

George Lies

George Lies passed away at his home in Morgantown on April 27th, 2024, finishing his final chapter. He was born in Pittsburgh in the spring of 1946 and grew up in the city's Hill District, going on to attend Fifth Avenue High School where he graduated as valedictorian of his class, then the University of Pittsburgh and later the WVU School of Journalism.

A lifelong fan of all Pittsburgh sports teams, particularly the Pirates, he found an early hero in Roberto Clemente who he would watch play at Forbes Field. As a kid, he sold newspapers on Pittsburgh's 5th Ave, and he later became a journalist working at the Pittsburgh Forum, the Pittsburgh Press, Roll Call, and The Brazilian Herald in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

George served on the staff at WVU for 38 years, first in the Coal Mining Extension Service, and later in the Office of International Programs. He had a lifelong love of Latin America and was instrumental in establishing Morgantown's Sister Cities relationships with Guanajuato, Mexico and Xuzhou, China, serving as the chair of the Sister Cities Commission. He helped usher hundreds of students through study abroad programs and even more international students through WVU.

A skilled and passionate writer, George was actively involved in many local literary communities which he helped build and sustain. He ran the Morgantown Writers Group for 30 years, fostering countless writing careers through his generous encouragement and constructive criticism. For the better part of two decades he ran the Goldenrod Writer's Conference which he founded, bringing together writers across the state of West Virginia and beyond, and he served as the President of West Virginia Writers Inc. from 1999-2001 and again in 2003. He also won numerous awards and recognitions for his own work.