

AFSC West Region News – January 2024

Stories of work from around the region

Welcome to the American Friends Service Committee’s West Region monthly newsletter. Please send feedback to WestNews@afsc.org.

U.S. Pistol and Revolver Exports to Israel, Jan. 2018-Nov. 2023

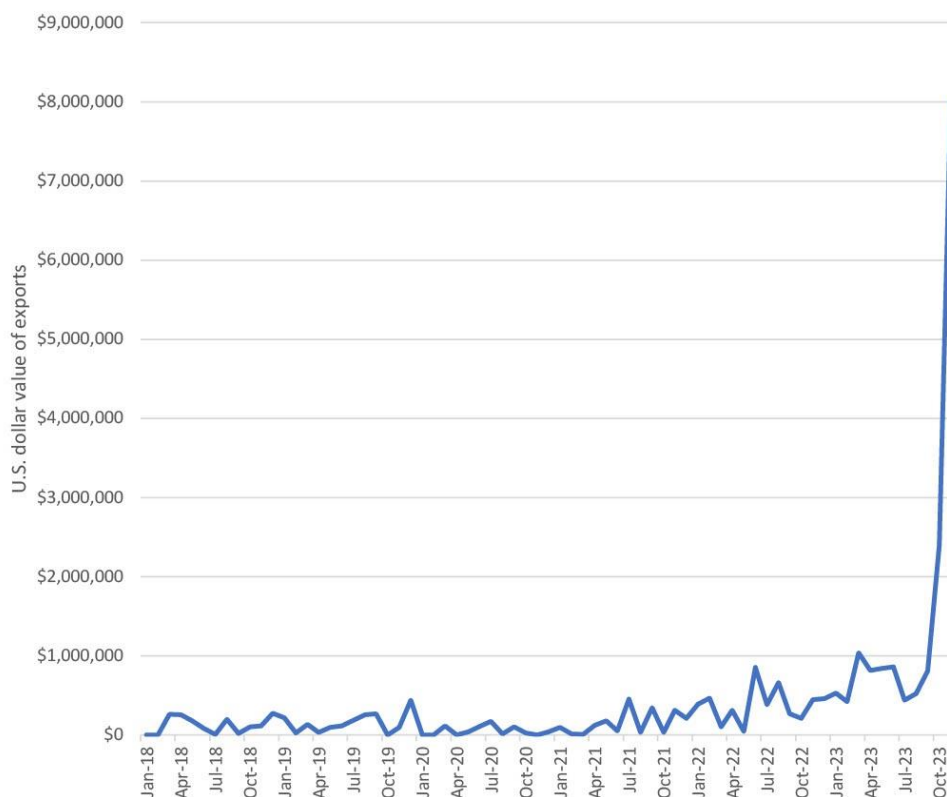


Chart by AFSC. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

California Healing Justice Program, Oakland

US gun exports to Israel: Report to the Commerce Department

“U.S. firearms exported to Israel have contributed to human rights violations, even before the current escalation of violence since October,” according to this [new report](#) by researchers with Gun Free Kitchen Table and AFSC, including John Lindsay-Poland. “These violations are the result of extensive proliferation of weapons to Israelis who live in the occupied Palestinian territory and other end users who present a high risk of committing violence against civilians – both Israeli and Palestinian, domestic violence, and other illegal activities. The United States exported more than 15 times as many handguns to Israel in October 2023 as the previous October, according to U.S. official data.” Read [more](#).



People held at the border (photo: Pedro Rios)

US-Mexico Border Program, San Diego

Advocating for migrant families held between the border walls

For months, Border Patrol has held people migrating—including children—in open-air detention sites without access to basic services. Last month, AFSC and other immigrant rights organizations filed a federal complaint against the Department of Homeland Security for these gross human rights violations. Thanks to volunteers, we've also been providing migrants with food, water, medical care, and other relief. “It is one small way to challenge the inhumanity of the walls,” [writes](#) Adriana Jasso of AFSC.



People of the Land Program, Albuquerque

Annual sharing of accomplishments – and gratitude for community

AFSC New Mexico's top accomplishments for 2023 include our 10th Annual Farmer Gathering, our “Farmer Unwind” Wellness Celebration and our expanded Farm to Early Childhood Education work. Acequia organizing and Farm Bill advocacy round out our [top five list](#). Sayrah Namaste and Angelina Lopez-Brody of AFSC express gratitude for all the communities with whom we partner.



Immigrant Rights Program, Denver

National media recognize AFSC support for migrants in Colorado

Since the 1990s, immigrants from Somalia, Guatemala, Honduras, and other countries have arrived in the small town of Fort Morgan, Colorado. In 2020, [AFSC began supporting](#) newcomer immigrant community members to access the asylum process and to advocate for just, humane migration policies. Today, the town is a model for how communities can welcome migrants and refugees.



Tou Ger impersonates Elvis at the first Tamejavi Festival. (photo: Tudor Stanley)

Pan Valley Institute (PVI), Fresno

PVI pays tribute to Tou Ger, a dear friend

The news of the tragic and violent death of our dear friend, Tou Ger Xiong, profoundly saddens us. Tou Ger was a Hmong artist, storyteller, educator, comedian, and cultural organizer. He was a headliner at the first Tamejavi Festival in Fresno in 2002. He quickly became part of the Tamejavi family because he understood and shared the values guiding the work. [Read more.](#)



Cindy with RFP speaks at a LA rally for a ceasefire in Gaza.

Roots for Peace Program, Los Angeles

RFP outlines youth organizing work

Crystal Gonzalez of AFSC says RFP’s organizing work provides youth with immediate support to realize their goals in the areas of leadership development, education, and health. Their political education and community action projects foster a sense of connection to the current issues in their communities. RFP’s work is creating a pipeline of youth organizers who coordinate on their school campuses and meet regionally in South LA. Their power and coalition building results in access to decision-making bodies for deep and long-term systemic changes benefiting youth and their families. Stay in touch on [Instagram](#).



67 Sueños, Oakland

67 Sueños podcast lifts up struggle, dreams and unity

From [Instagram](#): Ever since the first generation stepped out of the shadows, storytelling has been an inherent part of our journey. Every generation has embraced each other’s struggle, dreams, and unity discovered in shared memories that feel like home. We hope you enjoy this year’s International Migrants Day podcast filled with a wide range of sounds, voices, and issues close to our hearts and unique *estilo de 67*. (To be posted soon on [Spotify](#).)



Posada sin Fronteras at the U.S.-Mexico border in San Diego (Photo: Pedro Rios)

Demonstrating for migrant rights

Last month, AFSC and partners organized vigils, protests, and other events as part of our "Migration is a Human Right" week of action. We celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and took action to demand that migrants be treated with the dignity and respect we all deserve. See [photos and a recap](#) from the week, including actions in San Diego/Tijuana and Colorado.

Some more ways to engage with AFSC

[Quakers Today Podcast](#)

[Update on Gaza and the West Bank](#)

[Take action to stop Cop City](#) (national week of Action Jan. 15-21)

[Protecting Migrant Rights in an Election Year](#) (Jan. 23, 4 pm PT)

[Quarterly AFSC liaison call](#) (Jan. 25, 4 pm PT)

[Apartheid-Free Cities: How to Mobilize](#) (Jan. 30, 5 pm PT)

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