

Vets group aids Relief Nursery

Veterans organization the 40&8 held its quarterly state convention at the Village Green recently, and on Wednesday, March 2, the group came back to Cottage Grove to visit the Family Relief Nursery and deliver an \$800 check to aid its efforts. Pictured at right are Jim Willis, Grande Chef de Gare from Lebanon and Tony Pickens, a past national office holder, also of Lebanon, during the group's nursery visit. The 40&8 is reportedly already planning a return to Cottage Grove for another gathering.



photo by Glenn Knox

Onions: Springtime planting brings big summertime bulbs

BY KYM POKORNY
OSU Extension Service

Get onions in the ground in spring and avoid heartbreak when it comes time to harvest big, beautiful bulbs this summer.

Plant as soon as the soil is dry enough to work, said Jim Myers, a plant breeder at Oregon State University. March and April are prime times.

Most onions grown in Oregon are long-day onions. They make top, green growth until a critical day length is reached, which triggers bulbing. That generally begins at about 14 hours of light per day.

If you plant onions in early spring, they'll grow to fairly large plants by the time daylight reaches 14 hours. Large bulbs result. However, if you wait to plant until the end of April when days are already 14 hours long, bulbing will begin immediately and you'll have small pearl onions.

"The size of the bulb is dependent on the size of the plant when bulbing begins," Myers said. "This is why early planting is critical if you want large onions, as well as plenty of water and fertilizer."

Buy onion sets while firm and dormant. Harvest early in the season to eat as green onions, or in late summer when they've formed bulbs. When purchasing transplants, look for plants that have not been damaged by decay or excess drying.

After getting your onion sets home, sort into two groups by size – those smaller than a dime and those larger. Use the larger size for green onions. The smaller ones will produce large dry bulbs.

Onions can be grown in almost any type of soil as long as it has good fertility and drainage. Before planting, amend soil with compost or aged manure. A handful of complete fertilizer, such as 10-10-10, applied along the row at planting time will get the plants off to a good start. A



good compost or organic fertilizer will also supply the needed nutrients for onions.

For green onions, plant the sets 1½ to 2 inches deep and one inch apart. They'll be ready for eating in about a month when the tops reach 8-10 inches tall. For larger onions, plant the sets about a half-inch deep and four inches apart. Plant transplants 3 to 4 inches apart in rows 12 to 15 inches apart.

Fertilize every two to three weeks until onions start to form bulbs and make sure to keep soil consistently moist.

"Onions are shallow rooted," Myers said. "If allowed to dry out, they bulb early and small size is the result."

When tops begin to dry out and are falling over, stop watering so the bulbs mature in dry soil. After about half the tops have fallen over, wait about a week and harvest the bulbs. Cure them for a week or so by spreading in the sun and covering with a sheet or tarp at night.

The OSU Extension Service recommends the following varieties as performing well in Oregon:

- Yellow: Copra, New York Early, Candy
- Overwintering: Walla Walla
- Red: Red Wing
- White: White Sweet Spanish, Superstar
- Green bunching: Ishikura, He-shi-ko

WAGE

Continued from page 1A

The minimum-wage increase has also prompted the Cottage Grove Chamber of Commerce to form a legislative committee to monitor developments at the state legislature that could affect local business owners. Palmer said the committee will work in a collaborative partnership with the state Chamber of Commerce to "monitor and decipher" news of interest coming from Salem and advocate on behalf of local businesses.

Here in Cottage Grove, though, several business owners say that while paying some of their employees more per hour may drive up costs, the effects of a higher minimum wage shouldn't necessarily be detrimental.

"Every time they talk about raising the minimum wage, we hear that the sky is falling," said

Axe and Fiddle Pub owner Bart Caridio, who said he's seen the minimum raised several times as owner of Sam Bonds Garage in Eugene.

"It's raised, and then nothing happens," he said. Caridio said his prices may have to increase by about five percent or so, but the jump could mean an extra \$3 per hour for the employee, money that's spent in the community.

"It translates directly into spending in the local community," he said. "Owners don't do that much worse; they typically just raise prices a little."

Dean Krushke, the new general manager at Cascade Home Center, said the minimum wage increase won't affect his employees immediately, as none make the current minimum.

"Once the tiered system starts affecting us, we'll look at everybody's wage," Krushke said.

"We want to stay ahead of the curve so our people don't just have a job. We're happy when our employees can make a living wage, but depending on how it happens, we may be forced to raise our prices a little. As long as the increase doesn't happen overnight, we're going to look and see if we're able to absorb the costs."

Grocery Outlet owner Ed Sowa said he finds himself in a similar situation.

"We've only got one pay grade at minimum wage, and it's designed to offer an incentive to do well and be promoted," Sowa said. He said the first wage increase won't have "as big an impact," though his business will have to "adapt as time goes on."

"My biggest concern is that businesses may not be growing at the same rate that wages are increasing," he said. "The

concern is how to adapt and adjust."

At Log House Plants, a labor-intensive business that employs lots of seasonal workers, owner Greg Lee said the minimum-wage increase will definitely affect his business, though he's not overly worried.

"We pay above the minimum, so for the first year it won't affect us," Lee said. "As long as it's sort of gradual, it should be okay. We will probably have to raise our prices a bit, but that's okay because our competitors should have to raise their prices too, and a lot of them haven't raised prices in years."

Lee said it usually takes an event such as this wage increase to force competitors in the plant business to raise prices.

"Our competition across Oregon will all have the same decision to make," he said.

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EASTER SUNDAY CELEBRATION

March 27, 2016

Delight Valley Church of Christ
33087 Saginaw Road East, Cottage Grove
541-942-7711

9:00-10:30am Free Breakfast

9:00-10:30am Free Easter pictures & After Service
Props available, pictures received on the spot!

10:30-Noon-ish Worship Service – in the Gym

11:00am-Noonish Kid's Program – in the Chapel

Noonish Easter Egg Hunt (after Worship Service lets out)

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