



2020 Annual Report

STONY KILL FOUNDATION





STONY KILL FOUNDATION

79 Farmstead Lane, Wappingers Falls, New York 12590
845-831-3800 // foundation@stonykill.org // stonykill.org

THE MISSION OF THE STONY KILL FOUNDATION IS...

"To educate the public and cultivate environmental stewardship through interpretation of the rich historical, environmental and agricultural heritage of Stony Kill Farm."

Stony Kill Foundation is a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3), funded by donations from individual contributions, corporate donors, memberships, grants and program revenue.

This Annual Report highlights the achievements of the Foundation over the past year and presents the vision for future momentum.

The Stony Kill Foundation began in 1977 as a friends group to assist the DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) operations of Stony Kill Farm and Environmental Education Center. Due to state funding cuts in 2010, the DEC left the daily operation of the facility in the hands of the Foundation. As a working farm, Stony Kill is unique in having the ability to teach environmental education through the lens of agriculture.

This 1,000-acre farm is a place to get lost in history, experience the simplicity of nature or find solace in watching the cattle graze green pastures. In addition to livestock, the farm provides essential habitat to a wide variety of wildlife. On a spring night around dusk, the woodcock mating call can be heard along the edge of the fields, Eastern bluebirds are raising families in the nest boxes along the farm lane, and swallows dart from the barn to feast on mosquitoes. The forest, gardens and meadows are a pollination paradise, a pesticide-free sanctuary for flowers and bees. Stony Kill Farm, held in public trust, is the living story of agriculture in New York.

What is the meaning of the name Stony Kill? A kill is a body of water, most commonly a creek, but it can also be a tidal inlet, river, strait, or arm of the sea. The term is derived from the Middle Dutch kille (kil in modern Dutch), meaning "riverbed" or "water channel." In English, the farm would be called "Stone Creek."

Thank you to photo contributors in this publication: K. Stamper, Yvette Valdés Smith, Tim Stanley, Nick Gardinier, Stacey Adnams, Rich Willey

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PRESIDENT'S REFLECTION

SKF: A DECADE OF DETERMINATION BRINGS THE FARM FORWARD

It is said the strongest steel is forged in the hottest fires. The Stony Kill Foundation is no stranger to tough times. A decade ago, in 2010, the Foundation signed an Occupancy Agreement with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to run the day-to-day programs of Stony Kill Farm. 2010 was a tumultuous time during a deep economic downturn; the future of Stony Kill was uncertain. The Foundation accepted the challenge of keeping Stony Kill open for the enjoyment of the community. Founded in 1977 simply as a Friends group to support the work of the DEC, it had no experience with the nuts and bolts of running the farm. The decade since 2010 has been a bumpy road, but with the perseverance of dedicated board members, part time staff and volunteers, and the financial support of funders and members, the Foundation delivered on its commitment to the community. Then, in a time when we should have been celebrating our decade milestone, 2020 again challenged the fortitude and resilience of all not-for-profit organizations. However, born in the fire of tough times, the Foundation's resolve has remained steadfast.

Open sunrise to sunset, the open space of the farm became a place of respite during the dark days of the COVID-19 pandemic, a testament to the farm's innate value in modern culture. As the virus spread fear through society, the Foundation was forced to cancel almost all the planned public events, school programs and summer camp. This was a financial blow to the income needed to operate and run our organization. Amid the devastation, the rhythm of life at Stony Kill Farm kept tempo -- delivering blossoming flowers to hungry bees, green grass to newborn lambs and rich, fertile soil to eager gardeners. Nature inspired us, gave us permission to stop, to reflect and ponder on the very essence of life. In time, we learned how to adapt amidst the pandemic; we learned how to rise up and carry on while protecting ourselves and others. Innovative ideas and the support of our members and donors helped to keep the Foundation viable during troubling times.

Despite the challenges, 2020 is also a year of successes for the Stony Kill Foundation and the Farm. This Annual Report highlights our organizational achievements; collectively, they place the Foundation in a stronger position to better serve the community.

Timothy J. Stanley, *Stony Kill Foundation President*



A WINDOW TO THE PAST

Did you know Stony Kill once had a school house? Built in 1830 It was located on the corner of Red School House Road and operated for 129 years. According to newspaper accounts it was the last one room school house in Dutchess County. Elizabeth Livingston Travis taught at the school for 47 years. In addition to teaching, daily responsibilities included carrying fresh water into the school, keeping the pot bellied stove burning, snow shoveled in cold months

and the lawn mowed in warmer months. The school closed in 1959 when it merged with the larger Beacon district. A carved wooden sign commemorates the site of the old schoolhouse that had taught the children of many families over the years including the children of the tenant farmers of Stony Kill Farm. In the spirit of the Red School House, it seems fitting to this day that education is the keystone of Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center.



STONY KILL WELCOMES ERIK FYFE

SKF is excited to welcome our first Executive Director, Erik Fyfe, thanks to a generous grant from NYS Park and Trail Partnership Program. “We recognize investing in a full-time Executive Director will ensure Stony Kill Farm remains a viable centerpiece of our community well into the future,” stated Board President Tim Stanley, “Erik has demonstrated a deep-rooted commitment and understanding of the environment and is well suited to advocate for the farm.”

Erik brings 14 years’ experience implementing environmental protection and education programs, forging partnerships, and providing strategic leadership. Most recently he served as Education Director for Hudson River Sloop Clearwater. Erik originally hails from Georgia, and holds a graduate degree from the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale. He pursues his enthusiasm for agricultural traditions on the side, and over the years he has been a mushroom farmer, cider maker,

vegetable gardener, and beekeeper. We are so proud to have Erik join the Foundation, and as Erik puts it, “Stony Kill Farm is a local treasure, and I feel very lucky to be part of the team helping to preserve this wonderful place and creating opportunities for people to connect to meaningful experiences on the land.”

ADAPTING TO COVID

"The value of Stony Kill Farm has always been self-evident but never more so than during the COVID-19 pandemic. The grounds remained open daily for the public to explore, and we adapted our programming to continue safely providing mean-

ingful experiences on the farm. This next section of the Annual Report documents the adaptations that allowed us to continue to serve our patrons."

– Timothy J. Stanley, SKF President

EVENTS & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS 2020



OPEN BARN

Each year, we introduce thousands of visitors to the animals at Stony Kill through our Open Barn program.

Amidst the pandemic, we were able to continue that tradition by implementing recommended safety measures and providing volunteer-led, private tours of the barn. As our volunteer Abby put it, "The best part of giving barn tours is educating the

public." During the tour, visitors learn about Stony Kill's heritage breed conservation program and meet the new animals in the barn. Popcorn and her flock of Crevecoeur chickens were a big hit this year. Open Barn is held on most Saturdays and Sundays from February to November. During the pandemic, visitors are asked to preregister on our website: stonykill.org

POP-UP SHOPS

On three dates in August the Foundation offered many local and farm fresh goodies for purchase, in an effort to raise funds to maintain the Farm. The chickens at Stony Kill have been hard at work laying eggs, which were available each week. Busy honey bees worked around the clock to create Stony Kill Farm honey, which shoppers mentioned were a perfect addition to their summer treats of ice cream and sweet teas. Bees-wax lip balm and wraps were

also available for purchase. The Foundation was able to share Sharpe Reservation's maple syrup at the shops. Local artists donated beautiful works of art, including handmade jewelry, note cards, and quilted goods. A highlight of the event included the sale of house plants from our greenhouse. Volunteers and staff were responsible for setting up and running the events. Thank you to our volunteers and shoppers for another successful Pop-Up Shop series!

PLANT SALE



As the snow begins to melt and the growing season approaches, volunteers begin to sow seeds in the Stony Kill greenhouse. Over forty varieties of peppers, tomatoes, herbs and more are offered at the Foundation's annual Plant Sale. Urban agriculture is a growing hobby especially in the Hudson Valley, where many individuals and families find themselves with limited garden space. Stony Kill kept this in mind by offering a wide variety of patio friendly

cherry tomatoes and hot peppers. Running the plant sale took months of volunteer dedication, including daily watering and pest inspections to ensure healthy and happy plants. The Farm estimated over 75 volunteer and staff hours went into propagating, caring, and organizing the Sale of 2020.

For the first time, Stony Kill offered pre-orders and pick ups on site to maintain social distancing practices. To say

this new style of fundraising was a success would be an understatement, since we sold out of ALL our plants and had customers wanting more. With the help of Sunny Gardens Nursery, we were able to provide more plants as the demand from gardeners was more than ever this year.

To find out more about volunteering at the Plant Sale or in the greenhouse, email foundation@stonykill.org.



HOMESCHOOL ON THE FARM A FOUNDATION AND COMMON GROUND PARTNERSHIP

Homeschool on the Farm was a new venture for Stony Kill this year, and an opportunity for us to collaborate on an education program with our friends and partners at Common Ground Farm. It has met the needs of our community by offering hands-on, socially distanced programs that families can enjoy safely in an outdoor setting.

The homeschool program offers a full day of integrative farm-based learning. Each morning, Stony Kill educators lead a hands-on workshop focused on the barn animals and the natural landscape of Stony Kill Farm. In the afternoons, Common Ground educators lead workshops focused on vegetable farming, culinary skills, and art. The morning and afternoon sessions were planned to be complimentary so that parents can opt to do one or both sessions.

Due to COVID-19, new safety protocols were put in place. All workshops take place outside, and families are able to sit on picnic blankets spaced six feet apart and wear masks when needed.

Daily themes are geared toward the changing fall season, agriculture and the environment with seed explorations, the Autumn harvest, and turkeys. Families gathered on blankets and camp chairs in our field and dissected owl pellets, made pumpkin pie in a bag, and learned about various bird adaptations. On Egg Day, educator Kim Pennock introduced our heritage breed chickens to families in the barn and finished off the day with the egg float and strength tests.

Homeschool on the Farm has brought families and our two organizations together in such a positive way. Overall the program was a tremendous success. Both morning and afternoon sessions filled very quickly, and there have been many requests for additional programming. We are looking forward to building our collaborative efforts and partnership with Common Ground and many of our other partners as we plan for the future.

STONY GROUND 4H CLUB

The Stony Ground 4H club continues to thrive and connect with animal husbandry lessons on the farm. Focusing on art, beekeeping, poultry, rabbits, and sheep, the 4H-ers met virtually throughout the spring and summer and resumed their in-person volunteer work at Stony Kill this fall. Each member of the group gains hands-on livestock caretaking experience and develops confidence working with the animals. If all goes well, they will have a chance to bring the sheep to the Dutchess County Fair. Club membership continues to grow and everyone is excited for the new 4H year!



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

The Stony Kill Foundation is proud to collaborate and maintain partnerships with the following outstanding institutions:



FARM POD PROGRAM



This year, our education team had to think outside the box to align our children's programming with COVID-19 guidelines. The Farm Pod Program was initiated in September, to offer students a space to complete their remote learning, while also engaging in socially-distanced outdoor activities in a small-group setting. Students ages

6-12 join us two days a week in the newly opened Learning Center. While our educator Stephen is overseeing Zoom meetings and completion of schoolwork, the rest of the group is heading to the barn to feed the livestock with our educator Stamper. The Farm Pod kids have been outside trekking across the trails, fields

and forests at Stony Kill. They have built habitat dioramas and an outdoor shelter, painted their own walking stick, released and tagged Monarch butterflies, and created a sensory rope walk. This winter, they will be observing birds for Project Feederwatch, learning about what wild animals do in the winter, and exploring pond

ecology before the pond freezes over. As our community ventures further into the current model of remote learning, Stony Kill's Farm Pod has become a vital source of outdoor recreation and safe socialization for our school-age children.

SAN MIGUEL UPDATE

We were excited to have the 5th grade class from San Miguel Academy join us this year for in-person outdoor programming. The last school year program was cut short due to the pandemic, but the next class of boys joined us in September and started the school year off with tree identification, the Monarch migration, and outdoor survival. Special guest Dave Beck from Bowdoin Park presented his Native American program and showed the boys how to throw a spear using an atlatl. We are looking forward to working on some long-term projects like Project Feederwatch and building a maple sap evaporator with San Miguel this year.



STONY KILL LIVESTOCK: A HERITAGE BREED VISION

The Stony Kill livestock are the cornerstone of the farm. The Foundation has deepened its agricultural impact by selecting heritage breed animals that tell the historic story of the farm. The Livestock Conservancy defines heritage breed animals as "...traditional livestock breeds that were raised by our forefathers. These are the breeds of a bygone era, before industrial agriculture became a mainstream

practice." Stony Kill Farm, with agricultural roots that date back to early America, is the ideal place to promote, protect and save these old breeds from extinction. If we lose them, they are gone forever. Integrating these animals into our programs is important to teach about the historical role of these animals and how they can play a viable role in modern agriculture through niche markets.



Juniper



Jasmine

AMERICAN MILKING DEVONS

Once upon a time, all cows had horns, and our three new American Milking Devons remain true to this heritage. Originating in Devonshire, England, Milking Devons are among the last remaining tri-purpose breeds of cows in existence. Recent times have led to the decline in these breeds as commercial production has favored cows for either milk or beef alone. In contrast, Milking Devons would traditionally have been used for milk, beef, and pulling the farmer's plow. The rich butterfat content in their milk makes a delicious cheese that few people have ever tasted.

Juniper came to Stony Kill from Ardent Homestead in Arden, NY, in February 2020. Violet "Red" is from Chandler Ridge Farm in Leicester, VT, and arrived in October 2020. Jasmine arrived from Mt. Joy, PA, in August 2019, and spends her summers at a nearby educational farm. An artificial (AI) breeding program has been implemented for our cows to ensure proper genetic diversity. Juniper and Jasmine have both been bred, with anticipated due dates in 2021.



Caramel & Peaches

TUNIS SHEEP

Each spring is the lambing season. Ten lambs were born on the farm this spring, including two purebred Tunis lambs, Flitwick and Peaches, giving the Stony Kill flock a total of six purebred Tunis sheep. Tunis sheep are a dual-purpose breed raised for both meat and wool. Sheep are

bred in October and November each fall to coincide with a spring lambing season in March and April. The sheep are sheared annually, usually in April. When not in the barn greeting Stony Kill visitors, the sheep can be seen out grazing in the pasture.



Dominique and Java Chickens

Stony Kill has numerous heritage breeds of chickens, most notable of which are Dominiques and Javas. Commonly found on early American farms, these breeds are adapted to surviving in the colder climates of the northeast. Both breeds fell out of favor for more modern breeds that lay more eggs or grow faster. The Stony Ground 4-H club has introduced two additional heritage breeds to the farm, including the Sebright and the Crève-cœur. Sebrights are a small breed of chicken, considered a true bantam. Crève-cœur gets its name from the village of Crève-cœur en Auge in Normandy, France. “Crève Cœur” translates literally as “broken heart.”



Auburn Java Rooster



Narragansett and Bourbon Red Turkeys

Additions to our livestock inventory this year include heritage breed turkeys, Narragansett and Bourbon Red’s. Turkeys are the only livestock native to North America.

To Learn more:

The Stony Kill Foundation is a proud member of the Livestock Conservancy, an organization that works to save rare breeds of livestock (www.livestockconservancy.org). In addition, the Foundation belongs to the National Tunis Registry and the American Milking Devon Cattle Association. By supporting Stony Kill, you are supporting the work of these organizations.



American Milking Devon
Cattle Association

National Tunis
Association

VERPLANCK TENANT FARMHOUSE RESTORATION

This year, the Department of Environmental Conservation began a series of projects at Stony Kill Farm that includes the restoration of the exterior of the Verplanck Tenant House. It is not an easy task. There are no reliable pictures or drawings of the original house which was built around the mid-1700's as part of the payment by the tenant to the Verplanck family. The original building is the east end (road facing end), and consisted of a main floor, a cellar, and a half-story garret, a small, dismal attic only accessible by a ladder. Through the years, other tenants 'remodeled' it, much the same as people fix up homes today. For example, a second residence was attached to the river side of the house, probably to accommodate a second tenant. Barns were added to the north side (the side that faces the shop), although one barn is described in the original agreement with the tenant. There were basements on both sides which were needed to store crops after harvesting. A new roof, new stone pointing, new windows, and new doors are being installed to bring the building to resemble what it was over 100 years ago. The understory support is also being reinforced. This work will help make it accessible and prevent deterioration. The interior is another matter. Again, there

have been modifications to the building to facilitate its use even as a dormitory up until the mid-20th century. Restoration of the interior back to the active farming period will require

careful planning and funding. The Foundation has begun to secure donations to help make it a truly educational experience by restoring the interior to historical accuracy to the best

extent possible. Completing the restoration will bring back a key structure in the farm's story, enhancing our connection with the agricultural history of Stony Kill.





LEARNING CENTER INAUGURATION A LAUNCH PAD TO THE FARM

October 24, 2020 marked the re-opening of the Stony Kill Learning Center, located behind the Manor House. Built in 2006, it had been closed to the public since May 31, 2010, when the DEC was forced by the state's financial crisis to reduce support to the farm. Now with DEC's support, Stony Kill Foundation has been able to reopen and reactivate the building. Through the generosity of the Malcolm Gordon Char-

itable Fund, administered by the Open Space Institute (\$13,000), Verizon (\$15,000 in goods and services), and private donors (\$2,000), the Learning Center has been restored to its original promise. It is completely outfitted to hold 99 participants, robust technology including high speed Wi-Fi and a 100-watt sound system, and all the materials needed to meet its potential. The "green" building also boasts geothermal energy,

water saving fixtures, a well-equipped kitchen, and an exploratory room called "the Hive" for younger learners. And while the building is called the "Learning Center," it is not the CENTER of learning at Stony Kill as one might expect. Its true success will be measured in the real time experiences it allows the community to have throughout the farm. It is structured to present programs at all age levels,

from the youngest to adults, with technological and material resources appropriate to each age level using a variety of techniques. It is the launch site for opportunities to understand the world that is Stony Kill Farm: the livestock, the fields, the crops, and the forests. We are proud to introduce the Learning Center: an active and crucial part of the Foundation's resources.

DONORS & SUPPORTERS

Thank you to all our members and donors for supporting Stony Kill

Up to \$99

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- Elizabeth Allee
- Kimberly Allison
- Lucille Andriola
- Lucy Anich
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- Anonymous
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- Ballet Arts Studio
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- Barbara Benedict
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- Shelly Blumenthal
- Lucy Bonacquist
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- Susan Cherneq
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\$100 - 249

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\$10,000 and up

- Anonymous
- Malcolm Gordon Charitable Fund, administered by the Open Space Institute
- Nifty Thrifty Shop Ltd

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Did you know that our volunteers at Stony Kill come from all walks of life. Volunteers are an essential component to the daily functioning and success of the Stony Kill Foundation. We always welcome individuals from all backgrounds and experiences to help plan/run events, write for publications, monitor social media, host workshops, or as a guide for our weekly open barn and greenhouse. No matter

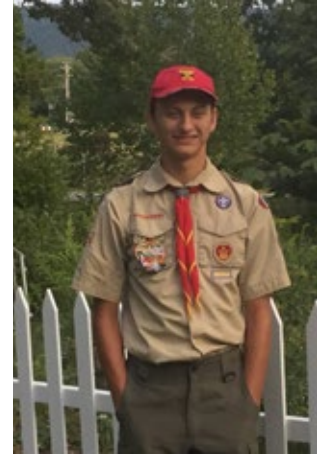
how busy you are, there are always ways to help out at Stony Kill. We even welcome students who may need hours for clubs or leadership programs they are involved in. If you are interested in becoming a part of our volunteer team please reach out to Stacey at stacey@stonykill.org.



Brianna Vivace
Brianna built this recycled compost bin for her Girl Scout Gold Award



Darren Horton
Darren rebuilt the Verplanck Garden Fence for his Eagle Project



- Ashawna Abbott
- Paul Adams
- Kendall Adnams
- Riley Adnams
- Kimberly Allison
- Tom Amisson
- Jim Baisley Jr.
- Hunter Baisley
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- Beacon Scout Troop 41
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- Anna Cenicola

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- Rebecca Cossa
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- Scott Delaney
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- Melissa Diaz
- Matthew Epler
- Karen Finnegan

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- Alste Holmgren
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- Ludvick Lucas
- Mary-Lynn Malone
- Margaret Maruschak

- Chris Mendez
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- Robbie VanCott
- Verplanck Garden Club
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- Brianna Vivace
- Denise Vivace
- Ariel Yarmus



IN REMEMBRANCE OF HUGH MAURER

Hugh Maurer, born in Bremen, NY on September 7th, 1929 was a pillar of the community throughout his life. He proudly served our country in the US Navy Seabees Reserves from 1952-1987. He was a member of the First Reformed Church of Fishkill, the Fishkill Rotary Club, the International Gourmateers of Fishkill, the Masons, and Protection Engine Company. He also served as the President of the Fishkill Rural Cemetery Board, and they recently named the new mausoleum in his honor. He was inducted into the Dutchess County Baseball Hall of Fame. He served as a board member for Vassar Brothers Hospital and the Millbrook Hunt; District

Commissioner for the US Pony Club of America; and member of the US Pair Horse Driving Association where he qualified for the World Championships in the Summer of 1987. At 91 years old, Hugh Maurer passed peacefully at his home on September 29th, 2020. As in life, in lieu of flowers, donations were made to the Verplanck Tenant House Restoration Fund. \$2,500 were raised in Hugh's memory towards the restoration of this historic farm house that will one day serve as an interpretive center for tenant farmers from the 1700 and 1800's. His spirit of community service continues to enrich our community.

TREASURER'S REPORT

INCOME

PUBLIC SUPPORT	
Membership	6,550.00
DONATIONS & GRANTS	
Donations	38,554.60
Grants	17,100.00
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	
Youth Programs	16,006.49
Adult Programs	1,489.00
Family Programs	4,730.00
FUNDRAISING REVENUE	
At-Large Appeals	8,782.88
Product Sales	4,568.83
Corporate	1,074.00
EVENT REVENUE	6,956.13
FARM GENERATED REVENUE	
Livestock & Farm Products	6,548.40
Garden Plots	6,000.00
LEARNING CENTER LICENSING	100.00
COMMON GROUND USE	10,170.18
DEC INTERN REIMBURSEMENT	33,556.03
INTEREST & DIVIDENDS	3,809.65
MISCELLANEOUS	19,255.00
TOTAL Income	187,637.19

EXPENSES

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	
Youth Programs	1,704.68
Adult Programs	60.00
FUNDRAISING EXPENSES	
At-Large	35.00
Product Sales	5,270.25
Corporate	350.00
EVENT EXPENSES	1,897.13
FARMING EXPENSES	
Livestock	6,097.64
Farm Supplies, Repairs, Maint.	6,211.88
Beekeeping	1,269.95
Farm Equipment	2,257.58
RESTRICTED GRANT EXPENDITURES	12,017.49
FARM CLASSROOM, BARN, & LOWER SHOP	
Supplies & Equipment	378.72
Utilities & Janitorial	18,670.82
LEARNING CENTER	
Supplies	9.75
Utilities & Janitorial	819.71
ADMINISTRATION (excl. payroll)	8,740.87
INSURANCE	7,089.93
PAYROLL (incl. payroll taxes)	83,845.13
DEPRECIATION	3,098.21
TOTAL Expenses	159,824.64

SKF BY THE NUMBERS



19,000+
Stony Kill visitors



10
Lambs born



1,200
bales of hay
harvested
for feed



5,420
Lbs. of Bird
seed sold



12
Trees Planted



1,000
acres of Stony Kill
Farm & Forest



56
Monarch
butterflies raised



90
Lbs. of honey
harvested



146
Active
volunteers



8.5
miles of hiking
trails



1,187
Open barn
visitors



807
Plants sold



133
Community
garden plots



25
Gallons of maple
sap tapped



142
Bird species
spotted



120
Lbs. of wool
sheared



15
Community
workshops



39
chicks hatched



153
Education
programs



13,000
Grant dollars
invested in new
Learning Center