

# The **B E L S** Letter

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## **New president takes helm at BELS meeting**



Mary Ann Schmidt, ELS, became president of BELS at the organization's annual meeting in Austin, Texas.

**By DONNA TILTON, ELS**

The BELS annual meeting took place in Austin, Texas, on Monday, May 21, at Moonshine Patio Bar & Grill. The restaurant was a short walk from the hotel where the Council of Science Editors meeting was being held.

Once at the restaurant, we were shown to our own private small building. I guess they did not realize that we were quiet editor types and were afraid we would be too rowdy. The small side building, called the Sunday House, was rustic and quaint, with rough-hewn beams and stucco walls. Dinner was wonderful, starting with their signature "corn dog" shrimp and ending with a fabulous apple pie with maple ice cream.

Kim Berman, as the outgoing president of BELS, gave the treasurer's report and diplomate registrar's report. BELS is doing well financially. Most of the discretionary budget last year was

Continued on page 2

## —BELS annual meeting—

From page 1

spent in redesigning the Web site, which has several new features and is easy to use. (If you have not logged on lately, you should.) We have one new diplomate, Jane M. Krauhs, ELS(D). Congratulations, Jane! Leslie Neistadt gave the registrar's report. Seven exams have been given in the past year, and 61 people took the test. Forty-one passed, for a passing rate of 67%. (See the complete list of newly certified BELS editors on pages 6-8.)

Kim's final act as outgoing president was to hand over the gavel to our new president, Mary Ann Schmidt. Kim gave an interesting and cryptic introduction of Mary Ann, pointing out that she likes to participate in local theatrics and Harry Potter dress-up parties. The cryptic part was a couple of terms Kim gave that have meaning for Mary Ann but that she did not elaborate on: Underdogs and Rainy Day Women.

As always, the BELS annual meeting dinner allowed members to dine in interesting company and share their editors-in-the-trenches stories. The conversation at the table where I was sitting ranged from politics to literary figures of Mississippi to heart muscle cells to tattoos and piercings. (I don't recall anyone at the table admitting to having the latter, but since Mary Ann was sitting at the table, it was likely that at least one of us did.)

The annual BELS meeting is a great place to meet other BELS



At left, outgoing BELS President Kim Berman introduces the organization's new president, Mary Ann Schmidt. Below, longtime BELS members Chris Wogan, left, and Karen Phillips, enjoy the camaraderie of the annual meeting.



members. We all have much in common, and it makes for a congenial and convivial atmosphere. Anyone who will be in the Vancouver area

for the meeting next year should make every effort to attend a great evening.

# Listserv links BELS members by e-mail

Among the benefits available to supporting members of BELS is the organization's listserv, or automatic mailing list server.

We are happy to see members use it for their grammar, writing, and ethics questions and to discuss editing challenges.

The BELS listserv is available to allow e-mail communication and an exchange of ideas between BELS members. When e-mail is addressed to the listserv, it is automatically

broadcast to everyone on the list.

Listserv access is restricted to supporting BELS members (i.e., dues-paying members of BELS). Postings are not to be distributed or shared outside the listserv community. E-mail postings on the BELS listserv must be related to our focus (i.e., editing). Listserv e-mail postings must not be promotional or commercial in nature, and they cannot include employment or freelance opportunities.

Inappropriate language and personal attacks are not allowed. Violations of these simple guidelines will result in removal from the BELS listserv. Please keep in mind that every posting you make to the listserv will appear as an e-mail for every subscriber to the list.

If you are not already on the listserv, send an e-mail request to [webmaster@bels.org](mailto:webmaster@bels.org) and get in on the action.

## BELS Executive Council

BELS is governed by elected and appointed officers who constitute the Executive Council. Its activities are administered by these officers and the members of the committees they direct.

Note: Numbers in parentheses are years when terms of office end.

### Officers (Elected)

President—Mary Ann Schmidt (2007-2009)

President-Elect—To be determined in 2008

Immediate Past President—Kim Berman (2007)

Secretary—Donna Tilton (2007)

Treasurer—Nancy Wachter (2008)

### Officers (Appointed)

Councilor for Certification Examination

Development—Susan E. Aiello

Councilor for Diplomate Examination Development—Norman Grossblatt

Registrar and Councilor for Examination

Administration—Leslie E. Neistadt

Registrar and Councilor for Diplomate Examination

Administration—Nathalie Turner

Councilor for Appeals—Carol A. Kakalec Kohn

Councilor for Nominations and Elections—Kim Berman

Councilor for the BELS Letter—David Galloway

Councilor for Website Management—Kim Berman

### Committees

Certification Examination Development—Susan Aiello (Chair)

- Leslie E. Neistadt
- P. Lynne Stockton

Diplomate Examination Development—Norman Grossblatt (Chair)

- Miriam Bloom
- Elizabeth L. Hess
- Laurel Derks Prokop

Certification Examination Administration—Leslie E. Neistadt (Chair)

- Kim Berman

Appeals—Carol A. Kakalec Kohn (Chair)

- Gil C.R. Croome
- Grace Darling
- Susan Eastwood
- Maria Essig

Member Relations—To be determined

Public Relations—To be determined

Nominations and Elections—Kim Berman

BELS Letter—David Galloway (Editor)

### Liaisons with Allied Organizations

American Medical Writers Association—Norman Grossblatt

Council of Science Editors—Norman Grossblatt

# Web site redesigned

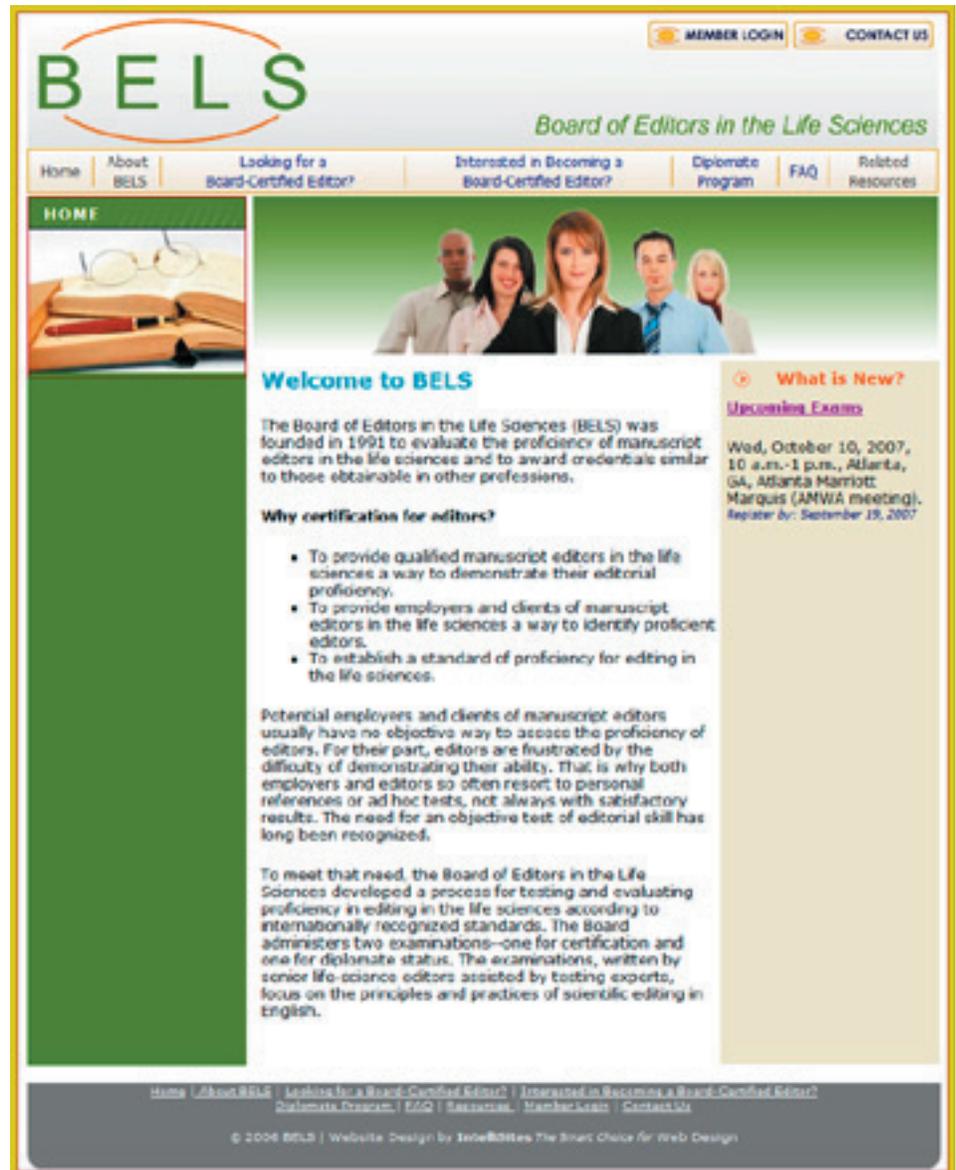
By **KIM BERMAN, ELS**

One of my goals for my tenure as BELS president was to revise and update our Web site. If you go to <http://www.bels.org>, you'll see the new and improved version of our site.

We are working on the Members Only and Freelance Ads sections to automate all changes to your contact information across the site, enabling you to simply make changes to one page and have them reflected across the site. This effort will take a few more weeks, but we hope to have the automated process up and running shortly.

Recent improvements have made dues payments and the annual meeting/dinner planning possible through the site as well. This will help us to reduce mailing costs for BELS and reduce your need to send us checks or money orders for dues payments. This will also allow us to accept credit card payments from our U.S.-based members (something we have not been able to do in the past).

This has been a time-consuming and effort-filled process, but I have been helped immensely by Jan Jerrells (the past BELS secretary), Mary Ann Schmidt (our new president), Nancy Wachter (our



treasurer), the whole BELS Executive Committee, and the doyen of BELS Web-based issues, Dawn McCarra Bass. Many, many thanks to them for their hard work

and great suggestions on how to improve our site.

Enjoy the new site and please send feedback! I will be updating you as we reach our next milestone.

## What's news with you? *The BELS Letter* wants to know

Do you have news that you would like to share with your fellow BELS editors?

Promotions, relocations, marriages, children? Seminars you've

attended? Books you've read that you think others should read too?

We want to hear about it all. Send your news to David Gallo-way, editor of *The BELS Letter*, at

[belsletter@bellsouth.net](mailto:belsletter@bellsouth.net). If you prefer snail mail, send it to David Gallo-way, Mail Stop 765, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 335 N. Lauderdale, Memphis, TN 38105.

# Calendar

September 26–27, 2007

American Association of Dental  
Editors

Annual Meeting  
San Francisco, California

October 10, 2007, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

BELS examination

Atlanta, Georgia  
Atlanta Marriott Marquis

October 11–13, 2007

American Medical Writers  
Association

67<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
Atlanta, Georgia  
Atlanta Marriott Marquis

October 11–14, 2007

Plain Language Association  
International

International Conference  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands

October 19–23, 2007

National Association of Science  
Writers

Annual Meeting  
Spokane, Washington  
Davenport Hotel

November 4–7, 2007

National Council of University  
Research Administrators

49<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
Washington Hilton

May 16–20, 2008

Council of Science Editors  
2008 Annual Meeting  
Vancouver, British Columbia,  
Canada  
Hyatt Hotel

## An ode to the exquisite en dash

**By CHARLOTTE SEIDMAN**

*(With sincere apologies to any  
poet in the audience)*

I may not be as well-known as  
my siblings,  
I may not even be as understood.  
But I can tell you, editors,  
I'm really just as good (if not  
better).

I have my place in punctuation  
It's very plain to see;  
If you choose not to use me  
Then the problem isn't me.

Big brother is an em dash,  
Little sis is called a hyphen;  
They may be much more famous  
But my meaning you can siphon  
(if you really pay attention!).

By reading from the style guides  
You'll find that I can do

A lot of lovely little things that  
My siblings aren't entitled to.

I can give a range to years,  
I can also range the ages,  
I can join two separate but  
equals,  
And can even range the pages.

I can act like a minus,  
I can take the place of "to",  
And can join compound  
adjectives  
When one's composed of two  
(words, that is).

You can say that I'm too small  
(about half the size of brother)  
And that I really shouldn't  
matter.

But don't forget the bottom  
line—

I'm exquisite! It's true!

And if you use me properly  
You'll feel the same way, too.

May 17, 2008, 1–4 p.m.

BELS examination  
Vancouver, British Columbia,  
Canada  
Hyatt Hotel

May 1–3, 2008

American Society of Indexers  
2008 Annual Meeting  
Denver, Colorado  
Warwick Hotel

October 22, 2008, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

BELS examination  
Louisville, Kentucky

October 23–25, 2008

American Medical Writers  
Association  
68<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference  
Louisville, Kentucky

October 24–28, 2008

National Association of Science  
Writers  
Annual Meeting  
Palo Alto, California

November 2–5, 2008

National Council of University  
Research Administrators  
50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting  
Washington, D.C.

# New BELS members

New BELS members include the following:

• **Exam 85 on October 25, 2006, in Albuquerque, New Mexico:**

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## —New BELS members—

From page 6

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### • Exam 86 on March 2, 2007, in Orlando, Florida:

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### • Exam 87 on April 15, 2007, in Pacific Grove, California:

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W. Kevin Meisner, PhD, ELS (2007)  
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### • Exam 88 on April 27, 2007, in Kingston, Ontario, Canada:

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### • Exam 89 on May 4, 2007, in Seattle, Washington:

Lauren Baker, PhD, ELS (2007)  
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Continued on page 8

## —New BELS members—

From page 7

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Laura Singer, MS, ELS (2007)

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Trudy Schlumberger Stewart, DDS,  
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Jeannette Tomanka, MS, NP-C,  
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• **Exam 90 on May 19, 2007, in  
Austin, Texas:**

Gordon W. Brumbaugh, DVM,  
PhD, ELS (2007)

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Kasie Cole-Edwards, PhD, ELS  
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### Errata

The Erratum in the July 2006 issue of *The BELS Letter*, which attempted to correct a flawed new member listing in the February 2006 issue, contained additional incorrect information. The editor is humbled.

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\* \* \*

The list of BELS diplomates in the July 2006 issue of *The BELS Letter* was incomplete. The omitted diplomates were:

- Nancy A. Hemphill, ELS(D)
- Debra G. Share, ELS(D)

### BELS and Whistles

We are closing in on 700 members. As of the last exam, we now have 692 BELS-certified editors.

\* \* \*

Watch for a profile of BELS in the next *AMWA Journal* (September issue).