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I grew up in Lexington, North Carolina and have always loved music and dance. As a young girl, I would watch my aunt doing the “bop” while listening to beach music and R&B. I fell in love with the music and would do the bop with my aunt or by myself. As I got older, I remember my brother and I doing the bop many times. I guess this was the start of my dancing.

When I was 21 years old, I had my first shag dance lessons with Johnny and Wanda Bass at the Boat Dock in Southmont, NC (1989). I spent the next couple of years traveling to various shag clubs across North and South Carolina to watch my cousin, Brandi Collins, compete. During this time, I was approached by Susie Beaver who suggested I should start competing. While taking shag lessons from Susie Beaver & Patrick Gibson, I met my first dance partner, Randy Dorvin.

Randy and I competed from 1992-1993. I then danced with Sam West from 1993-1994, during this time, I was blessed to work with Shad and Brenda Alberty. I am fortunate to have won many competitions across the Carolinas with these two wonderful shag dance partners. But my most treasured wins in my early shag dance career would be back-to-back Non-Professional Division at the NSDC: 1993 with Randy & 1994 with Sam. Sam and I also won Overall Champions 1994 and danced on the 1994 NSDC Dance Team. Sam and I went on to dance in our first Professional Division contest Memorial Day weekend 1994 at Ducks.

I then decided to have a family and focus on my career. It was during this time that I was blessed with an amazing son, Michael Calabrese. He is such an inspiration to me and I thank God daily for choosing me to be his mom.

Life happens, things change and after a 15-year hiatus, I returned to dancing where I met the love of my life, Danny Johnson. After getting married and blending our families, we have 3 wonderful kids and 3 absolutely precious grandkids. Danny and I have competed off and on since 2010 and most recently won the 2023 Masters Division at the NSDC. This was my proudest moment on the dance floor and with my favorite dance partner. I love you Danny!

I have danced in many great shag clubs over the years: Ducks, Fat Harold’s, Boat Dock, The Jukebox, The Guard, Groucho’s, Stiggy’s, Thirsty’s, Loafers, Lynn’s and Memories, just to name a few. I have met so many great friends throughout my years of shag dancing that have taught me so much both on and off the dance floor. I love you all and I am so thankful for all the amazing memories I have. Thank you to all the instructors and dancers that have helped me over the years.

I am very humbled and honored to be inducted into the Beach Shaggers National Hall of Fame.