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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Recording Academy Honors George Beverly Shea, America's  
Beloved Gospel Singer, for Lifetime Achievement  
102 year-old Long-time soloist with Billy Graham crusades becomes oldest artist  
to receive a Grammy, his second**

**MONTREAT, N.C., Feb. 14, 2011** – George Beverly Shea, America's Beloved Gospel Singer and long-time soloist with Billy Graham Crusades, was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award for lifelong artistic contributions to the recording medium by The Recording Academy this past weekend.

Born in 1909, at 102 years of age Mr. Shea became the oldest artist to ever receive a GRAMMY, his second, awarded at a special GRAMMY week invitation-only ceremony on February 12. He and the other Lifetime Achievement honorees, including Julie Andrews, Roy Haynes, Juilliard String Quartet, the Kingston Trio, Dolly Parton and Ramones, were formally acknowledged during the national telecast of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual GRAMMY Awards the following evening.

"I am so thankful that at my age the Academy has given me this special tribute, and was surprised and humbled by their action," Mr. Shea said. "I thank God for giving me so many years of musical ministry, and am grateful for the countless opportunities around the world to sing about our Precious Lord."

Prior to entering the Wilshire Ebell Theater in Los Angeles for the ceremony attended by more than 1,000 guests and members of The Recording Academy, Mr. Shea made the customary trip down the red carpet, posing for industry photographers and answering questions from both Canadian and American reporters.

Mr. Shea was introduced by George J. Flanigen IV, Recording Academy Chairman of the Board of Trustees, who also presented a video tribute to his long life and lengthy musical ministry career, featuring vintage footage of myriad worldwide appearances and sound tracks from hundreds of recordings, including more than 70 sacred music albums and CDs on RCA and Word Records. Mr. Flanigen then presented Mr. Shea with a Grammy Award for Life Time Achievement.

Mr. Shea responded to the Award with his usual self-deflecting humor. He indicated that he was humbled to be included with fellow Lifetime Achievement honorees, some of them household names, who have all had spectacular and noteworthy accomplishments in the music industry. In comparison, he referenced a farmer who entered his mule in the Kentucky Derby, knowing it was impossible for that mule to win. When asked, "Why?" he replied, "Just look at the company he'll be in."

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Mr. Shea talked about his life-long love of music and tenure of ministry with Billy Graham spanning nearly six decades. He recounted a particularly moving moment when he accompanied the global evangelist to Vietnam to hold meetings for the troops during the War. While up near the front lines one Christmas day, he was standing beneath a giant Christmas tree held up by wires, and noticed a group of soldiers receiving haircuts upon their return from duty. One of the soldiers recognized him and yelled out, "Shea, sing 'How Great Thou Art.'" He then cupped his hands around his mouth so to be heard, and sang a verse of the song that he had popularized with crusade audiences around the world.

As Mr. Shea concluded by thanking members of the Academy for this honor, many stood to their feet in rousing applause, acknowledging his extraordinary life and musical accomplishments. At a reception following to honor award recipients, he greeted many individuals who had attended the event, some of whom expressed their appreciation for his rich voice and command of the stage at his age. Earlier he had a personal visit with fellow Lifetime Achievement honoree Julie Andrews.

According to the official program, the Lifetime Achievement Award, "established in 1962, is presented by vote of the Recording Academy's National Trustees to performers who, during their lifetime, have made creative contributions of outstanding significance to the field of recording."

In announcing recipients in late December 2010, Recording Academy President/CEO Neil Portnow noted, "These influential performers and brilliant innovators have been of great inspiration to our culture and industry. Their legendary work has left a lasting impression and will continue to influence generations to come."

In addition to ten nominations by The Recording Academy and two GRAMMYS, Mr. Shea has received numerous other awards, including two honorary doctorates and his induction into the Gospel Music Association Gospel Music Hall of Fame and the National Religious Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

In the days leading up to the GRAMMY Awards, Contemporary Christian Artist Michael W. Smith paid tribute to his close friend at this significant milestone. "Bev has been a source of inspiration to millions, and especially to me," he said. "He is a gifted man, with a great heart, who has lived life as a faithful friend, and in doing so has changed the world."

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***Note to Editors: For more information or to arrange an interview with George Beverly Shea, please contact Melany Ethridge of A. Larry Ross Communications at (972)267-1111 or via email at [Melany@alarryross.com](mailto:Melany@alarryross.com).***