

DEBORAH CARROLL-JONES RECEIVES CALLERLAB'S MILESTONE AWARD

**Presented by
Patty Greene**

The most prestigious award CALLERLAB can bestow on an individual is the Milestone. It is presented to callers who have made significant contributions to the square dance activity. Recipients are awarded the honor based on five criteria:

1. Must show outstanding and significant contribution to the field of square dancing and have shown leadership in uncharted fields, which has resulted in the betterment of square dancing.
2. Contribution must have stood the test of time.
3. Unselfish contribution, divorced from personal gain and monetary rewards. Requires attitudes that think of others first.
4. Must maintain and conduct self in professional manner, reflecting the high standards of leadership to which we have dedicated ourselves in our day to day actions.
5. Must have exercised broad influence in the square dance activity although local geographic and highly specialized activity may lead to recognition.

It gives me great pleasure to tell you about this year's recipient, but I have to tell you; it will be difficult to keep their name under wraps for very long.

Our awardee began square dancing in 1979 and began a caller apprenticeship in 1982. She called their first dance in 1983, and has been calling full-time through A-2 since 1984. She is a sought-after staff caller for festivals and events both in the United States and all over the world. In addition to a busy travel schedule, she also maintains a local square dance program as club caller for a growing, vibrant club that is moving and shaking.

Our awardee has recorded many well-known and loved singing calls that are still used at dances today, recording on Rockin' M Records, Hi Hat, Global, Blue Star, Royal, Chaparral, and Chic.

Active Member of [CALLERLAB](#) since 1985, serving on the Mainstream, Plus, Advanced, Career Callers, Caller Training, Accredited Caller Coach, Accredited Caller-Teacher, Application and Review, and Women in Calling Committees.

Board of Governors member since 1994, serving as vice chair and on the Executive Committee.

Chairman of the Women in Calling Committee from 1998-2015.

Vice-Chairman of the Caller Training Committee from 1993-1999.

Coordinator of caller workshops for the Cow Counties Caller's Association from 1986-1987.

Chairman of Fundraising for the Foundation for the Promotion and Preservation of Square Dancing for the State of California from 1990 - 1991.

Accredited Caller-Coach since 1995, the 30th caller in the world at that time to have achieved that status. She is one of only Caller-Coach.

Oh - and she did all that while raising her daughter!

By now, I suspect that you have figured out that our awardee is **Deborah Carroll Jones**.

From the moment that I met Deborah, I have observed first-hand her unwavering dedication to callers. She is a mentor, friend, and teacher. She will champion and will fight for someone if the situation calls for it. She will support and mentor anyone who may cross her path or ask her to, and has a talent for both building confidence and giving constructive feedback and assistance in the growth of a calling career. She is fiercely protective and supportive about the next generation of callers coming through the ranks, and is always willing to help whenever and wherever she can. She does all of this without any expectation of payback – and many times at the expense of her personal time, talents, and money.

She is passionately involved in the education of callers, and to that end, in 2001 developed the “Lone Star Callers College Syllabus”. The New England Square Dance History Museum selected this syllabus to be the very best one ever and a copy is on file at that location. This syllabus is still in use today by many caller-coaches as a model for their student handouts.

I believe that Deborah’s active pursuit of the education and training of callers has made a substantial difference in our activity, but for me, it is the influence she has had on women in calling that will continue to stand the test of time.

Would the women callers in attendance please stand for a moment? Take a look around; this is part of the sphere of influence of Deborah. Many of us would not be standing here with you, without the encouragement and example of Deborah and those who went before her. Thank you! You may be seated.

Under her leadership, the Women in Calling Committee has produced many resources relating to the training of us women. Her groundbreaking “Stages” document was conceived by, researched by, and developed by Deborah, and was instrumental in opening conversations about issues that are specifically faced by women – both callers and partners. She organized the “WIC Top 10 Singing Calls and Patter Lists”, which are a great resource for caller-coaches for music suggestions. She also arranged to have women callers, historical and current, highlighted in an on-going series for the *American Square Dance Magazine*. Her actions and willingness to put herself out there and speak her mind have broken through the silent gender barrier that was once very prevalent in the square dance calling community.

I know that many joke about the “good old boy network”, but it was, for a long time, a reality. Many of our first female callers struggled to fit in and garner the respect of our male counterparts and receive recognition for their contributions. When Deborah came on the scene and refused to be anything other than herself, she picked up the torch and stepped up to fight for her right to sit at the table of leadership. And fight she did. She was the first female to be asked to be on staff for many festivals in her early career, including the Tuscon Square Dance Festival, the Mid Winter Festival in Oregon, the Silver State Festival, the Bakersfield Fiesta, and the McLeod Square Dance Resort to name a few.

While at times it is still an upward battle, I strongly believe that Deborah's willingness to stick to her ideals and her belief in equality has played a huge role in paving the way for those to come. In fact, I do not believe that I would be standing before you as your Chair-elect had she not put herself out there and fought for a place at the table.

On behalf of CALLERLAB, the square dance activity, and especially your sisters in crime, it gives me great pleasure to present the Milestone Award to **Deborah Carroll-Jones**