

The Power of Song: Hudson River Sloop Clearwater Launches a Musical Initiative To Get Kids Involved in Activism

Entertainer Linda Richards heads up the organization's Power of Song programs.



By Sara Novak
Tue Mar 2, 2010 10:54

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Tom Staudter / Clearwater

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The Hudson River Sloop Clearwater has long been an innovator when it comes to environmental education. The focal point of the organization, the Clearwater Sloop, was launched in 1969 and was the first ship of its kind to promote science and ecological education aboard a vessel. Since then, the program has expanded dramatically and today serves over 15,000 students annually and educates over 200 teachers a year about the program. And this year Clearwater is taking its pioneering instructive techniques a step further through its Power of Song program.

The Power of Song Program

Through the program, Hudson Valley entertainer Linda Richards will be introducing a new music initiative that exposes kids to socially conscious music. It's no secret that there's power behind a song. Activism and eco-activism specifically, have long been provoked by the emotions that stemmed from a song. From Janis Joplin to Bob Dylan and the more modern sounds of Pearl Jam, REM, Dave Matthews, and Brett Dennen to name a few, music stirs our emotions and brings activism to the surface. Starting kids off at a young age can inspire the next generation to play a role in their community, especially when it comes to the Hudson River.

In Clearwater's Power of Song programs, students are taught songs that not only teach them about ecology and science but, often times, bellow themes that are deeply rooted in the Hudson River. According to the organization, the workshops teach kids to create their own songs. In longer programs, the students research, write, and perform a variety of meaningful socially conscious songs.

"The goal of this program is for students to be inspired by the social movements of the past and appreciate their ability to enact social change through the power of song," said Linda Richards, Clearwater's Outreach Educator.



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News

Whiz Kid: Meet Matthew Emmer

Expressing himself through the "Power of Song"

By [Jessie Jafet \(/users/jessie-jafet\)](#) | [Email the author \(#\)](#) | March 8, 2011**Whiz Kid:** Matthew Emmer**School:** Junior at John Jay High School**Whiz Kid Accomplishment:** Matt Emmer is a songwriter, musician and member of "Power of Song," a musical youth group who sang in a video along with legendary folk singer, environmentalist and social activist Pete Seeger.Emmer's group will open the Earth Day concert at **Tarrytown Music Hall** (<http://www.tarrytownmusichall.org/>) on April 22 that will feature many folk-singing greats including Seeger, Tom Chapin, Janis Ian and others.**Whiz Kid's Key to Awesomeness:** When representatives from a Department of the Interior initiative—President Obama's "America's Great Outdoors Program"—came to the Hudson Valley last fall for a listening session, Matt Emmer and his group were eager to participate. He is a member of Clearwater's *Power of Song*, a group of 15-21 year-olds who consider themselves "cause musicians." The idea for the youth group was created by Seeger to foster the next generation of socially conscious artists who use music to speak their minds.

"We were asked to create a video to represent the efforts of the initiative," said Emmer. "So we added some new verses to Woody Guthrie's classic song "This Land is Your Land." Emmer wrote additional lyrics that he hopes will help preserve the legacy of Seeger and Clearwater by inspiring people through song.

Clearwater is the name of a sailing ship that was launched back in 1969 to conduct science-based environmental education aboard the vessel— and to bring about change to the then-polluted Hudson River.

The brainchild of Pete Seeger, the Clearwater organization currently has environmental education programs that reach over 15,000 students annually.

Seeger, 91, and Emmer, 16, share a passion for creating music that can move people into action.

"This experience has changed my life and how I live it," says Emmer. "Playing with Pete Seeger and aspiring to his example of a way of life full of idealism and optimism has had such a positive impact on how I see the world. Instead of seeing something and saying, 'Gee, isn't that terrible?' I now say 'What can I do in my life to make it better?'"

[Other Whiz Kid Articles \(/columns/whiz-kid-120\)](#)<http://o3.aolcdn.com/dims-shared/dims3/PATCH/resize/600x450/http://hss-prod.hss.aol.com/hss/storage/patch/a61cd298da8c641dc1556104492b2594>[Meet Zachary Mendes \(/articles/meet-zachary-mendes\)](#)By [Jessie Jafet \(/users/jessie-jafet\)](#)

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*Preserving the Hudson River
Next Generation of Environmental Leaders*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 4, 2011

America's Great Outdoors Initiative Brings Clearwater's *Power of Song* to a National Audience

DOI Youth Division Taps Clearwater's Power of Song Music Video for America's Great Outdoors Initiative

BEACON, NY – In the true spirit of Clearwater's founder, Pete Seeger, Clearwater's *Power of Song* captured the energy and imagination of last summer's America's Great Outdoors Youth Listening sessions in a music video featuring a parody of Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land." *Power of Song* members wrote new verses to voice their personal policy recommendations to the Obama Administration. Pete Seeger joined the youth in performance to create the music video, produced with support from Our Hudson Tomorrow and the Electronic Music Foundation.

Our Hudson Valley youth are now being heard on a national level as part of the formal policy recommendations for a 21st century conservation agenda. The *Power of Song* video, now featured on Clearwater's website, was tapped by the Department of Interior Youth Division as a model for its own multimedia presentation for the America's Great Outdoors report. Clearwater's *Power of Song* youth's version of "This Land" serves as the soundtrack for the DOI's multimedia piece, featuring highlight footage of Clearwater programs and comments from the 25 listening sessions that took place around the country.

To view the AGO Youth Division video, featuring Clearwater's *Power of Song*, please visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uk6NWhzQnYw&feature=player_embedded#at=12

Clearwater is proud of its passionate young leaders who attended this session and who aspire to make a difference in our country. We applaud their determination and leadership in making our communities better places. "You may think that no one listens to youth," said youth leader Carlos Duran, "take the initiative! In a big group, it is hard to get something started, but if someone starts something, all it takes is a spark to have a fire!"

More than ever we need to invest in our youth in helping them realize a green, sustainable future. To find out more about Clearwater's work in activating, educating and inspiring the next generation of environmental leaders, please visit www.clearwater.org

About America's Great Outdoors Initiative: On April 16, 2010, President Obama established the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to promote and support innovative community-level efforts to conserve outdoor spaces and reconnect Americans to the outdoors. The Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality are appointed to lead the initiative.

America's Great Outdoors Initiative visited the Hudson Valley last summer to host a Youth Listening Session in Hyde Park, NY. Given Clearwater's role on the river and its powerful youth leadership programming, the organization helped bring in youth from New York City to Albany to participate in the America's Great Outdoors August 5th youth listening session. The youth were undeniably passionate with over 300 arriving in Hyde Park to contribute their ideas and concerns about the environment. The Hudson Valley youth voiced heartfelt statements on the subjects of access to the natural environment, creating green spaces, green education, and green careers.

About Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 tax-exempt nonprofit, member-supported corporation whose mission is to preserve and protect the Hudson River, its tributaries and related bodies of water. Hudson River Sloop Clearwater conducts innovative environmental programs, advocacy and celebrations in order to inspire and energize the next generation of environmental leaders. Founded in 1966 by music legend and environmental activist Pete Seeger, the organization launched the sloop *Clearwater* in 1969 —a majestic replica of the sloops that sailed the Hudson in the 18th and 19th centuries. The 106-foot-long tall ship was among the first vessels in the U.S. to conduct science-based environmental education aboard a sailing ship, creating the template by which such programs are conducted around the world today. More than half a million young people and hundreds of thousands of adults have experienced their first real look at an estuary's ecosystem aboard the sloop. *Clearwater* has become America's Environmental Flagship, named to the National Register of Historic Places in 2004 for its role in the environmental movement. Today, the organization is partnering with schools and community leaders to raise the bar of environmental education again. This time the health of the Hudson River must go hand and hand with a sustainable world of green jobs in a green economy.

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*Preserving the Hudson River
Next Generation of Environmental Leaders*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 21, 2010

Clearwater Generations: An Earth Day Celebration to Benefit Clearwater

BEACON, NY – Pete Seeger, American icon and folk legend and Clearwater founder, along with grandson Tao Seeger will lead a remarkable line up for a special benefit concert, *Clearwater Generations: An Earth Day Celebration*, to take place April 22, 2011, at the Tarrytown Music Hall in Tarrytown, NY.

Clearwater Generations: An Earth Day Celebration grew out of the 2011 Great Hudson River Revival, Clearwater's annual festival and fundraiser, which is held annually on Father's Day weekend in June. This year the Clearwater Festival is also titled "Clearwater Generations." "Clearwater's environmental mission is about inspiring and educating the next generation, and we have applied this theme to music," said concert organizer, Steve Lurie. "Honoring tradition while looking toward the future has always been a major part of the Clearwater Festival. The *Generations* concert is all about classic Clearwater artists performing and inspiring their children and grandchildren, and carrying on their legacy through song."

Featured artists in addition to Pete Seeger and Tao Seeger include Peter Yarrow and Bethany Yarrow, Bernice Johnson Reagon & Toshi Reagon, and David Amram and Family. Performances by Clearwater friends and special guests including Janis Ian, Tom Paxton, Tom Chapin, Livingston Taylor, Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, Guy Davis, Rufus Cappadocia and the Power of Song, and others will round out Clearwater's Earth Day Celebration.

Tickets for the *Clearwater Generations: An Earth Day Celebration* concert range in price from \$48 to \$98, and are now on sale to the public. A limited number of premium tickets that include premium seating and a post concert reception with the artists are also available for \$250. Tickets are now on sale at Tarrytown Music Hall and can be purchased at www.tarrytownmusichall.org, or call 877-840-0457. Proceeds from the concert will benefit Hudson River Sloop Clearwater.

Tarrytown Music Hall, located in Westchester County, is just 35 minutes north of New York City at 13 Main Street, Tarrytown, NY. The Music Hall is a short walk up the street from the Metro North train station.

About the *Generations* Artists:

Legendary folk musician and activist, **Pete Seeger** has recorded and performed tirelessly throughout his long career, honoring the folksingers' commitment to spread the word and involve the audience. Seeger

founded the organization Clearwater in 1966 when he decided to "build a boat to save the river" with the belief that a majestic replica of the sloops that sailed the Hudson in the 18th and 19th centuries would bring people to the river where they could experience its beauty and be moved to preserve it. Thus inspired, the 106-foot-long tall ship Clearwater was launched in 1969.

Peter Yarrow's ability to write songs about social concerns made him an internationally recognized singer and songwriter. His part in the success of Peter, Paul & Mary has made him a folk legend.

Grammy award winning singer-songwriter, **Janis Ian** is also a published author and lecturer. Her 1975 album *Between the Lines* went platinum and the single "At Seventeen" reached the Top Three and won a Grammy.

Winner of the Grammy Lifetime Achievement award in 1999, **Tom Paxton** has become a voice of his generation, addressing issues of injustice and inhumanity, laying bare the absurdities of modern culture and celebrating the tender bonds of family, friends, and community.

America's favorite family entertainer, **Tom Chapin** is a gifted singer who charms audiences of all ages. His remarkable musicianship, great songwriting and personal warmth shine through in his many award winning recordings and videos, but particularly in his concerts that are special experiences for young and old alike.

Though perhaps most widely known as the founder and guiding force of the Washington, D.C. - based women's group "Sweet Honey in the Rock," **Bernice Johnson Reagon** is also a noted political activist, a Distinguished Professor at Washington's American University, and a Curator Emeritus at the Smithsonian Institution.

Livingston Taylor has enthralled audiences for forty years with a diverse original repertoire of country, folk, bluegrass, and blues. His top forty hits "I Will Be in Love with You," and "I'll Come Running" launched his career, and a steady song output has characterized his performances ever since.

David Amram has composed more than 100 orchestral and chamber music works, written many scores for Broadway theater and film two operas. A pioneer player of jazz French horn, Amram is also a virtuoso on piano, numerous flutes and whistles, percussion, and dozens of folkloric instruments from 25 countries.

Jay Ungar & Molly Mason are performers, composers and teachers specializing in 19th and 20th century American folk songs and dance music. Since joining forces in the late 1970s, they have become one of the most celebrated duos on the American acoustic music scene.

Updating the rural blues tradition for the modern era, **Guy Davis** was among the most prominent ambassadors of African-American art and culture of his generation, additionally winning great acclaim for his work in the theater.

Tao Seeger is the eldest grandchild of folk singer Pete Seeger. Tao was co-founder of the folk/rock groups RIG (Rodriguez/Irion/Guthrie) with Sarah Lee Guthrie and Johnny Irion and The Mammals with Mike & Ruthy Merenda before beginning starting his own group, the Tao Seeger Band.

Daughter of Bernice Johnson Reagon, **Toshi Reagon** was described by *Vibe* magazine as "one helluva rock'n'roller-coaster ride" and by *Pop Matters* as "a treasure waiting to be found," Toshi Reagon is a one-woman celebration of all that's dynamic, progressive and uplifting in American music.

Daughter of Peter Yarrow, **Bethany Yarrow** is a singer-songwriter, filmmaker and activist. She performs with a number of different ensembles including Bethany & Rufus Roots Quartet (with Rufus Cappadocia)

Cellist **Rufus Cappadocia** is a multi-lingual musician, performer, composer and recording artist of incredible range and diversity.

Clearwater's **Power of Song** is a vivacious group of young musicians who have meaningful traditional, new and original songs to share. These 15-21 year-olds participate in Clearwater's Power of Song apprentice program, which exposes Hudson Valley students to socially conscious music and empowers them to be active on issues that concern them through song

About Clearwater:

Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 tax-exempt nonprofit, member-supported corporation whose mission is to preserve and protect the Hudson River, its tributaries and related bodies of water. In despair over the pollution of his beloved river, Pete Seeger and friends built the sloop Clearwater in 1966 and started the organization, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater to preserve and protect the Hudson River. As an organization, Clearwater believes in educating our youth through innovative environmental programs, onboard the sloop and on-land, and creating the next generation of environmental leaders for a sustainable future. Pete knew that to teach people about a problem, you need to inspire them to care. He did this through music and Clearwater is proud to continue his legacy.

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Hudson River Sloop Clearwater
Hudson River Valley Greenway
Hudson Valley Tourism
Land Trust Alliance, New York Program
New York Committee of Highlands Coalition

New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Riverkeeper
Scenic Hudson

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Public Encouraged to Speak Up for Valley's Natural Treasures in Important National Listening Sessions

Valley among 25 locations nationwide selected for America's Great Outdoors Initiative

HUDSON VALLEY – Los Angeles, Calif.; Denver, Colo.; Missoula, Mont.; Minneapolis, Minn.; and Charleston, S.C. are among the special places across the U.S. where senior officials from President Obama's "America's Great Outdoors Initiative" have been engaging citizens in conversations as the federal government seeks to develop a 21st-century conservation agenda to reconnect Americans with our great outdoors. Comments shared at these sessions will be included in a report to be presented to President Obama on Nov. 15, 2010. Hudson Valley residents are excited about the administration's visit—and are reaching out to friends and neighbors, encouraging them to step up and speak out for the region's great outdoors when a group of high-level federal representatives comes to the area for two listening sessions on Thursday, Aug. 5, and Friday, Aug. 6. Pete Seeger, local legendary folk singer and environmentalist, and area youth from Clearwater's Power of Song program, will open the Aug. 6 general listening session with a song.

Valley land preservation, environmental education, and recreation and tourism groups are asking residents to join senior representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of the Interior, Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies for public listening sessions in Hyde Park and Poughkeepsie.

- A youth session (junior high, high school and college students) will be held Thursday, Aug. 5, from 3-5 p.m. at the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center at the FDR Home and Presidential Library in Hyde Park.
- A general session will be held on Friday, Aug. 6, from 9 a.m.-noon at the Marist College Student Center in Poughkeepsie.

The Hudson Valley offers natural areas, places of beauty unique in the entire country, clean water and safe, fresh food—and these outdoor resources are vital to quality of life and economic opportunity. The Hudson Valley has an important place in conservation history and was one of the first regions in the country designated by Congress as a National Heritage Area. The region also merited a stop by America's Great Outdoors Initiative because the area has created enterprising, collaborative and progressive programs that are helping revitalize urban and town centers as well as rural communities.

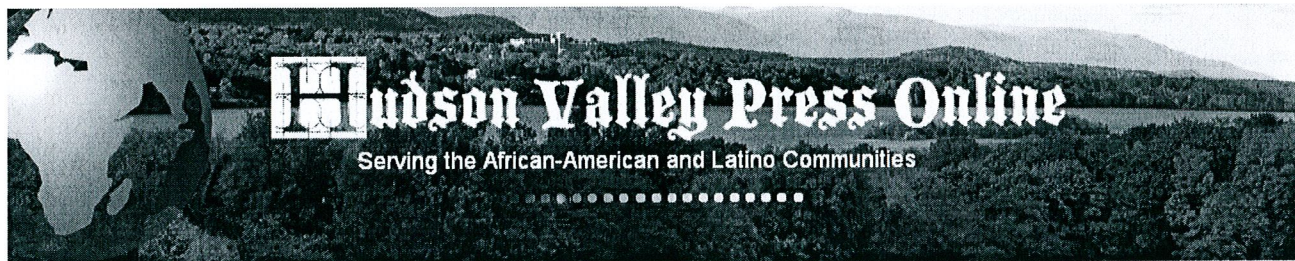
Those interested can find out details and register to participate at www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors.

Ned Sullivan, president of Scenic Hudson, said, "This is a terrific opportunity for Hudson Valley residents to tell why being outdoors in the region is special. It's a chance to tell top federal decision-makers how we can partner with them, with kayak outfitters, park managers, local government and community groups to improve our outdoor experiences for tourists and residents. People should join the gathering to let the Obama administration officials know we want to work with them. If you care about healthy water, working farms, great parks or other parts of being outdoors—come participate."
(more)

Patrick Hooker, commissioner of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, said, "From apples to angus cattle, the Hudson Valley has long been famous for its fruits, vegetables, wines and livestock. We are very proud to welcome the America's Great Outdoors program to the nation's original breadbasket to enjoy the beauty and the bounty of our region."

Pete Grannis, commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, said, "I applaud Secretary Vilsack for bringing the American Great Outdoors Initiative to the Hudson River Valley, which is in many ways the birthplace of American conservation. We are justly proud of the outdoor legacy we have created in New York through innovative community partnerships like our Hudson River Estuary Program that serve as national models for protecting watersheds and connecting people of all ages to world class outdoor recreational opportunities."

"At the turn of the last century, New York led the way to protect vast acres of land for the enjoyment of future generations and the protection of wildlife in both the Adirondacks and Palisades. At the turn of this century, the 65,000 protected acres of the New York/New Jersey Highlands stand as our legacy for the next generation to enjoy and protect," said **Carol Ash, commissioner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.** "The heart of the Highlands is the Hudson Valley. Known for its riverfronts, cultural and historic landmarks and its ability to support rare habitat, the Hudson Valley is a thriving piece of geography worthy of recognition by the president and his Great America Outdoors Initiative. We welcome the opportunity to work with him and our regional and national partners as we redefine our relationship to the natural world for the 21st century."



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October 1st, 2010

Walkway's Anniversary Celebration

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POUGHKEEPSIE—Family-friendly activities and homegrown talent will be featured during the Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park's one-year anniversary celebration scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 2.

The public is invited to attend the day-long anniversary celebration, which will feature musicians, face-painting, scavenger hunts, chalk art, storytelling, and other performers at various locations along the 1.25-mile-long park. Other attractions will include alternative energy displays and an oral history archiving project entitled "Stories of the Walkway" being gathered by the Children's Media Project. All activities will be free or will cost \$1.00. The Walkway will be open until 9 p.m. encouraging the public to stroll the bridge under the stars and enjoy musical entertainment provided by local performers. (All proceeds will benefit the Walkway.)

During the day's full slate of events, Walkway officials will also recognize public and private donors who contributed \$10,000 or more to the \$38 million "Build a Bridge" capital campaign that transformed the former Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge into the Walkway Over the Hudson—the world's longest elevated pedestrian park. The land preservation and environmental organization Scenic Hudson will receive special recognition when officials unveil the Scenic Hudson Gate at the Walkway's western entrance, commemorating the nonprofit organization's \$1 million donation to the capital campaign.

"Come join us on the Walkway to celebrate the one year anniversary! Participate in 'Chalkway on the Walkway', blow colorful bubbles, join in the scavenger hunt or just take a lovely nighttime stroll while listening to music. We are so pleased that our sponsors and contributors have made possible a family friendly and affordable celebration," said Walkway Executive Director Elizabeth Waldstein-Hart. "We will also unveil the Scenic Hudson Gate and recognize the generosity and vision of 28 individuals, foundations, companies, and government agencies that contributed the lion's share of the funding needed to make the Walkway a reality."

Ned Sullivan, President of Scenic Hudson, said: "Congratulations are due all who participated in the Walkway success story. In particular, strong leadership and funding were provided by the Dyson Foundation, New York State, and state and federal legislators. Scenic Hudson is proud to be part of Walkway as an extension of the parks we create up and down the Hudson River. The Walkway, like Scenic Hudson's collaborative land-preservation campaign to Save the Land That Matters Most, creates an enduring legacy for the Quadricentennial and helps boost the region's economy. We're also gratified to have been part of the Walkway Loop Trail, which enables walkers, runners and cyclists to explore the 30 miles of connected trails that showcase the river's and valley's beauty and history."

Musical entertainment will be provided by several notable Hudson Valley groups including the Hudson Valley Bluegrass Association, folk group Rosemary Rye, Clearwater's Power of Song, Melissa Orquist and others. Volunteer support for the event is being provided by Walkway Volunteers Children's Media Project, Girls Scout s-Heart of the Hudson Council, Dutchess County Arts Council, Mill Street Loft and the Kiwanis club.

5 Stars - Excellent
 ☆☆☆☆ 5 / 5 (1 Votes)

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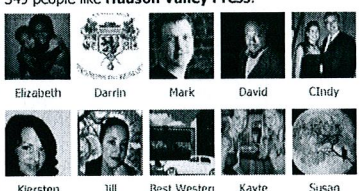
Hudson Valley Press Orange County Community College dedicates new Kaplan Hall in the City of Newburgh.
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Yesterday at 8:13am

Hudson Valley Press Sacred Heart School received computers from Mount Saint Mary College.

Mount Saint Mary donates computers to Sacred Heart
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 Newburgh - Thirty-five computers, complete with keyboard, monitor and mouse, were donated for children at Sacred Heart School in the City of Newburgh.

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