

The **BELS** Letter

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Anomaly or Trend?

2014 Shaping up as Good Year for Diplomates

By Don Harting, ELS, CCMEP
Editor

An uptick has been observed recently in the number of BELS members who have risen to the level of master editor by attaining diplomate status. According to figures from Leslie Neistadt, BELS registrar, only 27 people have achieved this distinction in the 23 years BELS has been in existence, for an overall rate of slightly more than 1 new diplomate annually. This year, however, 3 BELS members have succeeded in achieving diplomate status, and 4 months remain on the calendar. Moreover, the first BELS member from India to achieve diplomate status did so during 2014.

"The numbers are still small, but we hope this signifies a trend," Neistadt said. "We want to encourage people to consider the diplomate program."

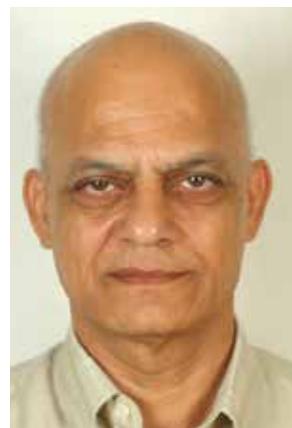
BELS offers 3 credentials aimed at recognizing professional excellence, as follows: Editor in



Bailey



Eliason



Joshi

the Life Sciences, ELS; Diplomate Editor in the Life Sciences, ELS(D); and Honored Editor in the Life Sciences, ELS(H). The first 2 designations are achieved through an application and review process. The 3rd designation is conferred by the Executive Council to recognize distinguished editors.

According to Donna Tilton, a member of the Executive Council, 1,157 people have passed the BELS exam since it was first

offered in 1991. This means less than 3% of those who have become certified have gone on to achieve diplomate status. Only 4 people have achieved honored status.

"Thrilled to bits," is how Yateendra Joshi, ELS(D), described his feelings upon receiving notice in June of his successful candidacy. Joshi works as a freelance copy editor and teacher who divides his time between the World Institute for Sustainable Energy in Pune and Cactus Communications in Mumbai.

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India has become an important source of new BELS members since the first exam was given in Mumbai in 2008. For example, 15 people passed the exam in Mumbai in December 2013. Joshi said he was motivated to take the next step up the BELS ladder by a desire to see how his skills compare with those of editors outside India and by his hope to win more and better-paying authors as clients. A major obstacle he overcame was to obtain enough samples of substantive editing for his candidate portfolio.

"Another obstacle, which turned out to be imaginary, was the concern about differences between US English and UK English," Joshi wrote in an email. "What I edit usually calls for UK style, and I was apprehensive lest it should be considered unacceptable by BELS examiners."

To be eligible for diplomate status, a candidate must have been certified for at least 2 years and be able to document at least 6 years of editorial experience. The first step is to apply for candidacy and pay a \$50 application fee. Once admitted, the second step is to submit a portfolio of edited material with a statement of circumstances surrounding the editing. A \$150 evaluation fee is required. Candidates must also submit 2 short essays on topics selected from a list provided by BELS. An example of a winning essay is published elsewhere in this issue.

"I like to write, so the essays were fun," said Jo Ann Eliason, MA, ELS(D), whose candidacy was

also approved in June. Her major obstacle was procrastination. The communications manager for the Journal of Neurosurgery Publishing Group in Charlottesville, Virginia, kept putting off the task of assembling her portfolio until just weeks before expiration of her 3-year candidacy period. When she finally did so, it took her less time than she expected. As a way to showcase her editorial prowess, Eliason selected an article on radiation physics that had been written by foreign authors.

"Be yourself," Eliason advises other diplomate candidates. "Have faith in what you're doing. Go with your normal writing style. My husband asked me after I submitted my portfolio why I sent in something funny. I told him, 'People have to read this. Let's make it a little bit enjoyable.'"

Misty R. Bailey, MA, ELS(D), a science editor at the University of Tennessee, received notice of her success in March. Like Joshi, Bailey was certified in 2008 and eager to move up the ladder quickly. For her portfolio she selected 2 journal manuscripts as well as a large table from a scientific poster. Her essays addressed copyright and rebutting criticism. Now she is enjoying the payoff: Having diplomate status enables Bailey to instill more confidence in her editing abilities among new faculty members.

"When you are thinking of applying," Bailey advises, "also start thinking of each editing piece as a potential submission piece, and go ahead and ask permission from those folks while it is still fresh in your mind."

Blinded Portfolio Reviewers Deserve 'Special Gratitude'

Requirements for achieving diplomate status have changed over the years. The founders of BELS conceived of the diplomate program early on, but could not focus on it until after the certification examination had been written and tested. Initial drafts of various structures and models were written by the late Susan Eastwood, ELS(D), and the late Martha Brookes, MS, ELS(D).

The diplomate assessment has relied solely on a portfolio evaluation since 2003. According to Barbara "Bobbie" Reitt, PhD, ELS(D), the original diplomate exam consisted of 3 parts -- the portfolio, an oral examination, and a written test. "We soon saw that the oral was unnecessary and of course impossible to blind, and so we dropped it," Reitt, one of the original 10 BELS founders and now retired, recalled in a recent email interview from her home in Northampton, Massachusetts. "Later, in 2002, we decided also to drop the written part as well; it had proven too costly to administer and also seemed unnecessary."

Due to blinding requirements, all diplomate portfolio examiners must remain anonymous. In Reitt's view, these volunteers deserve special gratitude for doing a thankless job. "It's not only a time-consuming task but a challenging one," Reitt wrote, "...especially if someone has to be told they've failed."

So Who Holds Copyright, Anyway?

By Jo Ann Eliason, MA, ELS(D)

Editor's note: Jo Ann submitted this essay as part of her diplomate portfolio.

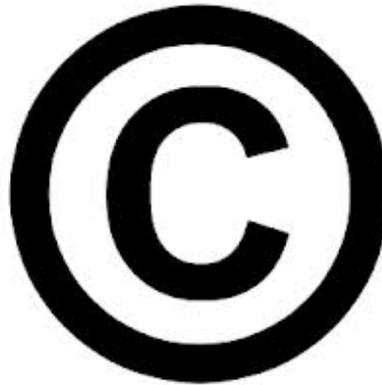
Imagine you're working as an editor for an oncologist who wants to reuse a figure from a previous publication in an upcoming book chapter. The oncologist is the author of the original paper, which was published 15 years ago in a small subspecialty journal. What do you do? Obviously, the fastest approach is to ask your author whether he owns copyright to the figure as well as to the article in which it appears. The response is quick: "It's my research, my figure, my article—I'm the copyright holder." That would seem to end the discussion, but of course it doesn't. There remain some questions to consider both about authorship and retention of copyright.

Rule of thumb is that authors hold copyright to their work from the time they first saved their document to the computer "in fixed form." Authors do not have to register their work with the US Copyright Office, and indeed they do not have to publish their work at all to hold copyright on it. This copyright ownership remains with the author until such time that he transfers it to another person or entity (such as a publisher).

As with most rules, there are exceptions. And it's exceptions that keep editors up at night. To ensure that no one needs to obtain

permission to reproduce the figure from an as-yet-unknown copyright holder, it is wise to verify that the author does indeed hold copyright to the figure. You can ask the author direct questions or first do a little preliminary research with the aid of the author's CV and the Internet.

Does the author recall transferring copyright to the publisher of the journal? Chances are he doesn't remember. If he doesn't, check the Author Instructions on the journal's home page to see if



authors are required to transfer copyright in exchange for publication of their papers. If authors are allowed to retain copyright, you should double-check with the journal's editorial office that this policy was in effect 15 years ago. Many publication policies have been changed during that time period, and some changes may not be retroactive.

Good news! The publisher of the journal allowed authors to retain copyright 15 years ago. You could leave it at that or follow the little nagging voice in your head and ask a couple more questions to ensure that the new paper will proceed to publication without a hitch.

What was the author's work status 15 years ago, when the work was done? If the author worked for a private company when he conducted the research and wrote the paper, it is likely that copyright to the paper and figure belongs to the company—that is, as long as the work was part of the author's normal work duties. If the author was an independent contractor working for a corporation, this may also be true, depending on the wording of his contract. In both cases, we are talking about a "work made for hire," in which ownership of copyright falls with the employer.

On the other hand, if the author worked for the federal government at that time and the work he did was part of his normal work duties, no domestic copyright protection exists. In none of these cases can the author consider himself the copyright holder. In the first two cases, permission must be obtained from the "employer" company, which truly holds copyright on the paper; in the last case, there is no copyright to worry about, as long as the figure will be included in a journal published in the United States. (Little-known fact—the US government can claim copyright protection when its works are reproduced in other countries.) Either way, it is appropriate to credit the paper in which the figure first appeared. Usually this is done in the figure legend, although some publishers place illustration credits in an acknowledgments section.

Good news! The author was working at the University of _____ at the time the paper was submitted to the publisher. In keeping with the academic spirit of

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the university, the author appears to hold copyright to the paper and its contents.

Who created the figure? One last nagging question: Did the author create the figure or did someone else do it for him years ago? If the author created the figure and he never transferred copyright elsewhere, then he clearly holds copyright. If someone else created the figure, “Who owns copyright?” depends on the contract between author and illustrator at the time the figure was commissioned. If the illustrator created the figure as a “work made for hire”—similar to the employer–employee relationship—the author holds copyright to the figure. However, if the illustrator prepared the figure and licensed the finished product to the author, the illustrator retains copyright and permission must be obtained to allow the figure’s reproduction. Of course, this means that an erratum notice may have to be created for the paper published 15 years ago to credit the proper copyright holder for the figure.

Whew! All these questions are asked with the notion that the original paper was published in the United States. If not, it’s wise to check with copyright laws in the country in which the figure was first created. Either way, it is time to sit the author down for a long talk on who owns copyright to “his” work and how this is not always a clear-cut issue.



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BELS Members Gather in San Antonio

By Linda Kesselring, MS, ELS
BELS Secretary

Fifteen BELS members got together in the vibrant city of San Antonio, Texas, in early May for the annual BELS Membership Dinner, held in conjunction with the conference of the Council of Science Editors. We found our way to the Iron Cactus Mexican Grill & Margarita Bar, right along the colorful River Walk, shown above. Hope Lafferty, from Nashville, and Kirsten Vaughan Ketner, from St. Louis, made the arrangements for us, and we raised our glasses to their wonderful choice of venue. We had come from distant American cities—Portland, New York, St. Louis, Washington, Atlanta, Memphis, Baltimore, Minneapolis—but Rick Weisburd won the prize for greatest distance traveled. There’s no competing with Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan. After enjoying a delicious dinner, Leslie Neistadt, BELS Registrar, and Rick, Councilor for Exam Development, gave us an overview of BELS experiences overseas.

The next day, we attended sessions at the CSE conference or explored the lively city. Mary Anne Mitchell and I took a leisurely boat tour and were not shy about requesting the senior discount.

On Tuesday, the BELS Executive Council got to work, taking up residence in a meeting room at the Marriott for about 8 hours. We all had a role in our full agenda, which included a discussion about the purpose and production of *The BELS Letter*, a careful review of the budget, and consideration of hiring a management company to handle administrative details such as meeting planning and website development. We heard a detailed report from the committee that has reviewed the certification exam and received its recommendations for modernizing our tracking of the use of questions and the development of new questions. The Council decided to sponsor a booth at the AMWA conference in Memphis in October and started to think about how we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of BELS.

All in all, a fun and productive time for BELS folks in San Antonio!

Journal Editors Meet in Philadelphia

By Jan Higgins, PhD, ELS

The International Society of Managing and Technical Editors (ISMTE) held its 2014 North American meeting in Philadelphia from August 14–15. The Committee on Publication Ethics held a full-day meeting at the same location on August 13.

Highlights of the ISMTE meeting are listed below:

- a keynote panel discussion featuring Kent Anderson, CEO/publisher for the *Journal of Bone & Joint Surgery* and its parent company STRIATUS, and founder of the *Scholarly Kitchen* blog; Matt Giampoala, executive journals editor for John Wiley & Sons; and Jason Roberts, senior partner of Origin Editorial and ISMTE past president, discussing the state of the art and profession
- breakout sessions on handling appeals, the publishing landscape in China, editor-in-chief transitions, how to conduct research as an editorial office professional, working with the production department, navigating policy, a spreadsheets workshop, freelancing, Publishing 101, submission-system vendor presentations, and a session on peer-review evaluation
- a panel discussion on various types of transitions that a journal may face and how to make informed decisions
- a poster session, a speed networking session, and an exchange forum where attendees had the opportunity to ask provocative questions and receive answers from their gathered peers

During the meeting's General Session, Robert Bazell, former chief science correspondent for NBC News, spoke about reporting on science in the media. A full report will be posted at www.ismte.org.

Let BELS Help You

Twice each year, the Executive Council will reimburse one BELS member up to \$US 500 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 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 to submit a report about the meeting they attend to *The BELS Letter* to help update colleagues on industry trends and events.

Members Elect Next BELS President

This past April, BELS members elected Thomas Gegeny to the office of president-elect. Tom will serve in this capacity for 1 year, immediately preceding a 2-year term as president. He will round out his 4-year commitment by serving 1 year as immediate past president.

Tom is employed with the Envision Pharma Group, a medical communication and publication agency in the New York City area. He serves as a senior scientific team leader across several pharmaceutical product-related medical publication plans. He holds a master's degree in biomedical sciences from the University of Texas. The Connecticut resident attained ELS certification in 1999.

Tom is a fellow and former president of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA). Tom currently co-leads AMWA's commission on medical writing certification, which plans to administer its first examination in the fall of 2015.



Tom Gegeny

BELS Welcomes Our Newest Members!

Exam #145
Split, Croatia
June 13, 2014

Analisa Weston, ELS
Seville, Spain

Exam #144
Indianapolis, IN
June 6, 2014

Sarah W. Felde, ELS
Fishers, IN

Anne Goebel, MA, ELS
Indianapolis, IN

Karen Kassel, PhD, ELS
Olathe, KS

June Oshiro, PhD, ELS
Rochester, MN

Kurt Spurlock, MA, ELS
Durham, NC

Exam #143
San Antonio, TX
May 3, 2014

Elizabeth Arnold, ELS
Charlottesville, VA

Helen Chifotides, PhD, ELS
Bryan, TX

Barbara Jovaisas, ELS
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Alicia Kellogg, MA, ELS
Albuquerque, NM

Raymond Lambert, MLS, ELS
Durham, NC

Angela Morben, DVM, ELS
Minnetonka, MN

Michael Quance, PhD, ELS
Houston, TX

Cheryl Strauss, ELS
Clarkston, GA

Scott Wessels, ELS
Minneapolis, MN

Exam #142
Pacific Grove, CA
April 27, 2014

Rachel Becker, ELS
Boston, MA

Jill Covert, DVM, MS, ELS
Davis, CA

Kimberlee D'Ardenne, PhD, ELS
Stanford, CA

Cordelia J. Fuller, MA, MS, ELS
New York, NY

Maria G. Malzone, MS, ELS
Glen Cove, NY

Laura Niven, PhD, ELS
Santa Cruz, CA

Kristin Pearson Fuhrhop, PhD, ELS
Tustin, CA

Exam #141
Orlando, FL
March 9, 2014

Victoria L. Jackson, MLIS, ELS
Jacksonville, FL

From Our President

Question from a BELS member:
"I'm not sure what benefit I will get from paid membership or what I will lose if I don't pay. Can you please advise before I make a decision?"

Answer from Mary Anne Mitchell:
You ask a good question! We believe that our function is, first and foremost, to develop and administer the certification exam. Once you pass the exam, you reap the primary benefit of the organization.

That said, there are other benefits. We recently revived our newsletter, which is now available to all members. We hope it adds the benefit of "connection." Many of us work in rather solitary settings, and we want our newsletter to provide a sense of community.

Additionally, as a supporting member, you receive notification about and have access to our jobs listings and to a directory of other board-certified editors. You would also be eligible for the Executive Council Award – a \$500 stipend to support attendance at professional meetings. Finally, there's the somewhat esoteric benefit of knowing that your support helps us to continue to improve the exam and to provide a way for editors to demonstrate their competence.

On a personal note, connecting with other editors, as I have through volunteering with BELS, has made me a better editor.

I hope you decide that all this is worth \$25.

Tools of the Trade

A Review of Beall's List

By R. Michelle Sauer, PhD, ELS

With the advent of online journals, the last 10 years have yielded an explosion of new titles for authors to consider when submitting manuscripts. Unfortunately, many of these new journals are more focused on profits than on quality science and peer review.

Jeffrey Beall, an academic librarian at the University of Colorado, publishes *Scholarly Open Access*, a website dedicated to reviewing open-access journals. Within a section of his website you will find an alphabetical listing of journals Beall considers to be predatory. Beall reviews their editors and staff for conflicts of interest, their business management practices, and other integrity benchmarks. Hundreds of publishers and journals are listed on his naughty list -- the section of titles beginning with the letter *A* contains more than 70 entries.

Beall also maintains an active blog on this site, where he brings relevant topics to light. For example, a recent blog post raised questions about conflicts of interest in journal articles about cancer drugs. According to Beall, some of the people involved in researching the drug are also involved in selling it.

Authors and editors alike should pay close attention to Beall's regularly updated website. In the academic world, tenure decisions are often weighted

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Nota Bene

Brittany Moya del Pino, MA, ELS, has moved from Bethesda, Maryland, to Kailua, Hawaii, on the island of Oahu. She plans to continue working with current clients as well as expand her work in the area of children's science publishing.

Don Harting, ELS, CCMEP, is now a director of medical education at MCM Education in Newtown, Pennsylvania, where he develops strategy for accredited learning activities in oncology and other therapeutic areas.

Linda Kesselring, MS, ELS, in the Department of Emergency Medicine, University of Maryland, and **Mary Anne Mitchell, ELS**, in the Publications Department, American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), are pleased to announce another fine collaboration, manifesting as the textbook *Cardiovascular Emergencies*, to be published by ACEP in October. The book was edited by Amal Mattu, MD, professor of emergency medicine at the University of Maryland. Linda served as authors' editor and Mary Anne as managing editor.

Still working for the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), **Mary Anne Mitchell, ELS**, has left her 15-year position as managing editor of *Critical Decisions in Emergency Medicine* to take on new duties working

with ACEP's Clinical Policies Committee.

Barbara Ustanko, GPC, ELS, has joined the staff of the Berkeley Research Development Office at the University of California, Berkeley, where she works extensively with faculty in the biobehavioral and environmental sciences on the crafting of major research grant proposals to federal agencies.



Aptitude Health in Atlanta, Georgia, benefits from the services of 3 women who are ELS certified and who also roller-skate under fierce-sounding aliases with the internationally ranked Atlanta Rollergirls. Pictured left to right in this photo are **Trudy Stoddert, ELS** (Hurtie Gertie), who hired and trained **Amanda Perkerson, ELS** (Cobra Camanda), and **Heather Tomlinson, MA, ELS** (The Merchant of Menace).



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Upcoming BELS Exams*

| Date (2014 unless noted) | Location | Meeting | Register by |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| September 27 | Seoul, South Korea | none | September 6 |
| October 8 | Memphis, Tennessee | AMWA | September 17 |
| December 14 | Washington, DC | none | November 23 |
| May 16, 2015 | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania | CSE | April 25, 2015 |
| September 30, 2015 | San Antonio, Texas | AMWA | September 9, 2015 |

* Please visit www.bels.org for updates and more information.

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Have You Visited www.bels.org Lately?

A variety of interesting job openings have been posted in the recent past:

- Senior scientific editor in Memphis, Tennessee
- Regulatory and scientific communications scientist in West Lafayette, Indiana
- Managing editor, emerging infectious diseases journal in Atlanta, Georgia
- Associate editor/senior editor for university health system in Baltimore
- Senior scientific grant writer/ editor in Houston, Texas
- Proposal developers (3) at a university in Champaign, Illinois



Connect with BELS on LinkedIn!

Thank You, Proctors

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

Jennifer Ballinger, Jon Blanding, Cynthia Chapman, Hope Lafferty, Leslie Neistadt, Patti Raley, Anita Wentley, Mimi Wessling

New volunteer proctors are welcome and should contact Leslie Neistadt at neistadt@slu.edu.

Beall's List *continued*

by the number and quality of a candidate's publications. Tenure committees could use the list when reviewing candidates.

As board-certified editors, we should encourage authors and journals to avoid practices described on Beall's List. Visit this website soon and share it with your colleagues: <http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>

Dr. Sauer is a research assistant professor at the University of Houston, Texas, and a freelance scientific writer.