

Atlanta FairTax Rally - May 24, 2006



Thanks to these FairTax volunteers and staff who arrived early to set up the FairTax.org booth and auditorium materials. Also, many thanks to Pat Landy from Indian Lake Estates, Florida who volunteered to become the "official" FairTax.org photographer for this event.

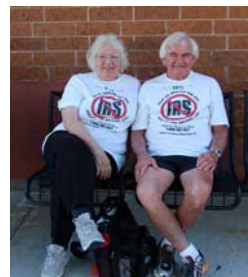
[If you missed the rally, click here for some short video clips of the event.](#)



The first in line. Right, David, a Trucking Company owner from Perry, GA and left is "Peter the Painter" a Painting contractor from Snellville, GA



The line of enthusiastic supporters started forming early in the day. These dedicated folks endured a typical hot Georgia day to make sure they were part of the 4,500 to be allowed inside.



Warren Morrissette and his wife Jeanne have been working for tax reform for over 50 years and still make annual visits to Washington DC to visit with their Senators and Congressman. They are convinced their persistence will pay off!!!



Alice Rodriguez from Fayetteville, GA, left and Vera Clarkson from Pensacola, FL just became acquainted and Vera said they were becoming friends already!!



Art and Betty are in the Formal Wear business and have many wonderful stories gathered over the years, their customers were lucky to have the benefit of their expertise.



Some of the volunteer staff with FairTax.org. From left: Gene Key, Georgia State Director; Phil Hinson, SE Regional Director, Mike Frederick, Alabama State Director; Angela Bean and Vick Vickery, co-directors for CD-08.



Sherry Mitcham, Angela Bean, Sam Wright, Phil Hinson and Genie Hayes do some pre-rally set up planning.



FairTax.org volunteers distributed information to the supporters waiting in line.



FairTax.org volunteers gave away T-Shirts, brochures, videos, CDs and more and encouraged supporters to get involved in spreading the word.



John and Dolly Collins rode their BMW motorcycle over 800 miles from Coldwater, Michigan to be here to support the FairTax



Pat Landy was one of the many supporters who drove or flew in from other states to support the cause! THAT is dedication to the cause!



Regardless of the Georgia sun, the lines continued to form.



Alice Holtzclaw and son, Wesley.



Kelley and Mike Frederick drove from Alabama with their two sons but became part of the "left behind" crowd who listened to the rally from the parking lot. They made good use of the time and kept the crowd outside motivated. [A link to our neighbor's web site with photos.](#)

[Click here for some great photos, videos, and reports from The Lumpkin Informer](#)

Look for more photos from the event to come soon! If you have a photo to share email to angela@gafairtax.org. We will try to include as many as we can on this site. Also send us your comments about the event to this email and we will post as many as we can.

Some individual experiences....

As you have probably heard by now, the rally last night was a huge success.

When Genie Hayes, Angela Bean, Gene Key and myself arrived in the Gwinnett Convention Center parking lot around 1:30, there were already a few FairTaxers there, including Sam Wright from Brunswick. With the help of Diana, Vicky and Heather from Houston, as well as quite a few othervolunteers, we got the AFFT area set up and petitions placed in every seat in the auditorium by mid-afternoon. We had new brochures from AFFT, which were very welcome. By 3:30 PM, there were quite a few people "tailgating" in the parking lot. By 5:00 pm, there were several hundred people lined up at the door waiting to get in.

I think they opened the doors around 6 PM and the ballroom was full by around 6:30 and the Gwinnett police diverted people away from the parking lot at that point, telling them the event was "sold out" (which must be some kind of record for an event which was free). There had been a serious traffic accident on I-85 that held up traffic and Grayson high school held it graduation at the arena next door. The result was one huge traffic mess. Those of us in the ballroom started getting calls on our cellphones from FairTaxers being turned away during that time. Some of these people had driven in from out-of-state, almost everyone had fought their way through heavy traffic to get there. Some of those people called Boortz this morning on the air and everyone I heard was thrilled that the turnout was so tremendous and some said they had a great time in the parking lot. The show was aired live on WSB.

Even though we had been led to expect that Hannity and Colmes would be aired live at 9PM from the event, that did not happen. We have not been told the reason for that decision.

The crowd was very loud and enthusiastic. A local band, Banks & Shane, "warmed up" the crowd and the air was electric. I got a real sense that we were witnessing history being made. Neal Boortz, John Linder, Sean Hannity, Herman Cain, John Stossel & Clark Howard were all very good, as was AFFT's Ken Hoagland. Royal Marshall, Neal's radio side-kick, also did a very good short set of remarks. There was also an excellent set to open in which a group of school children recited some relevant quotes (such as the Einstein one about the income tax being the hardest thing in the world to understand).

One of the more surprising pieces of information was that the facility was donated. One of the other speakers (either Stossel or Howard) said he had never heard of this type of facility being donated. Given the amount of overhead they must have, I was very surprised by that.

Mssrs. Boortz and Linder made mention of making this a "road show". If we can duplicate this type of event in other areas, it could well serve as a huge momentum accelerator. -- *Philip Hinson, Volunteer Regional Director SE*

I am very encouraged by the results of the FairTax Rally on Wednesday the 24th. It is very important that we all recognize what is going on and how all of our individual efforts and decisions to get involved have made a difference. Our grassroots effort is really changing the hearts and minds of the country. One thing I am realizing from being involved with this group is this.... FairTax people come from all walks of life and unlike many things in our society; this Tax Reform Effort unites people. I saw Multi Ethnic groups of people standing side by side laughing, giving Hi-fives, and cheering. What a statement and a "nice picture" for America and the truly good people it produces.

Thank God for the decision we've all made to make this a successful Grassroots Effort: Decisions Made; Results Received! We have a ways to go to declare complete success but the harder we work, we won't wait long! Keep it going. -- *Brian Martin, District Director CD-04*

I'm the mommy of the smallest Fair Tax supporter that you have a picture of on your website. The rally was terrific. We were so happy to be there. All of the speakers were so motivating, and Herman Cain in particular really rallied the crowd. The event was even fun for Wesley, who's only 16months old. We'll be ready to travel anywhere there's another rally in the south east. I really believe history was made last night at the rally. The grass roots fire has certainly been started!! Look out America, here comes the FAIR TAX!!! -- *Alice Holtzclaw, Locust Grove, GA*

The rally was great! A freind and I actually made it into the rally. We got through the doors at 6pm and they closed them at 6:15pm. My dad was driving back from Social Circle last night, and he travels down Sugarloaf Pkwy. He said that the traffic for the rally was backed up over 10 miles!! The rally was very moving, and proved to me that a modern era tax revolt has just been started and I am happy that I was able to be a part of it. One of my favorite speakers of the night, was Herman Cain. He made a great speech. If you can find the text of his speech from last night, it will be worth the read. And please keep him in your prayers, he is currently undergoing Chemo. *Thanks. -- Chris*

What a magnificent experience it was tonight at the Gwinnett Center FairTax Rally! 4500 people in attendance and reportedly about that amount had to be turned away because we maxed out the facility! If you missed it you really missed something special! It would appear that there will be more to come so make every effort to attend when it comes to a city near you! I'm sure Mr. Boortz will have plenty to say about it on his show Thursday morning! Thanks to all who worked hard to make this a success! -- *Jim Melham, Acworth, GA*

WOW! I work 10 minutes from the Gwinnett Civic Center - left at 5:30 to get there, couldn't do it. Fire Marshall closed it down while I was sitting at Sugarloaf & Satellite - for 20 minutes trying to turn left. I HATE that I missed it, but I'm PLEASANTLY surprised that so many supporters showed. TERRIFIC RESPONSE!!!!!! Next time - Turner Stadium will be maxed out. -- *Richard Bedsole, Hiram, GA*

We were also stuck in traffic for an hour, but were 3 miles from Satellite Blvd! I'd guess that many more than 4500 turned around. Next time pick a place that can handle 50,000 because we are s-p-r-e-a-d-i-n-g the word! -- *Rick*

I wish I could have been there! I had my Jeep Cherokee covered with those 18 x 24 yard signs taped to each side and rear window--I drew a lot of attention in all that traffic. After a 4 hour drive from Warner Robins through ungodly traffic jams I was about the 20th person "waiting" in line when they told us no more people! Needless to say I was a bit frustrated along with maybe couple of thousand others waiting to get in.

It took one hour just to go down 12 miles of I-85 and once off the exit it took 40 minutes to go barely one mile!!! Then they turned us away because the parking lot was closed at 6pm--I parked at a nearby Holiday Inn, walked the 1/2 mile to a huge line at 6:30pm.

After moving slowly through the line for 45 minutes I got turned away when I was about 20th person in line. The event staff was not very helpful when I first arrived at 6:30 and I said I was a volunteer. They said nobody else goes in ahead of the line! Period!

I was really mad a first and vowed to never go to another rally again...but after hearing all the apologies from Neal and from the announcers on WSB and their airing the event because of those turned away, I calmed down and at least heard the great rally on the way back home which only took 2 hours to get back! WOW, Hermain Cane was awesome, of course along with Neal, Sean and Congressman Linder! And to have John Stossel show up--we are moving into national attention--the next wave forward could be a

tsunami! I hope John Stossel does a 20/20 segment on the FairTax grassroots movement!

I would love to get a video of the event if it is made! What a powerful-motivating set of speakers. I am still committed, hopefully they will learn from this underestimation of attendance. Next time, I will leave at noon and beat the evening traffic mess. I am fired up again and going to move forward. Normally about a 2 hour drive in normal traffic, I planned an extra hour for rush hour and still was delayed an additional hour. Oh well, good thing is that the turn out was far more then expected, makes the problems feel justified a bit and with all the appologies they made I felt better. Gives me more hope that this movement is growing and unable to be stopped!

Looking forward to the next event. Maybe Neal can arrange for a larger facility gathering again in Atlanta later this year and make up for the thousand or so that got turned away?-- *Doug Sleeth, Warner Robins, Ga, FairTax District Director GA Congressional District 1*

I was fighting my way through traffic when I got the call that they were turning people away because they were at capacity. I have never been so excited to NOT get to do something- what an amazing statement of support!!! I stood on the hill just up from the convention center and watched in amazement as people just poured in. Thankfully WSB was smart enough to broadcast it live and although I would have loved to have been inside, listening to it was enough to get me fired up and give me great hope that something really powerful has gotten started. Kudos to all those 'big potatos' on this list who were a part of making lastnight happen!! Next time I will make sure to get there far earlier. -- *Lee Watts, Atlanta, GA*

The FairTax rally Wednesday night was unbelievable.

The atmosphere was absolutely electric. The passion in the crowd rivaled what I've seen when Auburn and Alabama face off in the Iron Bowl - no exaggeration. (If you don't know about SEC football, think 80,000+ Hatfields and McCoys in one stadium).

I honestly didn't know what to expect when I decided to drive the nearly 300 miles, one way, from North Alabama to Duluth, GA. I suspected that the turnout would be strong, but my expectations were shattered. I don't see how the FairTax bill won't pass now! Trust me, politicians who oppose this bill will peril at the polls.

For those who didn't make it in, please don't feel disheartened. The fact that so many were turned away says more than a partially full convention center. Your very presence sent a STRONG message.

I would say that more FairTax rallies are almost a certainty after last night's great event.
THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE FAIRTAX!!! -- *Brian, Alabama*

This was my first Fairtax event, I just wanted to show up to be one of a number, yes, prove to Neal Boortz that there is support for the Fairtax and to let the politicians know that there is grass roots support out there. I got there early, the morning of the Rally, you know "Be Prepared".

I was not prepared, I don't know what I was expecting, however I am totally overwhelmed by the genuine people I came in contact with. It was such a gratifying feeling, talking to these wonderful people, with their real stories of their real lives. Everyone I spoke to was pleasant and friendly and all had a common theme.... we are laboring under to much government!

To see these mild mannered polite people arrive, get in line, display some of their signs, talk with others, then, a short while later, exhibit the tremendous passion during the Rally inside the Auditorium was nothing short of amazing!!!

I couldn't help but think that these people are just the tip of the Ice Berg. This feeling has to be pent up all over the country. This show has to go on the road..... the politicians need to see the real Americans show their passion for Freedom and responsibility.... And to those very Politicians, the message should be very clear..... FEAR THIS!!!!!! -- *Pat Landy, Indian Lake Estates, Florida*

Some of the news stories.....

FairTax rally jams Civic Center

05/25/2006

By Dave Williams

Staff Writer

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DULUTH - U.S. Rep. John Linder has said for years that only a groundswell among the American people will convince Congress to scrap the Internal Revenue Service and replace it with a national sales tax.

Wednesday night's rally at a jammed Gwinnett Convention Center in support of Linder's FairTax bill looked a lot like the popular uprising the Duluth Republican has envisioned since he introduced what has become his signature legislation in 1999.

"The grass roots are working," said Joseph Gullett of Norcross, motioning to more than 100 people gathered outside the convention center listening to a radio broadcast of the rally because they couldn't get into the packed building.

"It's nice to see all these people with the same ideas," added Richard Trenchik, who drove all the way from Warner Robins only to be turned back from the center after it had reached its capacity of 4,500 people.

Trenchik and like-minded FairTax supporters came to Duluth not only to get the latest on Linder's bill but to hear from Fox Television Network host Sean Hannity and syndicated radio talk show host Neal Boortz.

Linder and Boortz combined to author "The FairTax Book," which was published last August and still is No. 3 on The New York Times Bestseller List for paperback nonfiction.

"When the IRS is eliminated and the income tax is abolished, we will remember it started right here in Atlanta," Hannity said to a huge ovation.

The FairTax legislation would do away with the federal income tax and replace it with a 23 percent national sales tax, the rate the bill's supporters say would be needed to ensure that it raises the same amount of revenue as the current system.

By shifting taxation from income to consumption, supporters say Americans would be encouraged to save and invest. Such a sea change in the way people handle their money, the argument goes, would foster economic growth.

"People want ... to invest with no consequences, to save with no consequences," Boortz said. But critics say the FairTax would affect low-income Americans disproportionately because they spend a larger percentage of their incomes compared to savings and investments than the more well-to-do.

A tax reform commission formed by President Bush last year cited that as a concern when it decided to recommend relatively minor changes to the tax system rather than a dramatic overhaul like the FairTax. The panel also questioned whether a 23 percent sales tax would raise enough revenue.

Linder's bill addresses the concern that the FairTax would hurt poor people through a rebate that would go to low-income taxpayers.

Still, the measure has languished in the House through seven years and four congresses. Linder said he's not surprised that it's taking so long, given America's history with major initiatives. He said Social Security, which was created in 1935 as part of the New Deal, was being talked about as early as the 1870s.

"Big ideas take time," he said. "But we've started to move the country, and they will start to move the Congress."

Indeed, despite the cool reception the FairTax got from the president's commission, Linder told the crowd Wednesday night that House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Ill., has scheduled a meeting with Bush in two weeks to give Linder a chance to pitch the legislation.

Linder said Hastert wants to include the FairTax as part of a new Contract with America, modeled after the 1994 platform that played a major role in Republicans winning a majority in the House for the first time in 40 years.

"We won in '94 because we had new ideas and big ideas," Linder said. "We haven't done that since."

Wednesday night's huge civic center audience tied up traffic on Sugarloaf Parkway, delaying another large crowd trying to get to the Grayson High School graduation at the adjacent arena. At the beginning of the rally, Boortz told the audience that the parking lot was full an hour before the 7:30 p.m. rally. With up to 2,000 people unable to get in, Atlanta's WSB Radio - Boortz's flagship station - decided to broadcast the event live.

"We're sorry," Linder said. "Next time, we'll get you a bigger building." **Rally for national sales tax draws overflow crowd**

Rally for national sales tax draws overflow crowd

By BEN SMITH

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

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It wasn't exactly the Boston Tea Party but this modern mob must have made a lot more noise.

About 4,500 raucous tax protesters packed the Gwinnett Convention Center on Wednesday night to hear politicians, musicians and talk show celebrities call for the end of the federal income tax and the creation of a 23 percent national sales tax to replace it.

WSB radio talk show host Neal Boortz and U.S. Rep. John Linder (R-Ga.), co-authors of the "Fair Tax Book," were joined by Fox-TV commentator, Sean Hannity, ABC 20/20 anchor John Stossel and local radio personality Clark Howard, among others to preach to a huge choir about the evils of the current tax code.

"The liberals and the bureaucrats and the political class in this nation are robbing us, and the biggest weapon they use to rob us is the tax code, which we must get rid of," exclaimed former Republican U.S. Senate candidate Herman Cain, drawing cheers from the crowd.

The size of the "Fair Tax Rally" crowd was so large that event organizers, prodded by a fire marshal, turned away roughly 2,000 rallygoers. Many gathered in the parking lot to listen to the event on radio.

"We're sorry, next time we're going to get a bigger room," said Linder, who spoke from a stage at the front of the 50,000-square-foot room.

"But you are the persistent minority. We have 300 million people in America, and 250 million of them have never heard of the Fair Tax. It's your job to tell them."

One couple that made it inside the convention center before the doors were closed drove all the way from Live Oak, Fla., to attend.

"If they [Boortz and Linder] start a circuit, we'll just probably follow them around the country," said Bob Abbey, who pumped \$120 into his RV so that he and his wife, Kitty, could attend.

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