

What could be better than “Keeping Belle Isle Beautiful” in a kayak?

by Beth Crick | Aug 18, 2017 |



To get an idea of the types of litter collected, the Belle Isle Conservancy created a fish mosaic from trash collected during their Spring Clean-up event. The attached infographic represents the display at the Belle Isle Aquarium.

The weather cleared up Thursday just in time for a DTE Energy Care Force team to get in their kayaks and pick up trash from the canals on Belle Isle.

“We choose this volunteer activity because it’s something we could do in the Michigan outdoors and it supports Belle Isle, one of the jewels of Detroit,” said Knut Simonsen, senior vice president, [DTE Midstream](#). “We focused on staying safe in our kayaks and collecting trash. It was a fun team outing – and what a cool view of Detroit from the river!”

The canal clean-up initiative is a partnership between the Belle Isle Conservancy, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Riverside Kayak Connection, supporting the “Keep Belle Isle Beautiful” anti-littering campaign.

“The goal of “Keep Belle Isle Beautiful” is to create awareness, through education, about the impact of littering in our parks and waterways,” said [Genevieve Nowak](#), director, [Belle Isle Conservancy](#). “We truly appreciate being a part of DTE’s Month of Caring, and having the team care for Belle Isle with such impactful volunteer service.”

During high season (June-August) 800,000+ people visit the park each month. In staff costs alone, Belle Isle Park spends \$2,136 a day in high season picking up litter and more than \$500,000 each year. Trash on Belle Isle negatively impacts wildlife and marine life.

“We took 12 full bags of trash out of the canals. The most unusual items I found were a Tequila bottle, a toothbrush, and a seat belt,” said Susan Sullivan, office administrator, DTE Midstream. “I also saw a turtle on a log, several birds roosting in trees, and a fish jump in the water! It was such a rewarding experience to help clean up the canals and preserve its natural beauty.”