



Move over Barbie: Woman-owned eco-enterprise introduces the next generation of Earth Friends™

Can dolls be fabulous toys and environmental role models? Eco-entrepreneur Deborah Kettner is banking on it as she relaunches the innovative line of Earth Friends™ dolls. In fact the dolls' mission statement is the biggest feature on their 100% post-consumer waste cardboard box: "Inspiring the children of today to care for the world of tomorrow."

The Earth Friends were created in 1996 by Whitney Ellis Kennedy of Venice, CA with the intention to create huggable lovable dolls for boys and girls using green materials. There are 9 Earth Friends to choose from, 3 boys and 6 girls, with a diverse selection of hair and skin tones. The dolls are made in the USA with hair and clothing made from organic or recycled cotton, skin made from the durable and renewable hemp fiber and bodies filled with post consumer recycled stuffing from plastic bottles.

Each doll comes equipped with a Hope Planting Kit™ inside his or her backpack including tree seeds, a coconut coir pellet that expands when watered, and an instruction booklet. "The idea is to give children a hands-on experience of Mother Nature," says Ellis. "It reminds them about their Earth Friend's mission to help the planet. By planting a tree, children learn that they can actively participate in taking care of the earth."

Deborah Kettner recently purchased the line of dolls when she was unable to reorder them for TWIST, her eco-groovy retail shop in Mendocino, California. "Whitney decided to stop making them when she had a new baby. I was heart-broken to see such an inspirational and popular product line disappear, so I decided to purchase the business and carry the important mission of the Earth Friends forward."

Part of this forward momentum has been eco-evaluating The Earth Friends™ already green materials. Kettner has a growing list of ecological accomplishments including redesigning the doll packaging out of 100% post-consumer waste cardboard printed with water based inks. She has replaced the peat pellets in The Earth Friends Hope Planting Kits with a coconut coir growing medium as an environmentally friendly improvement. Peat moss is over harvested and coco is a renewable resource. Kettner has sourced a wonderful organic cotton yarn that is both soft and sustainable to create beautiful and healthy doll hair. Organic cotton cultivation eliminates the toxic chemicals used in the growing of conventional cotton. In the near future alliances with organic cotton and hemp clothing manufacturers will be solidified utilizing fabric scraps that would otherwise be heading to the landfill for new doll clothing.

Kettner says "When I think about all the possibilities for The Earth Friends I feel inspired. The children of today are eager to be Earth Friends. I am especially looking forward to transforming each of the Earth Friends into earth activists with educational stories about exciting adventures aligning each character with a specific environmental or social justice mission. The Earth Friends will partner with environmental and community organizations around the globe to help educate about the many ways people need to revolve back into earth friendly lifestyles and quickly strive to repair the damage being done to Mother Nature. Through storytelling and play we can spread hope for the future one heart at a time. I am both amazed and honored to be an Earth Friend."

For more information about The Earth Friends, visit www.theearthfriends.com or contact Deborah Kettner at theearthfriends@mac.com or 707-536-7916.