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Earl Hamner to Receive Lifetime Achievement Award

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For Immediate Release

Nelson County native Earl Hamner, writer of novels, television shows, and movies and the force behind the semiautobiographical television series *The Waltons*, will receive the 2011 Literary Lifetime Achievement Award from the Library of Virginia at the 14th Annual Literary Awards Celebration on October 15, 2011.

Hamner grew up in Schuyler, Virginia, with seven brothers and sisters. From an early age he exhibited a love of words and writing. When he was six his poem, "My Dog" was published on the Children's Page of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. His potential was recognized and he received encouragement from his teachers and members of the tight-knit community.

Hamner received a scholarship to the University of Richmond, but midway through his sophomore year Hamner was drafted. He spent time learning to drive tanks and defuse mines, but his ability to type landed him in the Quartermaster Corps. While in the U.S. Army Hamner began to submit stories for publication.

After his discharge in March 1946 he returned to Richmond and briefly worked for local radio station WMBG. In the fall of 1946 Hamner enrolled in the school of broadcasting at the University of Cincinnati and graduated in 1948.

Shortly after graduation Hamner went to New York City and found work as a radio writer for NBC. His first book, *Fifty Roads to Town*, was published by Random House in 1953 and in 1961 his novel *Spencer's Mountain* was published by Dial Press.

He began writing scripts for episodes of the *Twilight Zone* and *CBS Playhouse*. The film rights to *Spencer's Mountain* were purchased by Warner Bros. and Hamner was on his way as a success in Hollywood. In 1970 *The Homecoming* was published by Random House and became a CBS special starring Patricia Neal and later was the basis of the long-running and hugely popular television series *The Waltons*. Hamner garnered additional fame as a writer for *Falcon Crest*, a prime time soap opera, which aired on CBS from 1981 to 1990.

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Hamner has received numerous honors including:

- TV-Radio Writers Award (1967)
- George Foster Peabody Award for Distinguished Journalism (1972)
- Virginian of the Year Award from Virginia Press Association (1973)
- An Emmy for Best Drama Series for *The Waltons* (1974)
- National Association of Television Executives Man of the Year Award (1974)
- Virginian Association of Broadcasters Award (1975)
- Frederic Ziv Award from the University of Cincinnati for Outstanding Achievement in Telecommunication

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