

# No More Deaths No Más Muertes



Dear Friend of No More Deaths/ No Más Muertes,

As we write this newsletter, it's hard to remember a much more difficult time for our immigrant and migrant communities. Temperatures are reaching record highs in the borderlands, leading to lethal conditions as desperate migrants and refugees try to flee an increasingly hostile and deteriorating border situation.

Instead of compassion and assistance being provided during these uncertain times for so many, the Trump administration continues to ramp up its xenophobic and deadly policies towards those who come here to seek a better life, escape violence and death, and work to support our economy. That's why we're conducting our **Longest Day Campaign** in June to support our humanitarian aid work during this current crisis and year-round.

In this issue, you'll find information about our work in northern Mexico. Many don't know that besides our work in Arizona, No More Deaths is very active in providing humanitarian aid, funds, and technical assistance to aid stations and shelters in northern Mexico.



Photo by Ash Ponders

As summer gets into full swing, especially here in the borderlands where daily highs soar routinely over 100 degrees, we ask you to join our **Longest Day Campaign** which will culminate on June 20th, the longest day of the year.

This year we're trying to raise \$100,000 to support our desert aid, search & rescue, legal aid and northern Mexico work year-round. Please support our **Longest Day Campaign** by giving a gift online at [nomoredeaths.org](http://nomoredeaths.org) or by using the enclosed envelope.

We appreciate your continued generosity and support. With much gratitude,  
The No More Deaths/ No Más Muertes community

You can make a tax-deductible donation online at [nomoredeaths.org](http://nomoredeaths.org) or by check.

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

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

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

Please contact us at [fundraising@nomoredeaths.org](mailto:fundraising@nomoredeaths.org).

## Desert Aid Update

As aid groups diligently work to redistribute resources under this worldwide pandemic, No More Deaths remains committed to providing water and food in the Sonoran desert. Our desert aid volunteers have acted quickly and remain agile, adapting to the ever-changing world under COVID-19. We have taken various precautions to minimize and mediate risk of exposure to those with whom we work. Our goal remains the same: Prevent death and suffering in the borderlands.

### Since March 2020:

We have put over **1200 gallons of water** on remote desert trails.

**Dozens** of volunteers, old and new, have stepped up to do water drops while maintaining social distancing standards, allowing for **4-6 water drop patrols a week.**

Volunteers across the country have made over **500 cloth masks** for migrants crossing the desert, and in shelters in northern Mexico.

Thank you!



## No More Deaths Recieves Human Rights Award

We're thrilled and honored to announce that The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA) and the Puffin Foundation have awarded the 2020 ALBA/Puffin Award for Human Rights Activism to No More Deaths. One of the largest monetary awards for human rights in the world, the ALBA/Puffin Award is a \$100,000 cash prize granted annually by ALBA and the Puffin Foundation to honor the nearly 3,000 Americans who volunteered in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) to fight fascism under the banner of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. This award recognizes the urgent need and the right to provide and receive humanitarian aid in the border region and acknowledges that providing humanitarian aid is never a crime.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE ARCHIVES

## No More Deaths in Northern Mexico

The immediate work of preventing suffering and death in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands begins before people enter the Arizona desert. Our work starts in the humanitarian shelters and aid stations in northern Sonora, Mexico. Many migrants and asylum seekers make arduous and dangerous journeys in order to reach the northern Mexico border, and arrive needing food and medical attention. Working in close partnership with organizations such as the Kino Border Initiative, and other local aid providers, No More Deaths helps maintain an infrastructure of services to assist these vulnerable travelers in several towns near the border.

At the Comedor, a busy hub operated by Kino

Border Initiative in Nogales, Sonora, migrants and refugees find a meal and a warm welcome. For those planning to cross the desert, No More Deaths volunteers provide harm reduction kits that include water purification tablets, ointment for blisters, which can be a life-threatening affliction for people who need to reach safety as quickly as possible, and information on what to do if they become lost or leave a traveling companion behind. They also make sure border crossers know that the labeled jugs of water they may find in the desert are safe to drink from. "Often migrants at the shelter [who include those who have been deported] have heard of No More Deaths," Dorothy Chao, a long time No More Deaths activist, notes. "We're told: 'I found your water and it saved me.'"

After breakfast, guests can make free phone calls to family and receive first aid. Chao, who is also a licensed nurse, describes the physical toll that living in fear and uncertainty takes on the people she treats at the Comedor. Over the past few years, she has increasingly cared for patients presenting with the same set of illnesses: many colds, respiratory infections, and stomach issues. "These are things you would expect with a population that is highly stressed," she explains. Sometimes a guest needs medical care beyond what can be provided at the shelter. These patients can be seen by a local doctor thanks to a recently implemented program that provides No More Deaths funding for health care appointments and medications.

Humanitarian work in northern Mexico continues with intensified urgency in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. While the U.S. government uses the pandemic as justification for unlawfully expelling and denying entry to asylum seekers and summarily deporting undocumented migrants, No More Deaths and allied organizations have responded by donating supplies of masks and by adopting new health protocols at the shelters, which now provide hot breakfasts and bagged lunches on a to-go basis. Guests are asked to bring their own utensils and practice social distancing. For the safety of both the guests and volunteers, No More Deaths has scaled back the provision of some in-person services, but continues to provide supplies and funding to on-the-ground services. A new program, for instance, allocates No More

Deaths funds to help asylum seekers stranded in Nogales, Sonora buy discounted bus tickets to Ciudad Juárez, 355 miles away, where they must show up for their asylum court date.

Partnering with Samaritans, No More Deaths also continues to collaborate with shelters in the Mexican border towns of Altar, Caborca, and Sonoyta by providing limited food, masks, medical supplies, and money, in some cases. Jim Marx, a No More Deaths volunteer who has made monthly trips to Altar, Sonora, Mexico for the past several years, emphasizes that the pandemic has put an even heavier burden on migrants and the northern Mexico shelters that serve them. "It's more important than ever that we listen to these shelter and community leaders and respond as best we can to their needs at this time."

*Article by Elizabeth Wilder,  
No More Deaths volunteer*

## ***Facing Death in Detention***

Due to the threats of COVID-19, since February, the No More Deaths Keep Tucson Together Legal Clinic has focused its efforts on preparing humanitarian parole requests and motions for bonds for more than 50 of our clients detained at La Palma, Eloy & Florence, AZ ICE detention facilities. Court dates are set and then cancelled, re-set and then cancelled. Meanwhile, precautions against the spread of the pandemic in cramped detention centers are abysmal. There is no soap in sinks, no access to gloves, and detained women and men just receive two face masks each – only after signing waivers of liability for the masks. Under these conditions, it is no surprise that more people are becoming infected with COVID-19. As of this writing, ICE acknowledges 69 known "positive" cases of COVID-19 at the La Palma facility alone.

Recently, at an La Palma detention center in Eloy, detainees blocked the doors to their "pod" with tables and chairs, demanding masks, gloves, hand soap and testing. In response, the officers from CoreCivic - the for-profit company that operates



many detention centers - broke through and shot them with rubber bullets and sprayed them with tear gas. As this violence demonstrates, detained men and women are not safe in ICE custody. No More Deaths, along with Amnesty International and others, have called for the release of all ICE detainees during this pandemic, and we have been working hard to secure the release of these individuals. On May 1st, our legal team was able to secure four bond

***“There can be no doubt that the United States is executing a policy of detention = death.”***

\$9,000. Detention was horrific for this young man. Another of the three released tested positive for COVID and has been quarantining since release. As of this writing, we have been able to get nine detainees out since February and back to their families, and hope to get more out soon. What is clear is that the government’s policy of denying all petitions for humanitarian paroles and continuing bond hearings, not providing masks, gloves, soap and testing are all purposeful and orchestrated forms of mass

negligence, not just coincidental incidents of chaos. There can be no doubt that the United States is executing a policy of detention = death. The No More Deaths/Keep Tucson Together Clinic will continue to shine the light on these deadly practices and to do everything in our power to secure freedom and life for our sisters and brothers in detention. If you are able, please consider making a generous donation to the No More Deaths Keep Tucson Together Bond Fund at [bit.ly/nmdbonds](https://bit.ly/nmdbonds). We are committed to doing everything we can to leave no one behind to die alone in detention.



*No More Deaths clients released from ICE detention in May*

hearings; three of our brothers were granted bonds and one was continued. One of those released is an 18-year old high school senior, who has never been in detention before, and had his bond set at

*Article by Margo Cowan, volunteer, Keep Tucson Together*

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 at [nomoredeaths.org](https://nomoredeaths.org).