



The BELS Letter

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences

Maintaining and promoting editorial proficiency in the life sciences



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From the President

Everyone loves a celebration, and usually we reserve the festivities for major milestones: the jubilee year, the notable birthdays like the big 40, and so on. But what's not to like about those in-between dates, the quieter passages of time that often go less noticed but arguably should be just as recognized?

So happy 31st anniversary, BELS! That's right, we gave our first certification examination on May 4, 1991, so this month marks the big 3-1. Before you know it, we'll be at 40...50...and then some.

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The BELS Letter

Bryan Tutt, ELS(D)
Managing Editor



Alex Rudie
Publications Coordinator

From the President

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While anniversaries acknowledge the achievements of the past, it's important to always be looking forward. As I mentioned in remarks I shared in our online member meeting late last year, most of editing can seem like a timeless art. But it's incumbent on us to stay up-to-date on current trends in language, style, and so on. Being part of an organization like BELS can help us help each other to do that.

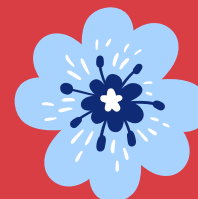
We editors also often find the need to continually demonstrate our value. Helping those we support measure the impact of their own work and ours continues to be a necessity, to more fully reflect true influence.

A lot has changed in the 31 years since BELS began, and I'm sure we'll evolve just as much in the next 31. Regardless, we must remain true to our mission and, in doing so, will help continue to set the bar high for the profession. As I've said before, and it bears repeating, we must also work hard to continue to build momentum, to position our organization to address the most pressing issues, to educate others in the profession about the highest standards, and to raise awareness early in others' educational and professional journeys about the opportunities that abound in scientific editing and communication so options remain open to them.

*Melanie Fridl Ross, MSJ, ELS
BELS President*

BELS Member Discounts

Discounts are blooming!



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

For last month's poll, we had a bit of April Fools' Day fun with common typos and accompanying faux facts. The most popular typo-based "fact" involved *rear* (instead of *rare*) earth elements, although the two sentences with *dessert* instead of *desert* were also appetizing.

Please visit bels.org to participate in the May poll (not the *maypole*).

Which false "fact," derived from a printed error, do you like best for April Fools' Day?



- The rear earth elements come last in the periodic table. (38.5%)
- Small mammals are able to survive in hot and dry desserts. (33.7%)
- The roots of the dessert willow can be used to make a sweet pudding. (22.1%)
- That is where flossing comes in to play. (5.8%)

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. Please visit www.bels.org/store to order.



Consult the Consultants!

Have you ever wondered if a career in consulting would be right for you? Now is your chance to ask your questions to professionals in the field. Our new Professional Development Committee will host a members-only event on May 26. You can email your questions ahead of time to info@bels.org, and register for the Zoom meeting [here](#).

SAVE THE DATE! Q&A: CONSULTING

Join us for a panel discussion about starting out in a consulting role. Our panelists, Mia DeFino and Kelly Byram, will be on hand to introduce you to their role and answer your questions.



MAY 26, 2022, 2-3 PM CDT VIA ZOOM
SUBMIT QUESTIONS TO INFO@BELS.ORG



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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.