



By Lisa Neff

From trash to art

The Splash Trash Tour invites people to dive in and do their part to keep the beaches and ocean clean.

The pop-up show is at the Valentine House in Robinson Preserve in northwest Bradenton.



Neff

Robinson is the third stop for the tour making its way to six Florida counties in early 2017. Hands-on educational programs at the stops engage people of all ages.

Environmental communicator Bette Booth created Splash Trash to show how trash found in the ocean can be used to create art.

The tour came together in a less than a year. Booth was staying on an island in Honduras in 2016 and, upon seeing the trash on the beaches and in the water, she felt compelled to do something.



Bette Booth's Splash Trash Tour provides hands-on opportunity to create art from trash and view artists' work. The tour is at the Valentine House in Robinson Preserve, 1704 99th St. NW, Bradenton, through Saturday, Feb. 25. Islander Courtesy Photo



Trash piles up on a beach and trash is transformed into art for the Splash Trash Tour at the Valentine House in Robinson Preserve, 1704 99th St. NW, Bradenton. The tour is at Robinson through Saturday, Feb. 25. Islander Courtesy Photos

She began combing the beach, collecting trash that she transformed into treasure art — mostly mobiles and totems made from children's toys.

She also began reading about pollution and litter, the organizations seeking to protect our natural resources and the trash artists who were making statements around the world.

Booth created an interactive show for ReUseA-palooza in her hometown of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and then she created the Splash Trash Tour for those of us who reside on the Gulf coast of Florida, where we see trash on the beach every day.

"We're extremely excited to host the tour here in Manatee County," said Melissa Nell, volunteer and education division coordinator for Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources. "The sculptures and artwork in the tour make a striking visual impact that definitely evoke wonder at the sheer volume and diversity of trash found in our world's oceans."

Those who visit the exhibit are encouraged to pledge to adopt new habits to reduce trash in the ocean, as well as participate in hands-on crafting activities — creating art to add to the tour.

"By hosting the tour, we hope to not only inform viewers but to also inspire them to take action to improve the situation," Nell said.

You can see the Splash Trash Tour at Robinson Preserve, 1704 99th St. NW, Bradenton. The tour stop ends Saturday, Feb. 25.

For more information, call the preserve at 941-745-3723.



An art piece in the Splash Trash Tour on display at Robinson Preserve, 1704 99th St. NW, Bradenton. Islander Courtesy Photo

Save the date

You can help.

Put the Great American Cleanup on your calendar.

This year the annual event — coordinated locally by Keep Manatee Beautiful — will be Saturday, April 22, which is Earth Day.

Volunteers are needed to clean shorelines throughout the county, as well as parks and preserves.

Convenient check-in sites for islanders seeking to participate are:

- Anna Maria City Hall, 10005 Gulf Drive, Anna Maria.
- Kingfish Boat Ramp on the north side of Manatee Avenue/State Road 64 in Holmes Beach.
- FISH Preserve, 11601 Cortez Road W., Cortez.

Additional check-in sites include:

- Terra Ceia on U.S. 19 at the northwest corner of the bridge by Crab Trap I.
- Old Braden River Historical Society at Jiggs' Landing near the intersection of Braden River and Linger Lodge roads.
- Palmetto City Hall, 518 Eighth Ave. W., Palmetto.

For more details about the Great American Cleanup go online to manateebeautiful.com or call 941-795-8272.