

# STONY KILL ALMANAC

BY AND ABOUT

Stony Kill Farm Environmental Education Center  
and the Stony Kill Foundation, Inc.

Calendar of Events Inside

email: [skfarm@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:skfarm@gw.dec.state.ny.us)[www.dec.state.ny.us](http://www.dec.state.ny.us)

## A Time of Harvesting and Thanksgiving, of Moons and Equality

by Reba Wynn Laks, Director

The period of October through December is, for many people, a period of gathering and thanksgiving. The final crops have been harvested. Here at Stony Kill, the hay is in the barn and the corn is in the corn crib. Two calves and six lambs were born this past spring. They are already getting big. The community-supported agriculture group, Common Ground, will soon be distributing the last of this year's produce. Gardeners working our community garden plots will also be gathering the last of their vegetables and flowers for this season.

According to the Farmer's Almanac, the traditional name for the full moon that occurs closest to the fall equinox is *Harvest Moon*. The Harvest Moon is no ordinary full moon; it behaves in a special way. Throughout the year the moon rises, on average, about 50 minutes later each day. But near the autumnal equinox, the day-to-day difference in the local time of moonrise is only 30 minutes. At that time, the moon will rise around sunset - and for the next few evenings after the equinox, will continue to rise not long after sunset. Traditionally, that came in handy for northern farmers who were working longer days to harvest their crops before autumn. The extra dose of light at the end of the day is what gave the Harvest Moon its name. With advanced farming techniques and electric lights, the Harvest Moon may not be as important to farmers today as in the past.

(Continued on page 2)

## 27<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sunday, October 2  
Noon till 5:00 PM

### "Hudson Valley Preservation and Conservation"

Hayrides, Barn Tours, Music by "Two Dollar Goat," Food, Kids' Crafts, Environmental Exhibits, Verplanck Garden Club and More!!

Suggested Donation: \$5.00/adults,  
\$3.00/Stony Kill Foundation members  
and seniors,  
\$2.00/children 5-12 years old.



**STONY KILL FARM  
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER  
Main # 845-831-8780**

*Office Hours*

Monday - Friday, 8:45 AM to 4:30 PM  
Saturday, 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM  
Sundays, (April, May, June, September, October)  
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM  
CLOSED ON ALL MAJOR HOLIDAYS  
Grounds - Open seven days a week from  
sunrise to sunset

**EDUCATION STAFF**

Reba W. Laks, Director, ext 303  
James Herrington, Farm Manager, ext 305  
Rich Parisio, Program Coordinator, ext 302  
Christopher O'Sullivan, Environmental Educator, ext 327  
Kerri Brady, Environmental Educator, ext 317  
Cindy Simpson, Regional WET Coordinator, ext 321  
Susan Kmietek, Office Manager, ext 300

**OPERATIONS STAFF**

Ed Higgs, General Mechanic, ext 307  
Jason Yaekel, Maintenance, ext 308  
Cindy Laccone, Maintenance, ext 308

**FORESTRY STAFF**

Barbara Lucas-Wilson, Forester, ext 309  
Lou Sebesta, Urban Forester, ext 316

**STONY KILL FOUNDATION, INC.**

**845-831-3402**

**Elaine Case, Office Manager  
Carolyn Plage, Volunteer Coordinator**

**Board of Directors**

Tony Riccobono, President  
Denise VanBuren, Vice President  
Richard Lahey, Chairman  
Art McCormack, Treasurer  
Alexandra Koppen, Corresponding Secretary  
Ed Connelly, Recording Secretary  
Laurie Harvey      William Reiner  
Patricia Lovette      Betty Strang  
Patrick Manning

*Stony Kill Almanac* is a quarterly publication and program listing of Stony Kill Farm EEC events. If you wish to be included on our mailing list, please call Stony Kill Farm at 845-831-8780, ext 300.

**Rich Parisio, Editor  
Susan Kmietek, Production**

(Harvest continued from page 1)

The fall equinox will take place this year on Thursday, September 22. This marks the beginning of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere. Buddhists celebrate equality, patience and acceptance on the equinox, the time of year when the sun is above the equator, and day and night are of equal length (12 hours each). This makes the equinox a particularly special time of the year in which to contemplate not only our wealth of harvest, but also the wealth of human diversity on our planet, and to consider how we treat one another. Fall is a time to celebrate not only the equality of day and night at the equinox, but also a time to recognize the equality of all peoples of the earth.

When Thanksgiving approaches in late fall, the story is often told of how the Native Americans assisted the early Pilgrims. At the same time that we express gratitude, and honor the help that was given, we should also acknowledge that the coming of the Europeans drastically changed the Native American way of life. As we celebrate the fall equinox, the harvest, and other fall holidays, we have an opportunity to remember the need for tolerance and acceptance, and to treat all peoples as equal.

Haudenosaunee (I roquois) Thanksgiving Address - "The words that come before all else." (This address is meant to be said every day, at the beginning of every gathering, social event, meeting and ceremony). You can access the entire Thanksgiving address from the Mohawk Nation at their website:

<http://pages.slic.com/mohawkna/thankgv.htm>



## Common Ground Farm's Fourth Successful Season

by Janet Ruhe

During the dog days of August, with crops coming on bountifully, we can say that Common Ground Farm, the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) project based at Stony Kill, is well on its way to one more good season, its fourth.

The farm is not just growing good crops - it's growing an educated membership. When the farm started, many members tended to view themselves as consumers, as if the farm's distribution days were like trips to the grocery store, and the price of membership should be a bargain. Now, more and more members see the CSA movement as a *cause* with the purpose of helping to preserve regional small farms that produce a variety of crops with organic and heritage seeds. They accept that drastic weather, insect pests and other unpredictable factors affect farming, and thus can affect the quantity and quality of their food. Too windy, too hot, too rainy, too dry, too many weeds, too many worms or beetles - the farmer has to work long days facing endless challenges. This summer, our members learned all about that, and came out to help and experience for themselves the back-breaking labor of our farmer and her assistants that produces good, chemical-free food, in spite of it all.

One thing that aided the education process is that Common Ground eliminated the required work hours that frequently go with CSA membership, opting instead to keep members informed of needs in the field and encouraging them to participate voluntarily. Some members regularly arrive to help harvest, get food to the Common Ground booth at the Beacon Farmer's Market, pitch in on Saturday potluck work parties, and do other chores, while those who can't lend a hand for whatever reason don't have to feel guilty.

A delightful part of the education of Common Ground members is that they have a new

appreciation of the thrill, taste and fragrance of seasonal crops. Children who have munched peas fresh off the vine in pea season always remember when peas are ready for the picking, how much work it takes to fill a bin with them, and how delicious they taste with no added ingredients, just their own green goodness. Eating food fresh from a chemical-free farm also lets people enjoy the diverse shapes, textures and colors of vegetables that have not been raised for uniformity, conformity, cold storage and shipping over vast distances.

Reaching out to the community, and also always looking for more helping hands, Common Ground welcomed the "Green Teens," Beacon High School students who not only helped in the fields but staffed the farm's booth in the Beacon Farmer's Market with verve and friendliness.

All in all, 2005 has been a season that educated Common Ground growers and members alike to respect the power of nature and try to work pragmatically with her, rather than against her, on a farm that began as a seed of hope after 9/11 and continues to struggle, as hope must struggle, to be a living reality.



**Stony Kill Foundation has a new phone number.** To contact the Volunteer Coordinator or the Office Manager call **845-831-3402**. You may leave messages for both as well as for garden plot and bird seed info on this line.

NEW YORK STATE  
**CONSERVATIONIST**



More than 100,000 people are reading about *your* environmental education center. Where? In the *Conservationist* magazine! You'll love the beautiful artwork and stunning photography by some of New York State's best outdoor artists and photographers. Don't miss another story about Stony Kill or any of our other great articles on environmental stewardship, hiking, birding, camping and fishing.

Special offer for Stony Kill Farm patrons!

Only \$10.00 for a full year (six bimonthly issues)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Call 1-800-678-6399 to subscribe, or mail to:

Address \_\_\_\_\_

The *Conservationist*, PO Box 1500, Latham, NY 12110-8000

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Enclosed     Bill me later

The *Conservationist* magazine is published by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

JENV2

NONPROFIT ORG  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 PERMIT 9022  
 NEWBURGH  
 NEW YORK

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
 Bureau of Environmental Education  
 STONY KILL FARM ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER  
 79 Farmstead Lane, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

