



# **Call for artists: Mississippi Earth Tones Festival looking for more local talent**

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**ALTON** - This year's Mississippi Earth Tones Festival is coming Sept. 16, and Alton Main Street is looking for more artists to contribute to the eco-themed day of fun.

Alton Main Street Executive Director Sara McGibany said the festival is in need of fashion-minded individuals as well as sidewalk chalk enthusiasts for two of the more creative aspects of the festival. Last year was the first year for both the recycled fashion show and large chalk mandalas in the street. McGibany said each of those items were definitely worth bringing them back again for 2017.

For the recycled fashion show, people are invited to construct wearable apparel from garbage or recycled materials. McGibany said the fashion is broken into two categories: functional and fantasy. The former could be worn every day. The latter is more of costume apparel.

"Last year was great," she said. "We had about seven or eight entries."

People in the show were assisted by Lillian Bates of Lillian By Design, who also hosts the event. The recycled fashion show is the first event at the main stage of Earth Tones. This year, McGibany said Bates is offering a willing ear for people wanting to design wearable art this year.

The second project for which Alton Main Street is looking for artists is a collection of street mandalas. Artists are given a 10 foot square on East Broadway and some "professional grade" bright and vibrant sidewalk chalk to use to make elaborate mandalas.

Last year, the mandalas were popular among festival-goers, but they were all done in a specific area. This year, McGibany said she wants to utilize the large art works to separate different zones of the festival.

"We want to put them there for people to discover them as they walk down the street," she said.

Alongside those mandalas will be as many as five art installations made to illustrate the theme of the festival, which is pollinators. McGibany said one artist was going to make a large installation based on a queen bee and her court.