



From the Desk of the AFS-NCD President

"Minutes from Melissa"

April 2016

*What's in a name?*

As I write this month's blog, I admit the tone throughout feels a bit like Andy Rooney. Yes, despite my youthful appearance, I do know who Andy Rooney is (thanks, Mom and Dad!). If you don't know Mr. Rooney, just Google "Andy Rooney YouTube" and you'll see what I mean.

Have you ever noticed how some AFS awards are named after amazing leaders and some are not? For example, the Society annually awards "The Sully" (i.e., the Carl R. Sullivan Fishery Conservation Award) or the Emmeline Moore Prize. But other Society awards go by more general names like the AFS Award of Excellence or the Distinguished Service Award.

Awards given by the NCD are similar. We have the Joan Duffy Travel Award. But none of the other awards such as the "Most Active Chapter" awards or the "Fisheries Excellence" or "Meritorious Service" awards are named. The question is: should they be?

Interestingly, we often lack nominations for those "unnamed" awards that go to individuals rather than to chapters. For example, no nominations for the "Fisheries Excellence" award were received in either 2015 or 2016 and no "Meritorious Service" nominations were received in 2015 (Joe Dillard of the Missouri Chapter was recently awarded the 2016 prize in this category). We know there are a lot of deserving folks out there! Would changing the names elevate the importance and prestige of the awards increase nominations?

For some time, the NCD Executive Committee has discussed the possibility of naming our most prestigious individual awards after influential fisheries professionals and NCD members. What are your thoughts on this? Should the NCD name their awards, and if so, after whom? Please share your thoughts with the NCD by filling out this quick, two-question poll at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3CR7N8C>. Please, only one response per NCD member. No ballot box stuffing. ☺

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with the NCD! If you're in the field for early spring sampling, be safe out there!

Best wishes for great April weather!

*Melissa*