

The Kino Connection

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Sofia seems suspended in midair in this photograph of Asha at work on her senior project. David took this picture of the two at work in the greenhouse, with nasturtiums.

Kino and Casa — We Go Way Back

Every Wednesday, former Kino teacher Becky Duncan takes Kino students to Casa Maria.

Casa Maria is a Catholic workers' community that provides a variety of services, including free lunches for homeless people, free food for families on the edge of poverty, a medical

clinic, English classes, and help in finding jobs.

Kino students help by making and serving soup, bagging lunches and donuts, sorting clothes, and washing dishes.

We're not sure how long Kino students have been helping out at Casa Maria. In 2001 we said it was over twenty years, which is about how old Casa Maria itself is. Becky says her daughter Ashley got us started sometime before she graduated in 1992.

Kino students who are in junior high need to do 15 hours of community service every year. High school students are required to do 30 hours. While a student may start helping at Casa Maria because of this requirement, often he or she finds that it is a rewarding and life altering experience.

Last Christmas, Brian Flagg wrote:

"Needless to say, we are big fans of Kino School — they, especially Becky, have been faithful soldiers in the struggle here for many many years."

Becky leaves Kino on Wednesdays before homeroom is over, and students are back at school by lunch time. Students who are interested in volunteering at Casa Maria should pick up a permission slip at the front desk. A permission slip for Casa is good for the entire semester.

Becky wants us to know that most of the food distributed by Casa Maria these days is donated by Safeway.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CHARLIE!

The Parent / Student / Teacher conferences are next week, on January 27 through 29th.

Conferences are very important for a variety of reasons. They provide the opportunity for students, parents, and teachers not just to evaluate a student's progress, but also talk about long term and short term goals and discuss problems and solutions. Each teacher who work with a student will provide written evaluations for the classes and projects that the student is engaged in. While the teachers' evaluations provide an important point of view, the student's own evaluation of how the year is going is probably more important. Conferences are not only a time for parents to understand what their child has been doing; they are a time for parents to be supportive and encouraging.

If you haven't scheduled a time for your conference already, do it today!

Alumni news: Sam Greenberg, who graduated from Kino in 2007, was interviewed in the December e-newsletter of Dance Magazine. In the interview Sam, who is a member of the New York City Ballet, talks about dancing in this season's Nutcracker. His advice to the aspiring ballet dancer has a Kino ring to it: "If you really want something badly, work for it. But always work for yourself—always do it for you."

A copy of the interview is on the bulletin board in the front hall.

Get Well Jack!

Jack is having shoulder replacement surgery on Monday, January 25. While he is recuperating, Mary Lou will be in charge of his home room. Chris Shultz will be at Kino every Tuesday and Thursday morning to teach Jack's Writing and Psychology classes. Since Anna and Jack team teach Field Biology, Anna will be solo'ing on it for a while. Mary Jane says other faculty members will be filling in to cover the rest of Jack's classes.

Jack says he plans to be back at school as soon as possible.

Looking Forward / Looking Back

For as long as anyone can remember, every year almost every junior high and high school student at Kino has written two reflective essays, one of them looking forward and one of them looking back. I write "almost every" because the Looking Forward and Looking Back assignments don't actually have to be in the form of an essay. The Junior High and High School handbooks (which describe the assignment in greater detail) say it could be a "short story, poem, play, collage, etc."

One or the other of the essays was due at the end of the fall semester (January 15), with the second one due in May. Jennifer says she finds most people write the Looking Back essay in January. "We tend to look back at the beginning of a new year and think about what has happened and how we've changed."

Some of the essays she's been reading this week have been very introspective, Jennifer says, where the writers have described a process of self-development.

At the end of the year, on the other hand, she says, "Students are looking ahead to summer and to the next year." It's a good time to dream about the future and think about how to achieve those dreams.

Long time Kino students --especially after they've graduated and don't have to do them any more-- have said that they really appreciate having written these essays.

It is most common for students to work with either their home room teacher or their Language Arts teacher (probably Vanessa, Jennifer, or Jack) in writing these essays. However, virtually every teacher at Kino is available to help.

Coming Up at a Glance

Jan. 27, 28, 29	No school - Conferences
Feb. 2 -- 7 pm	Board meeting
Feb. 2 - 5	Junior high retreat
Feb. 25 - 26	No school - Rodeo days

Recent Thank-yous

We enjoyed a wealth of food at the pre-Christmas community potluck here at Kino, so much so that we took a load of the food to New Beginnings, a family shelter for women and children. Carol Hahn, the development director for New Beginnings, wrote us a thank you letter, saying that our gifts of ham, turkey, salads, breads, pies, and cakes "helped make the experience of staying at the shelter feel more like home."

You can go to their website at www.nbwctucson.org to see a wish list of their current needs.

Mary Lou was delightfully surprised to receive a thank you note from a math teacher at Pima College. Ana Jimenez wrote that each semester she asks her students to name a math teacher who influenced their love of math, and last semester someone named Mary Lou.

Libby told Mary Lou, "The nice thing is that, because you don't know who the student was, you can fill in the blank with fifty different names."

Primary students have also been looking back this month.

Check out the board in the front hall to see what they've drawn and written about their progress this year.



Aiden C says, "I can ride my bike super fast."

Looking Back Essay or Not? (bona fide quotes from my files)

Ultimately, it's up to your homeroom teacher to decide if an essay meets the Looking Back requirement. How would you have judged the essays (written by past students) with these opening sentences ?

"At the beginning of the year no one was holding out much hope for me. . . .The issue of licking my feet during homeroom was the source of most of my problems."

"Before I was born I was a prince dowager on the Jutai civilization who had been enslaved by the wicked Wamus."

"I opened my first cardboard shoe box at the age of one and a half and now I open them professionally as a high-powered executive."