



December 2010--the end of the first decade of the 21st century

Edited by: Jim Marx and Sue Lefebvre

Number of deaths in the desert October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010: 253

"In everyone there is the capacity to wake up, to understand, to love." Thich Nhat Hanh, from *Being Peace*.

Dear No More Deaths Supporter,

In our newsletter a year ago we included a set of Faith-Based Principles for Immigration Reform because we thought 2010 would finally be the year immigration reform would become a top priority for Congress. Not only did it not happen, the fall election turned the House of Representatives into a Republican majority and reduced the Senate Democratic majority to a slimmer margin. Many newly elected candidates ran on anti-immigrant rhetoric. Here in Arizona, Republicans now comprise a supermajority in both houses with their leaders vowing to pass more anti-immigration legislation in 2011.

The after-effect of our federal government's failure to enact humane comprehensive immigration reform and our state government's draconian anti-immigrant legislation has created:

- more deaths in the desert (253 in fiscal year 2009 - 2010);
- more fear in our communities that families will be ripped apart;
- more racial profiling and greater distrust of the police;
- greater reluctance to seek basic health and human services for fear of being deported;
- a huge increase in uprooting and deporting people who've lived in the USA for many years.

No More Deaths response:

- the largest group to date of spring break and summer volunteers (a total of 356) providing humanitarian aid in the desert, working with our border partners in Nogales, Naco and Agua Prieta, and doing advocacy work here in Tucson;
 - a significant expansion of services and aid to deportees in Nogales, especially to those who lived in the USA for a long time and who now are uprooted and displaced;
 - establishing a nationwide network of people willing to respond to the special problems of deportees and their families in their home communities;
 - organized the "We Resist Racism" campaign to repeal SB1070 and to bring focus on the harm this bill does to our community;
 - continue to document the systemic abuses inherent in our current border policy and implemented by border patrol;
 - on-going collaboration and support of all the border justice groups working to improve life for ALL people living in our border region.
- continued. . .*

Letter, continued. . . We are including in this newsletter an article on "Secure Communities," an I.C.E. program that is on a fast track to being implemented in many communities across the country with significant migrant populations. What it purports to do and what it actually does should concern all of us.

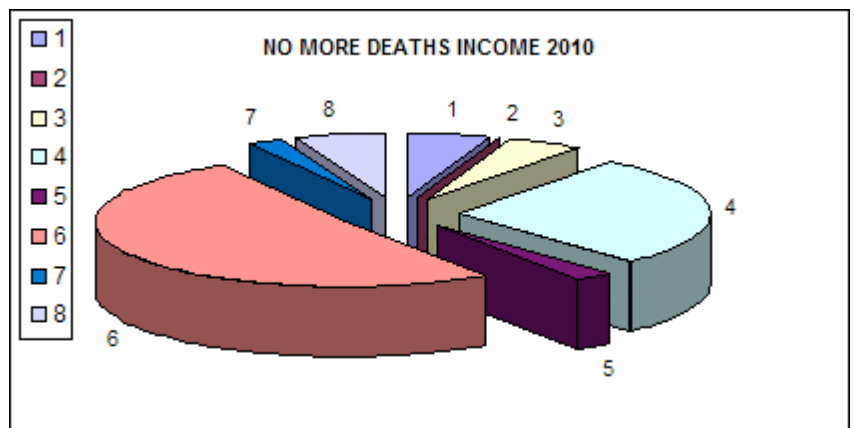
We are also sounding the alarm on the private prison corporations that profit substantially as more and more undocumented people end up in jail. Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) is the largest private prison system in the country and has plans to build a large prison near Tucson. The Geo Group is the second largest. Their cozy relationship with all too many state legislators who pass laws criminalizing migration should again concern us all. What a convenient way to fill jail cells and make a profit - on the backs of poor people and immigrants! As people of conscience and faith, we are compelled to challenge the systemic violence of these policies and practices. For more on this story, see Beau Hodai's excellent article, "Corporate Con Game -how the private prison industry helped shape Arizona's anti-immigrant law," that appeared in the July, 2010, issue of IN THESE TIMES magazine. (go to the link: http://www.inthesetimes.com/archives/covers_ind/34/07/).

Let us join together in our common cause to create a just and peaceful world for everyone. Once again, we thank you for partnering with us in providing aid and advocacy for those in need. Without your gifts of time, money and material aid, we could not do this work. Thank you for your generosity.

Peace - and with gratitude, No More Deaths Community

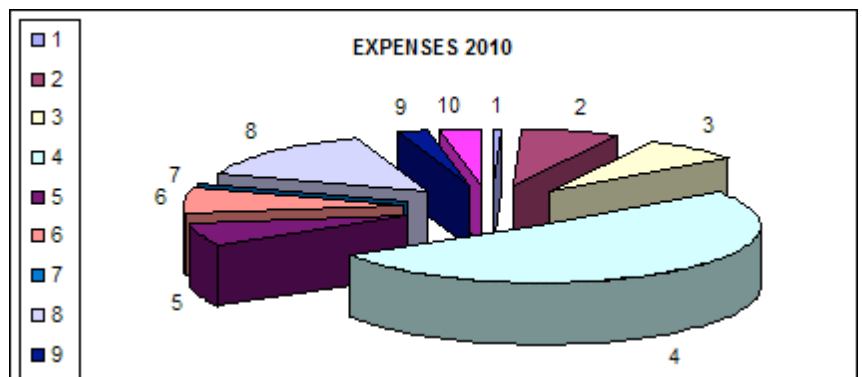
INCOME 2010

1	Abuse Documentation	\$ 9,800	5.25%
2	Administration	\$ 14	0.01%
3	Border Programs	\$ 9,462	5.07%
4	Desert Aid	\$ 51,655	27.65%
5	Education/Outreach	\$ 5,072	2.72%
6	Fundraising	\$ 95,914	51.34%
7	Nogales/Mariposa	\$ 4,073	2.18%
8	We Reject Racism	\$ 10,818	5.79%
		\$ 186,808	100.01%



EXPENSES 2010

1	Abuse Documentation	\$ 1,026	0.60%
2	Administration	\$ 12,570	7.14%
3	Border Programs	\$ 12,868	7.31%
4	Desert Aid	\$ 90,781	51.58%
5	Education/Outreach	\$ 10,645	6.05%
6	Fundraising	\$ 12,908	7.33%
7	Media	\$ 108	0.06%
8	Nogales/Mariposa	\$ 25,612	14.55%
9	Training	\$ 3,950	2.24%
10	We Reject Racism	\$ 5,535	3.14%
		\$ 176,003	



No More Deaths' Successes in 2010 Regarding BANWR

by The Rev. John Fife

Our readers have been following the No More Deaths' and Samaritan's saga with the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge (BANWR) and the Department of the Interior over the past two years. Finally, we can count some important successes in that dispute that also impact our sister organization, Humane Borders:

- BANWR for the first time has acknowledged that humanitarian aid is compatible with their mission and that BANWR has a responsibility to provide water to save human lives on the Refuge.
- The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the conviction of No More Deaths' volunteer Dan Millis for "littering." As a direct result, the conviction of Walt Staton and the citations of thirteen other volunteers were dismissed. This relieves Walt of 300 hours of community service and permits him to travel on the Refuge. In addition, he's no longer on probation.
- Humane Borders has been allowed permits for two new water stations on BANWR (after ten years of permit denial); and Humane Borders' flags now mark wells and spigots on the Refuge.
- BANWR has placed spigots on and made functional a number of wells which had been dry for years.
- Humanitarian Aid Organizations have received editorial support from the **Arizona Daily Star, the New York Times, the Arizona Republic, the Los Angeles Times, the San Diego Union, Time Magazine** and other media outlets for their efforts to change BANWR policy.

Already, since October 1, new records for deaths of migrants are being documented in the southern Arizona section of the border. Sixteen for the month of October compared with 8 last year. Humanitarian aid organizations will continue to monitor the changing migration patterns and migrant trails on BANWR.

On an emergency basis, we will place water on trails which have no special-use-permit water stations or functional wells. Also, we will notify and consult with land managers as to the most effective way to fulfill our common responsibility.

Dios Mio! Porque me Diste Vida de Pobre?

(My God! Why did you Give me the Life of a Poor Man?)

Five migrants walked into Byrd Camp around 10:30 p.m. on September 14, 2010. Their footsteps and voices awakened several No More Deaths' volunteers. They greeted the men and learned they had been in the desert six days and were lost when they got separated from their group two days earlier. A solar light rigged atop the Guadalupe flag attracted them into camp. The men were given water, food, and first aid. Several had open blisters on their feet.

Awakened at 11:30 p.m. by the sound of Spanish-speaking voices near the kitchen tent, Joel Higgins crawled out of his tent to see what was going on. Joel was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, and had migrated to the U.S. with his family in the '70s. He has great compassion for what is happening to migrants on the border and has spent some of his vacation time the past two years volunteering with No More Deaths at Byrd Camp.

Three of the five men, Joel determined by their accents, were from Central America, possibly El Salvador. The other two were Mexicans. After several minutes of conversation, one of the men who had spoken very little kept putting his head down on the table puffing as he breathed. In a puff of pleading exasperation, he said: "*Dios Mio! Porque me diste vida de pobre?!!*"

Guerrero and Oaxaca: Making Connections and Being Thankful



No More Deaths Volunteer Coordinator, Jean Boucher, with Social Workers and Others in Mexico

“Where are you from?” Alfonso queried.

“The United States.”

“How long does it take to walk there?”

“It’s really far; you don’t want to walk there.”

“How am I going to find work?”

That was the end of our conversation; Alfonso walked away. I could not pretend to have an answer. I am in Tlapa, Guerrero—a curvy mountainous drive, seven hours south of Mexico City—reportedly one of the poorest communities in the region. I am waiting outside. Shortly, I will be presenting to a small group of civil servants and local functionaries, and maybe some potential migrants, on the dangers of crossing the Sonoran Desert and the humanitarian response. I have been invited here as a representative of No More Deaths by a Mexican civil organization, *Caminos Posibles*, whose main mission is the protection of the rights and development of Mexican children. *Caminos Posibles* is completely funded by the Mexican government. There are about 25 people here who work with kids. I am one of four presenters but I do feel like “the special guest” and probably, I am.

I find that everyone here is extremely well-informed; they know the scoop: migration is about poverty. They do not need me to tell them about the big system that not many of us can change; they just want to hear about what I do and what I think of it. I do my slideshow, have some question/answer time, and discussion time. Afterwards, Bernardo, an indigenous lawyer, speaks on micro-credit, local products, and cooperatives. As we close, at the end of a long morning of talks and discussion, four different attendees, one after another, give me long speeches on how thankful they are for our humanitarian work and for my visit. I am stunned and speechless. Though I did travel a long way, I was not prepared for such gratitude.

It is soon explained to me that everything I am saying is contrary to all they have heard. They hear stories of discrimination and abuse towards migrants; people helping and fighting for migrants is off their map. Jorge, my guide and new friend, tells me that I am living proof that not all citizens of the USA are racist. He is astonished that many humanitarian volunteers are privileged white folks and he holds this up as an example to those present. I just sit and listen; I am not sure what to say. I think we are just trying to be human beings. Our next stop is Juxtlahuaca, Oaxaca, another poor area with high emigration rates; another long mountainous drive, and another community of people just trying to make their way. I feel good, whether this matters or not, that some of us little people, in this big seemingly heartless system, can make some connections and be thankful for each other.

"SECURE COMMUNITIES": DOES IT MEAN WHAT IT SAYS?

Secure Communities (or S-Comm) is a program created in 2007 by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to detect and deport undocumented immigrants with criminal records by sharing biometric data between local law enforcement and federal government agencies. The program checks the immigration status of detainees in county jails and, as of October 2010, it has been activated in 686 jurisdictions in 33 states. According to the program's Standard Operating Procedures, its **alleged intent is to prioritize the deportation of individuals who have committed "aggravated" felonies including "national security violations, homicide, kidnapping, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, threats of bodily harm, extortion or threat to injure a person, sex offenses, cruelty toward child or spouse, resisting an officer, weapons violations, hit and run involving injury or death, and drug offenses involving a sentencing to a term of imprisonment greater than one year."**

However, in practice, this program does not limit itself to felonies. Individuals picked up by the police for minor infractions and misdemeanors also have their fingerprints run through ICE's database.

Numerous abuses accompany this program. Detainees who are subject to S-Comm may undergo prolonged detention and face difficulty accessing a lawyer or be released on bail. In addition to violating due process and criminalizing immigrants, this program encourages police to racially profile and arrest individuals suspected of being undocumented. Indeed, many local law enforcement agencies throughout the country have expressed their concern about this program for sowing distrust between immigrant communities and police.

The case of Santa Clara County in California is particularly telling of the effects of the program. Santa Clara assumed S-Comm powers in May 2010. Since then, more than 500 people –**133 without criminal**

records—have been arrested and 241 have been deported—**81 of which did not have criminal records**. According to County officials, rather than targeting violent criminal undocumented immigrants, the program encouraged the apprehension of any undocumented person charged with a minor (usually traffic-related) infraction.

Interestingly, Santa Clara County's case also reveals how local jurisdictions can be forced to participate in federal immigration enforcement. The County never applied for S-Comm powers and could not opt out of the program once it had been activated. The activation happened through a memoranda of agreement issued between the California Department of Justice and ICE the previous year. The County only learned about the program in October 2009 when it received a packet of information about S-Comm's Standard Operating Procedure. The program was activated without approval from County officials and today ICE refuses to reverse the activation. Arlington and San Francisco Counties face similar situations.

These stories are unsurprising given ICE's ambitious goals for the near future. By 2011, the agency plans to have S-Comm activated in every state. By 2013, it plans to implement the program in each of the 3,100 state and local jails across the country.

For a list of activated jurisdictions, see <http://www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/secure-communities/pdf/sc-activated.pdf>.

For updates on the collaboration between ICE and local law enforcement, see <http://uncoverthetruth.org/>. For documents released by ICE regarding the program, see <http://ccrjustice.org/secure-communities>.

2011 Alternative Spring Break

This year's Spring Break will be held in March, 2011. See our website for more information and applications: www.nomoredeaths.org.

Abuse of Migrants by Border Patrol Continues

No More Deaths Documents the Abuse

by Molly Little

In September 2008, No More Deaths published a report titled, *Crossing the Line: Human Rights Abuses of Migrants in Short-Term Custody on the Arizona/Sonora Border*. The report contained stories from over three years of documentation with deported migrants who had experienced abuse—including denial of food, water, and medical care, refusal of access to legal assistance, racist slurs and other verbal abuse, and severe physical assault—while being held in Border Patrol facilities prior to deportation. In the last year, the Abuse Documentation working group has continued to document these ongoing abuses, as well as new patterns we are seeing—psychological torture through the playing of “*migracorridos*” (traumatizing songs about migrants dying in the desert) at night in detention centers, women deported while their husbands are still in custody so they are forced to wait in Nogales and negotiate the increasing violence there, and the systematic confiscation of necessary medications, resulting in severe health concerns attending the many other traumas of deportation. More and more, too, we encounter people deported after many years of living in the United States. Each of these deportations represents a family and a community torn apart, an act of violence. While the consequences of these deportations may be too deep and too broad to quantify, the working group seeks to be accountable to these realities in our documentation efforts. Alongside our documentation of Border Patrol abuse we are also working to document the public health consequences of deportations of long-term residents. In the months between September 2009 and November 2010, **No More Deaths documented more than 100 cases of abuse and filed, for each of these cases, an official complaint with the Department of Homeland Security.** We are currently working on a series of follow-up documents to *Crossing the Line*. In fighting for custody standards for people held in

detention, we understand Border Patrol abuse to be just one of the consequences of border militarization and the criminalization of people of color. This criminalization is evident in the collaboration between Border Patrol and local law enforcement in Tucson, Border Patrol occupation of O’odham Traditional Lands, abuse of tribal members, and racial profiling. We are working to build relationships with those documenting abuses on the Tohono O’odham Nation, in Tucson, and border wide, so that together we can show the realities of border enforcement, and demand change.

2011 Calendar for Sale



2011 HUMANITARIAN AID & SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR

Purchase a 2011 Humanitarian Aid & Social Justice Calendar, featuring the work of Michael Hyatt, a Tucson-based humanitarian volunteer. Michael has been documenting the immigration crisis on the Arizona/Sonora border since 2002. He is an activist working with No More Deaths, Samaritans & Humane Borders.

The 2011 Humanitarian Aid & Social Justice Calendar features 15 of Michael Hyatt’s photographs & dates of historical importance relevant to the theme. Quotes by local and international social justice leaders, including Jim Corbett, Cesar Chavez, Martin Luther King, Jr., Robin Hoover, Isabel Garcia, and more are included along with upcoming dates, such as the Border Issues Fair, the Migrant Trail Walk and the May 1st Coalition March. Founding dates of all the Arizona Humanitarian groups are acknowledged and twenty-five important websites are listed. It is Michael’s hope that the photographs and information in the calendar will inspire social action leading to humane immigration policies that eliminate suffering and death along the migrant trails. **Order your copy today at PeaceSupplies.org Cost \$16.00; \$5.00 goes to No More Deaths.**

The New Demographics of Deportees

by Lois Martin

For several years No More Deaths' volunteers have worked in Nogales, Mexico, aiding repatriated migrants after they were apprehended by the Border Patrol. Our services include basic needs like food, water, clothing, first aid, information, and assistance reuniting with family members or friends. The nature of these services has shifted over time as needs became more apparent or circumstances changed. For example, documentation of Border Patrol abuses quickly became an important part of our work, as did help in recovering belongings held by Border Patrol and their distribution to the owners. However, **the most important change has occurred during the past year, as people deported from all parts of the U.S. have replaced traditional migrants** as the major population needing our help.

Many of these people, picked off the streets of cities and towns, or apprehended during workplace raids, come to us with a myriad of problems stemming from the fact that their lives are still based in the U.S. One of our major services is to provide telephone access to their families. Others include helping obtain pay from employers; arranging various kinds of international money transfers; getting information, documents or important items from home. Often we can only help by providing a contact in the migrant's home community. This is particularly true when the deportee's family is of concern.

Consequently, we are developing a national network of volunteers willing to be contact people in case we encounter someone deported from their area for whom that help is needed. Still in its infancy, this effort has been extremely helpful, for instance in finding resources to assist an abandoned family.

Anyone interested in being part of this network of helpers can email our volunteer, Lois Martin, at loismarti@gmail.com for more information

David Hill Reports from Nogales

It is hard to believe that it continues every day. New *deportados*—economically displaced persons, long-time U.S. residents, thwarted desert crossers (sometimes all three at once)—get off buses here by the hundreds and are routed to the various migrant aid centers of Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. It is the kind of relief effort normally

associated with natural disasters: shelters, places to eat, places to make a phone call, buses to somewhere else.

But this crisis doesn't end. Its artificial permanence is imposed by force by an enforcement regime that, in tandem with economic displacement, ensures that people remain in perpetual motion. Increasingly, that regime is dragging even long-time U.S. residents back into the migration/deportation cycle.

For over four years, No More Deaths has injected itself into the relief effort on the ground in Nogales (starting in July, 2006), not only because help is desperately needed but because it is an opportunity for active resistance to a situation we deplore.

One important path of resistance that we continue to pursue in Nogales and elsewhere is to document and denounce the systemic abuses of migrants by U.S. immigration authorities. These abuses are part and parcel of the enforcement regime and to expose them is to show the regime is unsustainable. See "Abuse of Migrants by Border Patrol Continues," page 6.

We are also resisting the ways that the system punishes people economically. An important example is property recovery help: we work the system to help people recover the identification, money, clothing, wedding rings, mementos, and other "personal effects" that they were arrested with, and then deported without—thus, dispossessed of.

Many people have heard of the *bajadores* (bandits) that rob and beat up migrants in the desert, but fewer people know that the U.S. government systematically dispossesses migrants of personal property in the same breath as it criminalizes them. Anyone arrested by Border Patrol may be convicted in federal court of illegal entry and receive a prison sentence of 30 days or more, in which case they are at high risk of not receiving their personal effects upon deportation.

We meet many people in Nogales who have been deported without their identification and money. Being undocumented in Mexico, even if you are a Mexican citizen, puts you at immediate risk. And without money, it is impossible to buy a bus ticket away from the *frontera*, so you are forced to stay in this dangerous place. This is more than theft, it is reckless endangerment. *Continued on page 8. . . .*

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Get your senators to support the DREAM ACT!!

Continued from page 7. . . . But our main contribution to the relief effort in Nogales is to provide free phone calls, using U.S. cell phones to spare families (and the other networks of mutual support that people belong to, such as coworkers and schoolmates) from having to pay top dollar to communicate across an international boundary or from a pay phone. We place about a hundred calls a day, mostly to the United States. People make calls to arrange a transfer of emergency funds from their family by Western Union or simply to let them know their location and immediate plans.

Working as No More Deaths volunteers in Nogales, we remain mobile, visiting the various aid facilities where our services are useful. Right now, as the holidays are approaching, we are concerned about how people can stay warm and get home safely. But more and more, deportees' immediate families—children, spouses, parents—are back in the U.S. For them, not only working to support their family, but even homecoming itself, is at odds with their immigration status. Their struggle to resolve the contradiction between immigration enforcement and the values of family must be our struggle too.

NMD Entertains UUA

No More Deaths is a ministry of the Unitarian Universalist Church (UUCT) of Tucson. As such, it is also affiliated with the national Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). This past summer (July 29th), the president of the Association Peter Morales participated in the march in Phoenix against Arizona's recent legislation, known as SB1070, that directs the police to crack down on migrants. As the result of work by Walt Staton and other local UUCT members, the UUA has taken on immigration as a study/action issue for UUA churches across the country for the next two years. They have developed a study guide and other resources for congregations that are available at www.uua.org/immigration!

In January the national UUA board will be meeting in Phoenix. Prior to that meeting, No More Deaths, UUCT, and three other Unitarian Universalists in the Tucson area will be hosting 18 members of the Board of Trustees for a short study tour of the area and of the issues in southern Arizona. We are very pleased to welcome them here.