



JoAn Shaw - 2021

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Growing up in Fayetteville, North Carolina I danced at the Rec Center, the old Country Club Lake, parties and school dances. I attended Peace College in Raleigh where for two wonderful years, I danced at fraternity parties in Raleigh and Chapel Hill. After Peace, I attended East Carolina University where again there were frat parties and dancing. I moved to Wrightsville Beach for my first teaching job. I still loved dancing and the music so my roommate and I found our way to the Palm Room, the Other Side and the Upper Deck.

Life happened. I married, had three wonderful children, and divorced. I was introduced to Stacy because we both liked to dance. After Stacy and I started dating we often went to the Tiki Club that not only had music but a dance floor and an instructor. Meet my good friend Judy Duke! Stacy and I attended SOS and I saw some of the greatest dancers to ever hit the floor. We wanted to get better with this hobby we both loved so we began taking more lessons. Judy Duke, Jeppy, Charlie and Jackie all worked with us. We were hooked! Those teachers became close friends and still are today.

Stacy and I danced in the first SPA Amateur Contest at Fat Boys in Rockingham. That led to a contest every weekend. We traveled to Raleigh; Greenville, SC; Greenville, NC; Rocky Mount, NC; Charleston, SC; and Atlanta, GA. We danced in the National Shag Dance Competition for many years, even finishing in the top eight one year. We danced in the first through the nineteenth Grand National Shag Championship. In 1996 we traveled to California to dance in the first Shag division of the U.S. Open Swing Competition. We were invited into the homes and lives of people everywhere. Thanks to the Shag, friends became family!

Stacy and I taught shag lessons for over 20 years, starting out assisting Judy Duke. We taught in Rec Centers, churches, hotel bars and “juke joints”. Our students were not interested in competition, they just wanted to dance for fun. Many of these are dancing today and helping to keep our dance alive.

We joined CSA at its inception and served on the Board of Directors in 2001 – 2002. In 2014 we were inducted in the Sand Flea Living Legends. In 1994 we were awarded the first Spirit of Shag Award at the National Shag Dance Competition.

Shag to me is more than just the dance. It is the people you meet and the relationships you form. Between teaching and participating in contests and events like SOS we have made many lasting friendships; including dancers, djs, bar tenders, and club owners. Nothing makes me feel better than having a dancer say “You made me feel welcome” or a spectator say “You were the reason we started shagging”.

My induction in to the Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame is an honor. I am humbled and still a little amazed.