Margie McRae

Being a Carolina Girl from Kannapolis, N.C., Margie has been dancing since her teen years where she enjoyed shaggin' at local sock hops. Vacationing at Myrtle Beach each summer exposed her to more shaggin' fun. Even during the time while pursuing her career, Margie continued to learn dance steps. She acquired a bachelor's degree (ECU) and a Master's Degree (ODU) in Speech Language Pathology.

When employed by Portsmouth Public Schools, she became Department Head of Speech-Hearing-Vision Services. Although now retired, Margie maintains her licensure and supports the community by serving on the Special Education Advisory Board and on the Autism Team Consultant for Portsmouth Public Schools. During her busy career, Margie continued to develop her dance experience and has a background in dancing the two-step, hustle, waltz and swing dance.

Margie says that when she first decided to try line dancing, she was single, and the big attraction was that she did not need a partner! While developing her skill in learning and teaching line dancing, it became a means of "stress release". Her job kept her very busy supervising 32 speech, hearing and vision staff members which could often become intense while coordinating the desires of staff, administrators, and parents. Soon she began to look forward to dancing, and line dancing soon became very therapeutic.

Not only did Margie find joy in line dancing, but she also began shaggin' again when she met Sonny twenty years ago. They married and Carolina Shag has regained a special place in her heart and life. Their shared love of dancing was recognized in 2014, when Sonny and Margie were inducted into the Virginia Shaggers Hall of Fame.

In June 2015, Faye Ratcliff asked Margie to teach line dance for VBSC. She eagerly accepted. She had already been line dancing on Monday and Friday nights at a Moose Club where she continues to learn new line dances to share. As a result, she has fine-tuned her teaching abilities to an art.

Because line dancing does not require a partner, it is especially appealing to both the ladies and the gentlemen who like to join a large group of dancers out on the floor. Each dancer is learning or already has learned to follow a series of step sequences choreographed to flow with the specific music and song. It also enables the dancer to become familiar with many basic step sequences such as kick, shuffle, rock recover, bump, cha-cha, pivot turn, slide, scuff, the Charleston, coaster-step, sailor step, lock step, and the vine. These learned steps also help dancers in many partner dance moves.

Margie's strategy for teaching line dances includes walking through each step sequence slowly, repeating as often as is needed, and working up to the speed of the actual music. She generally chooses line dances which are easy and fun to learn, but she may occasionally introduce a more challenging dance. She is remarkable in her multitasking technique while teaching the steps, calling the steps, counting the beats of music and interjecting humor into the lesson so that the experience is relaxed and fun. She welcomes feedback from her line dancers regarding their specific needs and requests. Practice and repetition are important, and she is willing to review as often as necessary for the dancers to feel comfortable on the dance floor. She enjoys great satisfaction when someone comes to her and says, "I finally got it" and "Please do this one again next week!" Margie strives to give clear instructions and encourages dancers to feel comfortable asking questions or for requesting extra help. She often tells them, "Be patient with yourself!" She wants her students to prove to themselves that they don't have "two left feet" after all!

Margie remarks that she often sees attendees on sidelines watching, or she observes them beside a table trying to follow the lesson. She hopes they will eventually join the other students on the dance floor!

After line-dancing for twenty-four years Margie easily knows 100+ line-dances. If music is playing, she wants to be dancing! She has been invited as Guest Line Dance Instructor for Outer Banks Shag Club NYE Gala 2016, 2017 & 2018 and Shaggers @ Heart 2016, 2017 & 2018.

Margie McRae has been a member of the VBSC Shag Club for twenty years. She was the 2017 Chair of Mix and Mingle, is the 2018 Chair of Mix and Mingle, and the newly elected Nominating Chair for 2018.

The energy and enthusiasm this unique dance instructor possesses is contagious; the end result will be that those who take Margie's lessons will be smiling and moving smoothly through the line dance.