

Residents brandish tea bags

Protests across the nation target excessive government spending

By Brandon Macz of the Tribune

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Emily Yates of Moscow, with 20-month-old Anna on her back, makes her point with 300 other tax protesters at Moscow's Friendship Square.



Lewiston-Clarkston Valley residents line up to get inside the Quality Inn in Clarkston for one of the nationwide Tea Party protests. The overflow crowd spilled out of the meeting room reserved for the event Wednesday.



Barry Kough / Lewiston Tribune

Protesters march at Moscow's Friendship Square.

People trying to get to the post office in Moscow Wednesday may have had a little trouble as more than 300 people rallied around the building to protest excessive government spending.

Tea parties of a different blend were held in cities across the nation for tax day, a day used to launch protests against what was called reckless government spending that would eventually bankrupt the country's youth and lead to the need for higher taxes.

"This is how we make the politicians stop and listen," said Eric McGilp, of Troy, Idaho, coordinator for the Moscow rally that started at Friendship Square and went to the post office. "We're teaching our children how to stand up and tell the government instead of being pulled around like a bunch of sheep."

At the same time, a rally was being held in Pullman at Bridgeway Plaza with nearly 200 in attendance, and another was at 5 p.m. at the Quality Inn in the Port of Clarkston, which coordinator Dianne Capps said was held later in hopes of a bigger turnout.

She got her wish. The hotel's convention room reached capacity and a separate group formed on the back patio. In total, there were more than 600 "tea'd" off residents from the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley, brandishing tea bags on signs, hats, glasses and some wearing them as necklaces.

Kathy Dawson, 58, of Clarkston, said she had never participated in a demonstration before as she held up her sign - one side reading, "Taxed Enough Already."

"If we don't do this, then it's just going to continue and continue until we don't have anything from our founding fathers left," she said. "I'm going to get out here and have my voice heard."

Annah Bauer, 15, of Moscow, wore chains around her body to symbolize how the debt has enslaved the next generation of Americans.

"It signifies that I'm an in-debt slave because of the bills passed in government," she said. "Government has basically enslaved us with debt. We're raising our voices because we can't afford to be quiet anymore."

Bauer, like many at the Moscow, Pullman and Clarkston rallies, is a member of a grassroots movement called the Palouse 9.12 Project. The name comes from the day after Sept. 11, but also represents the nine principles and 12 values the organization stands for.

Jeff Williams, Palouse 9.12 Project chairman and coordinator for the Pullman event, caught up with the Clarkston rally to lend support to the national movement.

"When I have less money coming in, I don't go on a shopping spree," he said of fiscal responsibility. "Their (government's) answer is taxes, let's raise taxes. Our founding fathers created a nation with limited government for a reason."

Managing to find a seat up front before the Clarkston rally, Richard Eggleston Sr. said he was showing his support because he felt it was time the American citizenry took back its constitutional rights and made it clear in Washington, D.C., that the people were holding them accountable.

"The stimulus plan is a bunch of bologna," he said. "The bailouts are a way to control - a way to control business and destroy capitalism."

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