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Northwest FOCUS

God at Work Through Northwest Independent Church Extension

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Celebrating Roy Sprague!

Encourager. Mentor. Supporter. At the meetings of the Pacific Northwest Regional in March, these words were often used to describe Roy Sprague. The men and women of the PNW Regional had gathered in Astoria, OR to hear challenges from the Word from Steve Wong, of Fellowship Bible Church, Belmont, CA. But the Tuesday evening dinner hour had been set aside to honor former NICE Director, Roy Sprague. Roy turned 90 years old in March, and much of his adult life has been lived in service to Northwest Independent Church Extension, and the churches and individuals of the Northwest. Roy preached his first sermon at age 15 during his parents' evangelistic meetings, and is still in the pulpit, currently serving as Interim Pastor at Grace Community Church in Elma, WA.

Earl Brubaker served as NICE Executive Director following Roy's 30 year tenure, and recently reflected, *"During Roy's years at the helm, NICE grew from a small mission to become the most active church planting Regional mission in IFCA International. He was the visionary leader of the National IFCA Church Extension council for many years, and served two terms as a member of the IFCA Board of Directors and one term as president of that board. Because of his knowledge of its ministry, he was asked to serve as an honorary, non-voting member of the NICE Board after his retirement as NICE Executive Director, and did so for 20 years."*

In addition to Encourager, Mentor and Supporter, Roy has been described as Pastor, Teacher, Camp



Roy and Steve Wong



Roy, Earl and Bob: past and present NICE Directors



Pastor Matt Daniells, and some of his children, wishing Roy a Happy Birthday



Charlie Olson, INW President, Pastor, NICE Board President



Les Lofquist, The Shepherd's Church, Shepherds Theological Seminary and former IFCA International Executive Director

Director, Evangelist, Field Director, Mission Director, Minister at Large, NICE Board Member, Mission Historian and IFCA International President. A video camera had been set up to allow those attending to share their birthday greetings or memories. One pastor at the Regional meetings jokingly stated, *"I want to be like you when I grow up!"* Charlie Olson, President of the Inland Northwest Regional came from Idaho to bring birthday greetings from that Regional. The current NICE Director, Bob Rodgers, presented Roy with a gift on behalf of the entire NICE Family, stressing Roy's many years of faithful servant leadership within NICE. In his comments, Bob quoted John Stott, *"Leaders have power, but power is safe only in the hands of those who humble themselves to serve."* It was especially meaningful to Roy and his wife, Elvia, when a surprise video message was played from Les Lofquist, former IFCA International Executive Director. Les reflected on his friendship with Roy over the years, mentioning that Roy was one of those instrumental in convincing him to join IFCA International.

When he thanked those present at the Regional, Roy stressed that he was part of a team, and had not accomplished anything on his own. His wife, Elvia has ministered alongside him, as well as many others.

I Thessalonians 5:13 gives instruction regarding spiritual leaders: *"Esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake."* The PNW Regional, INW Regional and NICE were eager to "esteem" and honor Roy Sprague on his 90th birthday, recognizing that he has been an Encourager, Mentor and Supporter of many! Happy Birthday, Roy! God has blessed so many through your service to the Lord.

So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. I Corinthians 3:7