



## **JACKIE MATHEWS (2018)**

I was born and raised in Norfolk, Virginia. As most young girls I loved to sing and dance, imagining someday I would be a famous dancer. As a teen I took every opportunity to go to dances. I loved to Jitterbug. In my late teens I worked as a secretary for E. L. Creech Insurance, and then Tidewater Mortgage Company. After I completed my education and married, I migrated to Virginia Beach where I raised four children. At that time, I encountered the opportunity to become a freelance writer for the local newspapers.

Later I was employed by the Virginia Beach School System where I taught for 25 years. During that time, I wrote many of the school plays, created the costumes and staging. For seven years, I organized a unit in the Neptune Parade of 100 children and teachers winning first place each year. At the same time, I supervised students in the Neptune Sand Castle Contest. Those students won first or second place each year. While enjoying this adventure we were fortunate to be featured in an article of the Southern Living Magazine. Within my school career I received the following awards: Distinguished Service Award, from Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers, Distinguished Tag Award from the Virginia Beach School Superintendent, Honors Award from PTA, and Acknowledgement from The Beacon, Local TV Stations and the Mayor of Virginia Beach for writing, taping and producing a Video called "Virginia Beach: History Begins Here", which was added to the curriculum of the Virginia Beach Schools and placed in the Public Libraries. I have also appreciated the recognition for my service with charities such as Operation Smile, Edmarc, Hospice for Children and Virginia Beach Social Services.

In 1989, I had the chance to visit Larkins Night Club, off First Colonial Road in Virginia Beach. That was my first introduction to the SHAG. I was hooked. Still having the responsibility of children at that time I wasn't able to attend often. It wasn't until a few years later I found shagging located at Fat Rogers, Country World and Steppin' Out. I then joined The Virginia Beach Shag Club. I took lessons from Jan Weakley, and then Larry and Kathy Williams (later Steva Williams). The love of the dance and those that were connected brought a new beginning to my life. It not only filled the gap of the empty nest but overflowed with new friends and new dancing experiences. It was unbelievable to me when I first attended SOS in Myrtle Beach to see what a tremendous force shag dancing has had on so many. It was also an introduction to ACSC and lessons from other great shag teachers.

In 2007 I was elected President of the VBSC. I have been President, Vice-President, five years as Secretary and chairperson or worked for every committee in the Virginia Beach Shag Club. I help gather and disperse school supplies collected each September by VBSC, and work with other charities sponsored by the club. I have also chaired and organized approximately ten VBSC yearly Christmas Parties that are attended by over 200 people. For over six years, I have sent out weekly phone tree messages (voice-activated computer system) of the up-coming shag events to all 400 plus members of our club.

Being a Shag Dance Teacher for many years was also a great experience. It is a pleasure seeing others experience what I did as a beginner and reassuring them that once the shag bug got them, they would be hooked forever.

Over the years while working within the VBSC, I was given other rewarding experiences such as: working on Beach Bashes, giving shag dance demos, and working with others at the Music festivals at Virginia Beach.

It is very rewarding to be a member of the Shag community. I am also proud of being a member of The Virginia Beach Shag Club for approximately 20 years, on a successful Board and working together as a team.