

BELS

Letters

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Farewell, But Not Goodbye: President Norman Grossblatt Bids Thanks and Farewell

Welcome to the 8th annual meeting of the Board of Editors in the Life Sciences. Who would have thought it?

One of my favorite *New Yorker* cartoons has an old man sitting in a rocker. Walking into the room from behind him are people with presents and a cake that says, "Happy 100th Birthday!" And the little old man says, "My goodness! Is it one hundred years already?" That's sort of the way I feel. How can we be 8 years old already?!

We're going to divide the business portion of the evening into several parts. There will be a lot of hellos and goodbyes tonight, and at various breaks in the dinner we'll be recognizing some new members and some new officers and letting go of—or saying goodbye to—some old officers.

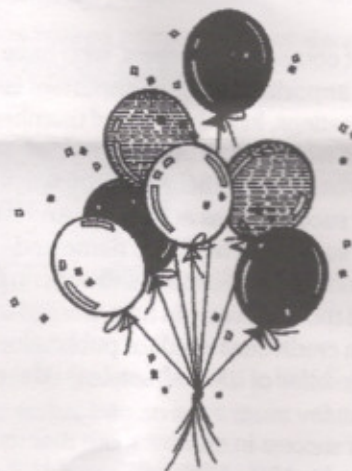
At this point, let's say hello to those who have become members of BELS since our last meeting:

Fran Aitkens, Deborah J. Anderson, Elizabeth Jean Betsch, Ashley Birch, Carolyn Brown, Patricia Connelly, James R. Cozzarin, Elaine Crabtree, Lisa Di Donato, Maria G. Essig, Kris Freeman, Miriam Gitler, Cheryl R. Hampson, Karen Hellekson, Mark Helliwell, Bettie Jean Hessie, Beverly E. Isman, Janice Kaspersen, Stephen Kepple, Linda A. Loy, Jennifer Macke, Eleanor Mayfield, Cella McElveny, Nancy McGuire, Heather Miniman, Flory Nye-Clement, Margaret S. Perkins, Gena Piccolo, Roseanne Price, Paula I. Robbins, Susan Sfarra, Caroline J. Simmons, Christine M. Sophos, Mary L. Tod, Gregory Truitt, Susan Virgili, Nancy S. Wachter, Erin L. Walls, Ann L. Wandtke, Jane Weaver, Eve J. Wilson, Tracy D. Wrey.

I can't let this occasion slide by without some comments.

A bunch of people have spent many, many hours working for BELS over the years. I won't try to name them all, but I do want to recognize some special people, and if some important person isn't mentioned, it doesn't mean anything, and I hope that that's understood.

Of course, there are the founding old people, the tired, the worn out. Please stand up if you're able—I mean if you're here. Or at least nod. Or something. Susan Eastwood, Martha Brookes, Martha Tacker, Gil Croome, Bobbie Reitt, Gillian Brown, Frances Porcher, Carol Kakalec, and Walter Pagel, who agreed to join this endeavor 11 or 12 years ago on the condition that he would serve for only 2 years.



Continued from page 1

Some others should also stand if they're able and present:

- John Gilbert, Christy Wright, and Barbara Reschke, who worked so hard on our "ur-exam". It was our ur-exam in that it was the original ancestor of the first exam that BELS gave for credit, for certification.
- And Karen Phillips, who sent material about the existence and purpose of BELS to thousands—yes, thousands—of people.
- And Grace Darling, who had one of the loudest voices asking why BELS couldn't have a newsletter or something—so we named her the founding editor-in-chief of the *BELS Letter*, which she then invented.
- And Shirley Peterson, who for several years kept track of our money and now keeps track of our hundreds—yes, hundreds—of applicants, our exam registrants and proctors, our test sites, and countless other details that have to be attended to for BELS to give its exams.
- And Miriam Bloom, who sort of invented the position of secretary for member relations.

And of course many others, who have helped in important ways on important tasks—annual meetings, keeping track of members, getting the word out, proctoring, . . .

BELS owes all of them in many ways for whatever success it has achieved. And it has achieved success. The BELS name and certification designations are showing up in more and more places—in help-wanted ads for editors, in credit lines in editor publications, in the front matter of the AMA style guide, and so on.

As for success in numbers, our membership has grown by 15%, 16%, 18%, and 19% per year in the last 4 years. It has increased by 42 since last year at this time—to almost 260 members. We have members in the United States (in 35 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam), in Canada (in three provinces), and in seven other countries. If we continue to grow at that rate—I know, this is an old trick—but if we continue to grow at that rate, we'll have more than 1,000 members by the end of our second 8 years. Not bad for a little mom and pop organization that had to hear things like, "Who do you think YOU are to test ME?" and "The last thing the world needs today is another certification." and "I don't believe in credentials awarded by other people; my own work is the only credential I need."

Much of what BELS is began in a huge document that I'm pretty sure used to be called "that yellow document" or some such. This is it. It's usually kept under seal in the BELS Archives, but I got special permission to take it out for a brief

time so that I could show it this evening. Like Athena from the brow of Zeus, it seemed to come full-blown from the brain of Susan Eastwood—or maybe I should say, "from the Braintree of Susan", referring to the 1989 example of the incredibly luxurious and much-loved settings that I have managed over the years to procure for Executive Council meetings. And cheap. I left out "cheap".

Who of the old-timers can forget the "yellow document"?! Actually, there are three yellow documents. These are all different—all for different parts of the overall BELS program—and all produced by Susan. But this, the first one, is the source, ultimately, of what BELS is all about—the purposes, the substance, the procedures, the criteria. It's probably the only draft I ever saw that had more than 20 levels of headings—well, it seemed like that many. And Susan is the only one who could possibly have created such a thing. (She might also be the only one who ever read all of it!) I sometimes think of Susan as the grandmother of BELS.

And that takes us to Bobbie Reitt, whom I think of as, in many senses, the mother of BELS. (I guess if we had called this organization Professional Editors for Assisted Rewriting and Literacy, instead of BELS, she would be the mother of PEARL!)

For figuring out how to make BELS do what it was invented to do—certify editors—and then making it do it, one name comes to mind: that of Bobbie Reitt. Maybe you'll all just have to take my word for it—much of what she has done has been behind the scenes all these years—but please believe me when I tell you that BELS would not be where it is today—about 40 exams on the books, for one thing—if it had not been for Bobbie. Always available, always sensible, always reassuring, often nagging without seeming to (and sometimes seeming to), always with a sense of humor—gee, I feel as though I'm talking about my mother. But in many ways Bobbie has been just that—the mother of BELS!

Before we induct our new officers—more than we ever have before at one time—we have to say goodbye, in a way, to some BELS officers who will leave office this evening:

- Gillian Brown, long-time Executive Secretary.
- Gil Croome, long-time Secretary for Nomination and Elections.
- David Orr, Secretary for Public Relations.
- Walter Pagel, long-suffering Secretary for Certification Examination Development.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to Miriam Bloom, who served for 3 years as Secretary for Member Relations and then



cheerfully—she always seems to be cheerful (and why NOT? she would say)—put in another half-year until her successor, Carol Cadmus, was able to come aboard.

My sister has three children. As they were growing up, my sister drove the first one to college, left her there, drove home, and cried all the way home. When she left the second one at college, she cried for the first hour of the ride home. And when she took the third one, she started laughing as soon as she left the campus to go home. Since last year at this time, I've occasionally wondered what could possibly fill the hole left in my life by ending this phase of my activity in BELS. Well, I expect to laugh all the way home on the plane in a few days.

It is my great pleasure to announce the new officers of BELS. Some of them are present this evening, and I'd like them to come up here when they're introduced.

- President: Bobbie Reitt.
- Secretary: Mary Ann Schmidt.
- Councilor for Certification Examination Development: Karen Phillips.

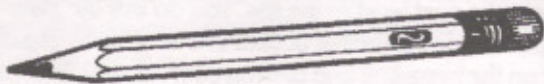
UNABLE to be here this evening are

- Julliana Newman, our new Councilor for Public Relations.
- Janice Jerrells, our new Councilor for Web-Site Management.

And would the continuing members of the BELS Executive Council who are here please come up, also?

- Treasurer: Flo Witte.
- Councilor for Appeals: Carol Kakalec.
- Councilor for Member Relations: Sue Aiello.
- Councilor for Diplomate Examination Development: Martha Brookes.
- Registrar and Councilor for Examination Administration: Shirley Peterson.
- Councilor for the Newsletter: Grace Darling.

Now, without still further ado, I present the official BELS Gavel to President Reitt and turn this meeting over to her.

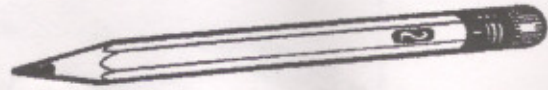


New Policy: Advertising on the BELS Site

As of September 1999, active (dues-paying) members of BELS may advertise their own services on the BELS site free of charge. They may also post notices of available jobs offered by their own businesses for no charge. (To qualify for

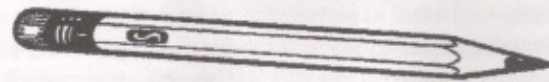
the latter privilege, the BELS member must be the owner of the business.)

For details, check the BELS site itself, and if you have any questions that are not answered there, you can always ask the Webmaster, Jan Jerrells, by clicking on one of the "contact the Webmaster" spots.



Philadelphia Certification Test Registration Largest in BELS History!

Registration for the Philadelphia sitting of our certification examination reached 45! The largest ever before Philadelphia was 30. Shirley Peterson stayed on top with her usual efficiency (no mean trick when the traffic gets heavy); she had the help of Karen Klein, who's taken charge of test arrangements (rooms and proctors). At least part of the credit for the high registration goes to Julliana Newman, whose publicity letter to AMWA members was terrific.



From the Guest Editor

I am delighted to be the guest editor of the fall 1999 issue of the *BELS Letter*. The way of the world is that we all must become Web-savvy. That includes becoming familiar with the BELS Web site—and using it to our advantage. This is such an important topic (and I received so many excellent contributions) that Bobbie Reitt agreed that two issues of the *BELS Letter* should be devoted to the Web site. This fall issue highlights Jan Jerrells's outstanding article explaining how to navigate the BELS Web site (<http://www.bels.org>). Jan is our Webmaster, having replaced Patti Wolf, who gave birth to the site. Also included is a Sidebar on how the site came to be. The site is up and running, but you will have to wait until the winter 2000 issue of the *BELS Letter* to read about the site's impact, particularly on the BELS certification examination, and users' thoughts on the subject.

But first, many thanks are in order. As you know Norman Grossblatt, President of BELS for many years, has stepped down, being replaced by Bobbie Reitt. At the 8th annual

meeting of BELS held in Montreal, Norman thanked many persons who worked so tirelessly over the years with him to build BELS into the organization that it is today. Norman's complete remarks open this issue of the *BELS Letter*. Laissez les bon temps roulez!

Ann Morcos, MA, ELS



You CAN Get There from Here

The Guest Editor, Ann Morcos, asked me to write an article for the *BELS Letter* describing the BELS Web site (<http://www.bels.org>), including what is posted there and how to navigate the site. Many of you are seasoned Web surfers and therefore may find this information "old hat". However, the Executive Council has discovered that many BELS members are not using the BELS Web site often or comfortably. We don't know why, but we guess that many of you may be new to Internet access.

The information I provide here—tips for moving around and accessing the information on the BELS Web site—is especially for novices, but perhaps it includes a pearl or two for the veteran BELS Web surfer as well. You will understand these instructions better if you have the BELS Web site open on your computer while you read.

When you arrive at the BELS Web site, bear in mind that you'll have some very basic decisions to make:

- What format to choose to view the contents.
- What topics to read about or search for to find answers.

It will also be helpful to know that some topics are in the public area of the site, but others are available only in the Members-Only area. As I describe these, I also explain the use of the various navigational tools or hyperlinks that help you move forward, back, and within the site and to related sites on the Internet.

HOW TO GET THERE

When you arrive at the BELS Web site (<http://www.bels.org>) you can gain entry to the crux of the site by choosing one of

two formats for viewing: **Text only** or **Frames Version**. Both paths lead to identical information. Your choice is a matter of personal preference and one that is likely to be based on your computer, Internet mode of access (e.g., modem, cable), Web browser (e.g., Netscape Communicator, Internet Explorer), browser version, time, interest, and patience. Try both to see which works best for you.

Text only is text only, that is, no fluff—just the stuff. **Text only** is designed for users who want information in the quickest manner with the least amount of interruption or delay—thus the word-only format with no background or graphics to load before you can read the information you seek.

However, you may prefer to have a little visual stimulation added to the information you're about to peruse. Your modem speed or cable access may provide rapid loading and downloading of information, so time may not be an issue in your search. And you might like the added advantage of being able to view the index to the site while viewing the topic you have chosen from this index. In this case, you'll probably like the **Frames Version**.

When a page of the BELS Web site opens in the **Frames Version** format, two frames (regions) are visible, side by side, on the user's computer screen: One displays the index (or hyperlinks to take the user directly to the topic of interest), and the other displays the topic of interest (the Web page to which the hyperlink has taken the user). In contrast, in the **Text only** format, the Web page appears as a single, open page, and the index (or hyperlinks) within the site appears at the top or bottom of the page.

Hyperlinks are words set apart from regular text by color, underlining, or graphics (or combinations thereof). These distinguishing characteristics provide cues to users, so they can recognize a hyperlink or navigational tool to take them from point A (current location in the site) to point B (desired location in the site). Thus, the words **Text only** form the hyperlink to the next level of the BELS Web site through the first viewing format. This hyperlink will likely appear green and may be underlined (or not, depending on your Web browser). In turn, the words **Frames Version** form the hyperlink to the site through the second viewing format.

At this point, you need to choose a viewing format and thus gain entry into the next level of the site. You do this by "clicking" the hyperlink for the format of your choice (i.e., by placing your cursor on the hyperlink and clicking your mouse). In some systems, the cursor changes shape (e.g., into a pointing hand) when it passes over a hyperlink.

WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET

It's important to emphasize that no matter which format you choose for viewing the BELS Web site, you'll gain access to identical information. Table 1 displays the available topics (and I've listed them as they are titled in the respective formats—

Text only: top of page, left to right; **Frames Version:** left-hand frame, top to bottom).

Table 1.
Topics on the BELS Web Site (Public Area)

Text only	Frames Version
Home*	What is BELS?
What is BELS?	Executive Council
Executive Council & Committee Members	Search the Database
Certification Information	Certification Information
Diplomate Program	Diplomate Exam
Search the BELS Database	Related Sites
Related Links	Members Only
Members-Only Area	FAQ
Frequently Asked Questions	

*Actually "Home" is a navigational tool, rather than a topic of interest.

Now you simply need to determine what topic or area is of interest to you and then use the various navigational tools to get you to that topic or discover more about the site. Both formats default (or open automatically) to the topic **What is BELS?**

What is provided in the first four topics in the **Text only** version—**What is BELS?**, **Executive Council & Committee Members**, **Certification Information**, and **Diplomate Program**—is fairly clear from their titles. These are the current contents of the brochures we provide to examination candidates and new members. We update the list of officers as needed.

Search the BELS Database allows users to search for BELS members and thus for board-certified life-sciences editors who can provide related editorial services on their projects. Active (dues-paying) BELS members may place an ad in this area and thus have their background and credentials, as well as the services they provide, reviewed and considered by potential clients. (The procedure for placing a member ad on the site is explained in more detail later. Note that the search does not yield the names of all members—just those who have chosen to place an ad.) Within the topic description you'll find directions on how to

- View the database.
- Search for advertising members on the basis of geographic location, areas of expertise, services provided, and media.

One of the nice features of this section (thanks to how Patti Wolf and Donna Perry [see Sidebar] set this up) is that advertising members can maintain their ad without help from the Webmaster. They're given a username, password, and Web address for direct access to their ad, and thus they can keep their information current and ensure its accuracy. Of course, the Webmaster is available for queries and troubleshooting. There is no charge to dues-paying members for the

use of this resource.

Related Links provides a list of helpful Internet resources. The resource names are set up as hyperlinks, so that the user can quickly move from the BELS Web page to the Web site and Web page of interest. (See Bobbie Reitt's article in the upcoming winter issue of the *BELS Letter* on a favorite Internet resource.) This list is likely to grow and change to reflect current information and user needs. If you have suggestions for additions, please submit them to me.

The **Members-Only Area** and its topics will be discussed in more detail later. Unlike the previous 6 topic areas, however, this area is not open to the public. Information in this area pertains to and involves BELS members only. Thus, you need a username and password to access this area.

Frequently Asked Questions, or **FAQ**, offers helpful tips if users experience any problems in navigating the BELS Web site, including what to do if they experience difficulty in accessing the **Members-Only Area**.

Home is included in **Text only**, and it serves as a tool to take the user to the main BELS Web page and thus the decision point of choosing a format for viewing the site.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE SITE

Integral to your navigating the BELS Web site is knowing that the mechanism for movement to, from, back to, and within the site is the hyperlink. How the hyperlink looks and where it is will depend on the format through which you are viewing the site and the rationale for the hyperlink (e.g., to move from topic to topic, to provide a mechanism to send an e-mail message to the Webmaster or fellow BELS member, to fill out a change-of-information form for the BELS Directory and submit it to the BELS Secretary). Hyperlinks on the BELS Web site are words or a combination of words and graphics.

Hyperlinks to the 8 main topics on the BELS Web site (see Table 1) are displayed conspicuously, but how they look and where they are once again vary with the viewing format you've chosen. Other hyperlinks and thus tools for navigating and using information on the site are embedded in topic text or at the end of a form, table, section of text, or Web page. You'll recognize these hyperlinks because they are words or a combination of words and graphics and distinguishable by being in a color other than text black (and in some browsers they'll be underlined). Examples include **Top of Page**, **click here**, and **Fill out the form**.

In the **Text only** format, hyperlinks to the 8 main topics are the title words of the respective topic. These 8 hyperlinks are clustered at the top of a given page, as shown in Figure 1.

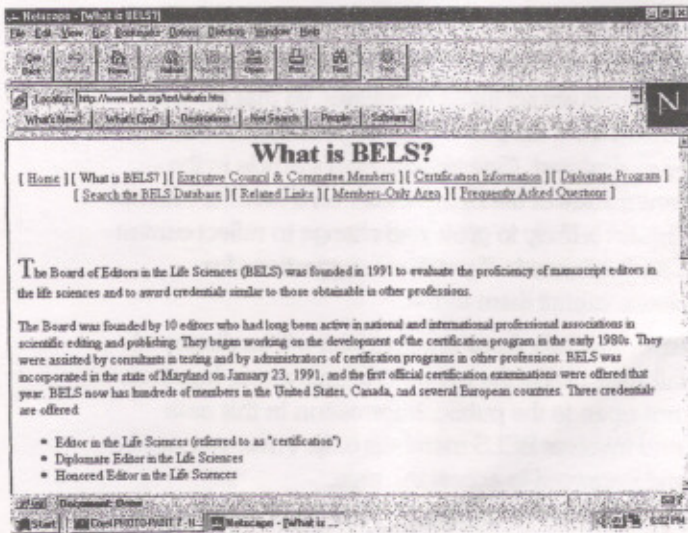


Figure 1. Text Only Hyperlinks on the BELS Web Site (Public Area)

You can go back and forth among topics simply by clicking on the hyperlink of your choice from the cluster. Within certain topics (e.g., **Certification Information**) there are hyperlinks embedded in text to take you to a subsection of information or a form.

In the **Frames Version**, you'll see two frames or regions on a given BELS Web page, as shown in Figure 2.

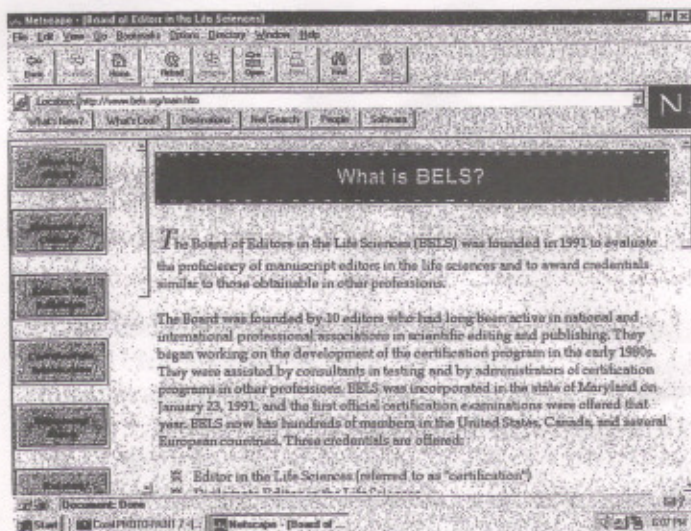


Figure 2. Frames Version Hyperlinks on the BELS Web Site (Public Area)

The frame to the left provides the index to the site, as well as the hyperlinks to the various topics. The hyperlink in the **Frames Version** is a combination of words and graphics. By

clicking on the graphic-word hyperlink, you move to the respective topic, and it is revealed in the right-hand frame. Again, as in the **Text only** format, other hyperlinks are embedded in text or occur at the top or bottom of a page.

Depending on what Web browser you're using, what browser version you have, and the size of your computer screen, you might also have scroll bars that can assist in navigation: one or two for the left-hand frame and one or two for the right-hand frame for, respectively, vertical or horizontal movement within the frame.

MEMBERS-ONLY PLEASE

To access the BELS Web site area reserved for active BELS members, you simply click on the hyperlink to that area. But in contrast with what happens in the public area of the site, here you'll be prompted (through a dialogue box superimposed over the page) to enter your username and password. (**Helpful Hint:** Both should be entered entirely in lowercase letters.) You might be prompted to enter your username and password a second time after gaining entry to this area. Don't be concerned about this. If it occurs, it is likely related to your system or browser. If you cannot supply your username and password, access will be denied. We don't maintain a list of passwords, so if you lose yours, you'll have to choose a new one.

All active members should already have a username and password. New members are contacted by the Webmaster, after their contact information is entered in the Web site membership directory, and asked to provide a password. The Webmaster assigns the username. Inactive members who become active members and members who have forgotten their username, password, or both can contact the Webmaster to set up this information.

After your username and password are accepted, entry defaults to the page titled **Members-Only Area**. On that page you'll find a brief description of this area.

The **Members-Only Area** of the site has 6 topics of interest to BELS members (see Table 2; topics are listed as they are titled in the respective formats—**Text only**: top of page, left to right; **Frames Version**: left-hand frame, top to bottom).

As in the main part of the BELS Web site, the title words for these topics are hyperlinks to the topics. In the **Text only** format, the hyperlinks to these topic pages are displayed at the top of the given page, as a sublayer to the hyperlinks to the main area of the BELS Web site. In the **Frames Version** format, they're included in the left-hand frame index, along

Table 2. Topics on the BELS Web Site (Members-Only Area)

Text only	Frames Version
Advertise Your Services	Members Only*
Membership Directory	Bylaws
Job Listings	Membership Directory
Members' FAQ	Job Listings
Bulletin Board	Advertise Yourself
Bylaws	Bulletin Board
	Members' FAQ
	Main BELS Page**

*Default page after access to the Members-Only Area is authorized.
 **Actually, "Main BELS Page" is a navigational tool, rather than a topic of interest.

with two other hyperlinks: **Members Only** and **Main BELS Page**.

As with the topics in the main BELS area, the topic titles for the **Members-Only Area** describe their basic contents. The **Advertise Your Services** section tells you how to go about placing an ad on the site, and as mentioned earlier, this ad can be viewed in the public area of the site through the hyperlink **Search the BELS Database**. Employers interested in hiring life-sciences editors can, for a fee, post open positions within their organization on the BELS Web site in **Job Listings**. Many of these employers list BELS certification as a "preferred" job requirement.

The **Membership Directory** lists every active BELS member in alphabetical order with the contact information they provide and want listed. Name; credentials; mailing address; day and evening telephone numbers and fax number; e-mail address; Web URL; and areas of expertise by subject are the possible fields of information. A change-of-information form can be submitted electronically to the Secretary of BELS by accessing the "**CLICK HERE**" hyperlink at the bottom of the **Membership Directory** page on the site.

Members' FAQ provides answers to questions related to navigating the **Members-Only Area** of the site, and the **Bylaws** tell you everything you'd want to know about how BELS works and is set up.

The **Bulletin Board** was set up so that members could post information or queries to fellow BELS members related to editing in the life sciences. We have learned that the Bulletin Board is insecure from unwelcome intruders, so it has been dismantled, and a replacement system is being evaluated. In the meantime, members can still post messages for (and receive replies from) fellow members very easily through the BELS ListServ by sending their query by e-mail. Simply address a regular e-mail message to **members@bels.org**—

no need to go to the Web site to do this. Note: Only BELS members can post to this list.

NEVER ENOUGH WAYS TO GET THERE

Hyperlinks appear in different ways on a page. Hyperlinks can maximize your efficiency in navigating the site. I'll use one of the pages within the **Membership Directory** in the **Text only** format to illustrate how this works.

In the **Text only** format, the hyperlinks at the top of the **Membership Directory** page for members whose names begin with L through Z appear as shown in Figure 3. What might not seem obvious is that several of these hyperlinks can help you accomplish the same task: getting the information you need in the most efficient manner. Thus, let's continue with this example in the **Text only** format:

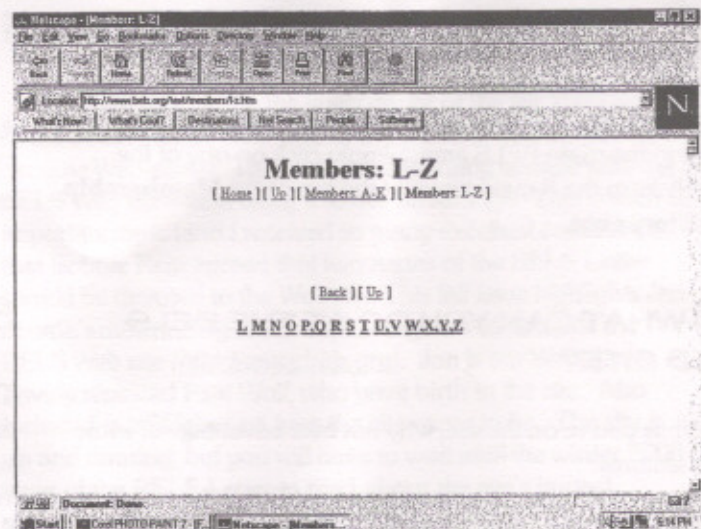


Figure 3. Text only Hyperlinks in the Membership Directory, Members: L-Z

- If you mistakenly clicked on a hyperlink to this page but you want to find contact information for a member whose last name begins with C, click on the hyperlink **Members: A-K** in the middle of the upper row of hyperlinks. This will take you to the correct page to search for the member's information. You can also get to the **Members: A-K** page by clicking on the hyperlink **Back** in the lower row of hyperlinks (and if you're on the **Members: A-K** page and want to move to the **Members: L-Z** page, you can click on the hyperlink **Next**).
- If you're on the **Members: L-Z** page and you want to obtain contact information for a member whose last name begins with R, you can click on the **R** in the lower row of hyperlinks. This will take you to the beginning of the category R.
- If you'd like to return to the main **Membership Directory** page, simply click on the hyperlink **Up**.

You can also take advantage of the **Top of Page** hyperlink when you find yourself buried deep in the list of member contact information and want to return to the beginning of that page. Such a link exists at the end of each alphabetical letter category.

While you're checking the contact information for members, notice that each e-mail address (if available) is a hyperlink. When you click on that hyperlink, a blank e-mail message frame opens, and your intended recipient's e-mail address appears in the "To" line of the frame. Some members also have a personal Web site, which is hyperlinked to take you directly to that site.

Now that, in the example with the **Text only** format, you've moved (by using the **Up** hyperlink) from the **Members: L-Z** page to the **Membership Directory** page, you can easily return to the main BELS area. Simply click on one of the hyperlinks to the 8 main topics at the top of the **Membership Directory** page.

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO AT THE BELS WEB SITE?

While you're on the site, why not take advantage of some of its features?

- Learn more about the ins and outs of BELS through the **Bylaws**.
- Conduct BELS business—for example:
 - Send an e-mail to a fellow member about sharing a room at the next AMWA conference or CSE meeting.

- Obtain a username and password for access to the **Members-Only Area** of the site (or request new ones if you've forgotten yours).
- Become familiar with the contents of the **Certification Information** section and help recruit potential BELS members (information about what they need to apply, examination schedules, and a helpful checklist are among the materials for use).
- Post an ad in the BELS database of life-sciences editors.
- Review **Job Listings** posted by employers who are interested in hiring life-sciences editors.
- Submit to the Secretary a change-of-information form for the Membership Directory if you've moved, changed e-mail addresses, added a fax, etc.
- Explore the **Related Links**.
- Print a topic, so you can review it later. (**Helpful Hints:** If you're using the **Frames Version** format and want to print a topic, be sure your cursor is in the right-hand topic frame, not in the index/hyperlink frame. In addition, in some Web browsers a Windows user can right-click the mouse and choose Print.)

Visit the site, and please visit often. Let me or other Executive Council members know if there's other information you'd like to see on the site. Don't hesitate to contact me if you're having any difficulties navigating the site. (Click on the hyperlink **Webmaster**, which is sprinkled throughout the site.) However, bear in mind that like the other BELS officers, I'm a volunteer. Thus, I may not be able to respond to your query immediately, but I will get back to you. Enjoy!

Janice Jerrells, RN, ELS
Three Forks Editorial Consultants
BELS Webmaster

Acknowledgment

My sincere thanks to Bobbie Reitt and Patti Wolf for their critique and comments on this article.

SIDEBAR

The BELS Web site would not exist, nor stay viable and useful, without three key players: Patti Wolf, MS, ELS (Wolf Publications, Inc.), Donna Perry (DPDesigns), and Janice Jerrells, RN, ELS (Three Forks Editorial Consultants).



Patti gets credit and accolades for the site design (and site maintenance, until she trained Jan Jerrells to take over as BELS Webmaster). As Jan notes, "Thanks to Patti, the technical part of my job as Webmaster is relatively easy." Patti speaks to the origins of the BELS Web site and how Donna Perry became part of the BELS family:

At the 1996 AMWA annual conference, at a bar one evening after the main day's events were concluded, a great idea was born (as often happens at such gatherings!). Then-President Norman Grossblatt; my husband and fellow BELS member, Ron; Miriam Bloom, Gil Croome and other BELS members bandied about the idea of a Web site for BELS. We fleshed out the "bare bones" of what the site should contain, and I volunteered to create and maintain the site.

It took us more than a year to get the first site up (mainly because this was a volunteer job and I had to squeeze it in among other tasks). I'm indebted to a couple of my former employees who spent countless hours working on the early versions of the site. Norman, Ron, and Kendall Sterling (another BELS member) acted as beta testers while we got everything working on the site. The site debuted in early 1998, and in March of that year, we transferred the site to its current host, DPDesigns, and Donna Perry became part of the team.

Without Donna, as the Web host through DPDesigns, there wouldn't be a BELS Web site. As Donna so pleasantly and nontechnologically explains, "DPDesigns provides a server to give the BELS domain an Internet address, as well as a place for the BELS site and information to sit and thus be viewed on the Internet." Besides keeping the server up and running and providing the space for our site, Donna occasionally

assists with some of the more technical aspects of site maintenance.



Earlier this year, I made the decision to resign as Webmaster. My career has taken another path (I primarily teach business and computer applications at the undergraduate level these days), and I no longer felt I had the time required to devote to the BELS site. Jan Jerrells volunteered to take over, and we spent the

summer transitioning the site from my computer and brain to her capable hands. It was a challenge at times because we were working long distance, primarily through e-mail, and I sometimes found it difficult to articulate my thought processes to someone else. Jan has done a wonderful job taking over the reins and brings new enthusiasm to the position.

The site has been revised numerous times since its debut, but the basic goals are still the same:

1. To provide a place where BELS members (who are located all over the world) could gather and exchange ideas and information.
2. To advertise BELS to potential employers and potential BELS members.

I enjoyed my part in the creation of the BELS site and hope to watch it evolve into an even more valuable resource.

**We All Must
"Pay Our Dues"**

Well, it's not as solemn as it sounds. This is just a reminder that dues notices will be sent out in December for the fiscal year 2000-2001.



BELS Examination Schedule

Date	City & Association	Registration deadline
19 March 2000	Asilomar, CA, AMWA Asilomar	5 March
25 March 2000	Newark, none	11 March
6 May 2000	San Antonio, CSE	22 April
20 May 2000	Tours, France, EASE	6 May
7 November 2000	Miami, AMWA	23 October

For more information, write to Registrar, BELS, PO Box 8133, Radnor PA 19087-8133

BELS Letter

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Radnor PA 19087-8133

