

The BELS Letter

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

Maintaining and promoting editorial proficiency in the life sciences



From the President

Summer is the season when many of us try to step away from our desks to take a break with friends or family. Whether you have travel plans this year or you plan to take a stay-cation, I hope you find time to recharge.

BELS sought to help in that regard, by encouraging you to trade your office for the kitchen for a bit. I hope you were able to attend our members-only event, a BELS recipe swap, on July 14.

In honor of the occasion, I thought I'd share my Aunt Mary Anna Novotny's Blue Ribbon Spice Cake. It's been a summertime favorite at family gatherings for years.

Continued on page 2

INSIDE:

- From the President
- BELS Member Profile
- Monthly Poll Results

The BELS Letter

Bryan Tutt, ELS(D)
Managing Editor

Alex Rudie
Publications Coordinator



From the President

Continued from page 1

Blue Ribbon Spice Cake

Cream:

1/2 cup shortening
3/4 cup brown sugar
3/4 cup white sugar

Add:

2 eggs

Sift together:

2 cups cake flour*
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp cloves
1/2 tsp nutmeg
1/2 tsp salt

Add alternately with 1 cup buttermilk or sour milk.

Bake in two 8" layer pans or a long Pyrex at 350° Fahrenheit for 35-40 minutes.

*A substitute for cake flour: Measure 2 tbsp cornstarch in cup; fill with all-purpose flour to make a cup. Therefore, for this recipe, use 4 tbsp cornstarch and enough flour to make 2 cups.

Frosting

Blend in mixer in order given:

3 tbsp butter
1 small egg yolk
2 cups powdered sugar
2 tbsp cream or milk
1 tsp vanilla

Enjoy! Wishing everyone a healthy and happy month!

*Melanie Fridl Ross, MSJ, ELS
BELS President*

BELS Member Profile

Stephen Bublitz, ELS
Senior Medical Editor
MedVal/PharmaWrite
BELS Member since 2019



How did you first hear about BELS?

I had been freelancing for about 8 years and had gotten stuck in unsatisfying and low-paying routines. I started looking around for networking opportunities, certification programs, classes, anything to get me out of the funk. In doing so, I found KOK Edit's "Copyeditor's Knowledge Base" and started going through it link by link. One of those links was to BELS, and, lo and behold, there was a test at the CSE conference just over a month away within driving distance of where I lived. I signed up immediately, and the rest is history.

How has BELS certification or membership benefited you personally and/or professionally?

The agency I currently work at requires that all editors are BELS-certified, so it has most definitely benefitted me. In a more intangible way, we all at times struggle with imposter syndrome or question our abilities. Having a highly regarded certification such as ELS provides a good mental backstop for those days when I'm wondering, "What the heck am I doing here?"

What gives you job satisfaction?

Getting it right. Also, getting it done. Also, working with people whose skills impress me.

What is your grammar pet peeve?

Using "as" when you mean "because." Using "The reason is because" instead of "The reason is that." Also, I'm driven nutty by the "based on/on the basis of" distinction. No one seems to start a sentence with "On the basis of," and I don't think I've had a writer who hasn't statted it when I've made the change. Oh, and I get unnecessarily annoyed (definition of pet peeve) by "healthcare" as one word, though when aiming to stay under a word count, I grit my teeth and bear it.

BELS Member Profile

Continued from page 3

Which style guide or reference book do you use most in your work?

I work as a medical editor, so I use AMA daily and have for years.

Be There With BELS On!

BELS branded merchandise is now available! Now you can proudly display the BELS logo on your tote bag, mug, travel tumbler, sweatshirt, laptop case, or mouse pad. They make great gifts for colleagues, employees, friends, family, and yourself! Please visit www.bels.org/store to order.



BELS Member Discounts

Chill out and save!

BELS has partnered with resource providers to provide valuable members-only discounts on products and services that help make your job easier. These offers are exclusive to BELS members and should not be shared with any other non-member.



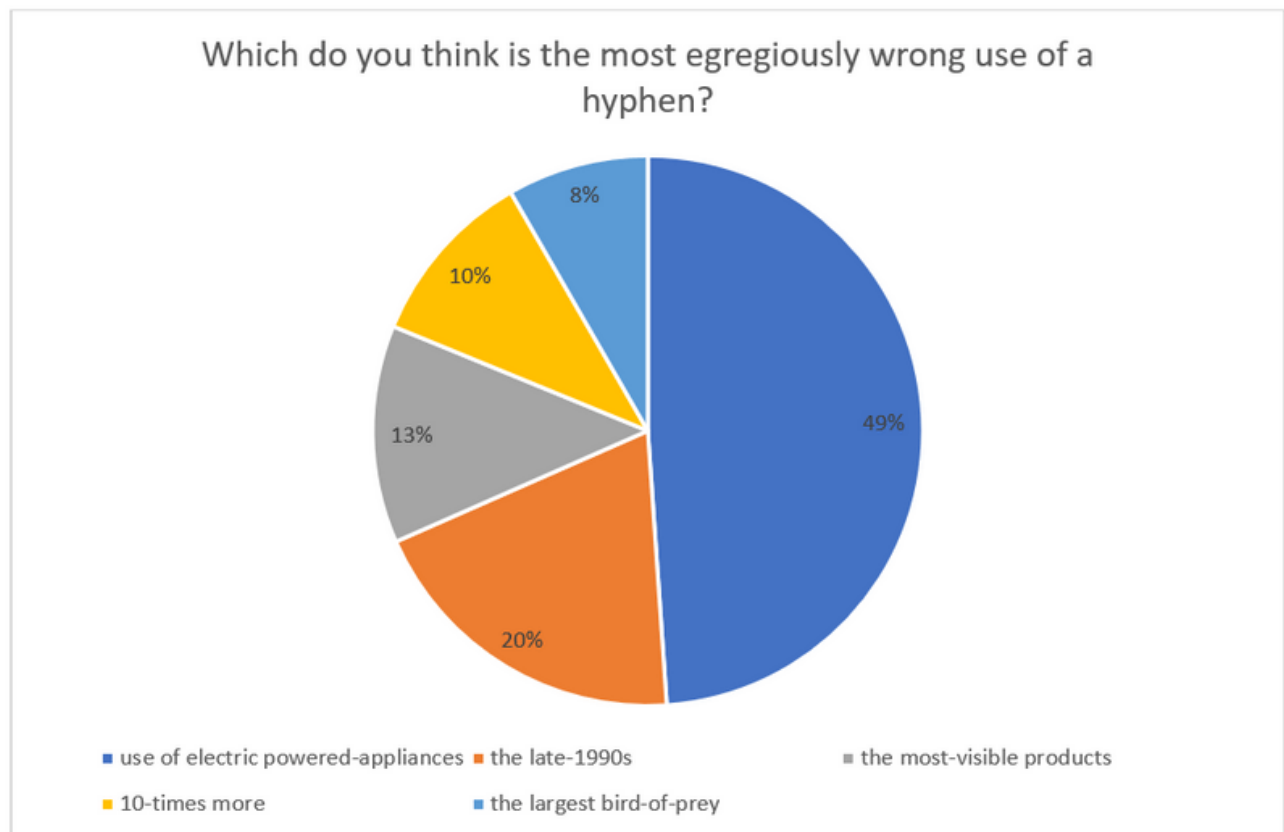
BELS member discounts include a **30% discount** on a single license of PerfectIt software. PerfectIt improves consistency, ensures quality, and saves time. BELS members also receive a **20% discount** on reference books such as *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers* and *The Chicago Manual of Style*. The discount can be applied to both online and print versions of these books. Visit bels.org and click on Member Resources to claim your discounts today!

Monthly Poll Results

In June, the BELS website featured a poll asking members to choose the worst of 5 hyphen errors.

Nearly half (49%) found “electric powered-appliances” to be shockingly inappropriate. Meanwhile, “bird-of-prey” flew under the radar, with only 8% finding it the worst.

Please visit bels.org to participate in our next poll!



Officers

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

Board of Directors

Jane Krauhs, PhD, ELS(D)
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.