

# FOR ALL OUR VOICES

Issue No. 2

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As I write this, the peas are on the vine, the first coneflower has opened, and there's a fountain of daylilies in my backyard. School is out and we've just come round the Summer Solstice. How sweet to ride the wheel of seasons into high summer!

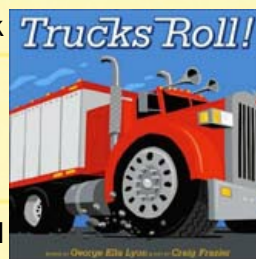
School jobs are over. Now come reading camps, teacher workshops, writing institutes, Governor's Scholars programs. You can see what I'm up to by clicking through to my [calendar](#).

In the midst of this, I try to keep writing at the center-- always a challenge. It's easy to feel writing is something I fit around everything else, since Everything Else pays the bills. However, I get mean if I don't write. And I feel like a fake when I talk about writing and don't do it. These days, writing the "Morning Pages" which Julia Cameron describes in *The Artist's Way* is helping me keep on track. If you're not familiar with it, I highly recommend this twelve-week course in reclaiming yourself as an artist. Just right for summer.

## NEWS

### picture books

*Trucks Roll!* is coming out as a Big Book/Little Book from McGraw Hill.



The ninth printing of *Mother to Tigers* (a picture book biography of Helen Martini, who started the animal nursery at the Bronx Zoo) arrived just in time for what would have been Helen's 97<sup>th</sup> birthday. On the same day, I discovered a wonderful series of Eisenstaedt photos of her and the tigers online in the LIFE archives. To see them, [click here](#).

*My Friend, the Starfinder* is now available from [Recorded Books](#) in CD and cassette, as well as Read Along Packs and Classroom Sets.

### novels

Alec Volz's dramatic adaptation of my YA novel *Sonny's House of Spies* has been accepted by Playscripts. It will soon be available to examine and to order at [playscripts.com](#).



My YA novel *Oh, Baby!* is finally ready to be submitted. It takes a village, and I thank everyone who has helped me with it.

### poetry

"Fallingwater," a poem shaped like the famous Frank Lloyd Wright house, is included in the current online issue of [New Works Review](#). Since I wrote this poem in 1992, seeing it appear at last is a reminder to keep sending work out I believe in.

## other

At the recent Mountain Heritage Literary Festival, held at Lincoln Memorial University, I was given the Lee Smith Award, a beautiful bowl made by potter Michael Ware. The award is given for being a sort of ambassador for Appalachia, and I was amazed and moved to receive it. All I am doing is passing on what so many people--family, friends, teachers--have given to me. The bowl looks empty, but is full of thanks. *(photo by Silas House)*



## POEM

When working with kids, I often have them look up the meaning of their names or find out where their parents got their names and write about how this feels. If they write, I write too, so here's one of my takes on the subject:

### OH, THE NAMES

I've been called!  
For starters, there are  
the ones my parents  
gave me: George  
which means farmer  
and Ella, which means  
light. But George also  
means boy which I am not  
and Ella means girl  
which nobody thinks I am  
because of George.

Past all this I have  
a necklace of nicknames:  
G.E. (I thought the stove  
was named for me)  
Jell-O (my little belly shook)  
General Electric  
George Ollie  
Peejib (did I look like  
a homemade clay marble?)  
Squirt (short and sweet)  
Pumpkin (crooked smile)  
Boysenberry  
and the truly dreadful  
Georgie Porgie  
puddin' 'n pie  
kissed the girls  
and made them cry . . .  
That nursery rhyme  
is a big fat lie  
and Georgie Porgie  
is not !!

## EXERCISE

Your turn! Don't forget nicknames, middle names, and secret names.

## QUOTATIONS recently copied into my journal

"Do you have a little soft cloth I could use to wipe the blood off this guitar?"  
--Kate Larken, in my kitchen

"Sing with the voice you have, not the voice you want."  
--Phyllis Jenness

"We must be willing to get rid of the life we planned, so as to have the life that

is waiting for us."

--Joseph Campbell

Happy Summer! Happy writing!

George Ella Lyon