



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

"When the Rain Came to Ocean Drive"

There's an old shaggers' saying that the music doesn't stop just because the sky opens up — and the 9th Annual Ocean Drive Beach Music Festival proved it once again on Saturday.

The forecast wasn't kind. Rain moved in over the Grand Strand and parked itself over the festival grounds between Main Street and 1st Avenue South, soaking the parking lot stage that had been built to host Band of Oz, Jim Quick & Coastline, and headliners The Commodores. But for the sponsors, the volunteers, the festival staff, and the loyal beach music family who showed up anyway, the rain was just one more thing to dance through.

"The festival may have had rain," wrote CBMA Hall of Fame DJ Chad Sain, who joined the 94.9 The Surf team on the soggy scene, "but it did not stop the fun. The sponsors and guests made the best of it in a most special way."

Chad's tribute went out to the village it takes to put on a festival of this scale — and especially to Jessica Worley, who orchestrates the whole production. "This village certainly includes the sponsors and guests," he wrote. "From the Tiki Bar remote on Friday until the last piece of equipment was off the lot, it was truly a special weekend."

The Friday night Tiki Bar remote outside HOTO's, with the Surf Crew, kicked things off the way Festival Weekend always does — laughter, cold drinks, Surf DJs working the crowd, locals and visitors mingling like old friends. By the time the rain settled on Saturday, the weekend's spirit had already been written in.

That's the thing about Ocean Drive. The shag community has been weathering bad forecasts for sixty years and counting. Rain has never been the enemy of a good time on this stretch of sand — it's just a change of scenery. To the sponsors who stuck it out, to the festival staff and volunteers who worked the lot until the last cable was coiled, to Jessica Worley, Bo the Webguy, their team, and to every guest who showed up with a smile under a poncho: thank you. You reminded us why we do this.

One team. One weekend. Rain and all.

Upcoming Events

- Saturday, May 9 — Surf Countdown returns, 10 AM
- November 5–8, 2026 — 32nd Annual CBMA Awards Weekend at the Alabama Theater
- See the [Daily Calendar](#) for events happening today in the North Myrtle Beach area.

Surf Countdown — A Note for This Week

There was no Surf Countdown broadcast last Saturday, May 2nd. Jay Kinlaw given the day off for the Ocean Drive Beach Music Festival along with the rest of our Surf DJs and Show Hosts. The Surf Countdown returns Saturday, May 9th at 10 AM with a fresh chart.

Voting is open right now for the May 9th chart — cast your ballots at surfcountdown.com before Friday at noon and help shape this week's show.

Chart Spotlight — Behind the Song “Every Road” — Rick Strickland & Lesa Hudson

Written and produced by Rick Strickland and Lesa Hudson

In a scene that has always thrived on its great covers, Rick Strickland and Lesa Hudson have built a career doing something different — and "Every Road" is the latest piece of evidence that their bet is paying off. The duet, released in late 2025, climbed to #1 on multiple major beach music charts by February 2026, including Surfside with Don Mark and Pat Gwinn at the Beach, and has been a fixture in the Surf Countdown ever since.

What makes Rick & Lesa stand apart is simple: they are one of the very few acts in Carolina Beach Music who perform 100% original material — songs they write themselves, produce themselves, and put out under their own banner. They call their sound "Rhythm & Romance," and on "Every Road" you can hear exactly why. The tempo lands right in the shag pocket, the harmonies are warm and unhurried, and the production is as clean as anything on commercial radio. It's the kind of record that fills a dance floor without trying too hard — which, as anyone who has spent a Saturday night at Mother Tucker's or Deckerz can tell you, is the hardest trick in the book.

Two Songwriters, One Sound.

Rick Strickland's career is one of the most quietly remarkable in beach music. Inspired as a boy by seeing the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan Show, he wrote his first song at age thirteen — and since then, by his own count, he has written over three thousand more. He spent time on the road as a member of Shagtime and later Band of Oz, and along the way wrote hits not just for himself but for the Mighty Kicks and others. His solo catalog runs deep: "Something Smooth," "So Do I," "One Step Closer," "She Can't Fix Grits," "Nice While It Lasted," "My Heart Belongs to You" — songs Carolina shaggers have been dancing to for two decades. "Something Smooth" sits at #68 on 94.9 The Surf's All-Time Top 100 Beach Music Songs.

Lesla Hudson grew up in Darlington, South Carolina, in a musical family with church at the center of it. She has been playing piano since age six, started singing in a church trio, fronted the contemporary Christian group N'Accord, and led the Lesa Hudson Band before joining forces with Rick. She is a multiple Carolina Beach Music Female Vocalist of the Year, a CBMA Songwriter of the Year, and one half of the most prolific original-music partnership in the genre. Their 2010 duet "When You Look at Me" hit #1 on the beach music charts; their 2020 release "A Little More Love" swept seven Carolina Beach Music Awards, including Song of the Year. Together, Rick and Lesa hold eight CBMA wins and more than sixty CBMA nominations.

Rick was inducted into the Carolina Beach Music Hall of Fame in 2017. The full Rick Strickland Band — built around Rick and Lesa, with Debbie Anderson on guitar, Art Benton on keys, and Don Hamrick on drums — has more than two dozen #1 beach and shag radio hits to its name. So when "Every Road" started racking up #1s last winter, the scene took notice but nobody was surprised.

And there's already another one in the pipeline. As "Every Road" continues to hold a top spot on the Pat Gwinn charts heading into May, Rick & Lesa have begun rolling out their next single, "Too Late" — which made the Bubble Songs list on this week's Surf Countdown. Same writers, same producers, same Rhythm & Romance — and almost certainly the same trip up the chart. Stay tuned.

HOF Song Spotlight “Hey! Baby” — Bruce Channel

Smash Records, 1961 • Written by Bruce Channel and Margaret Cobb

2026 CBMA Carolina Beach Music Hall of Fame — Song of the Year Inductee

When the Carolina Beach Music Awards announced its 2026 Hall of Fame class last week, "Hey! Baby" was on the list — and there are not many records that belong there more obviously than this one. It hit #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 in March 1962 and stayed there for three weeks. It has been a shag floor staple for sixty-four years and counting. And it carries a piece of rock and roll history that almost nobody outside the music nerd circle knows about.

Bruce Channel was a young singer from Jacksonville, Texas, when he and co-writer Margaret Cobb put "Hey! Baby" together. The record was cut in Fort Worth with a harmonica player named Delbert McClinton — yes, that Delbert McClinton — and what came out was a buoyant, mid-tempo shuffle built around one of the most recognizable harmonica hooks in pop music. The riff is the song. Once you hear it, you don't forget it.

The Carolinas took to it immediately, and by the time the Carolina Shag was on its way to becoming the official state dance of both North and South Carolina, "Hey! Baby" had already locked in as one of those bedrock records every shagger learns by feel. A generation later the song got a second life when it landed on the soundtrack of *Dirty Dancing* in 1987 — that's "Hey! Baby" playing during the famous log-bridge scene — and a whole new audience discovered what the beach club crowd had known all along. To this day it shows up regularly on the Beach Music & Shag All-Time Top 200, and you'll hear it most weekends at Deckerz, Fat Harold's, and just about anywhere on Main Street where the floor opens up.

The Beach Music Cover Story.

While the Bruce Channel original is the version that hit #1 nationally, "Hey! Baby" has had a second life on the Carolina bandstand. The most important beach music recording came from one of our own — the Swingin' Medallions, whose 1968 Capitol Records release "Hey, Hey, Baby" gave the song its definitive Carolina horn-section treatment. The Medallions were already heroes of the circuit thanks to "Double Shot (Of My Baby's Love)," and their punched-up reading of the Channel song — bigger, brassier, and built for a packed dance floor — became the live version that shaggers came to know. And in 1980, General Johnson and the Chairmen of the Board folded "Hey Baby" into a medley with "Pretty Women Everywhere" — released on Surfside Records as the B-side of the original "Carolina Girls" single, and a staple of their live show for decades after. The song shows up on the seminal *I Love Beach Music* compilation series and in the working setlists of bands from Ocean Drive to Virginia Beach pretty much any weekend you care to look. It is, in the truest sense of the term, common property — every beach band knows it, and most of them play it.

And the home crowd has weighed in: "Hey! Baby" currently sits at #96 on 94.9 The Surf's All-Time Top 100 Beach Music Songs — voted on by Surf listeners. Sixty-four years after the record came out, the dancers are still calling for it.

Now — about that piece of rock and roll history. In June of 1962, Channel and McClinton were touring the United Kingdom on the strength of "Hey! Baby." On June 21st, at the New Brighton Tower Ballroom in Wallasey, their opening act was a Liverpool group that had not yet released a record: the Beatles. Backstage, John Lennon — who already had "Hey! Baby" on his personal jukebox — sought out McClinton to ask about his harmonica technique. Lennon could already play the basics; what he wanted was the cross-harp style that gave "Hey! Baby" its signature snarl. McClinton showed him a few licks. A few months later, the Beatles released their debut single. It opened with a harmonica. The song was "Love Me Do."

Sixty-four years on, "Hey! Baby" still does what it has always done — it gets people on the floor and keeps them there. The CBMA's 2026 Hall of Fame nod isn't really an honor the song needed. It's the music finally getting the paperwork in order on something Carolina shaggers settled a long time ago.

94.9 THE SURF PROGRAM GUIDE

Live shows 7 days a week from Ocean Drive, the Shag Capital of the World — Listen live at 949thesurf.com

SHOW	HOST	TIME
Morgan In The Morning	Jim Morgan	Mon-Fri, 7-11 AM
Best Day Ever Show	Jim Quick	Mon-Fri, 11 AM-3 PM
The Traffic Jam	DJ Heavy	Mon-Fri, 3-6 PM
Southern Soul at 6	DJ Heavy	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 6PM-7PM
The Surf After Dark	Old Soul Cole	Mon, Tue, Thu, 7PM-11PM
The Surf Countdown	Jay Kinlaw	Sat, 10 AM-12 Noon
Live on Ocean Drive	Old Soul Cole	Sat 12 Noon to 3PM
Fat Harold's LIVE	Surf DJs join Fat Harold's DJs	Wed, 6-9 PM
A Joyful Noise	Jim Morgan	Sun, 7-10 AM
Swamp Soul	Jim Quick	Fri, 7PM

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