



Belle Isle Aquarium Weathervane Butzel Long Design Contest Information and Rules



About the Belle Isle Aquarium and Weathervane

On May 26, 1899, a civic minded bill to construct a combined aquarium and horticultural building in Belle Isle Park passed the Michigan State Legislature. The bill was introduced by David Heineman, the cousin of Leo M. Butzel, whom the law firm of Butzel Long is named for. The Butzel/Heineman family and the Butzel Long firm have a long and dedicated history of giving back to the community. Butzel Long now wishes to mark their 160th anniversary as a premier Detroit law firm by sponsoring the return of a weathervane to the cupola of the Belle Isle Aquarium just in time for the Aquarium's 110th birthday!

When the Aquarium was conceived, institutions of its type were exceedingly rare in the world. It was therefore believed that an aquarium would bring honor and prestige to Detroit and that her citizens would be uplifted by exposure to aquatic creatures in a grand public building. The will to create this new building was an outgrowth of the public fascination with the study of the natural world that bloomed during the Victorian era. Albert Kahn won the competition to design the building and in 1901 ground was broken.



On August 18, 1904, the Belle Isle Aquarium was opened to the public. At that time it was the third largest public aquarium in the world and declared by experts to be the finest institution of its kind.

Over the next century the Aquarium welcomed millions of visitors and remained open during difficult times in our history including two World Wars, Prohibition and the Great Depression. During that period of time the building underwent many repairs, quick fixes and renovations. At some point the fish weathervane that adorned the Aquarium since 1904 was removed from the cupola and lost. The former weathervane is visible in historic photos and some Aquarium postcards.



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Project sponsor:



About the Contest

The law firm, Butzel Long will mark the occasion of their 160th anniversary as a premier Detroit law firm by sponsoring a competition to design and construct a weathervane for the 110th birthday of the Belle Isle Aquarium. The new weathervane will adorn the Aquarium's cupola. As the direction of Belle Isle in general and the Belle Isle Aquarium specifically moves forward, it is only fitting that a weathervane marks these positive winds of change.

Contest Guidelines

- You must incorporate the following elements into your design:
 1. It must be at least 2.5 feet long but no larger than 4 feet long, no wider than 9 inches, and large enough to be visible from the adjacent parking lot.
 2. It must function as a weathervane and rotate with the wind.
 3. It must be made of non-corrosive metal.
 4. The design's weight must be appropriate for the roof and functionality of the weathervane.
 5. The design must include north, south, east and west directionals.
- The design should capture the essence of the Belle Isle Aquarium and its historic character.
- Entries must include a text description of the design and a to-scale, color drawing that will be unveiled on September 19, 2014 at a private party at the Belle Isle Aquarium.
- The construction of a proposed design must not exceed \$7,500. Entries must include a preliminary budget of the cost to construct and assemble the weathervane, identification of the person who will construct the weathervane, and a timeline for project completion.
- The design must be your own original, unpublished work and must not include any third-party logos or copyrighted material. By entering the competition, you agree that your submission is your own work.
- The winning entrant will receive a \$500 award.

Submitting an Entry

- Fill out the entry form completely and email it to [wyermank@belleisleconservancy.org](mailto:wyermark@belleisleconservancy.org) with a subject line "Aquarium Weathervane Competition."
- Digital entries only. High-resolution images in jpeg or pdf are preferred.
- Submissions will be accepted through midnight on Friday, August 29, 2014.

Timeline

- Competition opens: Friday, August 1, 2014.
- Competition closes: Friday, August 29, 2014.
- Jury deliberation: Week of September 8, 2014.
- The winning designer will be notified by Friday, September 12, and the winning design will be announced on Friday, September 19, 2014.



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The Fine Print

- Maximum of one entry per person.
- You must be a U.S. citizen and at least 18 years of age.
- Entry form should include a biography of the artist.
- Submissions will be evaluated by a five-person Belle Isle Aquarium Weathervane jury for merit and feasibility.
- The Belle Isle Aquarium Weathervane Committee reserves the right to make changes to the winning design before construction occurs.
- The decision of the judges is final.
- Construction of the winning design will be completed by a third party.
- The name of the winning entrant will be announced in a press release.
- The winning entrant agrees to be interviewed about his/her weathervane design.
- The winning entrant agrees to be photographed and to allow his/her photograph to appear in Belle Isle Conservancy and/or Butzel Long promotional material.
- Upon winning the contest, the winning entrant agrees that the artwork and design of the weathervane becomes the sole possession of the Belle Isle Conservancy and may not be reproduced in any form by the entrant without the permission of the Belle Isle Conservancy.
- The Belle Isle Conservancy reserves the right to merchandise the weathervane.



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