A Torch Is Passed

The Hudson Valley has lost an incredible social justice, environmental activist and peace advocate. Connie Hogarth passed away on Friday, February 11, 2022. Clearwater leadership recalls and celebrates Connie's loving spirit and many achievements.

Connie was the co-founder and executive director of WESPAC for 23 years until 1996. Her efforts included educational and activist work to shut down the Indian Point nuclear power plant in Buchanan, active support for ending apartheid in South Africa, and local efforts in the areas of human rights, LGBTQI rights, civil rights, affordable housing, and equal educational opportunities.

If Pete Seeger was the (grand)father of the Hudson Valley activist community, Connie was the (grand)mother.

Connie was tireless in her work for peace, justice, and the environment, and that side of her had a tenacious, even steely quality. But more than that, she was a deeply relatable, nurturing, loving presence. "From organizing music at WESPAC's annual picnics to whipping cream for shortcake at the Beacon Sloop Club's Strawberry Festival, Connie's activism was celebratory as well as hard-hitting, following the example set by Pete and his wife Toshi," said Steve Stanne, Clearwater's board president.

 It was palpable that **what Connie did, she did out of love.** That quality gathered countless people into her orbit who were inspired by her and wanted to get to work, too, and it multiplied her impact and her legacy a thousandfold.

" I asked her a couple of months before she died how she felt about it all," said Steve Kent, one of Connie's many close friends who worked with her on projects ranging from civil rights to Indian Point. "She said that she felt she had done enough, which struck me as remarkable. How many of us will be able to say that? But beyond what she did herself, what she set in motion and how she inspired others to action with the force of her example and loving personality is still unfolding, and will be for a long time to come. It's the greatest of the many great things she leaves us."

Tinya Seeger, daughter of Pete and Toshi, reflects on Connie's life, "Connie was a humanitarian who spent her life teaching grassroots activism by example. She would call and email us and see we showed up. She gave me clipboards of petitions to get signed. She had unbounded energy and a hands-on approach to reminding everyone, especially young people to continue to fight for justice."

Musician and friend, Guy David said, "Connie Hogarth always made you feel like your voice was as important as hers, in determining the future of the world. She was a quiet force of nature. Her belief in Human rights and equality were something she expressed every day."

John Mylod, a former Clearwater executive director, reflects that "Connie was a terrific long-time member and supporter of Clearwater, a regular activist volunteer at Revival and Beacon Sloop Club Festivals, and a fierce advocate for peace and justice."

Pace University Professor John Cronin, and former Clearwater Environmental Director, along with Clearwater's current Environmental Action Director, Manna Jo Greene visited Connie shortly before her passing. Sitting in her living room overlooking the Hudson, reflecting on some of the victories we have collectively achieved over the years, Connie reminded them emphatically, **"there is still a lot of work to be done."**
John asked Connie what her final earthly wish would be, if she were granted one. Her response, **'That everyone would love and respect each other; that's what the world needs."**

We encourage you to enjoy this video celebrating Connie's contributions back in 2015:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WRixCASX50

https://midhudsonnews.com/2022/02/13/activist-connie-hogarth-passes-away-at-95/?fbclid=IwAR0A99MRWiM4qvX8aNFM2aiWggi3goncK1BfVjF_wzPplVxPuwFLGvN5UYQ

https://www.democracynow.org/2022/2/14/headlines/connie_hogarth_who_spent_decades_fighting_for_peace_and_justice_dies_at_95?fbclid=IwAR1akVx9MT_93D25ihDNf3zLL79MW91WojqmH9hmrhKjWi8c8lyykbp0HtQ