



No More Deaths • No Más Muertes

SPRING 2017

“For it is important that awake people be awake . . . the darkness around us is deep.” —William Stafford

Dear friends of No More Deaths,

Darkness leads people to turn on their lights. We have evidence of this in the increased volunteer applications we have received since the election and all of the phone calls and mail from you asking, “What can we do?”

We saw it during the holidays as you reached deep into your pockets and showed us your overwhelming support of our work. We saw it in January when a contemporary-art auction in New York benefiting No More Deaths raised over \$57,000.

The light that must continue to shine is active nonviolent resistance to an increasingly oppressive border policy that imperils and terrorizes millions of migrants and immigrants.



We need you more than ever to be “awake” and involved. Let us muster the courage to take action alongside allies and engage in conversation with adversaries, dissolving walls that divide us and constructing bridges that connect us. In this dark time, let us choose to live our belief that light inevitably filters through the cracks.

Thank you for partnering with us and for your continuing contribution to our work.

In solidarity,

The No More Deaths community

All contributions are tax-deductible. You can donate online or by check.

Please consider setting up a recurring donation, so that we can rely on your support.

To donate online, please visit our website at nomoredeaths.org and select “Donate!”

Make checks payable to “UUCT/No More Deaths!” Mail them to PO Box 40782, Tucson, AZ 85717.

No More Deaths gratefully accepts stocks, bonds, endowed gifts, and bequests. We also welcome your ideas for fundraising opportunities.

Please contact us at (520) 333-5699 or fundraising@nomoredeaths.org.

Our new campaign to resist deportations

In early February, Keep Tucson Together (KTT) launched the “People’s Power Campaign,” which aims to protect families from raids, detention, and deportation by providing legal counsel, materials, and “know your rights” information. KTT provides community members with updates on changing immigration policies every Thursday during its forum and legal clinic at Tucson’s Pueblo High School.

The first installment of the campaign unites Tucsonans to defend their civil liberties and constitutional protections. Volunteers are distributing bright, bold door signs that assert the fact that authorities cannot enter without a valid search warrant to arrest someone who is actually on the premises.

The second piece of the campaign provides noncitizens with a Form G-28, an official notice of representation, which names the attorney representing them.



KTT volunteers operate a 24-7 emergency hotline that allows clients quick access to their attorney.

The third initiative creates *paquetes de poder* (power packets), a selection of prepared legal documents requesting a hearing in front of an immigration judge, with supporting paperwork demonstrating length of US residency.

Each year, ICE and other federal agencies detain individuals who are bystanders to planned enforcement action. These detentions often occur because individuals fail to assert their legal right to deny access. KTT and partners seek to end unlawful searches and seizures that tear apart and threaten local families and communities.

KTT is a working group of No More Deaths and a grassroots community-based project founded in October 2011. The lead attorney is Margo Cowan. KTT works with community members applying for status or facing deportation.

Enhancing migrants’ safety in Nogales

We do everything we possibly can to make the border a safer place for migrants. That’s what our work in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico is about. Every morning, seven days a week, No More Deaths volunteers head to the Kino Border Initiative’s *comedor* (dining hall) to offer humanitarian aid to the migrants there. We help them make free, secure calls to their home countries, receive wire transfers from their family, and recover their money from the check or debit card that is given to them when they are deported. Without these services, our guests would be exposed to increased risk of robbery, extortion, and kidnapping.

The work requires a deep sense of humanity. We share only a few brief moments with each person, but they are often moments of true connection. Sometimes, when a person’s calls go unanswered, there is nothing we can do but try to lift their spirits — understandably, the inability to reach their families often leaves them disheartened or worse. But when they do

get through, they share their happiness with us. Sometimes they even manage to meet up with their loved ones and we have the privilege of witnessing those moving reunions.

Cashing checks can also be a joyful experience. Our visitors tell us that, thanks to that service, they can get home safely, with no further delay, and be with their families again.

At the end of the day, every service we offer gives us the chance to have an impact on people’s lives, to restore their faith and trust in others. And our guests and their stories have a transformative impact on our lives. They help us become better people with every passing day. That’s why we always go back — because, beyond helping, we learn, every day, from the very people we aim to serve.

This report was written by Carolina Íñiguez, a No More Deaths volunteer who lives in Nogales. Translated from Spanish by Gerry Dunn.

Preventing deaths, and helping recover remains, in the Ajo migration corridor

The desert around Ajo, in the western reaches of southern Arizona near the border, is a vast wilderness. Much of it is without public-access roads, making humanitarian aid incredibly difficult.

“Prevention through deterrence” distributes nearby Border Patrol checkpoints in such a way as to force people into the desert for weeks at a time. In tandem with the lack of water and the extreme heat, these checkpoints mean that the number of deaths in the Ajo corridor is staggering.

Recently, No More Deaths has been spending more time in the Ajo corridor, developing strategies to better provide humanitarian aid here. As a result of this exploration, since the beginning of December 2016, No More Deaths volunteers have discovered 11 sets of human remains and assisted in their recovery. When remains are found, we work closely with the sheriff and medical examiner, sometimes over the course of several weeks, to make sure that a thorough, respectful recovery is done.

Southern Arizona has thousands of unsolved missing-persons cases involving border crossers; every set of remains recovered is an opportunity to provide closure to a family waiting for word.

To say that many people are dying in the Ajo corridor is an understatement; the fact that we’ve found so

many human remains in our limited forays into the area should give some indication of just how serious the crisis really is. Many of the remains we have found have been in the Cabeza Prieta Wilderness, an area characterized by flat, open expanses that bristle with cholla and shimmer in the summer heat, alternating with snaking ridgelines of jagged, impassable mountains.

There are several unique challenges to providing aid in Cabeza Prieta, the biggest challenge being the lack of road access. Due to its “wilderness” designation, none of its rough dirt roads are open to the public — though they are used frequently by the Border Patrol.

No More Deaths volunteers carry as many as eight gallons of water in their packs while on patrol, as well as food and medical supplies, and are able to cover up to several miles a day on foot. This is, however, barely enough access to scratch the surface of the need that is Cabeza Prieta.

We are appealing to the managers of both the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument for road access within the wilderness area. With such access, we would be able to carry in much more water, hopefully establish permanent drops, and help make the corridor less lethal.



Boundary of the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range, part of the Ajo corridor.

Publicizing our findings

Sophie Smith and Alicia Dinsmore presented *Deadly Apprehension Methods* — our recent report in collaboration with La Coalición de Derechos Humanos — at five schools in the Midwest in February. Earlham Col-

lege’s Border Studies Program sponsored and organized the speaking tour, which brought Alicia and Sophie to DePauw University, Earlham College, Oberlin College, Kenyon College, and the University of Notre Dame. They were graciously welcomed at each school and collected \$3,400 in donations.

Remembering “Miguel”

I had a painful but powerful experience on February 20, 2016. My daughter and grandchildren and I were returning home. It was after sunset on the Arivaca–Sasabe road. We saw something up ahead. When we got closer we saw a man lying by the side of the road. My daughter slowed and drove past him. The man stood up and staggered a few steps toward the car, then fell down again. I shouted at her to stop. She had locked the doors. She told me later that she was worried it might be a trap. I was certain it was just a man who desperately needed our help.

We all rushed out and I sat on the ground next to the man and held his head in my lap. I asked him what had happened, but all he could whisper was, “I’m dying.” He told us he hadn’t eaten in three days, and the last water he had drunk, a day and a half before, was dirty. His chest and back hurt and he couldn’t move his legs because of spasms. My daughter, who knows first aid, took his pulse. She realized he needed medical assistance immediately. We had no cell-phone reception there, but some miles back we had seen a Border Patrol truck parked. My granddaughter drove back to ask them to call for help.

While we waited, we gave the man a little to drink and eat, but he immediately vomited. We knew we shouldn’t give him anything else even though he begged for water. I just held him close and my grand-

son brought him a blanket because he only wore a T-shirt and was very cold.

The Border Patrol agent arrived and stood over the man and asked him, “What’s your name?” The man said his name slowly and softly and we could hardly hear him. I will call him Miguel. The agent went to his truck and made a radio call. Miguel’s eyes kept rolling back in his head, so I kept telling him he was going to be all right and praying it was the truth.

About 20 minutes later, the Arivaca Fire Department van drove by, going west. My granddaughter went after them in our truck. They returned in a few minutes. The paramedics checked Miguel’s heart and gave him oxygen, and tried to put in an IV, but couldn’t because he was dehydrated. They finally put Miguel in the van and the Border Patrol agent followed them toward Arivaca.

I picked up his T-shirt that lay on the ground — it had been ripped open when they had checked his heart. I bunched it up and held it and cried. My grandchildren came to comfort me and I told them they should never forget what they had experienced. They should never hesitate to help someone. Somehow people have to work together to make this a world where young men don’t have to risk their lives to find a better life.

This piece was written by Carlota Wray, a No More Deaths volunteer who lives in Arivaca, Arizona. It was first published in the Arivaca Connection in February 2016.



Volunteers in the Desert Aid spring volunteer program rest and review maps at the end of a long day. Interest and participation in the program were high this year, but events in the news also had a chilling effect. After reports of at least one DACA recipient being detained at an internal immigration checkpoint in southern Arizona, a Colorado group that was scheduled to join us decided to cancel its trip. Disappointment and anger were felt all around that these bright volunteers would not be able to participate in our Desert Aid work.

No More Deaths was founded in 2004 in Tucson, Arizona. Our mission is to end the death and suffering of migrants on the US–Mexico border by mobilizing people of conscience to uphold fundamental human rights. Our work includes providing aid in the desert, providing aid in Mexico, documenting and denouncing abuse, searching for the disappeared, helping get belongings back, running a biweekly legal clinic for undocumented community members, and alliances with border communities. We are a ministry of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tucson. To contact us, call (520) 333-5699 or visit our website nomoredeaths.org.