

# Conservation and Art Rocked the Riverfront at 17th Annual Mississippi Earthtones Festival

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - This weekend, the 17th annual Mississippi Earthtones Festival celebrated the Mississippi River with a day of live music, art and conservation education.

Attendees flooded the Alton Amphitheater from noon to 10 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 16. They could enjoy eco-friendly craft vendors and art exhibits while learning about the

river and ways to help the environment. The many family-friendly activities and interactive art booths attracted a big crowd.

“Our goal is to bring locals and tourists alike to Downtown Alton to celebrate life on the Mississippi River and learn about ways that we can all be good stewards of our environment,” explained the [festival’s webpage](#).

The Mississippi Earthtones Festival was presented by [Alton Main Street](#), an organization that aims to revitalize downtown Alton, as well as [Jacoby Arts Center](#) and [the Sierra Club](#).

Local bands rocked the riverfront from 2–10 p.m. [Jason “Gordo” Gordon](#), [Mattie Schell & Friends](#), [Loftys Comet](#) and [Jake’s Leg](#) played Americana, indie jazz and Grateful Dead favorites throughout the evening.

Saturday’s event also honored local environmentalists Carla Cope, Clifford Clark and Tim Podhorn. These “three local champions for the environment” received the Confluence Conservation Leadership Award.

The Mississippi Earthtones Festival encourages people to engage with art and the river. The festival is always held on the third Saturday in September to coincide with “It’s Our River Day,” an initiative by the State of Illinois to promote education and conservation of Illinois waterways.

In addition to the festival, the Mississippi Earthtones Festival River Clean Up is next Saturday, Sept. 23. This event transports volunteers to nearby islands on the Mississippi River to pick up trash along the riverbanks. To reserve your spot on the ferries, sign up at [www.DowntownAlton.com/Events](http://www.DowntownAlton.com/Events).