

Maintaining and promoting editorial proficiency in the life sciences

From the President

It's officially summer time! Whether you enjoy the extra sunshine from the beach or from your air-conditioned office, it's nice to see some brighter days. In other 'bright' news, the world is beginning to open up again! According to CNBC, nearly 50% of Americans have received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and 40% have completed a full vaccination program.

As of May 28, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated their guidelines to indicate that fully-vaccinated people may resume many activities without

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The BELS Letter

Karen Stanwood, ELS
(with Eevee)
Managing Editor



Alex Rudie
Publications Coordinator

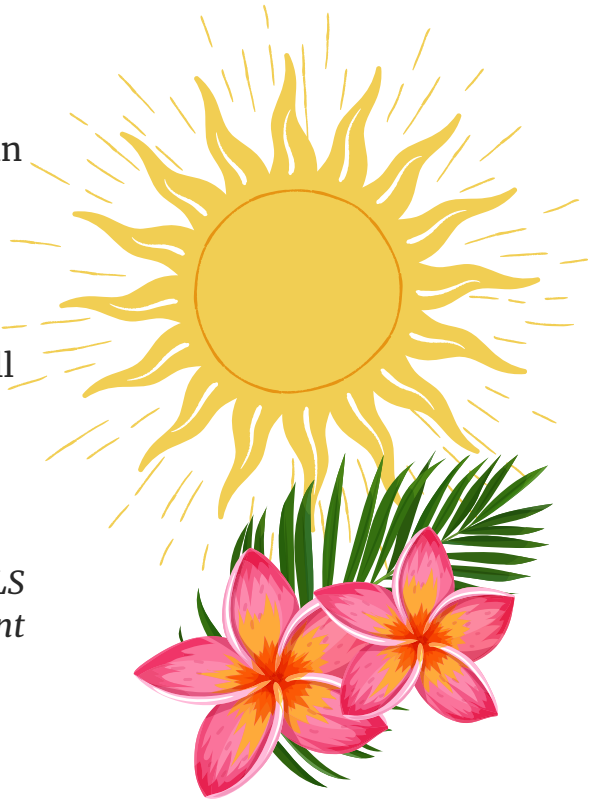
From the President

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wearing masks or physically distancing. You can find more information on the CDC's guidelines [here](#).

In other news, I'm sure you can't wait to find out the results of our member survey, but you'll have to be patient a bit longer. The aggregate results will be featured in the July issue. In the meantime, enjoy your summer!

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



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Ask the Editors

How are BELS Featured Members selected? Please consider explaining the process in *The BELS Letter*.

Scott C. Thompson, ELS

Sure thing! In June 2020, we sent a Member Profile Survey to all members. We received 100 responses! I emailed each member who indicated their willingness to share a photo and store these by date of receipt. Beginning in August 2020, each month, I select four members to feature in each issue, based on the date they sent their photo.

Each featured member receives a proof of their profile and has the opportunity to make updates before publication. They are also invited to use the profile on their own website or social media channels. In addition to being published in *The BELS Letter*, one profile is posted each week of that month to the BELS Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts.

Karen Stanwood, ELS
The BELS Letter Managing Editor

Ask the Editors

Does anyone have a recommendation for a good note-taking program? I need something that's Mac-compatible (ideally, Android too), works offline, has good sorting-tagging-searching capability, can handle a high volume of notes, and can export to Microsoft Word. I've seen programs that will practically cook you supper and sing you a lullaby, but some of these (I would have thought) basic features seem hard to find. Suggestions welcome!

Amanda A. Morgan, ELS

I use [Google Keep](#) for its simple note-taking functionalities, but it has its limitations. It works well on browsers and on Android, but the app is buggy on iOS devices. The other suggestion I have is Microsoft's [OneNote](#). I have heard good things about it, but I don't use it. I used to use Evernote until I discovered Keep, and I don't like Evernote since the company changed its basic plan to allow use in only two devices. If you stick to Mac/iOS, Apple's Notes app is really good.

*Krishna Kumar Venkitachalam,
MBBS, MS, ELS*

Thanks for these suggestions! I have heard good things about all of them (and the same complaint about Evernote). Unfortunately, they don't have my must-have features. To (over)simplify, the more basic ones don't have a robust sorting-tagging-

searching capability, and the more complex ones don't function without the Cloud. The ability to easily export to Word (or even a text editor) is also harder to find than I would have expected.

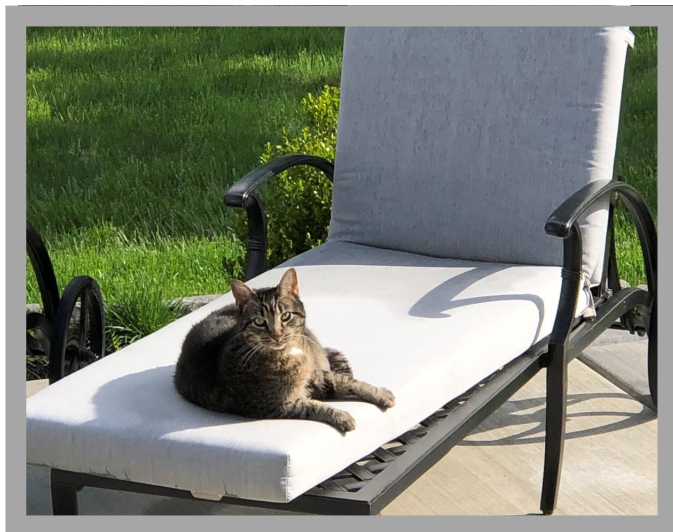
I'm still open to suggestions, but I think I'm going to go with [Zotero](#), which is primarily a reference-management program but miraculously has all the characteristics I need for notes as well, with only minor tweaking needed. (They seem to have recently put a lot of work into upgrading the notes function to do even more.) My opinion of this program just went from high to sky-high; it's not flashy, but it gets things done, and it's free. There's a good support forum, too. Thanks again.

Amanda A. Morgan, ELS

Do you have other suggestions for note-taking programs?

Send yours to info@bels.org.

BELS Gallery



This handsome gentleman, Munch, has his summer plans set! He encourages his person, Kristina Wasson-Blader, to take some time to enjoy the season. We have to agree; lounging in the sun looks like a perfect way to spend the summer to us!



Sarah Bulis, MD, ELS, shared a photo of her and her family with The Watchman at Zion National Park. Look at that gorgeous view!



Ali Foley Shenk, ELS, is pictured here doing what she loves to do all year round, rock out with her band WKNDR! Learn more about the band [here](#).

Send your BELS Gallery photos to info@bels.org

BELS Featured Members



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Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

MEMBER PROFILE

*Geoffrey Richard
Heintzelman, PhD, ELS*

Principal Editor
Evidera

Year of ELS certification:
2017

Grammar pet peeve:
'impact' instead of
'effect'/'affect'



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MEMBER PROFILE

Stephanie English, ELS

QC Lead
inSection Group

Year of ELS certification:
2015

Grammar pet peeve:
misuse of commas

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MEMBER PROFILE

*Pamela Paradis
Metoyer, ELS(D)*

Research Associate

Baylor College of Medicine

Division of Continuing Professional Development

<https://www.bcm.edu>

Year of ELS certification:

1992

Grammar pet peeve:

using nouns when verbs can do



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MEMBER PROFILE

Amanda Perkerson, ELS

Senior Director, Editorial Services

Aptitude Health

<https://www.apptitudehealth.com/>

Year of ELS certification:

2013

Grammar pet peeve:

at work – capitalizing disease
names, eg, Acute Lymphocytic
Leukemia; in my personal life –
'should of' instead of 'should have'

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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.