

The BELS Letter

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

Maintaining and promoting editorial proficiency in the life sciences



From the President

Happy holidays, editors! As each year ends, I like to reflect on our accomplishments and our areas for improvement. I detailed these accomplishments and new initiatives for those who attended our annual business meeting, and I present a brief recap here:

- We completed a full year of computer-based testing, which has resulted in the addition of 88 certified editors to our ranks.
- In May, we announced the election of Melanie Fridl Ross as President-Elect. She will assume duties on January 1, 2022.

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The BELS Letter

Karen Stanwood, ELS
(with Eevee)
Managing Editor



Alex Rudie
Publications Coordinator



From the President

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- Our membership committee hosted 6 virtual, members-only events, with discussions on work-life balance, project management, cybersecurity, professional image, freelancing, and use of PerfectIt.
- We updated our policy for using the BELS badge in social media.

If you weren't able to attend the annual business meeting, you can access the recording [here](#).

We also performed our first membership survey in 2021, which we are using to direct new initiatives. For example, you told us that more engagement with members and more collaborations with other organizations would make a BELS membership more valuable to you. We took those data to heart and are starting a professional development committee in 2022.

And now I need to introduce my “shameless” plug: As the soon-to-be Past President of BELS, I will be heading up the professional development committee and am looking for volunteers to help generate programming. Please contact me through email at info@bels.org if you would like to help.

I am also taking this opportunity to thank the BELS Board members during my presidency. It's been a pleasure serving with you all. See you in 2022!

*Kristina Wasson-Blader, PhD, ELS
BELS President*

Holiday Gift Guide for Editors

In case you missed it last year: Are you wondering what to get your favorite, hard-working editor for a holiday gift? Look no further: We've rounded up 11 editing- and literary-related items to make gift-giving easier!

*Karen Stanwood, ELS
Managing Editor*

1



COMING SOON!! BELS merchandise, including sweatshirts, totebags, and phone chargers

2



“I’m Silently Correcting Your Grammar” face mask by TeePublic (\$12)

<https://bit.ly/3IT95oT>

3



Punctuation throw pillow by lilcubby on Spoonflower (from \$42)

<https://bit.ly/36NTMMg>

4



“An Apostrophe Does Not Make That Word Plural” T-shirt from Grammatical Art (\$15–25)

<https://bit.ly/395TFOy>

5



“Readers Cabernet Sauvignon” wine from J. Bookwalter Winery (\$19.98)

<https://bit.ly/3EUQt5K>

6



“Editors’ Blend” tea bags from Murchie’s Fine Tea and Coffee (from \$4.95)

<https://bit.ly/35IVizp>

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Holiday Gift Guide for Editors

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“No. 2 Pencil” socks by Foot Traffic on ModSock (\$10)

<https://bit.ly/3pHtbZL>

10



“Bookstore” candle from Frostbeard Studio (\$19.75)

<https://bit.ly/2IKOVU6>

8



“The Raven” writing gloves from Storiarts (\$26)

<https://bit.ly/3lQwnzV>

11



“Oxford Comma Society” spiral notebook from Bookstonian on Etsy (\$13.95)

<https://etsy.me/32WEiEf>

9



Proofreading marks mug from CafePress (\$15.99)

<https://bit.ly/3nEmFkD>

BELS Featured Members



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Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

MEMBER PROFILE

Michelle R. Rizzo, ELS

Associate Medical Director
Integrity Continuing Education

Year of ELS certification:
2015

Grammar pet peeve:
using 'of' instead of 'have'
(ie, 'should of,' 'would of,'
'could of')



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MEMBER PROFILE

Aditi Srivastav, ELS

Curriculum Specialist
Journal of Visualized Experiments

Year of ELS certification:
2020

Grammar pet peeve:
use of 'imaging was performed
with a confocal microscope'

BELS Featured Members



BELS
Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

MEMBER PROFILE

Keri L. Tabb, ELS

Academic Editor, Expert
Research Square

Year of ELS certification:
2019

Grammar pet peeve:
use of the Saxon genitive
for objects



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MEMBER PROFILE

*Michael
Gerchufsky, ELS*

Senior Editor
Razorfish Health

Year of ELS certification:
2010

Grammar pet peeve:
I have so many!

Officers

Kristina Wasson-Blader, PhD, ELS
President

Melanie Fridl Ross, MSJ, ELS
President-Elect

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Chair, Membership & Marketing

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John D. McDonald, MA, DTM, ELS
Board Member at Large

Non-voting Board Member
Sheryle Hazard, CAE
Executive Director

The Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) was founded in 1991 to evaluate the proficiency of manuscript editors in the life sciences and to award credentials similar to those obtainable in other professions.

Potential employers and clients of manuscript editors usually have no objective way to assess the proficiency of editors. For their part, editors are frustrated by the difficulty of demonstrating their ability. That is why both employers and editors so often resort to personal references or ad hoc tests, not always with satisfactory results. The need for an objective test of editorial skill has long been recognized.

To meet that need, BELS developed a process for testing and evaluating proficiency in editing in the life sciences. The Board administers two examinations—one for certification and one for diplomate status. The examinations, written by senior life-science editors assisted by testing experts, focus on the principles and practices of scientific editing in English.