



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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Grisham to Receive Lifetime Achievement Award on October 17

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For Immediate Release

At the 12th Annual Library of Virginia Awards celebration on October 17, 2009, one of the nation's best-known and best-selling authors will receive recognition for a lifetime of literary achievement. The recipient of the 2009 Library of Virginia Lifetime Achievement Award is John Grisham. Grisham is the author of 22 books. Since publishing *A Time to Kill* in 1988 Grisham has written a novel a year and all of them have become international best sellers. His second book, *The Firm*, spent 47 weeks on *The New York Times* best-seller list, becoming the best-selling novel of 1991. *The Innocent Man* (2006) was his first work of nonfiction. More than 235 million Grisham books are in print worldwide, which have been translated into 29 languages. The *New York Times Book Review* says "John Grisham is about as good a storyteller as we've got in the United States these days." His trademark legal thrillers combine suspense and drama with taut narrative and are perennials on the best-seller charts.

Grisham was born in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and settled in Southaven, Mississippi, when he was 12. He is a graduate of Mississippi State University and earned his law degree from the University of Mississippi in 1981. He practiced law in Southaven, specializing in criminal defense and personal injury. In 1983 he was elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives and served until 1990.

In February 2009 Grisham received a governor's award for excellence in the arts from Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour. Grisham and his family divide their time between Mississippi and Albemarle County. He devotes time to charitable causes including his Rebuild the Coast Fund, which has raised \$8.8 million for Gulf Coast relief. Grisham is a big baseball fan and funded the building of Cove Creek Park, a youth baseball complex near Coveseville, Virginia. He serves as the local Little League commissioner.

Previous recipients of the Library of Virginia's Lifetime Award were Ellen Glasgow, Edgar Allan Poe, Anne Spencer, Booker T. Washington, Mary Lee Settle, Louis D. Rubin Jr., George Garrett, Merrill D. Peterson, William Styron, Tom Wolfe, and Rita Dove.

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The 12th Annual Library of Virginia Awards Celebration Honoring Virginia Authors & Friends will be held on October 17 at the Library of Virginia. The winners of the annual awards for best fiction and poetry work by a Virginia author and best nonfiction work by a Virginia author or on a Virginia subject will be announced at the gala event. The winners of the People's Choice Award, the Weinstein Poetry Prize, and the Whitney & Scott Cardozo Award for Children's Literature also will be announced that evening. Winners of the Library of Virginia's literary awards will receive a \$3,500 monetary award and a crystal replica of a book. For ticket information, please call 804-692-3900.

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