



Rogue Valley honors dedicated volunteers



Left to right: Volunteer Ken Elton, youth Jesus P., Volunteer of the Year Rick Nelson, youth Victor D., and volunteers Linda Wingerath and Karl Schray.

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Thirty volunteers and guests attended Rogue Valley Youth Correctional Facility's annual volunteer appreciation barbecue on April 17.

The food was first-class; the music, provided by QMHP Steve Mounce and youth ukulele players, was nice; and our youth were appreciative. Youth Padilla gave a speech honoring our valued Volunteer of the Year, Rick Nelson. Other honorable mentions were Steve Roe, Margo McAlpine, and Nick Hall.

Nelson has been an active volunteer since 2001. He is in charge of Rogue Valley's Catholic services and coordinates our Christmas and Easter functions. When we had our Christmas party, Rick bought (with his own money) extra gifts, soda, cake, and ice cream. Another great example of his care for our young men occurred this last Easter when he shared handmade cards of encouragement from his church youth group that featured the first names of each youth on Alpha Unit. Recently, while I was giving a tour to three new volunteers, they asked him about his secret to success.



Volunteers Steve and Kristie Roe.



Left to right: Volunteers "Grandma Mary" (Mary Tinoco) and Margo McAlpine.

His response: "Just sit down and talk with these guys — don't preach to them."

Another volunteer, Roy Dinnel, later sent a thank-you note for the event: "It is truly heart-warming to see the youth take a leadership role not only in their own life, but also helping those who may be struggling a bit. ... Everyone has or will go through hardships and some will fall flat on their face and that is ok, but how you get up and handle yourself from there is what will make the difference."