



# KAMSC's *84 Steps*



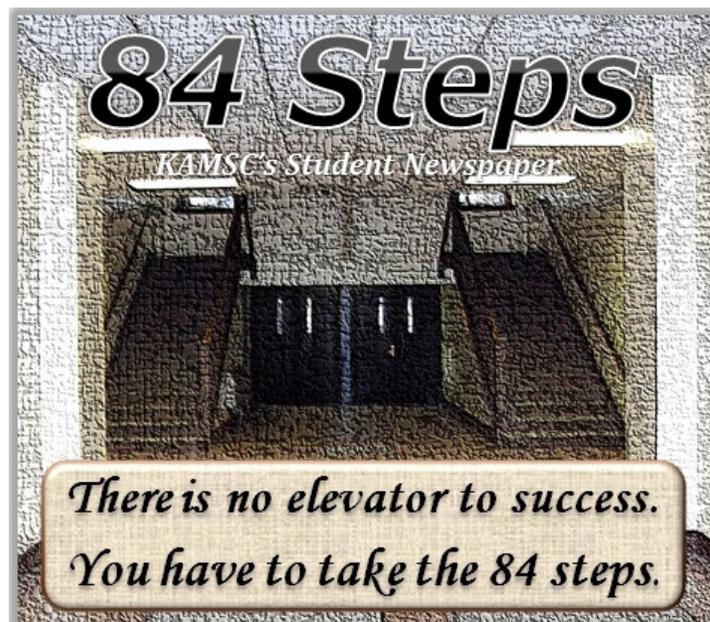
Cover by Genevieve Sertic



Winter 2011-2012



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# Letter from the Editors



The Thanksgiving weekend may be over, but winter break is just around the corner. Of course, we here at *84 Steps* don't want to wish our days at KAMSC away, and to get us back in the mood for a little math and science, we've whipped up a special winter edition. In this issue, we'll get a Frosh Mixer update from America Edwards which will remind the newest members of the KAMSC family about the event. Brice Calco will then supply us with ten representative tweets of KAMSC students, highlighting our thoughts in 140 characters or less. Genevieve Sertic and America Edwards will give us tips on being more environmentally friendly, both during the wintertime and all year long. Chang Yang will supply us with some disturbing Horrorscopes, many of which would likely make you feel like calling in sick from school the next day, if KAMSC kids ever did that. Afterward, Humza Mirza will provide us with an update on the KAMSC Cricket Team, a team that allows its members to be a part of KAMSC's premier sporting event and to learn the meaning of mysterious words such as "googly". Brice Calco follows this up with an advice column, Kitu Komya covers the recent Class Clash, Brice has another top ten list detailing all of the activities that we did (or wish we had done) over our five-day Thanksgiving break, and Robert Heidelberg wraps up the issue with a surefire classic in the form of a song parody. Also, be sure to take a look at our interview with Dr. Tanoff on page five, during which the Director himself answers a few questions that have been pressing on everyone's minds. Enjoy!

Your Editors,

Grady Sertic and Samir Deshpande



## Frosh Mixer

by America Edwards

The Frosh Mixer, which was held on September 21st, had a great turn out! Only a few people were absent [what, think you're too cool for us?] and the people who did show up had great fun! As a warm-up, we played *Guess Which Famous Person I Am*. Fellow freshies had to give each person a hint so that they could guess what name was on their back. Then, we played human bingo! Did you know there were only about three vegetarians and only one person owns chickens?! During the "neighbor" game, someone asked which of her neighbors were Jewish... two people stood up. WOO! Nerdy prizes such as highlighters, graph paper, and index cardholders were given out, as well. After the games, everyone ate yummy food such as pizza, brownies, veggies, etc.



Thank you to all of the parents that came and helped out. Y'all did a great job! :)



## Top Ten KAMSC Kid Tweets

by Brice Calco

1. Uggs I need to go to sleep! Too bad I waited till midnight to start all my homework. #nerdprobs
2. Fixed my program. Not a semi-colon error! #programmin4lyfe
3. Yesss! I finished all my homework! For my home school... #oh #ozone
4. Found my flash drive! Thanks mom! #lulzz
5. Yeah definitely not going to sleep tonight #nerdlyfe
6. Why is it I never get any homework from my home school but do homework all night anyways? Oh yeah #thankskamsc
7. I think I like someone. I wonder if I send them my lab report if they will like me be back. #worthashot
8. Crappp!! Definitely forgot about that lab due tomorrow! #funfun
9. Sleep?? Umm what's that? #nerdlyfe
10. @briquecalco is so awesome! When are you free to hang?? Please be my friend! #ferreal



## Talking with Dr. Tanoff

**KAMSC is extremely fortunate to have Dr. Tanoff as our new Director. 84 Steps appreciates his time as he recently answered the following questions posed by your editor, Grady Sertic.**

*Q: How have you liked your first few months at KAMSC?*

A: The action comes fast and furious, which makes for a fun job! The day moves by very quickly! I've gotten to work with lots of new people, including the staff at KAMSC, the administrators in KPS and KRESA, county superintendents and principals, and other directors in the Michigan Mathematics and Science Centers Network. It's been an incredibly satisfying experience so far.

*Q: How different is it working at a high school as opposed to a college?*

A: The biggest difference for me, of course, is that now I am an administrator, as opposed to being a teacher in the classroom, learning with the students. The local and county-wide school systems are much larger and much more intricate than the small liberal arts college environment from which I came, but I've been delighted with the sense of sincerity and candor with which people go about their business.

*Q: What do you like best about being the new director here at KAMSC?*

A: At this point, if I'm being asked to single-out one "best" facet of my position, it's that I've been able to help some individual parents address their children's education concerns. What more could one ask than to combine problem-solving with helping people?!

*Q: Has anything about KAMSC surprised you?*

A: Yes. While I certainly expected the students to be engaged with and driven in their coursework, I was delighted to learn that just about all of the students I've asked tell me that

they really enjoy the social aspects of engaging with their KAMSC classmates. That articulation is not only a surprise — it's a bonus!

*Q: If you could, what one thing would you like to add or change here?*

A: After being on the job for only three months and three weeks, it's too early for me to address a question such as this. Ask me again in about a year . . .

*Q: What is your favorite book, film or TV series?*

A: Ha! Just one?! Okay, my all-time favorite book probably remains *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins, but *Avenger* by Frederick Forsyth would have to run a close second. Also, I've read and enjoyed everything by Jim Thompson, Agatha Christie, P.D. James, Frederick Forsyth, and Martin Cruz Smith. *Moby Dick* is another classic that I've enjoyed, and I'm currently in the middle of *Don Quixote*, which is hilarious. Films? That's even tougher! (I was actually a film projectionist in college. By the way, that was back in the days before DVRs and streaming on-line video. I actually had to SPLICE together several reels of film to make one continuous movie!) If I had to choose "one" (using the term "one" loosely), it would probably be the *Godfather* trilogy (although *Godfather III* pales in comparison to the first two). I tend to like movies with memorable lines or movies that leave one feeling uneasy. The best movie I've seen in the past few months is probably *Unknown*. For "oldies," I'm a softy for *It's a Wonderful Life*, and I enjoy just about any Academy Award nominee from the 60's.

*Q: If you had a motto, what would it be?*

A: "Be cautious of student newspaper interviewers." No, just kidding. Actually, my motto is a combination of two: "I am but dust and ashes" and "The world was created for me." I think that one of the secrets to happiness is knowing when to access each motto.



# EverGreen: Going Green Every Day

by America Edwards

What does "going green" even mean? One sophomore I asked said, "I think of a healthy lifestyle, in which nature can support our basic and fundamental needs." (Geez, I was looking for something more along the lines of, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" but that works too!) So in a nutshell, to go green is to be helpful and kind to our environment. So how can us KAMSC nerds "go green"?



A. Reduce - Use less stuff! Instead of using four plastic cups, use two.

B. Reuse - Instead of using those two plastic cups, use one made of glass!

C. Recycle - Go the extra mile and separate those plastics from metals and take them somewhere where they can be recycled!

D. Take your bottles and cans to the grocery store where they can be exchanged for ten cents each. The bottles will be reused in some way.



E. Save the world, get money! Steal your dad's half empty root beer, dump the rest out, and hop on your bike! Ten cents will add up fast! Ten cents times ten equals a dollar times ten equals ten dollars, and so on. I don't need to do the math for you.

F. Do fun projects out of old material! Want a new dress? Take the sheet off of your bed. Wait, on second thought, DON'T YOU DARE, because I will have to call the fashion police. Take your old jeans and make a purse out of the pocket! Google fun earth-friendly projects for more ideas!

G. Don't litter. Plastic takes way too long to turn into dirt to be throwing it on the side of the highway, so instead of littering, recycle. Also, I am going to have to clean the side of the highway for volunteer work, so don't litter, please!

H. Buy old. Old food, old drinks, old everything! Just kidding. Buy previously recycled materials such as pencils and paper.



I. Don't kill trees. What I mean is, don't use a thousand pieces of paper when it should only take notes. Use every side of each piece of paper; don't throw away paper because of one mistake. That's why whiteout and erasers were invented!

J. Um... I'm fresh out of ideas! We are all smart, so go think of your own ideas! Going green is extremely important in maintaining our earth. Do what you can when you can to be green. One thing though: dying your hair green or programming KAMSC's computers to only show green typing DOES NOT count. GO GREEN!



## WinterGreen: Going Green for the Holidays

by Genevieve Sertic

With the winter holidays fast approaching, here are some ideas to make sure that the Earth is on your gift list!

### Giving without Taking

There are some earth-friendly alternatives to buying a standard gift that have little to no impact on the earth's resources, and they are probably much more appreciated than the dreaded holiday sweater. Consider giving a service (babysitting, shoveling, tutoring, pet care, etc.). If you're talented in the kitchen, homemade treats make nice gifts for the right recipient. Buying an experience is a great idea, too (gift cards to a theater or favorite restaurant, tickets to sporting events, a pass to the skating rink...we're lucky to have a lot of fun choices around here).



### Wrapping It Up



If you are wrapping gifts, consider using cloth instead of store-bought paper, which is often not recyclable. Use some colorful scarves, pillowcases, bandanas, or tablecloths, and wrap your gift (use safety pins, if necessary). Reuse for next year!

### Holiday Lights

The first LED holiday lights were cold-looking and had a tendency to strobe. There are much better choices now, replicating the warm feeling of the standard strings, and they use much less energy!



### Greeting Cards

Don't throw your beautiful holiday cards away! Instead, recycle them into gift tags for next year. Find small, stand-alone images on the cover of the card, fold into a rectangle, and cut using either straight scissors or some with a fun, decorative cutting edge. You can often get multiple tags out of one card, and they're unique!

Happy Holidays!

## Horrorscopes

by Chang Yang

**Aries: (March 21-April 20)** You need to find a way to channel your excess emotion. You act before you think. You don't know your own strength. You have a shorter patience than Kim Kardashian's marriage. Sign up for kick-boxing classes; it will help.

**Taurus: (April 21-May 21)**

Coming back from break, you will unexplainably discover the need to buy bigger pants. (On a completely unrelated subject, during Thanksgiving you discovered the amazing ability to inhale 14 pounds of turkey.)



**Gemini: (May 22-June 21)** Due to your dual personality, you will talk or even argue with yourself sometime this week. A good thing? You'll always be right.

**Cancer: (June 22-July 22)** As all the astrological websites on the Google database claim, you are a very emotional person. However adept that makes you socially, intellectually it does not benefit much. Study tips—tape notes to your mirror. Write formulas in the steam after a shower. Rename your dog Nicholas II and ask him about 1825 Decembrists' Revolt (do not expect a reply). Now and then, eat your study notes.



**Leo: (July 23-August 23)** Pretend to be a cat today. Run on all fours in public. Bite pedestrians. Get on the national news.

**Virgo: (August 24-September 23)** The rest is predictable. You will now spend a few minutes attempting to deduce the meaning of the aforementioned sentence. Having found none, you will then confront me for calling "24." a sentence when it is grammatically a phrase.

**Libra: (September 24-October 23)** Although you usually have excellent judgment, you can't tolerate anybody else's criticism of your decisions; a flaw for anybody who truly wants to improve. Locate your nearest overachieving friend and let his/her mother berate you on the phone for a couple minutes.

**Scorpio: (October 24-November 22)** You and Virgo share very similar characteristics. Thus it is very likely you will hook up with a Virgo this year, where you two will spend many blissful hours housebreaking dogs or correcting the postures of slouching children.

**Sagittarius: (November 23-December 23)** In the distant future you will become President. Of course, this addresses all the Sagittariuses (Sagittariusi? Is there a plural for this?) so all the others have to die of mysterious causes before you accept the position.

**Capricorn: (December 24-January 20)** "How many Capricorns does it take to change a light bulb? Capricorns don't buy new light bulbs unless it's a business expense." Indulge yourself. Spend twenty dollars on chocolate and work yourself into a food coma.



**Aquarius: (January 21-February 19)** You are prone to bouts of forgetfulness. Sometime in the next week, you will get up to get a drink of water and then realize that you're running out of eggs, then make a shopping list while searching for lost socks, etc. You will finish everything besides get a drink of water.

**Pisces: (February 20-March 20)** In the very near future, you will blink. Doesn't get much better than that.

## I See Cricket in Your Future!

by Humza Mirza

The upcoming 2012 season of KAMSC cricket is finally underway. For those of you who missed the meeting held at Open Lab a few weeks ago, as well as for the new students, KAMSC has a cricket team! In fact, our school ranks as the first in the state for high school cricket (partly due to the fact that we are the only school that participated in a school cricket team, but that is beside the point). So far, KAMSC currently has a few sets of cricket equipment, but if you have any or know anyone who will be willing to lend their equipment for our use, they are more than welcome to do so.

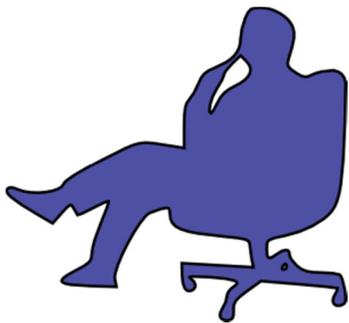
For those of you who do not know, cricket is a bat and ball sport where a bowler (otherwise known as a pitcher relative to baseball) throws a leather ball at three upright sticks in the ground called wickets. A batsman stands in front of these wickets and defends them from getting knocked over and if he/she succeeds he runs back and forth between two lines to

score runs, if he/she fails the batsman is out. Although there are many other rules that you will learn by joining the team, for time's sake that is the game in a nutshell. Many compare it to baseball with two bases, which is understandable. However, cricket allows the bowler to throw the ball at the ground allowing for all kinds of deflections and spins, as seen in many other English sports (i.e.: topspins in soccer and tennis).

The 2012 season seems promising with multiple practices soon to be scheduled and full of fun. A cricket championship will take place later in the school year with plenty of scrimmages in preparation.

Have extra time? Come to Open Lab and see if a team is practicing in the large hall connected to the commons room, and hopefully in the gym if approved. If you are interested in learning more about cricket, or are convinced to join the team, contact Mr. Sinclair or sign up on the clipboard outside of his room today.





## Ask Brice

Hello KAMSC nerds!! My name is Brice Calco and I am a junior here at KAMSC and will be the new advice columnist. Please feel free to ask me any questions. They can be sent to [kamsc84steps@yahoo.com](mailto:kamsc84steps@yahoo.com). Enjoy the year and keep the questions coming!

~ Brice Calco

**Dear Brice,**

I have a Facebook addiction and I can never get any of my homework finished before like midnight! My parents get really upset when I stay up super late every day and I can barely manage to stay awake in any of my classes. It doesn't help that I go to KAMSC and take all honors and AP classes either! I want sleep- OMG please help me!

**Sincerely,  
Sleepless Nights**

**Dear Sleepless Nights,**

I have some suggestions for you - it's simple - you need to delete your Facebook and completely isolate yourself from the outside world! Hahaha just kidding but you do need to seriously limit the amount of time you spend on social networks. Try planning your day out ahead of time and make a schedule to follow. Try it - it really works! Set specific times to get what you need to get done and if you don't meet the schedule stay off the computer (unless you need to do homework on there of course!). And I definitely would not recommend you get a Twitter, either!

**Dear Brice,**

My grades at KAMSC this year are not living up to my usual high standards and neither my parents nor my teachers seem too pleased. Sometimes I feel like I need some extra help studying, but I am not sure how to ask for it!

**Sincerely,  
Studying Alone**

**Dear Studying Alone,**

You should try creating a study group! Try them out- they really work. The only thing you will want to keep in mind is that if you are going to create study groups make sure it's people you actually will study with, and not just your friends. I would suggest meeting some new people if necessary and before you know it you will be at the library every weekend working your tails off together! Before you know it you will have the best study group in all of KAMSC and the grades to match it! Good luck!

**Dear Brice,**

All of my friends have iPhones and are always bragging to me about them. So I convinced my parents to get me a smart phone and so they got me a BlackBerry. Except it turns out the type that they got me was an off brand BlackBerry and when I went to show it off to all my friends they made fun of me. I want to get a new phone but I don't have the money for it! What am I supposed to do?

**Sincerely,  
Crackberry**

**Dear Crackberry,**

If you have a smart phone then what is there to complain about? It sounds like your phone is pretty close to the real thing anyway. And the important thing is not what others think about your phone- what really matters is what you think about it. So unless you can fork up the money to get another phone, your BlackBerry should get you by well enough. By the way, who compares phones with their friends?

## Student Senate Update: 2011 KAMSC Class Clash

by Kitu Komya

Student Senate consists of KAMSC students devoted to assist in school decisions and to help facilitate events. To be a part of the group, all that is needed is attendance. The meetings are held every Wednesday night from 7:30 pm (after Open Lab) to 8:00 pm in Mr. Sinclair's room. The Student Senate hosted the annual KAMSC Class Clash on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, in which all four grades competed against each other in various activities.

The foremost activity that took place was dodgeball. The first round involved the freshmen and the seniors. Even though they were outnumbered, the seniors prevailed with roaring success. In the next set, the sophomores were opposed to the juniors. Surprisingly, the sophomores defeated the juniors. Then, the freshmen battled against the juniors, in which the juniors creamed the freshmen. Finally, the seniors competed ragingly against the sophomores; incontrovertibly, the seniors succeeded. As a final ranking, the seniors were placed first, followed by the sophomores, the juniors, and then the freshmen.

Next, the Quiz Bowl activity proceeded. The topics comprised pop culture, mythology, staff knowledge, nerdy shows, and miscellaneous knowledge. In this activity, the seniors were named champions; at the heels were the sophomores, then the juniors, and finally the freshmen.



Afterward, there was the pie-eating contest, in which four students from each grade participated. It was rather amusing to see pie on the faces of classmates, as they struggled to devour pie as swiftly as possible. The end presented an incredible outcome; the freshmen prevailed over all, shadowed by the sophomores, the seniors, and the juniors.

Subsequently, Dance Dance Revolution was held as a new activity in the Class Clash. A female and male from every grade competed against each other for points. The result was not too extraordinary, except for the accentuated fact that the juniors should have stepped up to their assumed level. The seniors took first, with



the sophomores, the freshmen, and then the juniors following behind.

Finally, Tug of War was the concluding activity. Freshmen versed the seniors in the first round. Because of the remarkable strength produced by the substantial number of students, the freshmen astoundingly won. The sophomores were up next against the juniors, in which the fiery sophomores defeated the enervated juniors. Then, the seniors versed the juniors. It was all but disbelief to see the seniors succeed against the juniors. In the last round, the freshmen battled opposed to the sophomores; once again, the force of the huge group of freshmen slaughtered their opponent. So, at last, the freshmen won, with the sophomores, the seniors, and then the juniors trailing behind at a considerable distance.



Also at the Class Clash, the ranking of the dress up days was announced. The class displaying the most spirit was indubitably the seniors. Freshmen, sophomores, and then the juniors pursued, respectively.

Ultimately, the seniors won, overall. Sophomores were placed second, freshmen ranked third, and the juniors positioned last. Following the Class Clash was dinner, where pizza and snacks were served. To end the day, a dance was held until 11 pm. This year's class clash was undeniably a success, as it was engaging, lively, and in general, enjoyable. Don't miss out on upcoming events hosted by the Student Senate, as they will also be stupendous!

# KAMSC



## Top Ten Things KAMSC Kids Did Over Thanksgiving Break

by Brice Calco

1. Finished another chapter in USACO
2. Worked on physics problems
3. Updated lab notebooks
4. Made flashcards for biology
5. Got ahead in math class
6. Organized flash drives
7. Updated every program on our computer
8. Counted down the days until school starts back up
9. Caught up on all the sleep we've lost
10. Made up excuses to not hang out with people



## Nerd Train to Success (Song Parody: KAMSC version of *Highway to Hell*)

by Robert Heidelberg

It ain't easy  
Being me  
Acing tests until 2:05  
Ask me something  
I will be  
Answering them all in my stride  
Don't need hinting's  
Don't need help  
Ain't nothing that I'd rather do  
I go to  
KAMSC, dude  
You know my friends are all there too

I'm on the nerd train to success  
On the nerd train to success  
Nerd train to success  
I'm on the nerd train success

No sidetracks, are ok  
Nobody's gonna slow me down  
From this learning  
Gonna win it  
All math tournaments here in town  
Hey Sinclair  
Paid my dues  
Living through your physics class  
Hey Cardwell  
Look at me  
I'm graphing sinusoidals, yeah!

I'm on the nerd train to success  
I'm on the nerd train to success  
Nerd train to success  
Nerd train to success

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