

# Friends of Oakbourne

By Tom Bare, President, Friends of Oakbourne

The Friends of Oakbourne (FoO) are continuing to work on completing and filling in empty spaces in the new Oakbourne Water Tower Garden that we designed and started last year. This garden is located at the rear entrance of the Oakbourne Water Tower. In addition to the serviceberry that we planted in this garden last Fall, this Spring/Summer we planted 6 Otto Luyken Cherry Laurels (*Prunus laurocerasus* 'Otto Luyken'), 6 Glossy Abelias (*Abelia x grandiflora* 'Kaleidoscope'), a Rising Sun Redbud (*Cercis Canadensis* 'JN2'PP21451), a selection of perennials (including Meadow Sage, Phlox, and Coreopsis), and annuals (many marigolds to provide some instant color for the late summer and early Fall). FoO plans to continue to develop this garden to provide a beautiful area attractive not only to park visitors, but also to all kinds of pollinators including butterflies.



Water Tower Garden with newly installed trees/shrubs/flowers

An interesting Eastern redbud tree (*Cercis Canadensis* 'Alley Cat'), prized for its variegated leaves, was planted as a memorial tree. Like other redbuds, this variety produces pink/purple flowers on bare branches in the spring, and after blossom drop, foliage emerges as copper-pink and soft green heart-shaped leaves; however, unlike all other redbuds, these leaves become variegated with white speckles and striations as they mature. This tree was dedicated by Rob Spiron to his long gone parents, Claude and Sissy Spiron, and can be viewed in a grouping of other Eastern redbuds adjacent to a planting of oriental grasses along the park's entry drive.



Alley Cat Eastern Redbud dedicated to Claude and Sissy Spiron

One of our large ornamental cherry trees in the Cherry Tree Grove along South Concord Road died and was replaced with an identical variety, a Yoshino Cherry (*Prunus x yedoensis* 'Akebono') during late spring. There are 18 cherry trees in this grove, made up of 6 groupings of three trees, each grouping being a different variety of tree. Each grouping has a slightly different bloom time so that in the spring there is a wide range of blooming times and colors. These trees were planted in 2006 and 2007 as a Friends of Oakbourne project to celebrate Earth Day; the plantings were done with the help of numerous Penn State Master Gardeners, a large group of Girl Scouts, and the 2nd and 5th grade classes from Westtown Thornbury Grade School.



Variegated leaves of the Alley Cat Redbud

## FRIENDS OF OAKBOURNE

Contact Tom Bare ([tmbare@hotmail.com](mailto:tmbare@hotmail.com) or 610-399-1572) if you are interested in donating a park bench or tree to be planted in Oakbourne Park to honor a special person or loved one or to commemorate an important occasion.