



# 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

### Memorial Day on the Strand

Memorial Day weekend came and went the way it is supposed to come and go on the Strand — flags up on Ocean Boulevard, a long line at every breakfast spot from Cherry Grove to Surfside, the first full house at the Tiki Bar, and a quiet moment on Monday morning for the veterans who make the rest of the season possible. The unofficial start of summer is now the official one. The Strand is open.

If you spent the holiday on the road, here is what you missed. The cottages filled by Friday afternoon. Restaurants on Main Street ran the Saturday wait list deep into the second seating. The shag clubs ran late — Fat Harold’s, Ducks, OD Arcade and the rest of the regulars— and Jay Kinlaw’s Saturday Surf Countdown landed in the middle of all of it. The Strand has not had a Memorial Day this busy in years.

### Upcoming Events

- Saturday, May 30 • New Surf Countdown chart from Jay Kinlaw, 10 AM–Noon.
- Wednesday afternoons - Fat Harold’s LIVE 6–9 PM — Surf DJs join the Fat Harold’s DJs at the club.
- Friday afternoons through summer • Tiki Bar Deck Party at HOTO’s 11 AM–3 PM. Weekend starts at HOTOs
- September 18–27, 2026 • SOS Fall Migration — the next ten-night chapter on the Strand.
- November 5–8, 2026 • 32nd Annual CBMA Awards Weekend at the Alabama Theater.

## A Salute to Surf's Top 100

Memorial Day on the North Myrtle Beach airwaves meant one thing for anyone who grew up on this music: 94.9 The Surf rolled out the Top 100 of All Time.

With Jim Morgan and Jim Quick at the helm, and help from DH Heavy, the Surf delivered a powerhouse countdown that had the Carolina coast tuned in and turned up all day long. From the first note to the final #1, they celebrated the songs and artists that built the beach music sound and continue to keep the shag alive.

Top to bottom, it was a love letter to the format — the Catalinas, the Embers, the Tams, the O’Kaysions, the Drifters, General Norman Johnson and the Chairmen of the Board, Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs, the Coastline Band, the Fantastic Shakers, the Band of Oz, and so many more. These are the records that taught a generation what real beach music sounds like.

If you tuned in even for an hour, you heard the full architecture of the genre laid out in perfect order. The early R&B foundation that started it all — “Sixty Minute Man,” “Stagger Lee,” “What Kind of Fool Do You Think I Am.” The Carolina-coast originals that followed and made it their own — “Myrtle Beach Days,” “I Love Beach Music,” “Be Young, Be Foolish, Be Happy.” The timeless shag-floor standards that have ruled dance floors for fifty-plus years — “Ms. Grace,” “Double Shot (Of My Baby’s Love),” “I’ve Been Hurt.” And the modern Carolina additions that have earned their rightful place alongside the classics.

By the time Jim Quick and DH Heavy hit the Top 10 on Monday afternoon, the entire format had explained itself. No lectures needed — just one great song after another telling the story of beach music from its roots straight through to today.

The Top 100 is a Memorial Day tradition on the Surf for a reason. It’s the one weekend of the year when the Carolina coast collectively pauses to listen to its own history in order — a three-day soundtrack that reminds everyone exactly why this music still matters. If you missed any part of it this year, don’t worry. The songs are still spinning on the Surf every single day. The format never stops.

Special thanks to Scotland Motors for sponsoring the Top 100 countdown show on Memorial Day 2026.

Keep it on 94.9 The Surf — where the beach music never ends.

### **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.

Have you renewed your CBMA Membership for 2026?

Support Your Favorites - [cammy.org](http://cammy.org)

## **THIS WEEK’S SURF COUNTDOWN**

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Jay Kinlaw rolled into Memorial Day weekend with another full Saturday morning countdown, and the May 23rd chart says the audience is in summer mode. North Tower’s “Pretty Lady” held the top spot for another week. Ella Langley’s “Choosin’ Texas” and Jim Quick’s “Wait For Me” held at #2 and #3.

Big moves underneath. The Tams climbed back into the top five — “I Tried” up one to #4 and “My True Love” back at #9. Main Event Band’s “I Shiver” landed at #5. Gary Lowder & Smokin’ Hot’s “I’m Going to Make Her Mine” moved back up to #7. The Boogah Brothers’ “In Her Own Way” continued its climb to #10. Bruno Mars’s “I Just Might” settled at #12. And Vaughan Penn’s “Bands on the Beach” — last week’s biggest mover — held the gain at #8. Rick & Lesa’s “Every Road” was the big mover this week at #6.

One new entry this week. Gary Lowder’s “Forevermore” arrived at #15 — the kind of debut that says the Surf audience has been waiting on this one. Ken Knox and the Chairmen of the Board’s “Baby, You’re the Melody” is hangs in at #16. That one is this week’s Chart Spotlight — keep reading.

Bubble songs this week: Jennifer James and Brad Cox’s “Suspicious Minds,” and Nicky Harris’s “Dancin’ in the Carolinas.” The Spotlight — a separate feature inside Jay’s show — went to General Norman Johnson in honor of what would have been his 85th birthday on May 23. The songs of General Johnson, like the man himself, will live with us forever.

## May 23 Chart • Presented by Jay Kinlaw on 94.9 The Surf

#	SONG TITLE	ARTIST	LW
1	“Pretty Lady”	North Tower	1
2	“Choosin’ Texas”	Ella Langley	2
3	“Wait For Me”	Jim Quick with R. Mark Black and Allie Privette	3
4	“I Tried”	The Tams	5
5	“I Shiver”	Main Event Band	4
6	“Every Road”	Rick & Lesa	13
7	“I’m Going to Make Her Mine”	Gary Lowder & Smokin’ Hot	9
8	“Bands on the Beach”	Vaughan Penn	8
9	“My True Love”	The Tams	6
10	“In Her Own Way”	The Boogah Brothers	15
11	“I’ll Be There”	Too Much Sylvia	11
12	“I Just Might”	Bruno Mars	7
13	“Too Late”	Rick & Lesa	18
14	“At the End of the Day”	Rivermist	16
15	“Forevermore”	Gary Lowder	NE
16	“Baby, You’re the Melody”	Ken Knox and the Chairmen of the Board	19
17	“Carolina’s Home”	Jennifer James	14
18	“Hit Me with Them Horns”	Swingin’ Medallions	17
19	“Pretty Women Everywhere”	Craig Woolard	20
20	“Cruisin’ Down the Boulevard”	Andy & Oneida	10

LW: Last Week • RE: Re-Entry • NE: New Entry • Rate songs for next week at [surfcountdown.com](http://surfcountdown.com)

### Bubbling Under

- “Suspicious Minds” — Jennifer James and Brad Cox
- “Dancin’ in the Carolinas” — Nicky Harris

## CHART SPOTLIGHT • BEHIND THE SONG

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### “Baby, You’re the Melody” — Ken Knox and the Chairmen of the Board

New entry at #16 this week, and a record that walked the long way around to get here. “Baby, You’re the Melody” arrived on the Surf airwaves late in 2025 with a sound that drops you straight into a 1970s Detroit recording session — a bouncing bassline, a Motown-style opening drum figure, a punchy brass section, and a vocal arrangement that hands the lead off in turn from Ken Knox to Thomas Hunter to Patrick McGuire, each backed by the kind of harmonic call-and-response the Chairmen have made their signature for half a century. Retro-soul done by the people who built the room.

## The Five-Year Secret — and a Motown Royalty Co-Writer

The story of how the record got cut is the better half. The song was co-written by the iconic Lamont Dozier — the same Lamont Dozier whose name sits on the Supremes catalog, the Four Tops catalog, the Isley Brothers catalog, and most of the songs the rest of us still hum without thinking about it — along with the British producer Nigel Lewis. Lewis sent the demo to Ken Knox five years before it was finally cut. It sat on the shelf. By the time the Chairmen finally recorded it and released it in 2025, Lamont Dozier had passed away — the songwriter died in August 2022 — making the song a rare posthumous Dozier release.

And the label history closes the circle. When the original Chairmen of the Board formed in Detroit in the late 1960s, they were the flagship act of Invictus/Hot Wax, the label started by Holland-Dozier-Holland after the famous split from Berry Gordy and Motown. Ken Knox came in as a young saxophone player out of Detroit by way of West Virginia, joined the group in 1973, and has stayed in the lineup for more than fifty years. For Knox to cut a Lamont Dozier song in 2025 — with Dozier's name on the writing credit again — is, in the most literal sense, a full-circle moment. The kid Dozier helped sign in 1970 finished a Dozier song fifty-five years later.

## The Last Link

Ken Knox is the last remaining link to the classic lineup of the Chairmen of the Board. Original lead singer General Norman Johnson — the man who wrote “Give Me Just a Little More Time,” “Pay to the Piper,” “Patches,” “Carolina Girls,” and most of the modern beach music canon — died in 2010. Danny Woods died in 2018. Knox kept a promise to his former bandmates to keep the group's legacy alive. The current Chairmen lineup — Knox, Hunter, and McGuire — is the working version of that promise, a mainstay in classic soul and a permanent fixture on the Carolina Beach Music scene.

## On the Chart

“Baby, You're the Melody” was released in October 2025 and is at #16 this week. It is a record built for the format — mid-tempo, Motown bones, a Carolina-ready hook, and a singer the Strand has known by name since the Surfside Records years. Watch where it climbs.

*“Baby, You're the Melody” — Ken Knox and the Chairmen of the Board*

*Co-written by Lamont Dozier and Nigel Lewis • Released 2025 • [thechairmenoftheboard.com](http://thechairmenoftheboard.com)*

## CBMA CLASS OF 2026 • POSTHUMOUS INDUCTEE

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### DJ Larry Williams — “Larry's Beach Party”

This year's Carolina Beach Music Hall of Fame class includes a name that has been on the air, in the shag clubs, and at the festivals of the Tidewater for the better part of forty years. Larry Williams — born George Larry Williams in Gates County, North Carolina on December 13, 1944 — passed away peacefully at home in Suffolk, Virginia on January 4, 2026 with his wife of thirty-five years, Kathy, at his side. He was 81. The CBMA is honoring him this November in the class of 2026.

### The Voice of “Larry's Beach Party”

Larry was the host of “Larry's Beach Party,” the long-running beach and shag program out of WFOS radio that found its way to listeners not just across the Tidewater region of Virginia but to fans all over the country and abroad through internet streaming. The show was, in the words of those who knew him, an extension of the man himself — warm, friendly, never met a stranger, ready with a story and a song. His on-air greeting to anyone who asked how he was doing was always the same: “marvelous and wonderful.” Anyone who tuned in for an hour heard the phrase. Anyone who knew him says he meant it.

## The Shag Floor

Off the air, Larry and Kathy taught shag dance lessons across the Tidewater area for thirty-five years — hundreds of students, by his own count, maybe thousands. He helped more than a few couples find each other on his dance floor; the lifelong-partner stories are part of his legacy. He was inducted into the Virginia Shaggers Hall of Fame on January 20, 1996, and into the National Living Legends of Shag in 2004. The Carolina Beach Music Hall of Fame in 2026 completes the trifecta. Few in the format have earned all three.

## The Festival

Larry was also the organizer of the Virginia Beach Beach Music Festival, one of the regional events that helped carry the format north of the Carolina line and into the Tidewater audience that has supported the music ever since. As a promoter, host, and DJ, he built bridges between the Carolina Strand and the Virginia coast for decades. The Tidewater audience that now turns out for shag-club nights, festival weekends, and the CBMA itself owes a part of its existence to the work he did to make the music welcome up there.

## The Man

Before beach music became his beloved final career, Larry had already lived several lives. He attended East Carolina University as a History major before the Army called. After his service he worked in insurance sales — his warm personality, friends recall, made him a natural — and later in life became a homebuilder in Virginia and North Carolina. He even spent a stretch as a substitute teacher in Gates County Schools, where the kids who walked into his classroom got the same unguarded warmth his radio listeners got. He was a Christian, a member of Middle Swamp Baptist Church in Corapeake, an avid bird hunter with a favorite dog named Sam, and — above everything else — a man whose family said he could best be described in one word: love.

Larry was laid to rest in January. The CBMA will honor him in November. The next time you hear a shag record on the Tidewater airwaves, remember that for thirty-five years there was a voice in Suffolk telling you it was marvelous and wonderful. He was right.

*Ceremony: November 5–8 at the Alabama Theater, North Myrtle Beach • Full Class of 2026 roster at [cammy.org](http://cammy.org)*

## 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](http://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 Countdown	Jay Kinlaw	Sat, 10 AM-12 Noon
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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