

The

# BELS Letter

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## Smart With a Light Heart

### BELS President Loves to Sing, Wants to Renew Sense of Community

*By Don Harting, MA, ELS, Managing Editor*

Those who know her well describe Mary Anne Mitchell as a smart, successful, and light-hearted woman who loves songs and Shakespeare. As managing editor of *Critical Decisions in Emergency Medicine*, Mary Anne produces a 24-page monthly publication for the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) in Dallas, Texas. She worked her way up at ACEP over the past 25 years, and now has the pleasure of collaborating with an editorial board whose members include physicians from Duke, Harvard, and Stanford. Her newsletter teaches emergency department docs how to make split-second, life-or-death decisions when caring for patients with heart attacks, strokes, burns, gunshot wounds, and more.



But when she's not on deadline editing serious copy for equally serious adrenaline junkies, Mary Anne loves to lighten up. She does so by swinging a hammer for Habitat for Humanity, painting a house as part of a citywide beautification campaign, singing Christmas carols, or going ballroom dancing.

Whenever she and her friends encounter adversity, Mary Anne can be relied on to lighten the mood. In fact, her musical qualities seem to blossom in adverse situations. For example, one day she and her friends attended an outdoor concert in a beautiful garden setting, but it began to rain. As bedraggled members of the orchestra packed their instruments to leave the stage, Mary Anne and friends huddled under umbrellas waiting for the shower to stop and the concert to resume, singing every rain-related song they could think of, starting with "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head." Nearby concertgoers joined in, and the rain delay ended up being great fun.

# Presidential Agenda

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Then there was the time a taxi full of ACEP staff and conference attendees became lost while travelling the streets of Las Vegas. Mary Anne and friends led everyone in the cab – including the Middle Eastern driver – in a rousing rendition of “Tomorrow” from *Annie*.

Last but not least, Mary Anne is known for using her love for verse by the Bard of Avon to fight back against the oppressive Texas heat. During July and August, Mary Anne and friends organize a party they call “Shakespeare in the Pool.” Guests gather in bathing attire in the back yard of a friend’s house. After drawing names from a hat, they jump in and begin to read their parts while holding the script above the water in one hand and a wine glass in the other. No allowance is made for gender -- so a woman might read the part of demented King Lear, or a man might read ditzy Ophelia. After an intermission, roles are swapped, and virile Antony might suddenly morph into seductive Cleopatra. Under these conditions, even a bloody tragedy like *Titus Andronicus* becomes comical.

Mary Anne took office as BELS president during the annual meeting in Montreal in May. Here’s a sense of how she hopes

to increase the vitality of our organization.

**Q: What’s your main goal as you start your term?**

A: I want to ensure that we keep moving forward. I want to make it easier for the people who do the heavy lifting, like Leslie Neistadt, our registrar, and Rick Weisburd, our development councilor. I want BELS to continue to produce an excellent certification exam in a way that is efficient and effective.

**Q: Why did the Executive Council decide to bring the newsletter back?**

A: My gut says it would be a good thing. In addition to certification, there is value to creating a sense of community, which we seem to have lost.

**Q: But is a newsletter really necessary? We haven’t had one since 2009, and yet we’ve continued to add members all around the world and the organization is financially healthy.**

A: It’s true that the newsletter cannot be considered central to our mission, which is to develop and administer the exam. However, in addition to enhancing employability, the ELS designation should add value by making the person who

holds it part of a community. We used to have a discussion list, but that’s been gone for a while now. Currently there is no way for BELS members to know they are not sitting out there alone with the ELS after their name.

**Q: What else do you hope to accomplish as president?**

A: We are considering adding an administrative assistant for the registrar, and we plan to upgrade the BELS Web site to include a search capability for the membership directory and the ability to accept credit card payments. Just as we are reviving the newsletter, we want to bring back the discussion list and also raise awareness of the Executive Council award [see page 7]. We encourage BELS members to gather locally or regionally to supplement the 2 nationwide meetings we hold each year, during the CSE and AMWA conferences.

**Q: BELS has some money in its savings account. What projects are being considered by the Executive Council?**

A: Upgrading the BELS Web site will take some of those funds, and if it’s decided that we need to add an administrative assistant, that will take

*continued next page*

## Agenda, cont'd.

a bit, as well. We have lots of ideas of ways to make the exam better. One is to use commercial test centers; another is to provide the exam electronically. Perhaps we might do both. This

could actually save us money. Recently I had to fly to Indiana on short notice to help give an exam in person because a local proctor could not be found. Using technology might enable BELS to offer the exam in more locations, more frequently, perhaps even on demand.

## NEWS FLASH

BELS is sending a reporter to cover the 7th International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication, September 8 to 10. Look for updates on the BELS Facebook page and on Twitter at #prc7.

## Executive Council Update

By Linda Kesselring, MS, ELS  
BELS Secretary

The BELS Executive Council met on Tuesday, 7 May 2013, at the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth in downtown Montreal, following the annual conference of the Council of Science Editors. Topics on the day-long agenda included the schedule of certification exams, the development of new exam questions, the possibility of using test centers instead of proctored exams, and renewed publication of *The BELS Letter*. The fact that you are reading this newsletter reveals the outcome of one of those discussions.



Members of the BELS Executive Council 2013-2014 include (left to right) Norman Grossblatt, Donna Tilton, Rick Weisburd, Mary Anne Mitchell, Jane Krauhs, Linda Kesselring, Susan Aiello, and Leslie Neistadt. Mary Ann Schmidt and Karen Phillips were unable to attend the meeting in Montreal.

# BELS Members Recommend

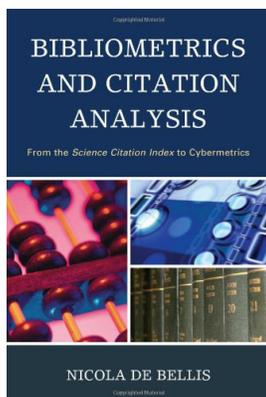
Section edited by Elisa Becze, ELS

As editors, the written word is our life. For many of us, books on topics both personal and professional speak to us, helping us sort through problems and understand strategies that enable us to better edit our publications, or they allow us to escape from the rigors of the job and reinvigorate on a personal level. Below, two BELS members share some of the books they've encountered that do just that. And, we're looking for more. If you have a book you'd like to recommend to your BELS colleagues, email me at [ebecze@ons.org](mailto:ebecze@ons.org).

**Mark Vrabel, MLS, ELS**

*Bibliometrics and Citation Analysis: From the Science Citation Index to Cybermetrics*  
by Nicola De Bellis

As stated in the preface, De Bellis intends to "make citation analysis a less unfriendly subject" and succeeds admirably, given its rather complex nature. The book provides a comprehensive introductory treatment of the history, theory, and application of citation analysis. I was particularly interested in the final chapter about cybermetrics, or the Web citation structure based on hyperlinks. De Bellis notes the inherent advantages of markup languages and the way they allow readers to move from a cited work to its full-text version via electronic journals and databases. Google Scholar and



Scopus are noted as examples of competitors to ISI products. Various ranking algorithms and systems are discussed for Web pages in general. A section on citations in e-journals and open archives draws attention to a fundamental problem; a selection criterion for sources used in the book was "free online availability," but obviously any true examination of publishing metrics should not be restricted to free sources, considering the massive number of electronic publications only available to paid subscribers.

Note: The text above is an excerpt from my full review at [doi:10.1188/09.ONF.734-735](https://doi.org/10.1188/09.ONF.734-735)

*After Dark* and *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*  
by Haruki Murakami

Although I read more current books as well, I chose these two by Murakami because during the summer of 2013 I was regularly listening to the audio version of *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running* while – you guessed it – running. This led to me want to read his novels – *Af-*

*ter Dark* traces a series of chance encounters among Tokyo nighttime denizens. The entire story takes place between 11:56 PM and 6:52 AM, as documented by the first and last chapter titles. But with prose that is at times



ornamented with symbolism, and scenes for which the narration sometimes uses a shared point of view

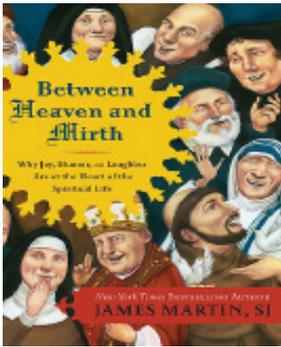
with the reader ("We see..."), Murakami delivers a captivating work. He explores memory and the subconscious and the association with immediate reality, darkness/light or nothingness/life, and actions and consequences – the central event connecting all characters is an abusive act committed on a Chinese prostitute at the Alphaville love hotel.

Note: My full review of *After Dark* can be found at [www.goodreads.com/markev](http://www.goodreads.com/markev).

Lyn Camire, MA, ELS

*Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter Are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life*  
by James Martin, SJ

As the blurb on Amazon says, Martin understands the often comic intersections be-



tween spirituality and daily life. This author has a gift for living in the real world while showing us how eternal truths tend to show up in it. His leisurely investigation results in much surprise and delight for the reader. This book will be a cherished oasis for those editors who may be striving for perfection, thinking it is something always out of reach.

## Twitter Update

By Don Harting, MA, ELS

BELS hosted its first tweet chat in August, using the Twitter handle @BELS\_Editors. Our hourlong chat followed a 31-day series of tweets on competence. BELS members from Florida, Illinois, India, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Texas took part. Skim the transcript at #cmwesm.



## Tools of the Trade

By Dave L. Chance, MA, ELS

Stedman's *Words* series is designed mostly for transcriptionists, court reporters, and other wordsmiths who need to check a word without much interest in its definition, but medical editors will find the series quite useful. These books do not provide definitions of medical terms. What they do nicely is provide medical wordsmiths with correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and derivations of specialized medical terms. The *Words* series now has at least 22 titles in various editions for a variety of medical specialties, available in softcover or CD-ROM. Stedmans.com has them priced at approximately \$46 each.

Editors will find the *Words* books most useful as a quick way to check the spelling and hyphenation of eponyms and proprietary names. Each book is cross-referenced in a main entry-subentry index-style format, which allows the user to see lists of words that contain a common descriptor. For example, "Barlow syndrome" can be found under "Barlow," and "Barlow s." is included under "Syndrome." Each book defines common acronyms pertaining to its subject matter.

Each *Words* book includes an appendix section with helpful quick reference material related to the book's specialty area. These include sample reports, anatomic illustrations, classification systems, equipment lists, drugs, etc.

There are a few discrepancies between *Words* titles and other Stedman's reference books, and one may find the occasional disagreement between *Words* volumes. These mismatches are rare and probably attributable to edition variations.

Editors whose work focuses on a specific area of medicine will find the applicable *Words* book a very convenient and easy reference.

# BELS Welcomes Our Newest Members !

**Exam #130**  
**Sacramento, CA**  
**October 3, 2012**

Kristi Boehm, MS, ELS  
 Spring, TX

Kecia Brown, MPH, ELS  
 Washington, DC

Ron Keller, ELS  
 Urbana, IL

Peggy P. Li, PhD, ELS  
 Alhambra, CA

Helen Londe, MD, ELS  
 Berkeley, CA

Matthew McKeehan, MA, ELS  
 Tokyo, Japan

Lauren Murata, PhD, ELS  
 Tucson, AZ

Varsha Ramanathan, PhD, ELS  
 Ringoes, NJ

Chris Small, ELS  
 Clayton, CA

Martin J. Spiering, PhD, ELS  
 Gaithersburg, MD

Robin W. Switzer, MS, ELS  
 Ames, IA

**Exam #131**  
**Mumbai, India**  
**November 25, 2012**

Anuradha Alahari, PhD, ELS  
 Caen, France

Niket Bhodia, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Candice D'Costa, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Marisha Fonseca, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Vyoma Joshi, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Shazia Khanam, PhD, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Rahul Mahale, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Christine Miranda, MSc, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Anusha Murali, MSc, ELS  
 Thane, India

Nikhil Philip Pinto, MSc, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Nazzia Sayed, MSc, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Supriya S. Shanbhag, MSc, ELS  
 Dombivli, India

Abhinav Pratap Singh, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Aarti Subramanian, PhD, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

Reshma Talreja, MSc, ELS  
 Mumbai, India

**Exam #132**  
**Atlanta, GA**  
**February 16, 2013**

David Boffa, ELS  
 Atlanta, GA

Jennifer Casper, MLS, ELS  
 Medina, OH

Dave L. Chance, MA, ELS  
 Salt Lake City, UT

Karyn L. Hede (MS, MA) ELS  
 Chapel Hill, NC

Stephanie Lenyear (MPW, MS)  
 ELS  
 Raleigh, NC

Lilly Ostrovsky, MS, ELS  
 Lake Hiawatha, NJ

Nicole Parker, ELS  
 Norcross, GA

Amanda Perkerson, ELS  
 Smyrna, GA

Mary Risinger (PhD) ELS  
 Cincinnati, OH

Diana E. Talag, MS, ELS  
 Princeton, NJ

Heather Tomlinson, MA, ELS  
 Atlanta, GA

Brandy Weidow, MS, ELS  
 Nashville, TN

**Exam #133**  
Perth, Australia  
April 9, 2013

Donna Armstrong, ELS  
Dural, NSW, Australia

Kathlein Hawkins, PhD, ELS  
Hazeldene, VIC, Australia

**Exam #134**  
Pacific Grove, CA  
April 28, 2013

Barbara Ustanko, MA, ELS  
San Francisco, CA

**Exam #135**  
Montreal, QE  
May 4, 2013

Mary K. Billingsley, ELS  
Silver Spring, MD

Michiel B. Dijkstra, PhD, ELS  
Lausanne, Switzerland

Danielle Gelinas, PhD, ELS  
Cambridge, ON, Canada

Sarah Ghorpade, MSc, ELS  
Kitchener, ON, Canada

Nicole Klemas, ELS  
Jackson, NJ

Crystal Smith, ELS  
Madison, WI

Agnes A. Zarkadas, ELS  
Oak Park, IL

**Exam #136**  
Indianapolis, IN  
June 8, 2013

Nola N. Clarke, PhD, ELS  
San Pablo, CA

Linda Conheady, ELS  
Elmhurst, IL

Tina Morwick, PhD, ELS  
Carmel, IN

Clint Smith, ELS  
Philadelphia, PA

## Editorial Update

An editorial focus group met in August in suburban Philadelphia to discuss ways to revitalize *The BELS Letter*. The group was held in the home of Don Harting, MA, ELS, managing editor. Focus group participants were selected from among active BELS members who live nearby and who completed a preliminary survey.

Following a delicious dinner cooked by Don's wife, a wide variety of creative, interesting, and even humorous ideas were suggested. In addition, several challenges were identified and discussed. Future issues of *The BELS Letter* will benefit from the many thoughtful ideas and discussions.



Follow @BELS\_Editors on Twitter!

## Let BELS Help You

Twice each year, the Executive Council will reimburse one BELS member up to \$US500 of the costs associated with attending, in person or online, a professional meeting, workshop, or other qualifying activity. The event must be attended by July 31 of the year following receipt of the award. To be eligible, an award candidate must have an ELS or ELS(D) designation and be an active BELS member. The awardee must submit registration receipts and other expense receipts for reimbursement within one month after the activity. Receipts received after the deadline are not eligible.

Candidates may complete and submit the interactive form on the BELS website, or download a PDF version of the form, print it out and mail it to the address given. Awardees are encouraged -- but not required -- to submit a report about the activity to *The BELS Letter*.

# Upcoming BELS Exams

Date	Location	Meeting	Register by
October 19, 2013	Seoul, South Korea		September 28, 2013
November 6, 2013	Columbus, Ohio	AMWA	October 16, 2013
December 1, 2013	Mumbai, India		November 10, 2013
May 3, 2014	San Antonio, Texas	CSE	April 12, 2014
June, 2014	Split, Croatia	EASE	TBA
September 24, 2014	San Antonio, Texas	AMWA	September 3, 2014
October 21, 2015	Memphis, Tennessee	AMWA	September 30, 2015

## Thank You, Proctors

The following people deserve our gratitude for serving as volunteer exam proctors:

Jack Aslanian, Charlotte Baptista, Jon Blanding, Roohi Ghosh, Norman Grossblatt, Julie Henderson, Reg MacIntyre, Mary Anne Mitchell, Carla Morris, Leslie Neistadt, Kathie Stove, Rick Weisburd, Mimi Wessling, Mary Ann Wojcik.

New volunteer proctors are welcome and should contact Leslie Neistadt at [neistadt@slu.edu](mailto:neistadt@slu.edu).

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 Managing Editor  
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 Downingtown PA 19335-1602