



# No More Deaths • No Más Muertes

## Humanitarian Aid Is Never A Crime

December 2015

Edited by Denise Holley

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me.” – Matthew 25:35-36*

## Dear Friends of No More Deaths

THANK YOU to all of you who contribute to the work of No More Deaths all year long. Generous partners like you know that welcoming the stranger and migrant and providing hospitality isn't just a seasonal practice, but ongoing. It is deeply imbedded in the ancient traditions of the First Nation peoples as well as in all the great religions of the world.

For more than 10 years now, No More Deaths has welcomed the stranger in our midst. These “works of mercy” happen every day by:

- leaving water and food on the migrant trails
- providing medical care and respite to the weary traveler at our camp near the border
- providing free phone service migrants can use to call their loved ones
- cashing U.S. checks for migrants who cannot otherwise cash them in Mexico
- helping people recover their belongings taken from them while in custody
- providing legal guidance to undocumented young people and their families
- attending Operation Streamline and witnessing the travesty of justice that lands migrants in private prisons
- visiting those in detention, participating in raising bond money and advocating for their release.



Photo by Amelia Krales

*Exhausted and injured desert travelers find first aid and a comfortable respite in the medical tent at the No More Deaths camp outside of Arivaca.*

Our year-round commitment to living out these works of mercy cannot happen without your year-round support. On behalf of our migrant brothers and sisters, thank you for being a part of this journey.

In solidarity,  
The No More Deaths Community

**To contribute, write a check to UUCT/No More Deaths and send it to: UUCT/No More Deaths, P.O. Box 40782, Tucson, AZ 85717 or visit [www.nomoredeaths.org](http://www.nomoredeaths.org) and select the donate button. No More Deaths gratefully accepts donations of stocks, bonds, endowed gifts and bequests. For more information, contact [www.nomoredeaths.org](http://www.nomoredeaths.org) or [fundraising@nomoredeaths.org](mailto:fundraising@nomoredeaths.org).**



*A former patient at the No More Deaths medical tent in Arivaca drew this thank-you note for volunteers.*

Photo by Catherine Gaffney

## Border Patrol agent indicted for shooting Mexican teen

By Denise Holley

A Border Patrol agent accused of shooting a teenager in Nogales, Sonora, through the international border fence, was arraigned on a charge of second-degree murder Oct. 9 at the federal courthouse in Tucson. Agent Lonnie Swartz was indicted Sept. 23 by a federal grand jury.

José Antonio Elena Rodríguez, 16, died Oct. 10, 2012,

*Continued on back page*



## Rosa leaves sanctuary for new life without fear

Rosa Robles Loreto left the safety of Southside Presbyterian Church Nov. 11 during a press conference that exploded into a celebration for her family and supporters. Facing a deportation order, the undocumented mother entered into sanctuary at the Tucson church on Aug. 7, 2014. Keep Tucson Together, a No More Deaths project, waged a publicity campaign that distributed 9,600 “We Stand With Rosa” signs to residents and businesses throughout the city. After 15 months of advocacy by many people, Attorney Margo Cowan announced a confidential agreement with the Department of Homeland Security that protects Rosa.

“Today is only a beginning ...we don’t stop until nobody in America has to live in fear,” Cowan told the audience. (Full story is at [www.nomoredeaths.org](http://www.nomoredeaths.org)) Photo by Denise Holley

## Volunteers triple desert area where they offer life-saving aid

By Catherine Gaffney

Over the last year, No More Deaths’ desert aid volunteers have expanded the scope of our humanitarian aid work. In the Arivaca area, we cover a wider radius than ever. Working from Byrd Camp, our home base since 2004, we stock water drops in an 800-square mile zone that ranges from rugged mountains to flat, dry cholla thickets. As enforcement and surveillance increase, migrants follow trails that climb higher and farther into remote wilderness. Volunteers travel through canyons, hills, and mountain passes where we may meet those in distress.

In 2014, we began mapping trails and leaving water in the Sonoita-Ajo-Gila Bend corridor, a drive of two and a half hours from Tucson. The vast, 1,700 square mile corridor has tripled the area in which we provide humanitarian aid. On a four-day trip, we can put out as many as 500 gallons (two tons) of water, carried to the trails by our hard-worn pickup trucks and the backs of volunteers. Our patrols range from Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, on the border, to the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range, an active bombing range 80 miles north.

Volunteers render emergency medical aid to migrants who are lost, sick, and often alone. Many are victims of deadly Border Patrol tactics – scattering groups using helicopters or ATVs. In many areas, we continue to find water and food we leave out has been slashed, removed, or destroyed. Our Search and Rescue team mobilizes in response to reports of missing

### Border Patrol agent continued

from 10 bullets fired mostly into his back, according to a ballistics report. Border Patrol agents said they had disrupted an attempt to smuggle drugs into the U.S. and were dodging rocks thrown from the Mexican side.

“It’s very unusual for a Border Patrol agent to be indicted for the murder of a Mexican national in a cross-border context,” said Luis Parra, a Nogales, Ariz., attorney and



Photo by Denise Holley

*Walkers in the Día de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) Pilgrimage leave St. John’s Church in Tucson Oct. 31 bearing 137 crosses to represent the migrant lives lost in the Arizona desert from Oct. 1, 2014 to Sept. 30, 2015. Coalición de Derechos Humanos (Human Rights) sponsors the eight-mile walk.*

persons, knowing that official responders often refuse or fall short. Even when we are not searching for specific people, we find them – often before anyone else knows they have gone missing.

While the number of migrants crossing through Arizona has decreased, the death toll rose this year. Until the deaths in the desert end, No More Deaths/No Más Muertes volunteers will walk the migrant trails and give aid to those we meet and those we never see.

member of a legal team that has filed a civil suit in federal court on behalf of Elena Rodríguez’s family. “To our knowledge, the indictment has no precedent.”

Every October since the shooting, people from both sides of the border have joined in processions to demand justice for Elena Rodríguez.