

**GOLD CARD-LIFE MEMBER**  
**PRESENTED TO BETSY GOTTA**  
**Presented by John Marshall**

Before I begin this part of our program, I'd like to address the question of why we make award presentations. Some first-time attendees, newer callers, and some visitors have been heard to say things like "What do I care about people I've never heard of?" or "What do I care about what they have done?" The individuals we honor may inspire you to become one who also gives back for the betterment of square dancing. They may be able to show you how much so many of us care about the future you hope to enjoy. It provides an opportunity to honor people who go above and beyond the norm. A worthwhile organization should and does acknowledge its own heroes.

Tonight, I'm privileged to be entrusted with the presentation of what many people hold to be CALLERLAB's highest award. The Gold Card, "Life Membership" in CALLERLAB is given in recognition of selfless service to CALLERLAB. It may be presented to long-term CALLERLAB Members who have provided outstanding service to CALLERLAB and selected by representatives of the membership (the EC) to be honored in this way. It may be given to callers who have retired from active calling. Under special circumstances, as determined by the EC, the Gold Card may also be given to CALLERLAB Members who are still actively calling. The list of those who have been given this recognition is short. It includes people who have worked very hard and very selflessly to enhance CALLERLAB. This organization has many ways of recognizing its members, and in some cases even non-members, for their contributions to the square dance activity. One of these ways is in the form of a Milestone Award. Well, tonight's Gold Card recipient has already attained that high honor. In as much as we only meet until mid-day on Wednesday, I will refer you to the Milestone history of this person. As her accomplishments in the worlds of square and round dancing, contra, National Square Dance Conventions, Legacy, The Arts, and more would have us here until at least Thursday. Hers is truly an amazing history. The Gold Card is reserved for those who have worked to make CALLERLAB a more valuable and successful leadership organization. The service that our Gold Card Members have given has come in many forms. This award requires unanimous approval by the Executive Committee. This award, by the way, is an actual gold metal Card which carries the rights and privileges of CALLERLAB membership for life.

The list of Gold Card Lifetime Members attending this year's Convention are Jim Mayo, Jon Jones, Bill Heyman, Marshall Flippo and Melton Luttrell. There are sixteen others whose iconic names would be familiar to most, if not all of you.

Having danced since 1952 and calling since 1962, our recipient became a CALLERLAB Member in 1976. She has served three terms on the Executive Committee, two as Vice Chairman of CALLERLAB. She is the first American woman nine elected to the Board of Governors. This year, she is completing her 25th year on the Board of Governors. In 1991, she was the first American woman to have achieved Caller-Coach Accreditation. She has served many times as a CALLERLAB panelist and continued to further CALLERLAB by volunteering her time and talent at the National Square Dance Convention CALLERLAB education panels. She has served with many of you on a variety of CALLERLAB committees. She is Past Chairman of the Women in Calling Committee. She is currently and has been the Chairman of the Caller Training Committee, having already been Vice Chair of that Committee between 1999 and 2006. She is the current CALLERLAB liaison to The Arts and has also served as its' Chairman. Additionally, she has chaired a number of special ad-hoc Committees; notably the Collection and Editing of the "Best of CALLERLAB Signature Series," and the Caller Mentoring Handbook, which was completed last year.

She and her partner have also supported The Foundation. The CALLERLAB Foundation has awarded her four Patrons Awards in recognition of their financial contributions. Those monies were generated by the sale of her professional video, "Learn to Dance" series.

Ladies and gentlemen, Members, spouses, guests, and past Gold Card recipients, I present for your approval and acknowledgment tonight's Gold Card Honoree, Betsy Gotta.