

PRO-CHRISTMAS FOLKS PUSH BACK

For the past few years, there have been two new developments in the War on Christmas: the good news is that more people are pushing back in villages and municipalities across the nation, demanding that Christmas celebrations proceed as planned; the bad news is that militant atheists are more aggressive than ever. Overall, however, there is evidence that the pro-Christmas side is winning the day.

On the positive front, the residents of Ellwood City, Pennsylvania turned out by the hundreds on December 2 to rally in support of their nativity scene. There is a live nativity scene on city property in Minden, Louisiana, and after some initial resistance, a church handbell group took command of the Springhill library's courtyard. After a nativity scene was banned for years on the grounds of the Muskingum County Courthouse in Zanesville, Ohio, the county commissioners voted unanimously to put it back. Similarly, Wisconsin reverted back to its display of a Christmas tree at the state capitol. "Keep Christ in Christmas" was the banner that stretched across the street in Pitman, New Jersey, despite failed attempts by atheists to censor it.

On the negative front, a school counselor at an Arkansas elementary school was told to remove her posting of a nativity scene on her billboard; her decoration was permitted for more than 20 years.

Tulsa, Oklahoma long had a Christmas parade, but in recent years it was renamed the Holiday parade. But just as the people in Rhode Island sang Christmas songs at their secularized "Holiday" event, the people in Tulsa countered with their own Christmas parade. Indeed, we see more examples of the pro-Christmas side not settling for a secular outcome than its obverse. More important, when the anti-Christmas side pushes back, those doing it are activist atheists. When the

pro-Christmas side pushes back, it's a grassroots effort.

In short, "Power to the People" never sounded so good.