



The SURFLINE

The Weekly Newsletter of 94.9 The Surf • WVCO FM
Official Station of the Society of Stranders • CBMA Hall of Fame Radio Station

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Ocean Drive Scene

It’s SOS Week!

The wait is over. Spring Safari officially kicks off Friday, April 17, and Ocean Drive is ready. Fat Harold’s opens the week tomorrow night with their SOS Kickoff Party — free hot dogs, cold drinks, and the best dance floor on the Grand Strand. The Spanish Galleon throws its big preview concert for early arrivers on Thursday with Band of Oz. Ten days of beach music, shag dancing, and everything good about this community starts right now.

Keep it locked on 94.9 The Surf all week long for live coverage, artist interviews, and your SOS soundtrack from Ocean Drive.

A Note from the Surf Family

Hello Surf Listeners,

We want to take a moment to acknowledge some very sad news in the Beach Music family. We were heartbroken to learn of the passing of Doug Winstead of the Band of Oz. Doug was a talented vocalist, trumpeter, and longtime contributor to the Carolina Beach Music scene. His energy, musicianship, and joyful presence on stage will be greatly missed by fans, fellow musicians, and the entire community. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, the Band of Oz, and all who knew and loved him.

A playlist featuring Doug Winstead’s performances is available at the link below. Please take a moment to remember a musician who gave so much to this music we love. [Click here for a Playlist featuring Doug Winstead.](#)

Upcoming Events

- April 15th Fat Harold’s SOS Kickoff Party with Free Hot Dogs
- April 16th Spanish Galleon Kickoff Party with Band of Oz
- April 17th–26th, 2026: S.O.S. Spring Safari – Ten days of beach music, shag dancing, and Ocean Drive nightlife
- Saturday, May 2nd, 2026: 9th Annual OD Beach Music Festival – Band of Oz, Jim Quick & Coastline, The Commodores. Tickets at odmusicfest.com
- See the [Daily Calendar](#) for Events happening today in the North Myrtle Beach Area

See the SOS Spring Safari 2026 Flyers on this Page at ExploreNMB.com

This Week's Surf Countdown

Thanks to everyone who tuned in to the Surf Countdown show on Saturday, April 11th! Jay Kinlaw once again delivered a great show, presenting the Top 20 songs in Beach Music this week as voted by our loyal listeners at SurfCountdown.com.

Climbing all the way to the top of our chart this week is Ella Langley with her massive hit "Choosin' Texas." The song has taken the country by storm and is currently sitting at #1 on just about every major chart out there right now. What a powerful way to lead the countdown!

The biggest mover this week is the Main Event Band, whose new release "I Shiver" rockets from its debut at #13 last week all the way to #5 — an eight-spot jump in just its second week on the chart. Watch this one closely. Cruisin' Down the Boulevard by Andy & Oneida also makes a strong move, jumping nine positions to #8. And welcome to a trio of new entries: Wayne Free with "I Love Kissin' You" at #16, the Pink Slips Band with "Catch a Ride" at #17, and The Castaways with "Love Is What I'm Talkin' About" at #18. Jennifer Licko makes her chart debut at #20 with "Meet Me at the Shag Pad."

Surf Countdown April 11th Chart • Presented by Jay Kinlaw on 94.9 The Surf

#	SONG TITLE	ARTIST	LW
1	"Choosin' Texas"	Ella Langley	2
2	"Pretty Lady"	North Tower	1
3	"Wait For Me"	Jim Quick with R. Mark Black and Allie Privette	3
4	"In Her Own Way"	The Boogah Brothers	7
5	"I Shiver"	Main Event Band	13
6	"I'm Going to Make Her Mine"	Gary Lowder & Smokin' Hot	5
7	"I Just Might"	Bruno Mars	4
8	"Cruisin' Down the Boulevard"	Andy & Oneida	17
9	"My True Love"	The Tams	11
10	"Hit Me with Them Horns"	Swingin' Medallions	10
11	"Pretty Women Everywhere"	Craig Woolard	18
12	"Carolina's Home"	Jennifer James	14
13	"Late Great Heartbreak"	Old Dominion	19
14	"Every Road"	Rick & Lesa	9
15	"Patience"	Harold Smith with Gary Lowder & Smokin' Hot	16
16	"I Love Kissin' You"	Wayne Free	RE
17	"Catch a Ride"	Pink Slips Band	NE
18	"Love Is What I'm Talkin' About"	The Castaways	NE
19	"Takin' It Easy"	Jennifer James	NE
20	"Meet Me at the Shag Pad"	Jennifer Licko	NE

LW: Last Week • RE: Re-Entry • NE: New Entry • Rate songs for next week at surfcountdown.com

Have you renewed your CBMA Membership for 2026?
Support Your Favorites - cammy.org

Chart Spotlight — Behind the Song - “I Shiver” — Main Event Band — #5

From a new entry at #13 to #5 in a single week — that kind of move doesn’t happen by accident. “I Shiver” by the Main Event Band is the fastest-rising song on the Surf Countdown right now, and the timing couldn’t be better: it’s SOS week, the dance floors are filling up, and this record fits the moment perfectly.

The Band

The Main Event Band has been a fixture on the Carolina beach music circuit for years, known for powerful vocals, tight horn arrangements, and the kind of stage energy that keeps dancers moving from the first beat to the last. The band has shared billing at the Carolina Beach Music Festival alongside Jim Quick & Coastline and other top-tier acts, and has built a loyal following the old-fashioned way — one great night at a time.

The Chart Story

“I Shiver” was already generating buzz in the broader beach music community in the weeks before it landed on the Surf Countdown. It debuted as a New Entry at #13 on the April 4th chart — a strong opening position — and then made one of the biggest single-week moves in recent Surf history, vaulting eight spots to #5 on April 11th.

With SOS Spring Safari now underway and the song picking up heat across the beach music charts, watch for “I Shiver” to keep climbing. Rate it at SurfCountdown.com and let Jay Kinlaw know where you want to see it next week.

HOF Spotlight — CBMA Hall of Fame 2025 “Girl Watcher” — The O’Kaysions

#53 on The Surf’s All-Time Top 100 Beach Music Songs (May 2025 Update)

They were six guys from a small tobacco town in eastern North Carolina who spent nearly a decade playing dance halls and beach clubs before the right song came along. When it did, it went all the way to the top — and it’s still turning heads more than half a century later.

This past November, “Girl Watcher” by the O’Kaysions was inducted into the Carolina Beach Music Association Hall of Fame at the Alabama Theatre in North Myrtle Beach, confirming what beach music fans have known all along: this record was something special. And the story behind it is even better than the song.

From The Kays to the O’Kaysions

The band that would cut “Girl Watcher” started in 1959 as The Ks — named simply for their hometown of Kenly, North Carolina, a crossroads community of barely a thousand people about forty miles east of Raleigh. A local newspaper misread the name as “The Kays,” and it stuck. For nearly a decade they were fixtures on the Carolinas dance circuit — beach clubs, college gyms, roadhouses — building a following in North and South Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia.

By 1967, they were ready to take it further north, but hit an unexpected wall: New York DJ Murray the K had a similar enough name that union registration was blocked. So they kept the soul of it, rechristening themselves the O’Kaysions — close enough that the home crowd still knew who they were, different enough to satisfy a New York union hall.

Lead vocalist and keyboardist Donnie Weaver was a particular point of pride. He’d first joined The Kays at age twelve. When he sang lead on “Girl Watcher” in February 1968, he was twenty-two years old — and had already been with the band for a decade.

Are you in the Surf Text Club?

Text the word **SURF** to 877-899-2845 and never miss out on great Surf events like the OD Beach Music Festival and The Beach Music Cruise.

The Song That Wrote Itself

Guitarist and principal songwriter Wayne Pittman had a habit of watching the girls go by on the Carolina beaches, and his bandmates weren't about to let him forget it. "Wayne, you're the writer," one of them said. "Why don't you write a song called 'I'm a Girl Watcher'?" Pittman took the bait.

He had a melody already sitting half-finished in a notebook. He had his bandmates' teasing to build on. And he had one more thing: a good-looking woman who jogged past his house every afternoon while he sat at his desk working. He wrote the song in two nights that week.

On February 8, 1968, the O'Kaysions walked into what one promoter later described as "a broom closet studio" — Sound Studio in Greenville, NC — and cut the track in two takes. Weaver delivered the vocal that would eventually reach millions of ears. His contribution of the signature "um, um, um" hook completed the song. They were done before lunch.

The Long Road to the Charts

The finished record landed on North State Records — a tiny label out of Goldsboro owned by Ronald Kilette, who recorded and released music under the pen name Buck Trail. North State 1001 went out in March 1968 and went essentially nowhere — at first. Local radio in Burlington picked it up, and from there it began to spread east. A Greensboro promoter heard it, brought in his boss Bill Griffin (who owned the famed Castaways club), and they shopped it to New York. ABC Records flew representatives down, picked up the master tapes, and released it nationally in June 1968, unchanged from the original recording.

By early October, "Girl Watcher" was sitting at #5 on the Billboard Hot 100 — matching its positions on both the Cashbox and Record World charts — and #6 on the R&B chart. By December, it was certified Gold for one million in sales.

ABC rushed the band into the studio to capitalize on the moment. The resulting album was recorded in two days. It did respectably — reaching #49 on the R&B album chart — but Pittman later said plainly: "ABC wanted something quick and something fast. It just wasn't a good product." A follow-up single, "Love Machine," reached #76. Nothing else the O'Kaysions recorded would chart again.

A Song in Dispute

Success brought complications. The songwriting credit on "Girl Watcher" was shared between Wayne Pittman and Buck Trail (Kilette). What followed was a legal tangle that included a lawsuit over royalties, a disputed settlement, and accusations of slander on both sides. A female answer record — "Boy Watcher" — surfaced on another label credited to Buck Trail as sole songwriter, with the question of who wrote what, and when, generating real controversy in collector circles to this day.

"They Thought We Were Black"

One detail that followed the record everywhere: the O'Kaysions were six white guys from rural North Carolina, but the record didn't sound like it. Their blue-eyed soul delivery was convincing enough that radio listeners across the country — and many deejays — assumed they were a Black group. It was, in a way, the highest compliment the genre could pay them. It also placed them squarely in the tradition that defines this music: the same dance floors, the same soulful current that ran through the entire Carolina beach music circuit.

The Long Afterlife

A record with a hook that strong tends to find new life. In 1987, Kool & the Gang recut the song as "I'm a Wheel Watcher" for Wheel of Fortune — it played every time Vanna White walked out on stage and ran in commercials for two full seasons.

In the May 2025 update of The Surf's All-Time Top 100 Beach Music Songs — voted on by listeners of 94.9 The Surf — "Girl Watcher" came in at #53, confirmation that more than half a century after its release, it still moves the needle on the Carolina coast.

The O'Kaysions themselves kept going. Personnel changed over the years. The band moved to Columbia, South Carolina. Wayne Pittman remains the one original member still performing with the

group. They played the CBMA Awards show when “Girl Watcher” was honored — and performed the song that started it all, just as they have for more than fifty years.

One million copies. Two takes. Two nights of writing. Not a bad return on a girl who used to jog past a house in Kenly, North Carolina.

“Girl Watcher” — The O’Kaysions • 2025 CBMA Hall of Fame Inductee • Written by Wayne Pittman and Ronald B. Killete • Produced by John I. Whitfield • North State Records / ABC Records, 1968

Society of Stranders Spring Safari

April 17–26, 2026 — It’s Here!

Spring Safari is officially underway — or just hours away as this issue hits your inbox. Ten days of beach music, shag dancing, and everything that makes Ocean Drive the shag capital of the world. Your SOS card is your passport to all of it — the Spanish Galleon, Fat Harold’s, Duck’s, OD Arcade & Lounge, Pirate’s Cove, and more.

Don’t miss April 25: Main Street shuts down for the ACSC Clubs Parade — floats, costumes, shag clubs competing for best in show, and a crowd energy that has to be seen to be understood. That’s your closing exclamation point on ten great days.

Keep it locked on 94.9 The Surf for live SOS coverage all week long. Spring Safari runs through April 26. The music starts tonight. Ocean Drive is ready.

World Famous Spanish Galleon	SOS Spring Safari • April 16–25, 2026
<i>Doors 7:30 PM • North Myrtle Beach, SC</i>	<i>Reserved Seating: Julian B. Fowler 843-617-3433</i>
<i>Thursday, April 16</i> Band of Oz	<i>Friday, April 17</i> Catalinas
<i>Saturday, April 18</i> The Tonz	<i>Sunday, April 19</i> Too Much Sylvia
<i>Monday, April 20</i> Embers feat. Craig Woolard	<i>Tuesday, April 21</i> Main Event Band
<i>Wednesday, April 22</i> Band of Oz	<i>Thursday, April 23</i> Jim Quick & Coastline
<i>Friday, April 24</i> North Tower	<i>Saturday, April 25</i> Special Occasion Band

The 9th Annual OD Beach Music Festival will take place Saturday, May 2, 2026, presented by Carolina Outdoor Power Equipment, 94.9 The Surf, and the City of North Myrtle Beach. This year will feature the Band of Oz, Jim Quick & Coastline, and The Commodores - Get tickets at odmusicfest.com

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98 N. Ocean Blvd., Suite 3-N • North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582

949thesurf.com • surfcountdown.com

Distribution by Bo the Webguy & [Explore NMB](http://ExploreNMB) - Historical content by Chris Jones

Contact Bo at 843-564-2610 or bo@949thesurf.com for questions regarding [The SURFLINE](http://TheSURFLINE)