

Featured Green School

Summers-Knoll School

Joanna Hastings, Head of School



Kim Guziel, Summers-Knoll Business Manager and Donna Lewis of Natural Kids® at **Green School Awards Ceremony.**



Summers-Knoll 2nd and 3rd grade students and teacher Susan Carpenter present an enormous plastic ball to the Mayor at Ann Arbor City Hall. The ball was comprised of thousands of plastic bags gathered from the school community.



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Head of School, Joanna Hastings states: “One of the reasons why Summers-Knoll strives for a sense of global connectedness is that so many of the issues we face today, and that our children will continue to face, are global concerns. The environment is a big one. It’s an issue that affects people and communities all around the world, and affects us right here in Ann Arbor, in our backyards and kitchens and yes, schools. “

That’s why Summers-Knoll has become a certified [Michigan Green School](#) – actually the first to become certified in Ann Arbor. The children are growing up concerned about the environment. They want to do something about it. At Summers-Knoll the teachers are listening to them, and providing the support and encouragement they need in order to try things out and figure out what helps. Maybe the kids are experimenting with designing and trying to cook in solar ovens. Maybe it’s feeding lunch scraps to a bin of worms, harvesting the resultant worm-casings and gardening with them. Or it might be tie-dyeing and selling fabric grocery bags as a fundraiser for Jane Goodall’s Roots-and-Shoots. In any event the students are engaged in hands-on, thought-provoking activities which further their critical thinking and creative problem-solving abilities as well as train them in research, scientific process, communication and budgeting skills and a whole range of other academic pay-offs.

Meanwhile the school is doing its best to ensure the health of its community by serving organic lunches (made and delivered to the school by Savor the Season, an organic caterer), and using eco-friendly products wherever possible. Being Green makes sense financially for an organization also; being responsible with energy consumption, using fluorescent and natural lighting, utilizing rain barrels to water flower and vegetable gardens: all these things and more have helped Summers-Knoll cut costs and give an active example of mindful living to the children in its care.