

## *The Way We Live*

One of the best-selling novelists of all time is John Grisham, best known for his popular legal thrillers. A graduate of Mississippi State University in 1977 with a degree in accounting, he later enrolled in the University of Mississippi School of Law to become a tax lawyer, but his interest shifted to general civil litigation, and he graduated in 1983 with a JD degree specializing in criminal law.

Grisham also served in the Mississippi House of Representatives from 1984 to 1990. He began writing in 1984, and his first novel, *A Time to Kill*, was published in June 1989. His first best seller was *The Firm*. Released in 1991, it sold more than 7 million copies, and the book was later adapted into a feature film. Seven other novels have also been adapted into films: *The Chamber*, *The Client*, *A Painted House*, *The Pelican Brief*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Runaway Jury*, and *A Time to Kill*.

Married to Renee Jones in 1981, Grisham and his wife teach a Sunday School class in First Baptist Church of Oxford, Miss.

In an interview with Will Norton Jr., dean of the Meek School of Journalism and New Media and a partner in ownership of *The South Reporter* in Holly Springs, Miss., Grisham recalled an incident that had a profound effect on him:

*One of my best friends in college died when he was 25, just a few years after we had finished Mississippi State University. I was in law school, and he called me one day and wanted to get together. So we had lunch, and he told me he had terminal cancer.*

*I couldn't believe it. I asked him, "What do you do when you realize that you are about to die?" Then he said, "You know, really, you ought to live every day like you have only a few more days to live."*

*That left an impression on me.*

Grisham's story is instructive for us all. Few things impart more wisdom than to face up to the fact that we will all die sooner or later.

For we who work in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, we understand that truth more than most. We serve men and women who are nearing the end of their days upon this earth, and we see first-hand how their choices – good and bad – have affected their health and their philosophy about living.

Those relationships, and how we care about our residents, cause us to consider the way we live.

*So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12).*

– Beecher Hunter