



Hi all,

This is our first Alice e-newsletter of 2006! Please let us know what you'd like to be hearing about in the future, and we'd love to hear some of your Alice stories (we've included 3 such notes in this issue).

Topics in this Newsletter:

- 1) Alice update on the Mac
- 2) Thanks for your letters of support
- 3) Alice activities at SIGCSE
- 4) Summer Alice workshops in 2006
- 5) Letters/tips from the field
 - a) Creating movies of Alice worlds
 - b) GrrlTech Meets Alice
 - c) Alice at Southwestern

1) Alice update on the Mac

If you are using Alice on a Mac, version 2.0.6 is now available at:

<http://www.alice.org/downloads/authoringtool/>

Bug fixes include the bugs in tutorial 4.

2) Thanks for your letters of support

Wanda and I were overwhelmed and the number of letters of support for our proposed combining of Alice and Media Computation as part of an NSF grant. Thank you all! If we get the grant we will be asking for folks interested in trying out our materials that we develop.

3) Alice events at SIGCSE, 2006

SIGCSE (<http://www.cs.rit.edu/~sigcse06/>)

is right around the corner. We will be running the following Alice-related events:

- ▶ Alice Tea Party (sponsored by Prentice Hall) Friday 12:15 – 1:45, Ballroom H
- ▶ Alice Bird-of-a-Feather session (Jim Caristi, Wanda, and Steve leading discussion) Thursday 5:45 - 6:30 PM room 328
- ▶ Beginning Alice workshop (Wanda and Steve running) Friday 7-10 PM Rice - Dell Butcher
- ▶ Advanced Alice workshop (Wanda and Steve running) Saturday 3:30 - 6:60 PM Rice - Dell Butcher
- ▶ Alice as part of an introductory programming panel (Steve) Saturday 11 - 12:40 room 329

Please stop on by to say hi!

4a) Summer Alice workshop: June, 2006

At long last, we finally have details about the summer Alice teaching workshops. Two workshops will be held back-to-back at Duke University. The first



workshop, appropriate for novice Alice teachers (and a near-repeat of our workshops last summer) will be held from June 19-20, with the advanced Alice workshop following on June 20-21. For details, please go to:

www.cs.duke.edu/csed/aliceworkshop/
<http://macs.sju.edu/alice/>

and **register early!** We fear that the workshops will quickly fill once we announce them to the SIGCSE mailing list and to the AP CS mailing list which we will be doing in approximately 2-3 weeks.

4b) Summer Alice workshop: July, 2006

Don Slater (of Carnegie Mellon University, dslater@andrew.cmu.edu) is helping us to run a weeklong Alice teaching workshop specifically targeting High School (and Middle School) teachers. This workshop will be Monday, July 24 - Sunday July 30, at CMU. We have reserved dorm rooms at the university for the participants. There will be room for 27 teachers. Details on costs and the mechanisms for registration will be forthcoming shortly.

5a) Creating movies of Alice worlds

Just thought you might want to know: I use two freeware products for Win/XP to capture video from the screen of Alice. There is no trial period timeout and no watermark created by either:

The first is AviScreen Classic version 1.3 available from www.bobyte.com. Although it offers the option to create WMV files directly, I have found it easier to use it to record "uncompressed" AVI files, and then convert them to WMV files using a second freeware program, called STOIK Video Converter 2, available from www.stoik.com/products/svc/. This is how I created the video (a 6MB WMV file) at www.cse.scu.edu/courses/topics/2006Spring/Alice.wmv.

All the best,
Dan Lewis, Chair
Computer Engineering
Santa Clara University



5b) GrrlTech Meets Alice Roger Williams University



(<http://www.rwu.edu>), in collaboration with the Rhode Island Technology Council, hosted GrrlTech in November 2005.

GrrlTech is a one-day session to interest female high school sophomores and juniors in career fields where women are traditionally underrepresented. Attended by approximately 150 students, the event was the largest in the four year history of GrrlTech.

Dr. W. Brett McKenzie, from the CIS faculty at the Gabelli School of Business, and two students, Jill Palazola, CIS – RWU '06 and Jess Hickson, CIS – RWU '07, led two, hands-on sessions using Alice to introduce programming to the Grrls. A video of the final animation is at: <http://www.wbrett.com/grrltech/alice.html>.

The Grrls were uniformly positive in their responses. Being able to download the software for free really excited a couple of the students.

5c) Alice at Southwestern University

Southwestern University was part of the pilot study for "Learning to Program with Alice" 2004-2005. We had about 20 students each semester in our course for students who have never programmed, Introduction to Programming. In order to enroll in our CS1 course, students must have had programming in high school or take the intro course. This fall 3 of the women from my Fall 2004 class (9 males, 12 females) successfully competed for slots on the SU

ACM programming team that went to competition. These women are now enrolled in CS2. Two were members of the three person team and one was an alternate. The team came in 6th among the undergraduate teams and 26th overall out of 48.

This is the strongest female participation that we have had, and I believe a lot of that can be attributed to beginning programming in Alice.

Barbara Boucher Owens

(By the way, we hear that Barb made a fabulous Alice presentation at the Australasian CS Ed conference, <http://www.comp.utas.edu.au/acsw06/>, last month!)

We're looking forward to seeing many of you at



in March!

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