



# No More Deaths • No Más Muertes

FALL 2017

## Dear friends of No More Deaths,

The Border Patrol **raided our camp on June 15**. Armed agents entered the clinic and took four patients from under our medical team's care. The raid was a violation of a long-standing agreement not to interfere with our work, but it drove home the fact that our government — at the highest levels — is determined to go after undocumented people no matter their circumstances.

The outrageous announcement, in September, of the cancellation of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) was a further instance of that no-holds-barred anti-immigrant agenda.

Despite obstacles, we remain committed to our mission of ending death and suffering in the borderlands. The undocumented among us are here to stay; their courage inspires us to stand our ground and continue to stand with them.

After the June raid, you stood with us. You nearly doubled the \$10,000 fundraising goal we had set that month. Volunteer applications increased. Three thousand people signed our petition calling for the Border



*A volunteer sports a DACA-themed shirt while on a water drop somewhere in the Ajo migration corridor in April.*

Patrol to stop interfering with humanitarian aid.

Thank you, dear friends, for your continuing support and generosity.

In solidarity,

The No More Deaths community

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

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

To donate online, please visit our website at [nomoredeaths.org](http://nomoredeaths.org) and select "Donate!"

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 (520) 333-5699 or [fundraising@nomoredeaths.org](mailto:fundraising@nomoredeaths.org).

# Work goes on in multiple desert corridors despite obstruction by the government

We are witnessing the effects of the harshest border and immigration policies yet. Figures from the International Organization for Migration show **a 17 percent increase in deaths on the US–Mexico border**. The need for a civilian, humanitarian response grows.

► We trained **35** new volunteers this summer, from across the US and other countries.

► Volunteers put out **5,400** gallons of water in June and July, as temperatures topped 110 degrees.

In addition to ongoing Border Patrol surveillance of our Arivaca camp, we are dealing with legal obstacles in the area around Ajo, in the western reaches of southern Arizona.



The Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge — some 1,343 square miles — forms an inhospitable migration corridor together with the neighboring Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range, an active bombing site. The wells dry out and what few water sources remain are hemmed in by Border Patrol sensors and cameras. Public access to the refuge is by permit only.

For the past six months, No More Deaths has been in dialogue with US Fish and Wildlife Service officials over our activities on Cabeza Prieta. By July 1, a new version of the access permit was issued — the terms of which specifically target our work, making it a ticketable offense to leave water, medical supplies, food, and clothing for travelers. This comes just weeks after one of our weekend patrols found over a dozen human remains in the area.

With Cabeza Prieta's new rules in place, our volunteers are regularly stopped, questioned, and detained while carrying water into the desert. One NMD crew in late July was detained by five different government agencies in the same day: Fish and Wildlife, the Border Patrol, US Air Force security, the Pima County Sheriff, and the Maricopa County Sheriff.

As government agencies continue to try to redefine the legality of humanitarian aid, we continue to pursue our mission as we know we must.

## *New report coming soon*

The abuse-documentation team will release part 2 of the three-part series *Disappeared* in November. This second report is titled *Interference with Humanitarian Aid* and looks at the deadly consequences of the destruction of water drops and other obstruction of humanitarian-aid work in the borderlands. We hope that you will help us share this critical information with your networks upon its release.

## *Food Conspiracy Co-op*

A huge thank you to the members and patrons of the Food Conspiracy Co-op in Tucson for their support of our work with a donation of \$2,500. This donation was the result of Co-op members selecting No More Deaths as this year's recipient of support from their Cooperative Community Fund and from patrons who chose to round up their purchase at checkout during one month.

# Support the Trans-Gay Migrant Caravan

On August 10, a caravan of seventeen LGBTQI migrants presented themselves at the port of Nogales to claim their right of asylum in the United States, accompanied by allies on both sides of the border.

Fleeing persecution and violence in El Salvador, Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, the “Rainbow 17” met in migrant shelters across Mexico and connected with Diversidad sin Fronteras, an LGBTQI activist collective, which helped organize the caravan. Caravan members are survivors of torture, extortion, trafficking, and attempted assassination, and they are determined to fight for their dignity and right to asylum in the US.

The Rainbow 17 received legal support and solidarity from Mariposas sin Fronteras, the Transgender Law Center, the National Immigrant Justice Center, Family Trans Queer Liberation, the Institute for Women in Migration, the Kino Border Initiative, Instituto Legal, and No More Deaths’s Keep Tucson Together legal clinic.

Despite their strong cases for humanitarian parole, some of the Rainbow 17 remain in immigration detention in New Mexico. To support their release, send letters of support, get updates, and make financial contributions, connect with [Diversidad sin Fronteras](#) on Facebook.



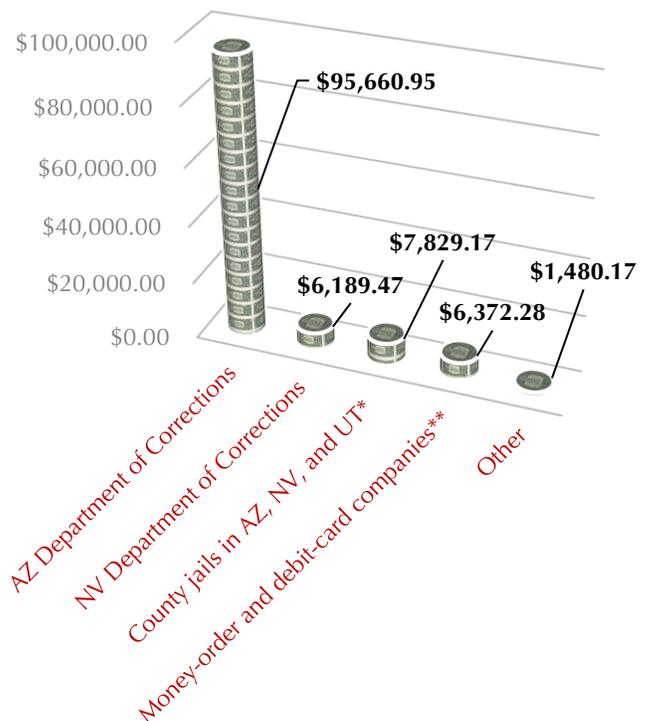
Every day, ICE scoops up people of Mexican origin from federal, state, and local jails and takes them to the border. Their funds do not go with them. In the first half of 2017, people deported to Nogales recovered **\$117,532.04** from their jail accounts through our unique “check-cashing service.” Volunteers have developed multiple recovery methods to use based on whether a person was deported with an unusable check, debit card, or neither.

Unlike every other agency that places detainees on jail inmates and takes custody of them, ICE refuses to accept inmates’ funds — which it would then have to give to them in an accessible form upon release. A jail, in order to transfer the inmate’s funds to the agency that has placed a detainee, issues a check payable to the inmate. But ICE, instead of using that check in the customary way to transfer the funds to its own accounts, simply hands it to the person and deports them with it, pretending not to know that it can only be cashed in the United States.

The Nogales check-cashing service is an example of material solidarity: people of conscience sharing their access to US banking resources with people unjustly denied such access. And it is an example of commitment to humanitarian aid for *all* the criminalized, including those with non-immigration-related felony convictions.

## Where is Nogales deportees’ money being left behind by ICE?

Money recovered January–June 2017



\*Some of these hold federal detainees under contract.

\*\*Western Union, MoneyGram, NUMI, and others. Agencies that purchase these companies’ products with detainees’ money include the US Border Patrol; the Pima, Maricopa, and Pinal county jails in Arizona; and the Henderson Detention Center in Nevada.

# Stepped-up efforts to fight disappearance

► Our **help line for lost border crossers and their families** launched July 10. Five trained search-and-rescue/search-and-recovery (SAR) operators field the calls. There have been almost **300** calls so far.

► Volunteers worked with Águilas del Desierto, the Ajo Samaritans, and migrant-rights advocates in Sonora to bring about the recovery of **20** individuals' remains.

*Kayla DeVault spent the month of April as a desert-aid volunteer. During that time, she participated in a search in the Growler Valley, part of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge west of Ajo. During searches, volunteers must hike for many miles, often in grueling heat. Whenever they find human remains — those of the person they are looking for or of someone else — they must contact the county sheriff to initiate the recovery process. Kayla describes her SAR experience this way:*

The beauty of the Sonoran Desert is pristine as you drive along. Then you step out of the air-conditioned truck, strap six gallons of water on your back, and the illusion is shattered. After just an hour, you find yourself drinking rapidly, not just because you're thirsty but because you're desperate to lighten your load.

Who would *choose* this?

When we had gotten the call that a man was missing in the Growler Valley — that the Border Patrol had given up searching — we were anxious to deploy our small group in the most systematic way we could. Grappling with tense relationships to receive our Cabeza Prieta permits proved a frustrating setback. It paled in comparison to the victim's situation.

The man was last seen in the middle of the night, working his way through the valley to Charlie Bell

Well. He had gone in search of water for his two comrades; but Border Patrol agents found the two men the next day. Perhaps they were processed and deported before the man even suspected something had happened.

As we trekked through the heat waves, vultures overhead only made our stomachs lurch. Thousands of scenarios played in our heads. *He was older, but healthy. He could be long gone . . . hiding . . . injured, too thirsty to cry out.*

Around sparse trees, evidence of human activity. How long does it take a can of beans to fade in the sun? This one's been eaten. This one's been slashed.

Shouting his name. Wanting closure.

Someone cries, "*Bones!*" The line halts. A tight grid search confirms a dismembered limb, but is it human? We hope the sheriff comes.

Only three hours in and we already need a break. I imagine the missing man's strength. No one would do this without a real cause. Who would *choose* this?

Then I think: My dad would. He would do anything for his family. But fate let him be born north of the border.

The man is no longer "a migrant"; I see my dad's mustached face. Lying in a ditch. Hiding in a mountain lion's den. Are we his last chance?

The man is my dad. I cry out.

We never did get closure. Like so many families never get closure, we never got closure.

*We are actively seeking new volunteers to work as phone-line operators. If you speak Spanish and would like more information, please visit our website to [email the SAR coordinator](#).*



**IN MEMORY OF FATHER JERRY** Jerry Zawada — nuclear resister, peace-and-justice activist, Franciscan friar — died on the morning of July 25 at the age of eighty. Father Jerry started the Dignity Bag project, a collaboration between No More Deaths and other groups. The project raised money to buy sturdy canvas tote bags, made by the women of the DouglPrieta Works sewing cooperative, for use by people deported to Nogales. Throughout his life, Jerry worked with the homeless, war refugees, and survivors of torture in Chicago, Milwaukee, Mexico, Las Vegas, Tucson, and elsewhere. He was imprisoned repeatedly for nonviolent protest of nuclear weapons and torture training. A few years ago, his advocacy for women priests and celebration of mass with them earned a disciplinary letter from the Vatican.