

# FACES AND PLACES

## Dan Brown

Author Dan Brown's latest novel, "The Lost Symbol," sold more than 1 million copies in the first day it was available to the public. "The Lost Symbol" is Brown's first novel since "The Da Vinci Code" was published in 2003. "The Da Vinci Code" also broke sales records, remaining on the bestseller lists for more than two years. It was made into a movie starring Tom Hanks. This is the third book featuring the character Robert Langdon, who is an expert in symbols and who solves mysteries involving strange riddles. Brown's books, some of which deal with religious themes, have been controversial in some circles. **Have you read any of Brown's books?**

## Bill Clinton

Former President Bill Clinton's fifth annual "Global Initiative" began last week in New York City. This year, the event centered on the issue of gender equity, or equal rights for women and men. "No country can prosper if it leaves half its people behind," said Melanne Vermeer, the State Department's ambassador-at-large for global women's issues. "The most dangerous places in the world, frankly, are those places where women are put down in the greatest way. It's where societies implode and where states fail." The Clinton Global Initiative brings together the public and private sector to discuss solutions to problems in four areas — climate change, poverty, global health, and education. **Do you think women in America are treated as equals to men?**



## Georgia

Flooding caused by heavy rainfall killed at least 10 people in Georgia and Alabama. The Atlanta area was hard hit. Hundreds of homes were under water, thousands of people were without power, and millions of commuters were stranded. Large sections of five major highways were closed as officials waited for waters to drain, causing major traffic headaches in a metro area that already has some of the nation's worst traffic congestion. Georgia's governor, Sonny Perdue, asked President Obama to declare a state of emergency in Georgia. Officials estimated \$250 million in damage in the state. Many residents who lost their homes had no flood insurance and face financial disaster. **Have you ever experienced flooding where you live?**

## Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

This U.S. city, once known for its gritty steel mills, has spent decades trying to remake its blue-collar image, and now is a haven for technology companies and "green" business. Still, many were surprised when it was announced that Pittsburgh would host this year's summit of the G-20, the group of 20 developing nations formed in 2003. President Obama was given the chance to pick the city after G-20 leaders decided the event would be held in the United States. Obama said he wanted to showcase how Pittsburgh has been able to reinvent itself. Pittsburgh beefed up security with thousands of extra police as protesters from all over the world descended on the city as the summit began last week. **Did you hear any news coverage of the G-20 meeting?**