



PARKER DILLARD (2016)

His Shagging career, and the fact that he would be nominated for the Virginia Shaggers Hall of Fame could be considered a paradox for several reasons.

He probably never danced more than 10 times (reluctantly and mostly slow dances) in high school, yet he liked the music and he liked to watch good dancers dance, all the while wishing he could. After all, he was around for the birth of rock and roll. He used to go to Moore's Lake in Chester, where my peers from Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall, Thomas Dale and Manchester High Schools used to dance. They were doing the bop, or something similar, then. But he would have never asked a girl to dance. He was too shy and had no confidence.

In college, at frat parties, he would dance with only his date (heaven forbid a stranger). But only when sufficiently "juiced", and only in the middle of the floor as he was very self-conscious. For years, he actually dreaded, and in many cases begged off, going to any reception or party where he thought he might have to dance. It's ironic because his toe would tap to the beat of the music. He had rhythm and liked to watch others dance. Poor Beverly (his future wife), who graduated from the old John Marshall High where they had great dancers.

In 2003, a friend told us of the Richmond Shag Club. After taking eight months for Parker to get up the nerve, they took their first beginner lesson. They were hooked. Parker looked at Beverly and said, "I can do this"!

The irony...the reluctant dancer has not only learned to shag, but teaches lessons for the RSC, competed in the O.D. Arcade's SOS Rookies Revenge contest (2nd place was his best effort), dances with new ladies all the time, and looks forward to the next good song. It's gratifying for Parker to realize that he might be on the dance floor with some of those who used to be at Moore's Lake. He didn't know them then, but he does now. He (and Beverly) can't imagine their lives without the shag and their shagging friends.