



# The BELS Letter

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

Maintaining and promoting editorial proficiency in the life sciences



## From the President

If Punxsutawney Phil is on the mark, we're in for six more weeks of winter. (At least if you're in an area where winter is a thing. Down here in Florida, we're more like humid, more humid, and hot for most of the year.) And when I heard the groundhog's latest annual prediction, I couldn't help but think about the movie *Groundhog Day*, where Bill Murray plays a character caught in a time loop, doomed to repeat the same day over and over.

Fortunately, BELS has a team of wonderful leaders, volunteers, and members who

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### *The BELS Letter*

Bryan Tutt, ELS(D)  
Managing Editor



Alex Rudie  
Publications Coordinator

# From the President

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avoid such repetition by thinking of ways we can innovate and maximize value.

We'll of course want to continue doing what works. But come Groundhog Day 2023, we'll no doubt also have continued to evolve as an organization to bring added meaning to you and to the profession.

I hope you were able to join our recent members-only event on setting freelance editing rates, led by Laura J. Ninger, ELS. Thank you, Laura, for taking time to share your expertise.

Remember to visit the BELS website to check out past member events, to see our latest poll, and to learn about other resources, including ways you can get involved through one of our committees.

Have an idea for the newsletter? Know a member you'd like us to spotlight? We welcome your input. Send us your suggestions!

*Melanie Fridl Ross, MSJ, ELS  
BELS President*

# BELS Featured Members

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*Kassel*

**BELS**  
Board of Editors in the Life Sciences  
**MEMBER PROFILE**

*Kassel Coover, ELS*

Associate Director, Editorial  
Razorfish Health

Year of ELS certification:  
2016

Grammar pet peeve:  
I should accept it since it's so common, but it still bugs me to see "alright" instead of "all right."



*Karen*

**BELS**  
Board of Editors in the Life Sciences  
**MEMBER PROFILE**

*Karen Stanwood, ELS*

Director, Electronic Publishing and Production  
Health Care Books and Journals  
SLACK Incorporated

Year of ELS certification:  
1999

Grammar pet peeve:  
"myriad of"

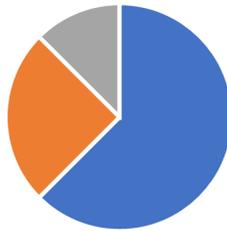
# Monthly Poll Results

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The January BELS poll asked members to choose the most confusing sentence from a group of five imperfect sentences. Although each sentence had an issue that could create confusion, BELS members overwhelmingly chose “We create maps that we can use to control invasive species and promote native species with and find the best fish habitat” as the most confusing. This choice was likely because of the awkward placement of “with.”

Please visit [www.bels.org](http://www.bels.org) to participate in our next poll and find other resources to help you get the most out of your BELS membership.

Which of these sentences do you think is most confusing?



- We create maps that we can use to control invasive species and promote native species with and find the best fish habitat. (62.5%)
- Avoiding social contact because of hearing loss may affect both physical and emotional well-being, any of which may mediate the relationship between hearing and brain health. (25.0%)
- This procedure can reduce a dangerously elevated white blood cell count or collect them for therapeutic purposes. (12.5%)
- I joined a group of 5 others. (0%)

# New Certified Editors

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In January 2022, 6 people were certified as Editors of the Life Sciences after passing the certification examination and meeting the other requirements. Please welcome our newest members and congratulate them on this achievement when you get the chance!

Marci Fern Adilman, ELS

Suzan A Alkhodair, MBBS, ELS

Bridget Andrews, PhD, ELS

Eva Veronica Lasič, PhD, ELS

Olga Norstrom, ELS

Rosemary Stephanie Procko, ELS

CONGRATULATIONS

## Officers

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**Melanie Fridl Ross, MSJ, ELS**  
President

**Kristina Wasson-Blader, PhD, ELS**  
Immediate Past President

**Lisa Kisner, ELS, CAE**  
Secretary

**Christine F. Wogan, MS, ELS**  
Treasurer

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Chair, Diplomate Examination Development

**Leslie E. Neistadt, ELS**  
Chair, Registrar & Examination Administration

**Stephen N. Palmer, PhD, ELS**  
Chair, Nominations and Elections

**Naomi L. Ruff, PhD, ELS**  
Chair, Certification Examination Development

**Thomas P. Gegeny, MS, ELS**  
Chair, Certification Maintenance

**Karen Stanwood, ELS**  
Chair, Membership & Marketing

**Stephen Bublitz, ELS**  
Board Member at Large

**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.