



Founded 1951

# American Name Society *Bulletin*

## *In This Issue*

2023 Names of the Year	1
ANS Has a New VP!	2
ANS Bylaws Revisions	2
And the Winner is. . . 2023 NAMES Best Article of the Year Award	2-3
An Interview with the Winner of the 2023 Best Article of the Year Award	3-4
<i>Names: A Journal of Onomastics</i> Reviewers Needed	4
Call for Proposals: High Desert Linguistics Society Conference	4-5
In Memoriam: Honoring the Legacy of ANS Members	5
ANS Executive Council 2023 End-of-Year Reports	5-10
2024 ANS Executive Council	11-13

## 2023 Names of the Year

On January 4, 2024, during a special online session, the American Name Society met to discuss the nominations it had received for the Name of the Year. As in each year, the nominations were judged on the basis of their demonstrated ability to influence language use and capture national attention. The meeting was officiated by ANS President, Laurel Sutton, and ANS Information Officer, Brandon Simonson.

This year's winners are presented below:

- Personal Name of the Year: **Swiftie**
- Place Name of the Year: **Gaza**
- Brand Name of the Year: **ChatGPT**
- Artistic/Literary Name of the Year: **Barbenheimer**
- E-Name of the Year: **X**

Each of the above category winners became automatic contenders for the overall Name of the Year. In addition, nominations were taken from the floor. After much discussion and two rounds of voting, two nominees tied for first place. The two winners of the 2023 Name of the Year are **Barbie** and **Gaza**.

More information about the category winners can be found here: <https://www.americannamesociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/NOTY2023-Press-Release.pdf>. A detailed report about all of this year's nominees and winners can be found in the first issue of *NAMES* 2024.

## ANS Has a New VP!

ANS's Information Officer, Brandon Simonson, will now serve as Vice President of the ANS. Members voted to elect Simonson Vice President, effective immediately, during the General Business Meeting at the 2024 ANS annual conference in February. We welcome him to this new position and are grateful for his leadership.

## ANS Bylaws Revisions

In 2023, a sub-committee of ANS Executive Council (ANS-EC) was formed to review the Society Bylaws.

The primary purpose of the revision was three-fold:

1. to update the pre-existing policies so that they conform with current practices,
2. to formally draw-up the new policies that had been officially ratified by the ANS over the course of 2023, and
3. to correct any errors in content and organization discovered.

In December 2023, the voting members of the ANS-EC were presented a report on the sub-committee's findings and a set of recommendations. In January 2024, the voting members of the ANS were sent ballots to vote on the sub-committee's recommendations. The ballots were tallied by ANS Secretary, Star Vanguri. The ANS-EC was unanimously in favor of the sub-committee's proposal. In accordance with Article III, Section 2, c. (5) of the ANS Bylaws, the aforementioned petition was therefore carried on January 8, 2024. The ANS General Membership was informed about results of the vote and a detailed report by the sub-committee was posted on the ANS website on January 15, 2024.

During the General Business Meeting at the 2024 ANS annual conference, a final vote on the ANS-EC-approved Bylaws was taken and the recommendations were approved.

## And the Winner is... 2023 NAMES Best Article of the Year Award

This winter, the members of the *NAMES* Editorial Board cast their vote to determine the best articles that appeared for 2023. The articles are judged on the following factors: scientific innovation, academic writing style, research methodology, and overall potential to make a significant and lasting contribution to the field of onomastics research.

After the votes were tallied, three articles were given the highest ratings across these four criteria.

The paper that was awarded 3rd place was "A Case Study of De-Russification of Ukrainian Hodonyms: Rigged Trial or Justice Restored?" by Oleksiy Gnatiuk and Anatoliy Melnychuk of the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv in Ukraine [*NAMES* vol. 71, no. 4: 40-55]. Coming in 2nd place was "Using the ANPS Typology to Unearth the Relationship Between Japanese Sign Language (JSL) Endonymic Toponym Distribution and Regional Identity" by Johnny George of Meiji University, Department of Political Science and Economics, Tokyo, Japan [*NAMES* vol. 71, no. 3 :1-19].

Finally, the 2024 Winner of Best Article of the Year was "A Change of Name During Sickness': Surveying the Widespread Practice of Renaming in Response to Physical Illness" by Russell Fielding of HTC Honours College and Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, Coastal Carolina University, Conway, South Carolina, USA [*NAMES* vol. 71, no. 2: 11-28].

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On behalf of the *NAMES* Editorial Board, I would like to congratulate Russell Fielding for this outstanding academic achievement. Many thanks to all of the *NAMES* Board members for not only their participation in this democratic process, but also their invaluable contributions to *NAMES* and the ANS as a whole.

I. M. Nick

## An Interview with the Winner of the 2023 Best Article of the Year Award



In an e-interview with *NAMES* Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Russell Fielding graciously answered questions about his research and being chosen as the 2023 winner of the *NAMES* Best Article of the Year Award.

**Your work is uniquely interdisciplinary. What would you say are some of the rewards and challenges of this approach?**

I like to tell my students that the world is interdisciplinary. This project on name-changes was outside my normal area of research but, perhaps because of that, was exciting since it challenged me to learn more about anthropology and ethnography as well as research methods and world regions that were new to me.

In terms of rewards, I've found that working across disciplines allows us to see connections and come up with ideas that might be elusive if we stay within the narrow confines of our fields. On the 'challenges' side, though, since it's impossible to read everything written and to gain expertise in every field, we have to accept that working across disciplines often means constantly needing to bring ourselves up to speed on newly integrated topics. It can be exhausting, but in a good way!

**Can you recommend any references for scholars and students interested in the intersection between names and geography?**

One that I have found the most useful is the website, [native-land.ca](http://native-land.ca), which is run by a Canadian nonprofit that aims "to create and foster conversations about the history of colonialism, Indigenous ways of knowing, and settler-Indigenous relations." On the website, the boundaries of indigenous lands are overlain atop a map of modern borders and placenames. By zooming in on a particular place, users can see the overlap of indigenous and settler geographies and will often recognize names with which they're familiar. For example, I live near the coast in South Carolina. From [native-land.ca](http://native-land.ca), I have learned that many of the local placenames (e.g. Winyah, Pee Dee, Waccamaw) that I know from the names of landforms, highways, businesses, etc., originated with indigenous peoples who lived in this area before colonization.

**Who was the first person you told about receiving this award?**

I texted my wife, Diane, immediately. She was at the grocery store buying ingredients to make one of our family's favorite meals: homemade pizza. Her response was that we should eat pizza and celebrate!

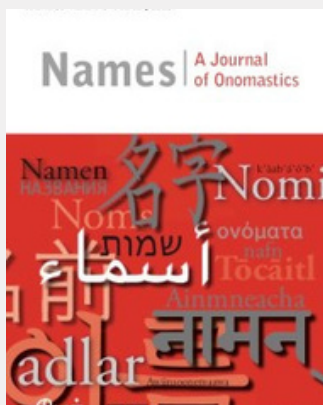
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On behalf of the *NAMES* Editorial Board, I would like to congratulate Dr. Fielding for his outstanding academic achievement. I would also like to thank the *NAMES* Board members for not only their work in selecting this year's winner, but also for so generously donating their time and expertise to *NAMES* and the ANS at-large.

## ***NAMES: A Journal of Onomastics***

### Reviewers Needed!

*NAMES: A Journal of Onomastics* is currently seeking onomasticians to join its Editorial Board of Reviewers. Persons selected will be responsible for assessing ca. two



manuscript submissions per month and for helping to select the winners of the *NAMES* Best Article of the Year award. Although newcomers to the Board may represent any area of onomastic research, there is a critical need for investigators with one or more of the following areas of specialization:

- Asian languages and literatures
- Middle Eastern languages and literatures
- Statistical methods of analysis

Interested applicants are asked to complete and submit the form found here:

<https://nick662.typeform.com/to/P6dzaz>.

## **Call for Proposals**

### High Desert Linguistics Society (HDLS 16)

November 1- 3, 2024

The 16th biennial High Desert Linguistics Society will take place from Friday, November 1st, through Sunday, November 3rd, 2024 at the University of New Mexico. The theme of the conference will be “Harmony in Diversity: Innovative Approaches to Language Variation and Change.”

#### **Submission instructions:**

##### General Requirements and Guidelines

- Abstracts for 20-minute papers and for posters must be submitted electronically on EasyAbs.
- Authors are allowed one single-author submission, but there is no limit on the number of co-authored submissions.
- Presentations must be delivered by one or more of the individuals listed as an author on the originally submitted abstract.
- Papers and posters must be delivered as projected in the abstract or represent bona fide developments of the same research.
- Presenters must complete registration at the time of the conference to present.
- Abstracts will be rated based on how well the abstract outlines the research questions/hypotheses, methodology, findings, and relevance of the work to the theme of the conference, another topic in linguistics, and/or related fields (anthropology, psychology, sociology, and education).

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## Information about the 'Best Student Abstract' Travel Award

- All single-author abstracts submitted by students traveling from out of town are considered for the 'Best Student Abstract' travel award
- The award is \$200 and may be used for travel-related expenses.

## Abstract Format Guidelines

- Abstracts must be submitted in PDF format.
- Abstracts may be submitted in English, Spanish, Portuguese, or ASL.
- For abstracts submitted in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, the main text for each abstract must be no more than 500 words and fit on one page. An optional second page may be used for the presentation of linguistic examples, plots, figures, tables, other diagrams, and references. Margins may be no smaller than 1/2 inch and font no smaller than 10 points. Do not identify yourself in any way on the abstract itself or the name of the file.
- For abstracts submitted in ASL, the video must be no more than 4 minutes. The video should be uploaded to a secure, private location (i.e., Dropbox, OneDrive, or Google Drive), with a link submitted in the .pdf document in lieu of the full written abstract. The author(s) should also include on this page: any linguistic examples, plots, figures, tables, other diagrams, as well as references. Do not include your name or affiliation in the video abstract.
- On the abstract submission form, you will also be asked for a short version of your abstract (max 100 words). We will use this shortened abstract in the conference handbook.

**Submissions open:** Jan. 24, 2024 - June 1, 2024

**Abstract review period:** June 1, 2024 - Aug. 1, 2024

You can submit an abstract here:

<https://easyabs.linguistlist.org/conference/HDL16>.

## In Memoriam: Honoring the Legacy of ANS Members

Beginning in the early 1950s, the American Name Society is one of the world's oldest scholarly organizations for onomastic research. Over its long history, the ANS has been the academic home to many onomastic scholars with illustrious careers.

Should you learn of the passing of one of our members, please let us know so that we can honor their lives and scholarly contributions with a formal tribute.

To request a formal ANS death notice simply send the name of the deceased member and any additional details you may have to the following address: [nameseditor@gmail.com](mailto:nameseditor@gmail.com).

## ANS Executive Council 2023 End-of-Year Reports

### President's Report Ms. Laurel Sutton

Due to the unfortunate need to remove the new President in 2023, I stepped back into the President role and will hold it through the end of this year.

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My main responsibilities were:

- Organizing the 2024 conference with Brandon Simonson, our Information Officer
- Worked with Iman Nick on revising the ANS Bylaws, which were moved forward by the ANS-EC
- Fielding inquiries on naming from journalists, directing them to experts like Cleve Evans and Jennifer Moss, as well as providing interviews myself (for the *Atlantic*, the *New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*)
- Working with Sharon Obasi, our Membership Officer, in the management of our membership payments and tracking
- Assisting Brandon Simonson, our Information Officer, with website upkeep and mailings to members
- Reviewing submissions to *NAMES*, as assigned by Iman
- Editing and uploading presentations from the 2023 ANS Conference to our YouTube channel

Outside of the ANS, I continued my work with the LSA SIG Linguistics Beyond Academia; we provide resources, networking, and support for linguists entering the non-academic job market.

Our latest offering is a podcast, called Linguistics Careercast, which I host; I interview linguists who have made the transition to industry about their career journeys.

## Secretary's Report

### Dr. Star Vanguri

My first task as Secretary for 2023 was taking the minutes for our EC meeting at the ANS conference last year. Throughout the year, I gathered content from our members for our newsletter and compiled the 2023 issues.

I also worked on a committee to revise the Name of the Year call, criteria, and format. Throughout the year, I collect and tally the ANS-EC ballots when we have a vote. This year, we voted on several significant issues, including changes to our leadership, conference format, Name of the Year meeting, and bylaws. I'm excited about where the ANS is headed in 2024. While some of our changes came out of less-than-ideal circumstances, I think that the changes we have made are strengthening our organization. As always, please let me know if you have feedback or suggestions for the newsletter.

## Name of the Year Coordinator's Report

### Ms. Laurel Sutton

I took on this role for the ANS, and we made many changes to the call and format of the Name of the Year process this year. I will continue in this role.

## Allied Conference Coordinator's Report

### Anne Anderson

As Allied Conference Coordinator for ANS, most of my work during 2023 involved preparing for the Modern Language Association's 2024 and 2025 conferences, as follows:

MLA 2024: After being appointed to this position in late January 2023, my immediate task was to create and post a call for proposals for the 2024 conference of the Modern Language Association (MLA) and to gather a panel of reviewers. In addition to being posted in the MLA portal, the call was posted on the ANS website and on the *NAMES* journal website, and Iman Nick's kindly shared the CFP with several of the international onomastics organizations. Additionally, I posted the call and reminders to the following Facebook groups and/or pages:

- AERA SIGs: Literature; Spirituality and Education; Writing & Literacies

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- ANS SIGs: Literary Names; Personal Names; Trade Names
- Children’s and Youth Media and Culture SIG of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies
- Children’s Literature in Education (focus on Springer journal by the same name)
- H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online
- Picturebook Scholars
- Syllabus Swap: Children’s and YA Literature

The calls generated four responses, one of which was accepted on first review. We invited the authors of each of the other three proposals to revise and resubmit their proposals. One did so and was accepted, one indicated they would but later had to withdraw due to unexpected commitments, and one did not respond. We subsequently received a fifth proposal, which met the parameters of the call, and completed the panel. The majority of the panelists voted to present in-person. In early April, I submitted the panel information to MLA, and the panel was confirmed for Friday, January 5, 2024, at the MLA Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The panel met in the Philadelphia Downtown Marriott, Room 414, at 1:45 p.m. on Friday, January 5, with several attendees in the audience.

The first two presenters listed shared their papers, but the third presenter listed was unable to present. The ensuing discussion was thoughtful and lively; one person asked about the American Name Society, and I provided QR-coded links to the ANS site and to the *NAMES* site.

MLA 2025: In mid-November 2023, I sent the CFP for MLA 2025 to Laurel Sutton, Star Vanguri, and Iman Nick for inclusion in the Newsletter, on the ANS website, and on the *NAMES* website. Once I received confirmation the CFP had been received and posted in at least one spot, I submitted the CFP to the MLA portal.

I have begun posting the CFP to the social media pages listed above and to some newer groups, as well. I will repost closer to the end of January 2024, in mid-February, and just before the deadline date, and I am hopeful that the earlier posting date will result in more submissions.

Other ANS involvement: Additionally, I have served as a reviewer for the 2024 ANS conference submissions; have, at the request of Laurel Sutton, reviewed the original Articles of Incorporation and ANS Constitution to provide suggestions for amending the Constitution and revising the Bylaws; and have posted relevant articles to the ANS SIG Facebook pages as I find them and have cross-posted ANS items to other groups.

## **Treasurer’s Report**

### **Dr. Saundra Wright**

My main duties as Treasurer have been to oversee our budget, issue payments, send reimbursements, submit tax forms, answer questions about budget-related expenses, and advise on society expenditures.

I also process mail-in renewals and mail-in conference fees, as well as those fees submitted by bank transfers and other means.

Our budget, unfortunately, has been dwindling. In 2023, we spent \$12,858, while we only took in \$3,686. As a result, we are down \$9,172. Our largest expense is our journal, where editing costs were over \$9,000 in 2023. We also spent approximately \$1,800 on conference-related costs and \$600 for awards and acknowledgements, and we had monthly bills for web hosting fees and Zoom upgrades. Our incoming funds, meanwhile, have come exclusively from membership fees and conference memberships.

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As of now, the balance in our CHASE account stands at approximately \$32,500, which is significantly less than this time last year. Unless we find a way to bring in more income, there is a possibility our funds could be depleted in the next few years. Thus, I recommend that the Executive Committee have a serious conversation about budget this year.

## **Membership Officer's Report**

### **Dr. Sharon Obasi**

As Membership Officer I contact ANS members to encourage renewal of membership and I also focus on recruiting new members, especially students, to ANS. These efforts have led to a roster of approximately 200 members from several countries. I continue to serve on the editorial board of the journal *NAMES* reviewing several submissions to that publication. I have expanded my scholarship in onomastics with publications examining gender and naming.

## **Editor-in-Chief of *NAMES: A Journal of***

### ***Onomastics* Report**

#### **Professor I.M. Nick**

This year, my primary ANS activities involved preparing and publishing 4 issues of *NAMES*. The fourth in volume 71 was a special issue dedicated to Ukrainian Names and Naming. The creation of this issue presented many unusual challenges as a result of the ongoing war. However, thanks to the undaunting courage and dedication of the onomasticians involved, this special issue presented readers with five excellent pieces of scholarship. Along with issuing the call for papers, organizing the double-blind review process, and editing each of these contributions, I also had the honor of writing the introduction to this special issue.

Alongside this editorial, I also wrote and published the following pieces for 2023:

- the 2022 Name of the Year Report,
- 2021 Award for Best Article of the Year Report,
- 2022 Award for Best Article of the Year,
- an obituary for Thomas J. Gasque,
- an erratum,
- a book review of *Empty Signs, Historical Imaginaries*, and
- a book review of *The Misfits*.

I also worked with the President and members of the *NAMES* Editorial Board in two cases of plagiarism. In both cases, the international procedures stipulated by C.O.P.E., the Committee on Publishing Ethics, were strictly followed.

Finally, I also answered questions from the general public and gave formal interviews to names specialists (e.g., babynames.com) and international journalists about names and naming.

Currently, I am working on updating the *NAMES* Style Sheet. The new version will include a special section on ChatGPT as well as a special set of style regulations for papers in literary onomastics. I am also writing up the final report on the Name of the Year deliberations which took place in January of 2023. This report will appear in the first issue of *NAMES* 2024.

As a member of the ANS-EC, I assisted the ANS President and other members of the Council on questions related to parliamentary procedure, and I served on the ANS-EC sub-committees to update the ANS Bylaws and nominate members of the ANS-EC.



## **Book Review Editor of *NAMES: A Journal of Onomastics Report***

**Dr. Christine De Vinne**

With an expression of gratitude to Iman, whose editing of *NAMES* anchors the journal's reputation for scholarly excellence, the book review section has continued to attract highly qualified reviewers in the various fields of onomastics. As before, two reviews appeared in each issue, a total of eight for the year. In 2023 we welcomed new reviewers Emilia Di Martino, with her review of *Names and Indexicality* (71-2), and Michel Nguessan, with his review of *Naming and Othering in Africa: Imagining Supremacy and Inferiority through Language* (71-4). Additional reviewers are always welcome, as are suggestions and alerts for new titles to consider. Please get in touch at [cdevinne@ursuline.edu](mailto:cdevinne@ursuline.edu).

As member of the journal's editorial board, I reviewed five manuscripts for potential publication. I published a review of *Haiku History: The American Saga Three Lines at a Time* by H. W. Brands (71-1); for the touch of whimsy that it brings to US history I recommend it again to our readership. I presented "Politicized Place Names: Toni Morrison's Literary Map in *The Bluest Eye* and *Home*" on the virtual ANS panel at the MLA conference in January, as reported last year. I also published "Proclaiming Names in Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of Butterflies*," a chapter in *Literary Onomastics*, edited by our ANS colleague Dorothy Dodge-Robbins (Lexington Books 2023, pp. 21-40).

## **Information Officer's Report**

**Dr. Brandon Simonson**

My work as the Information Officer mostly involved weekly updates to our website, our "Name in the News" posts, and the general upkeep of our website and social media sites.

These weekly updates include everything from Calls for Papers, to new publications, and sharing the "About Names" column by our own Cleveland Evans. Outside of this typical work, I also helped organize the Name of the Year discussion and voting events, and the annual meeting. Additionally, I served as a peer reviewer for our conference and our journal *NAMES*.

As always, we are especially interested in posting your name news to the ANS website. If there is anything that you would like to share with the society— whether it's related to name news or your own recent publications—please let us know! When we make a post on our website, we also post it to our Facebook account, which has a wide reach to both American and worldwide onomastics scholars and organizations. Feel free to send your name news and research to [simonson@bu.edu](mailto:simonson@bu.edu).

## **Member-at-Large Report**

**Dr. Wang Feng**

In the past year, I served as a voting member of the Executive Council (EC) and participated in the decision making involved in resolutions and motions. I coauthored with Dr. Feng Xuehong and Dr. Kevin Heffernan an article titled, "A Preliminary Study of Chinese Brocade Names." The study examines 160 Chinese brocade product names and 55 category names, extracted from *A Complete Guide to Chinese Brocade*, to investigate the naming patterns of brocades through lexicological and semantic feature analysis. It also explores the socio-cultural implication of these brocade names from a socio-onomastic perspective.

## Place Names SIG Report

**Dr. Sharon Obasi**

As coordinator of the Facebook Special Interest Group on place names I have continued to post information regarding toponymic research, policies, as well as “fun facts” about place names from around the globe. The Facebook group now has 112 members and I thank everyone for contributing to the growth of this group. I look forward to continuing to increase group membership and to stimulate conversation regarding place names.

# 2024 ANS Executive Council



**MS. LAUREL SUTTON**

President Pro Tempore, Immediate Past President  
Catchword Branding (USA)  
laurelasutton@gmail.com



**DR. BRANDON SIMONSON**

Vice President  
Boston University (USA)  
simonson@bu.edu



**DR. STAR MEDZERIAN VANGURI**

Secretary  
Nova Southeastern University (USA)  
sm1850@nova.edu



**DR. ANNE ANDERSON**

Allied Conference Coordinator,  
Independent Researcher/Scholar (USA)  
awanderson.editing@gmail.com



**DR. SAUNDRA WRIGHT**

Treasurer  
California State University, Chico (USA)  
skwright@csuchico.edu

## 2024 ANS Executive Council, cont.



DR. SHARON N. OBASI

Membership Officer, Place Names SIG Coordinator  
University of Nebraska at Kearney (USA)  
obasis2@unk.edu



PROFESSOR I.M. NICK

Editor-in-Chief of *Names: A Journal of Onomastics*  
Germanic Society for Forensic Linguistics (GERMANY)  
mavi.yaz@web.de



DR. CHRISTINE DE VINNE

Book Review Editor of *Names: A Journal of Onomastics*  
Ursuline College (USA)  
cdevinne@ursuline.edu



DR. ANDREAS GAVRIELATOS

Member-at-Large 2020-2021  
University of Reading (ENGLAND)  
a.gavrielatos@reading.ac.uk



DR. WANG FENG

Member-at-Large 2021-2022  
Yangtze University (P.R. CHINA)  
wangfeng@yangtzeu.edu.cn

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## 2022 ANS Executive Council, cont.



**DR. MARYANN PARADA**

Personal Names SIG  
California State University, Bakersfield (USA)  
maryannparada@gmail.com



**DR. MIRKO CASAGRANDA**

Trade Names SIG  
University of Calabria (ITALY)  
mirko.casagranda@unical.it



**DR. SUSAN BEHRENS**

Literary Names SIG  
Marymount Manhattan College (USA)  
sbehrens@mmm.edu