomnet.com](mailto:slweaver@mail.icomnet.com)

## AUG

- 12 **COTTON PICKIN CHICKEN EATIN** in Gastonia, NC. Hosted by Gaston Shag Club. Call 704-867-6506 for more info.
- 25-27 **BOOGIE ON THE BAY** in Clearwater, FL. Hosted by Tampa Bay Beach Boppers. Tickets \$30. Workshops every day. Call 813-915-9577 for info. E-mail [nanharrison@compuserve.com](mailto:nanharrison@compuserve.com)

## SEPT

- 15-24 **THE SOS FALL MIGRATION** at North Myrtle Beach. Hosted by the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs and SOS. Free shuttle service provided by SOS. Free food in participating lounges also provided by SOS. Lots of great DJ's and more. The Fall Migration also includes the FUN MONDAY street party with several bands. The SOS Company Store and Headquarters should be your first stop the latest info, and the latest SOS memorabilia. More SOS membership info is available on [www.shagdance.com](http://www.shagdance.com). E-mail questions to [martha@starfishnet.com](mailto:martha@starfishnet.com)

These event listings courtesy of [www.shagdance.com](http://www.shagdance.com), your best web source for complete and up-to-date shag club party information. The site is updated daily, so be sure to visit it often!





# Shag Millennium Review

— by Bill Clinard

Just like Viagra and the pill, the shag dance will influence the new millennium more than it did the old one. After all, it existed only 5% of the old millennium. But like all good things, it became one of those 5% of things that brings 95% of our pleasure.

Let's tick them off: food, shelter, family, friends, and a preacher that quits preaching at noon sharp. So let's review the last 1000 years and look forward to the next.

## Years 1000 - 1945:

Planet Earth awaits in travail for creation of the shag dance. The dancers who will create it have been born and are maturing into young warriors and U.S.O. volunteers.

The last world war is fought in argument over which side of the planet will create the dance. Wanting a dance they can master, the Japanese samurai wrestlers lobby hard for the right. But Big George Lineberry throws his weight around and we win.

## Years 1945 - 1960:

As the war winds down, the new dance cranks up. Those out of high school spend their summers at the beach. They bring the jitterbug, lindy hop, be-bop, strut, big apple, and a face full of acne on the mend.

Those just out of the armed forces attend college on the GI Bill and spend their summers at the beach. They bring the service man's favorite pastime—the marching cadence count, hup, two, three, four—strutted to the big band sound.

Those not attending school begin careers in life-guarding, bingo calling, and float rentals.

The makers of peroxide have a

sudden increase in sales as the beach cats all want bleach blonde hair. It doesn't work for everyone. My maroon hair was cut off as soon as it grew out. The early prediction does not hold true that peroxidized blondes are going to hell.

To hear the guys tell it, they were all lifeguards. At times the beach was so full of lifeguards, the tourists had to stay in the water or sit on the boardwalk. Those bruises and scratches did not come from fighting, as reported. They came from playing tackle football almost naked in the sand.

Then at night they would cram the dance floors so full it looked like a chicken farm. (If you haven't seen a chicken farm, this is not to suggest seeing one. If you have seen one, forget I said that. Chicken is good for you and pretty once it reaches the table and should remain on your menu.)

The point is that a dance was needed to take no more room than the floor space you occupied. Thus, the blending began. Big George shortened the cadence count to three to accommodate his weight.

Big band just isn't good beer drinking music, so it faded in favor of rhythm and blues because R&B included a lot of lyrics about drinking.

All the dances brought together were poured into an old beach favorite, a taffy pull, then massaged, stretched, experimented with, and tested to make sure your ducktail stayed combed and you could dance all night without sweating.

Out came a smooth step that started an argument that still lasts today. "I never did mirror steps. Never will. Don't like them." It's my pleasure to announce that if your partner was doing the same basic,

you were mirror stepping your first dance and still are.

So the fast dance, as it was called in the beginning, was progressing. Shuffles and lead steps were being created, and the three step pivot tied it all together. Many early dancers never picked up the four step full pivot yet are credited with the footwork that drove the dance to what it is today.

But the footwork wasn't all that was changing. The name was slowly changing to the shag. All of the stories about the name change can't be true; and if all were reported here, it would take a millennium to write them down. Suffice it to say, the name change did nothing for Big George's weight.

## Years 1960 - 1980:

Beach clubs began opening inland to make a lot of money. (If you believe that, I have a list of several for sale.) Bill Griffith opened his first of many clubs in Greensboro, N.C. Actually, these inland clubs helped preserve the shag dance by providing a place to drink beer other than at home in front of the kids.

Enough dancers could reach a club without spending money to stay overnight. A sobering breakfast before the drive home actually started those all-night pancake houses.

In appreciation for the money they were making, the club owners organized the Shag Preservation Association (SPA) and started a circuit of contests. The best dancers put their kids through college and funded long summer vacations with their winnings.

When the Highway 17 bridge opened over the waterway, shag headquarters moved to Ocean Drive. Dancers were relieved of burning



time and motors sitting up Highways 9 and 17 waiting for the old drawbridge.

### **Years 1980 - 2000:**

In 1980 Swink Laughter sent out the word that it was time to start a big semi-annual shag party that he could later sell for a fortune. It became S.O.S. and grew faster than a chicken farm population. The primary attraction was the food discounts given by local restaurants, especially the all-night pancake houses.

The new interest in the shag dramatically multiplied the number of dancers and the number of beach clubs. Many new dancers came by withdrawing from square dance clubs and joining shag clubs, because square dancing prohibited beer drinking and shagging required it.

Charlie Womble and Jackie McGee took the Shag National and amazed the swing dance circuit. A few of the swing dance steps infiltrated the shag, but those wild, colorful costumes never will.

In 1983 Rick Hubbard sent out the word that it was time to start a Shaggers Hall of Fame in Greenville, S.C. that he could later sell for a fortune. It would start with the old time dancers—and with eight inductions per year, most all good dancers could expect to be inducted by the year 3250. Of course, a few may have to come in posthumously.

In 1984 Representative Bubber Snow introduces a bill that makes the shag the South Carolina State Dance. After signing the bill, Governor Riley asks Bubber to teach him a good pivot so he can quickly turn his back on some politicians.

In 1989 the Association of Carolina Shag Clubs paid a fortune to buy S.O.S. Swink Laughter buys downtown Richmond with the proceeds.

To increase the complexity of

judging a contest, the competitive shaggers that dance the SPA circuit organize the Competitive Shaggers Association (CSA). Lacking enough to do, the O.D. club owners form an association. Both now enjoy all that committee work that cuts into their dancing.

In 1996 Chick Hedrick and Harry Driver paid a fortune for the Shagger's Hall of Fame, which had moved to Ocean Drive. Rick Hubbard retires and tries to buy Bob Jones U. to burn it down. Chuck and Harry hardly notice the dent in their fat checking accounts.

The crushing attendance at S.O.S. is being studied. Soundly rejected is the suggestion to have men come one week and women the next. Just as soundly rejected is to have married couples come one week and singles the next. The studies will continue, with an eye on planned parking decks.

S.O.S. is scouting for several forests and a paper mill to guarantee a paper supply for the *S.O.S. Carefree Times*.

Several early shag legends will not dance on this planet in the new millennium. Richard Nixon moves his deejay booth to that big dance floor in the sky. Lacy Moore, Charley Boone, Shad Alberty, Bunk Leach, and Dewey Kennedy trade in their loafers for wing tips.

The Hall of Fame loses its prolific emcee, as Harry Driver turns in his microphone and unexpectedly departs to prepare a place for those who follow shortly. Bill Griffith closes his last club. Big George Lineberry is weightless at last. Bob Somerset trades his beltless trousers, and Marilyn Smith trades her white pant suits for white robes. Rufus Oats joins the Psalm 150 ensemble.

Our kids and grandkids re-energize the shag and learn how to defy

gravity. There is no way to ground them anymore. They will not share this with their elders, even though tempted with bribery or forced to listen to Neil Diamond albums.

Microsoft announces that early in the new millennium they will offer loafers that are programmed with another person's shag steps. Available to the men will be Charley Womble, David Campbell, and Sam West. For the women, Jackie McGee, Sandra Schwartz, and Jennifer Beaver. Upon hearing the news, the Grand Strand Hospital broke ground for a new wing to specialize in broken legs.

In preparation, I have contracted a bio-tech company to download my brain contents, clone my 16-year old body, and then upload my brain to my new body. Wow! I'll be dancing with the juniors.

Beverly will sign her contract as soon as she decides what age she chooses. Both of us are looking forward to defying gravity in more activities than the shag.

Good shagging to you; and while you are preparing for the new millennium, remember, our motto remains the same: "Shag unto others as you would have others shag unto you!"

*Bill Clinard has been a long-time contributor to the "Carefree Times." He and Bev live in N. Myrtle Beach.*



" IT'S CALLED SHAGGIN' "



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# Never felt more like singin' the blues ...

— by Mike Miller

I was feeling kind of blue earlier this week. It was raining, I had the backache, and it looked like the Gamecock football team was done for the century. What was it Big Mama Thornton sang? "Sitting by my window, looking out at the rain. You know something struck me, clamped on my heart like a ball and chain."

It was time to pull out my favorite Junior Kimbrough CD, *Most Things Haven't Worked Out*, and listen to that ice-cold electric guitar wail. Sure enough, two or three tunes later, I was feeling better. That's what the blues are supposed to do—drive away your blues.

Some folks think the blues bring you down, but it just ain't so. People start singing the blues because they're too far down already. They need something to bring 'em up. "I make my living feeling rotten," Johnny Winter sang in the song *World of Contradictions*, "but I feel good when I play the blues."

The blues is not an easy thing to figure, though. What started out as songs sung by field workers and prison road gangs has turned into a popular American art form that's become big business for a lot of

people. (For all you business types who've never worked in a field or swung a slingblade on the roadside, having the blues is a lot like being "stressed out," "emotionally distraught" or "clinically depressed.")

Nowadays, you can mostly forget about the African-influenced, five-note pentatonic scale (as opposed to the European eight-note diatonic scale). The blues is mostly about Fender guitars and Marshall amps, tour schedules and record labels, although most blues players still have a hard time scratching out a living.

In his *Little Blues Book*, Brian Robertson tells the story of the first song that had the word "blues" in its title. Back in 1912, a fiddle player named Hart Wand was sawing away in the back of his father's drugstore when a black porter heard the tune and remarked, "That gives me the blues to go back to Dallas." So Wand named his song, as the story goes, *The Dallas Blues*.

It was W.C. Handy who popularized the form with his *Memphis Blues* in 1912 and *St. Louis Blues* in 1914, and Mamie Smith's 1920 song *Crazy Blues* is thought to be the first recorded vocal blues tune. I'm not sure what the *Carolina Blues* would be, not too far from crazy blues, I'm

sure. I guess I'll have to ask Drink Small the next time I see him.

Which won't be long from now. During the coming weeks, the Midlands will be rocking to the sound of the blues. Beginning Thursday, the Carolina Downhome Blues Festival begins a three-day run in Camden, and on Saturday, Oct. 16, the Columbia Blues Festival returns to Martin Luther King Park near Five Points.

Both festivals will feature old-school bluesmen, including Wild Child Butler, Detroit Junior and Henry Gray in Camden ... and R.L. Burnside at the Columbia festival. Drink Small will bring his guitar Geraldine to both events.

So it's time to get your mojo workin', and take KoKo Taylor's advice, "Hey everybody, let's have some fun. You only live once and when you're dead, you're gone. So let the good times roll."

See? I told you the blues was for picking you up, not bringing you down. I got to get back to Junior Kimbrough now. My back's feeling better, and he's about to sing *All Night Long*, two things that, come to think of it, have a lot in common. Things are looking up.

Submitted by Mike York. Reprinted by permission from "The State" newspaper in Columbia, S.C., October 1, 1999. Mike Miller is a Staff Writer.



## JB Pivots Beach Club

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- [HTTP://www.SunShag.com/jbpivots.htm](http://www.SunShag.com/jbpivots.htm)





## The Spirit of Shag Lives On ...

— by Janis Grimes

Just back from the National Living Legends of Dance Awards, an annual event honoring those who have made significant contributions to the preservation and evolution of dance, and I am filled with the warmth, love, and easy sense of fun that surrounds these special people.

Did you know that two members of our own club [Northern Virginia Shag Club] are National Living Legends? That's right—Craig Hutchinson and Earl Robinson are both recipients of the Star Award.

Conceived and produced by Fran Bingley and Berta Lull of Virginia Beach, this event has grown into a classy gala that attracts many of the best and most dedicated dance elite in the country. Invitations are limited by the moderate size of the Officers' Club at Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base, but good will and high spirits soar.

Amazingly, there is no sign of rivalries or egos running amok that might be expected in such a talented group, many of whom are competitors. The only sad part of the weekend, brought to immediate attention by the mention of those who are missing this year, is the quiet realization that after all the fun, laughter, and joy, it could be the last time we will see this person, or that one ....

Master of Ceremonies Steve Booth did a wonderful job as always, making the evening come to life with his stylish commentary and anecdotes about the honorees. Among the many shag luminaries present this year were Ellen and Carl Taylor, Earl Robinson and the lovely Beverly Jones, Jerry Canada, Norfleet Jones and Sheila Bodie, recently married Bobby Kellam and Ann Givens,

Michael Payne of *The Carefree Times*, Judy Davis, Charlie Snow, Johnny and Carolyn Johnson of Roanoke, and Wes May. Nine-year old Brenner Goree, an upcoming junior shagger, reported back to his grandmother Marjory after a dance with Ellen Taylor, "She catches on real quick to my steps."

Norfleet Jones, legendary shagger and proprietor of Ducks in North Myrtle Beach, and Eddie Monsour are sponsoring the newest team of shag competitors, Ducks Dirty Dozen, comprised of juniors and other young shaggers. The team consists of twelve awesome dancers—Norman Aldredge and Nikki Kontoulis; David Campbell and Jill Barton; Grant Garmon and Leah Sanderson; Brent and Kellese Key; Brad Kinard and Jennifer Beaver; and Grayson Smith and Leslie Melton.

We watched in awe as they performed their perfectly synchronized routine, on their way to the U.S. Open in Anaheim, California. In one corner of the dance floor sat Grayson Smith, resting his recently injured ankle. These kids are so polished and professional that they performed their routine with Grayson sitting out—meaning that one girl was always dancing her part alone. It was still stunningly precise.

Grayson was spotted later that night dancing with two girls (at the same time) on the carpet—just couldn't help himself. We hope he will recover in time to dance at the U.S. Open. Norfleet explained that Grayson, a third year student at Clemson University, a gifted athlete and dancer of extraordinary coordination and grace, sprained his ankle (oh no!) while walking down the sidewalk after leaving his fraternity house ... End of explanation. That's

his story, and he's sticking to it.

For the past two years the National Shag Dance Team won first place at the U.S. Open, stunning the entire dance community with their precision, grace, and ability. Several shag couples took top honors in other categories, as well, and Carolina Shag has finally been recognized on a national level for the beautiful art form that it is.

We know what to expect from these young shaggers—they are some of the most talented dancers in the entire country (okay, the world!), and we wish them every success this year.

(FLASH—the two shag teams took the top two places over all other teams, with Ducks Dirty Dozen coming in First Place at the U.S. Open!)

The friendship and support among the young shaggers was prevalent that weekend, with not a hint of the negatives—ego, attitude, or jealousy—that sometimes creep in when there is so much talent in one room. It was a perfect celebration with gracious people who support each other in a spirit of friendship that is wonderful to witness. They are fabulous, and they are the future. But as Norfleet said, were it not for the Living Legends who started dancing and kept it alive, they wouldn't be here.

That Shag Spirit is the glue that holds it all together for these talented, and very fortunate, people. The spirit of friendship, coolness, and genuine support for each other gives them a safe haven where they can play, work on their dancing, enjoy each other, and excel to fantastic levels. They are so blessed.

*Reprinted (with revision) from the Northern Virginia Shag Club's newsletter, "Shag Rag" Dec. '99.*



## Hazel comes ashore: 1954

— by *Sonny Nixon*

It was October 14, and I had just closed Sonny's for the season. I secured the floats and umbrellas in the storage area, and I had finished cleaning the grill and the beer coolers. It was overcast, and I knew from radio reports that there was a storm at sea somewhere out there.

There was no TV back then, and I only listened to Randy's Record Shop from Gallatin, Tennessee because they played beach music. Anyway, I was not too concerned because I lived with my family in a small frame house on the oceanfront directly behind Sonny's all my life. No storm had even come close for the first 23 years of my life; or if one did, we did not know about it. Back then, the dunes were large and covered with sea oats, and I had never seen any significant beach erosion.

The next morning the weather began deteriorating rapidly, and I noticed that the ocean was raging and the rain was coming down in torrents. The tide was high and running up under my dance floor, which I had just built that spring to move the jukebox onto. It was about 20 by 30 feet, and it connected Sonny's by a six-foot long boardwalk.

Since it was exactly low tide according to the tide chart, I began to worry that the dance floor might be taken by the angry surf. Milford Powell came up and went with my father to get a long warp rope to attempt to secure it by tying it to the main building. The warp rope was a 1000-foot long piece of large rope. My dad used it to help pull the seines in when he put the net out into the ocean from a commercial fishery he ran in the fall.

Poo McLaughlin, Milford, and

one or two other unwise souls, who had not yet evacuated the beach, helped me loop the rope around the dance floor, which by now was floating in the waves. Suddenly, in a matter of seconds, the waves surged in. We could barely get the rope around the entire building, which was now beginning to float away in the waves. We tied the building to another building about a hundred feet back from the dance floor.

Then we hastily exited the beach by wading in waist deep water down the main street of Cherry Grove toward the woods. I was in shock. I could not believe what was happening. I looked back, and my building had been churned to rubble by the ocean. My family's house was breaking apart as the waves grew ever higher. I realized we had been lucky to survive the surge.

About 8 p.m. when I returned, the sun was shining, and the weather was clearing. There was nothing on the entire oceanfront but piles of storm debris. We had no insurance. I felt that me and my family were finished, since everything we owned was gone. Fortunately, none of us was injured. With the help of friends and loans from the Small Business Administration, we were able to rebuild our lives and continue the beach tradition.

Milford Powell is still around, and he owns Pirate's Cove on Main Street at O.D. He is married to Becky Stowe, who runs Beach Memories, also on Main Street. Captain Poo McLaughlin runs the Blue Marlin Lounge at Anchor Marina and divides his time between that and piloting a large yacht named "The Dream." It is owned by S.O.S. friend Dynamite McDonald, whom most of you probably know. He and Cindy Collins are frequently generous

hosts of Living Legends events and do a lot to promote the shagging tradition.

*You may call Sonny Nixon at (843) 249-2620 if you have beach memories to share.*

### ... from our mailbox

*(Editor's Note: This letter was addressed to Ellen Taylor about her article, "More to the lady than dancing," in our Fall Migration issue.)*

Dear Ellen,

Thank you for taking the time to write about Wendy Shore. I had the pleasure of meeting, talking and dancing with Wendy at the Spring S.O.S. She was gracious in each regard.

As a competitive triathlete myself since 1978, I have a special appreciation for Wendy's accomplishments, especially since I got hit by a car while training for The Ironman Triathlon. I incurred a broken neck, three broken ribs, a broken leg, and seven broken bones in one hand. Returning to competition, especially getting back on the bike, was difficult because I had trained for two years to race in The Ironman, only to have all that work wiped out by a senseless act of a careless driver.

That Wendy came back is a testament to what it takes to be a triathlete. That she made it to the "World's" and finished respectably is a huge statement about her.

I am often turned away when people start talking about other people. You, however, have found a wonderful way to speak positively about someone and that makes me glad that you took the time. I'd hope that by writing about Wendy, maybe you as well as some of your readers can in some way attach themselves to her sense of accomplishment. Our world is often short of high notes. Your article about Wendy sure hits a nice chord with me! Thanks.

— *Mike Townsend*



## WHITE ROSES

*A love story*

I hurried into the local department store to grab some last minute Christmas gifts. I looked at all the people and grumbled to myself. I would be in here forever and I just had so much to do. Christmas was beginning to become such a drag. I kinda wished that I could just sleep through Christmas. But I hurried the best I could through all the people to the toy department.

Once again I kinda mumbled to myself at the prices of all these toys, and wondered if the grandkids would even play with them. I found myself in the doll aisle. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a little boy about 5 holding a lovely doll. He kept touching her hair and he held her so gently. I could not seem to help myself. I just kept looking over at the little boy and wondered who the doll was for. I watched him turn to a woman and he called his aunt by name and said, "Are you sure I don't have enough money." She replied a bit impatiently, "You know that you don't have enough money for it." The aunt told the little boy not to go anywhere that she had to go get some other things and would be back in a few minutes. And then she left the aisle. The boy continued to hold the doll. After a bit I asked the boy who the doll was for. He said, "It is the doll my sister wanted so badly for Christmas. She just knew that Santa would bring it." I told him that maybe Santa was going to bring it. He said "No, Santa can't go where my sister is...I have to give the doll to my Mamma to take to her." I asked him where his sister was. He looked at me with the saddest eyes and said "She has gone to be with Jesus."

My Daddy says that Mama is going to have to go be with her. My heart nearly stopped beating. Then the boy looked at me again and said, I told my Daddy to tell Mama to wait till I got back from the store." Then he asked me if I wanted to see his pictures. I told him I would love to. He pulled out some pictures he'd had taken at the front of the store. He said "I want my Mamma to take this with her so she don't ever forget me." "I love my Mama so very much and I wish she did not have to leave me." "But Daddy says she will need to be with my sister." I saw that the little boy had lowered his head and had grown so very quiet. While

he was not looking I reached into my purse and pulled out a handful of bills. I asked the little boy, "Shall we count that money one more time? He grew excited and said "Yes, I just know it has to be enough." So I slipped my money in with his and we began to count it. Of course it was plenty for the doll. He softly said, "Thank you Jesus for giving me enough money." Then the boy said "I just wanted Jesus to give me enough money to buy this doll so Mama can take it with her to give to my sister." "And he heard my prayer." "I wanted to ask him for enough to buy my Mama a white rose, but I didn't ask him, but he gave me enough to buy the doll and a rose for my Mama." "She loves white roses so very, very much."

In a few minutes the aunt came back and I wheeled my cart away. I could not keep from thinking about the little boy as I finished my shopping in a totally different spirit than when I had started. And I kept remembering a story I had seen in the newspaper several days earlier about a drunk driver hitting a car and killing a little girl and the Mother was in serious condition. The family was deciding on whether to remove the life support. Now surely this little boy did not belong with that story.

Two days later I read in the paper where the family had disconnected the life support and the young woman had died. I could not forget the little boy and just kept wondering if the two were somehow connected. Later that day, I could not help myself and went out and bought some white roses and took them to the funeral home where the young woman was. And there she was holding a lovely white rose, the beautiful doll, and the picture of the little boy in the store. I left there in tears, my life changed forever. The love that little boy had for his little sister and his mother was overwhelming. And in a split second a drunk driver had ripped the life of that little boy to pieces.

"Friends are angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly."  
-anonymous.

Submitted by Dianne Alexander of Club Savoy in Jacksonville, Florida.



## Report on Junior S.O.S. 1999

What a party! We registered 300 juniors by 11 p.m. on Friday, July 16 and signed in another 10 or so on Saturday morning at the workshops. We didn't register new arrivals on Saturday night, because it was so crowded; but I estimate we had at least 50 new arrivals, which put us up around 370 total. Last year we had around 250. I expect there will be 500 next year.

We had six junior workshops over the weekend, with the OD Arcade being workshop headquarters. A total of about 175 took workshops. Workshops in Beginner Shag, Intermediate Shag, Advanced Shag, West Coast Swing, and Retro Swing were offered. Free ice cream was provided at the daytime workshops.

We had two fun contests with over 30 couples each. We had a lot of compliments from juniors and adults. The few complaints we had were associated with growing so fast and it being so crowded. Too crowded! Too hot! Too many adults! If we are going to have problems, this is the kind I want. We will start right away planning to make next year even better.

I would like to thank all of the parents, club owners, shag clubs, friends of the juniors, and juniors that spent time and money helping with this event. The larger it gets, the more work it involves. We have been very fortunate to have more people step forward each year and offer their help and support. Thank you from the entire JSA organization!

— Ron Alexander

*Reprinted (in part) from the J.S.A. Newsletter, September 1999.*

**2000 Junior S.O.S.  
July 13 - 16  
Make plans now!**

## Some of the Worst News Headlines

**Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Expert Says**

**Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers**

**Iraqi Head Seeks Arms**

**Clinton Wins on Budget, But More Lies Ahead**

**Prostitutes Appeal to Pope**

**Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over**

**Include Your Children when Baking Cookies**

**Plane Too Close to Ground, Crash Probe Told**

**Miners Refuse to Work after Death**

**Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant**

**Stolen Painting Found by Tree**

**Two Sisters Reunited After 18 Years  
at Checkout Counter**

**War Dims Hope for Peace**

**If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last a While**

**Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures**

**Enfields Couple Slain; Police Suspect Homicide**

**Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges**

**Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead**

**Kids Make Nutritious Snacks**

**Hospitals are Sued by 7 Foot Doctors**

**New Vaccine May Contain Rabies**

**Drunk Gets Nine Months in Violin Case**

**Man Struck By Lightning Faces Battery Charge**

Source: the Internet



# Striving for Balance in Life

*This was written by the CEO of Coca-Cola, Brian G. Dyson. It was used as Georgia Tech's commencement address.*

Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them: Work - Family - Health - Friends - Spirit, and you're keeping all of these in the air.

You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls—family, health, friends, and spirit—are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life. How?

1. Don't undermine your worth by comparing yourself with others. It is because we are different that each of us is special.
2. Don't set your goals by what other people deem important. Only you know what is best for you.
3. Don't take for granted the things closest to your heart. Cling to them as you would your life, for without them, life is meaningless.

4. Don't let your life slip through your fingers by living in the past or future. By living your life one day at a time, you live *all* of the days of your life.

5. Don't give up when you still have something to give. Nothing is really over until the moment you stop trying.

6. Don't be afraid to admit that you are less than perfect. It is this fragile thread that binds us together.

7. Don't be afraid to encounter risks. It is by taking chances that we learn how to be brave.

8. Don't shut love out of your life by saying it's impossible to find. The quickest way to receive love is to give; the fastest way to lose love is to hold it too tightly; and the best way to keep love is to give it wings.

9. Don't run through life so fast that you forget not only where you've been, but also where you are going.

10. Don't forget that a person's greatest emotional need is to feel appreciated.

11. Don't be afraid to learn. Knowledge is weightless, a treasure you can always carry easily.

12. Don't use time or words carelessly. Neither can be retrieved. "Life is not a race, but a journey to be savored each step of the way." ... "Yesterday is History, Tomorrow is a Mystery, and Today is a gift: that's why we call it The Present."

## Editor's Message Update

Shortly before this issue went to press, we received word that Rich Harris, one of the Carefree Times' photographers and contributing editors, died of a heart attack on December 11.

In his photographer duties, Rich covered S.O.S. like the dew covers Dixie. He was everywhere taking pictures of everyone. His article, "The Laughter-Sawyer Connection" on pages 12-13 was written in August.

The shag world lost a really good man.

— Michael Payne



Because we mail via bulk mail, if you move and don't tell us or if your address is incomplete, you will **not** receive your mail-out S.O.S. Carefree Times issues.

Please fill out this change of address form and return to: Pat Smith, 407 Ivy Circle, Anderson, SC 29621. A photocopy is okay.

### OLD ADDRESS (as it reads on S.O.S. label)

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ APT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

### NEW ADDRESS — effective \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ APT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



## In Memoriam to Rufus Oates to 1933 - 1999

— Jeppy McDowell

I was angry for a while. Angry that a dear friend like Rufus Oates, appearing to be in sound health, enjoying a full life, can be taken so suddenly.

When there is no time to prepare, it is hard to turn loose and let someone go so quickly. And yet in the beginning my friendship with his family formed just as quickly.

I am grateful for that friendship, almost feeling indebted, although the family would never require or allow that word. When I moved here 18 years ago to leave a less than happy life, I met Rufus and Esther's daughter Judy coming out of a rough situation. We kind of helped each other through some rough times to start a new life.

For several years, Judy and I taught the shag and competed in shag contests. The stability this family showed me was perfect for the time.

I am also very sad. Rufus was special to a lot of people by the way he filled so many music lovers' lives with music. There is an additional reason for me. Due to the kindness and acceptance my new "family" gifted to me, I feel like an adopted son and brother. As Judy grieves for her father, I can identify with her, for I feel as if I have lost a father also.

I am now at peace about Rufus. For a while, I was anxious about the experience of being without him. For a while, I will hear a tune he introduced me to, and I'll think of him. I'll walk into a club, see the deejay in the booth, and I'll think of him. I'll sit down with Esther and Judy to one of those wonderful holiday dinners, and we'll think of him.

But if what our faith believes is true, Rufus is also having new experiences we can't begin to imagine. I can see him taking his place in the scheme of making "joyful noises" among the heavenly hosts. And he

will never miss a downbeat. He is well prepared.

*Reprinted from the O.D. Shag Club's newsletter.*

— Wilkie Whaley

It is late at night or I should say early in the morning, and I have just returned from the beach. Rufus left us at 7:00 tonight. He has struggled for 13 days, but tonight it is over.

I realized on the way home that a part of my life has come to an end ... Over the past 10 or 12 years, Rufus and I have become close friends, not only as a customer, but also as a personal friend ... Over the years, after many of these sessions, Rufus became the one person that I could talk to about my personal life and all of its ups and down. Rufus would listen, agree or disagree, and if he felt he needed, he would give advice.

He knew my children; he knew about their lives. I remember when they were in high school and just beginning to roam the beach as teenagers do, Rufus gave them his home phone number in case they got into trouble and needed help.

Not only could I talk to Rufus, he began confiding in me; I knew of his ups and downs, his likes and dislikes, and his love for his family. I remember one Christmas several years ago. He felt he could do a little something for Esther. He knew that she had always wanted a nice diamond. This was the year he could give it to her.

About a week before Christmas, we were talking one day and he told me he had bought her the ring. He was as proud and as happy as any young man that had just bought his girl an engagement ring. He never said it, but you could see it in his eyes that he was deeply in love with her after all these years.

I also remember that for Jerry's wedding, Rufus played the guitar with the band, something he had not done for years. He did it because of his love for his son. And when Judy would bring his great-granddaughter into the store, she would reach for Rufus and say "ice cream." He would rush across the street and get her some.

Not only was he a good personal friend but also a friend to the deejays and the shag community ... Rufus, we will miss you. And forever when I hear a good song and ask myself, "Will this song work?" I will hear you say, "AB-BO-SO-LUTE-LY."

*Reprinted from the "ABSCDJ Update."*

— Roger Holcomb

Rufus helped me tremendously over the years, was always honest with me, and has always been someone whom I respected and admired.

I have many fond memories of Rufus, but my fondest memories will be Saturday morning visits to the store with my son Drew ... Drew and I had to go see "Mr. Rufus" and "Ms. Esther", hear the new tunes, and Drew always had to have some bubble gum from the machine in the store. If I didn't have any dimes on me, "Mr. Rufus" or "Ms. Esther" would always find one to make a little boy happy.

Rufus left a lasting impression in the world of beach music and shagging, but he also left a lasting impression on my life and my son's life.

*Reprinted from the "ABSCDJ Update."*







# Everyone Boogies in North Myrtle Beach

## S.O.S. Schedule For Y2K...

December 30, 1999 - January 3, 2000

**Millennium Party**

January 20 - 23, 2000

**Mid-Winter Classic**

March 11 - 16, 2000

**Shag Cruise**

April 7 - 16, 2000

**SOS Spring Safari**

September 15 - 24, 2000

**SOS Fall Migration**

*SOS is Y2K Compliant!*

### 2000 S.O.S. Membership Application

Includes mailed out issues of the S.O.S. Carefree Times • Photocopies are acceptable

Name: (1) \_\_\_\_\_  Male  Female

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (day) (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (night) (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Were you an S.O.S. member in 1999?  Yes  No      Are you a member of a shag club?  Yes  No

Name: (2) \_\_\_\_\_  Male  Female

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (day) (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ (night) (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Were you an S.O.S. member in 1999?  Yes  No      Are you a member of a shag club?  Yes  No

( ) Memberships @ \$35 ea. = Total due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_      S.O.S. / Box 4688 / Columbia, SC 29204

METHOD OF PAYMENT:  CHECK  CASH  VISA  MASTERCARD  AMERICAN EXPRESS

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