



## **DON BORJA (2018)**

Don was born in California, but after a tour in the U.S. Navy he moved to the East Coast. He played in a special services band and provided the choreography for stage presentations while in the Navy with a mission of entertaining the troops aboard ships and at various ports. He continued his love for music and dance after he left the Navy by playing in a band at the Peppermint Beach Club in Virginia Beach in the 1960's.

Don joined the Northern Virginia Shag Club (NVSC) in 1997 and began his service on the Club's dance committee in 1998. Upon joining NVSC, Don (and Audrey), they started taking group and private shag dance lessons and worked to support all the events of the club and the ACSC events. In 1998 Don designed and completed the NVSC logo in a 3-dimensional model which is used for the Classic annual party and all of the NVSC's logo items. He designed and made shag dancers on floor panels used at NVSC dances attended by shag clubs from VA and throughout the East Coast. During Don's tenure on the NVSC dance committee, he participated in producing an instructional DVD for Carolina Shag steps which has been sold by NVSC for over 20 years.

Don has participated in SOS parades for many years, representing NVSC and the Competitive Shaggers Association (CSA) entrees. Throughout the years Don has danced in NVSC's Shag-A-Thons for charity, designed club T-shirts, participated in dance workshops, special initiatives such as the Virginia Shag Day in 2006, numerous club location search committees, a pilot junior shag program initiative, many community fairs, special events for charity and other ways to promote Carolina Shag.

Don (and Audrey) danced competitively for the first time in Dunn, NC in 1999. They joined the CSA in 2010. As a current CSA Amateur Division member. Don has logged thousands of miles to support the CSA and dance in contests. Thus far, he has assisted with and participated in several SOS parades with the CSA parade entry coming away with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place awards.

After helping establish the Battlefield Boogie Club (BBC) in 2004, he served as a dance instructor and taught hundreds of dance lessons for both clubs. Don also designed the BBC logo that is used on all club promotional items. He cultivates and promotes the shag dance locally to attract new members. As Chairman of the club's dance committee since 2006, he has planned the dance program. He has served on the Board of Directors for as many years as needed, as well as being the newsletter editor and the club photographer since the Club's beginning. Don plans and participates in dance demos to promote Carolina Shag at fairs, hospitals, community centers and local business events. Following the ACSC admittance of the BBC in 2006, Don attended the ACSC meetings in North Myrtle Beach and other locations. Don consistently assists in the planning for the BBC annual party and club events. Don is currently working with the BBC to develop local interest in a junior shag program. His enthusiasm to teach and see students learn the dance is noteworthy.

In 2017 Don participated in a NVSC dance team performance, practicing for weeks to honor Charlie & Jackie at the annual NVSC Classic dance party. The exhibition dance highlighted a number of dance steps Charlie & Jackie had taught the NVSC members at workshops over 19 years.

It is clear that Don's artistic talent is unique to our Shag dance community and transcends the typical artistry seen only on the dance floor. The Association of Carolina Shag Clubs (ACSC) and both the NVSC and BBC can confirm this. In addition to all of his graphic design projects for both VA clubs, the ACSC Icon Committee asked Don in 2013 to design a logo to be used on an award for Icon recipients (i.e., those recognized for their outstanding work for their clubs). Don's design for the ACSC Icon logo was accepted and is awarded across ACSC shag clubs to this day.

Don is a quiet and modest man. When he donates art to many shag organizations, they seldom know the magnitude of his donations. Don has a Master of Fine Art Degree from the University of Pennsylvania and before his retirement, he was a nationally-known Sculptor for the U.S. Government. He designed numerous federal agency and Presidential plaques, including the oval White House plaque used for press conferences in the White House Press Room. Possibly his most significant piece is at Arlington National Cemetery, where the memorial sculpture for our Challenger astronauts is Don's work.