



# TOM W. BARE - 2016

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I became interested in the dance in the late 50's and early 60's watching people "shag" dance on vocation with my parents while they were playing Bingo at the pavilion at OD. I would peek through the holes in the fence at the OD Pad and watch people dance and I was in awe. That was the spark that began my interest in the dance known as the shag.

Moving forward to 1980, I was living in Rowan County, NC and going to Randy's located in Salisbury, NC. I was again in awe of the dancers and thought to myself "that dance is awesome and I *will* learn to "shag". Upon relocating, I had to find an instructor and a new hangout. Fortunately, I found Groucho's Beach Club in Charlotte, NC and had the opportunity to take lessons from the master himself, Shad Alberty, and some years later from a guy named Charlie Womble.

My love of the dance, my desire to learn and having great teachers started my love and involvement in competitive dancing in 1984. My first lessons partner was Judy Bratton and my first competitive dance partner was Bene't McSwain Cash. She was gracious enough to dance with me on a ten hour notice. We practiced in the bank vault where she was employed, on the day of the contest. I was pleased with how we finished on such short notice, and that began my love for competitive dancing. For eight years, I danced on the SPA circuit and had the time of my life. I made the best friends, had great times and have great stories that will last throughout eternity. I retired from competitive dancing in 1992.

In 2011, I had the opportunity to purchase Lynn's Dance Club in Charlotte, NC from the estate of the late Bill Cole and have made Lynn's one of the premier dance clubs in the southeast.

Shagging has been such an integral part of my life, even to this day. Had it not been for the love of the music and dance, I would have never met Randy Rowland, Denny Wade, Shad and Brenda Alberty, Bill and Kay Young, John and Carol Church, Ronnie Shue and Toni Wicker just to name a few, and the list continues. What a ride!!!!