



THE ALICE NEWSLETTER

LEARNING TO PROGRAM WITH ALICE

September, 2007

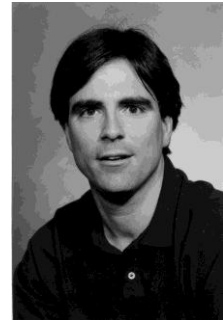
Volume 3, Number 6

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All,

As many of you have heard, Randy Pausch, who has been the head of the Alice project for many years, has been diagnosed with incurable cancer. This has been and continues to be a difficult and challenging time for our entire team. Randy was featured on Good Morning America this morning with Diane Sawyer (see story at <http://www.abcnews.go.com/GMA/story?id=3633945&page=1> .) You may watch Randy's final lecture, delivered at Carnegie Mellon on September 18th (<mms://wms.andrew.cmu.edu/001/pausch.wmv>) or see how the Wall Street Journal Digital Network reported this lecture on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQtwEKIUutA>), where Randy talks about his life, lessons learned and shares his advice on "Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams."



TV Coverage on an Alice Summer Camp

Jeff Gray has provided us with a great link, providing neat media coverage of his summer Alice camps. "The following reports on the TV coverage we received for our Alice middle school camp and has a link to the video (it is poor quality I have private links with better quality).

<http://www.cis.uab.edu/node/1724>

I hope to later get a web page up with the 45 Alice programs coming from these camps."

Please contact Jeff for more information.

Jeff Gray, Ph.D.

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University of Alabama at Birmingham*

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http://www.gray-area.org

Report from an Alice summer camp

Brett McKenzie reports:

"The URL for the workshop is -

http://www.wbrett.com/grrltech/cis_lesson.html

there is a link on that page to a Flash Video of how the world runs. (You should download the whole video then play - it stutters when streamed)

<http://www.wbrett.com/grrltech/alice.html>

Links

aliceprogramming.net
Helpful information on Teaching with Alice (course calendars, lectures, labs, assignments, exams, solutions, etc.)

alice.org
Download Alice, Alice community

visualization.sju.edu
The Center for Visualization website. Archive of past newsletters; listing of grants; useful information for users

The workshop was done in a session to introduce female freshman and sophomore high school students to computing. It involved roll playing with Lisa, a systems engineer from Raytheon. The grrls were Brett's programming team to write the program for Lisa. Lisa would check the program and relay information to and from an imaginary client. (Jill and Jess were undergraduate female students).

The beauty of this model is you follow the Ericson Rule of "raise the ceiling" and "lower the floor".

- First get to skate
- Add in a loop
- The jump method is invoked as an event so she can jump at will
- Camera change to view the face
- Say "If you need more detail, ask me,"

Best, Brett.

W. Brett McKenzie
Gabelli School of Business
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Request for information on those using Storytelling Alice

Jill Denner has the following request:

"I do appreciate you passing on anything you hear about people using it, even if they just used it, and didn't formally study how it worked. Is there someone who is using it this summer that you could put me in touch with? Caitlin said she would pass on anything she heard as well.

I hope your ITEST project is going well. I look forward to hearing more about it."

Jill Denner, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate
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****Please contact Jill directly if you have been using Storytelling Alice.****

Contact Us

- Recommend a colleague to the Alice Newsletter
- Share your success stories with other users
- Upcoming events / plans using Alice
- Comments, corrections or omissions

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Alice Use in Middle School

Elaine shares about her students:

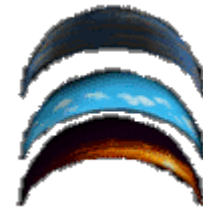
"I'm a middle school teacher in North Carolina who has been facilitating Alice instruction to students during weekly after school video club meetings. I've also been encouraging my students to be instructors by sharing each week what they have learned. My web site is http://www.randolph.k12.nc.us/schools/atmiddle/teachers_websites/Witkowski/davidson.htm."

Elaine Witkowski
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Learning about Alice: How do I change the texture of the sky and/or the ground?

Sky:

In the templates, the only sky color that isn't blue is the space template. So, the color of the sky isn't a problem unless you want the space template. In this case, you can drag in a new sky object from the "Stars" 3D model, located in the Local Gallery --> Environments --> Skies folder.



Ground:

- Select the ground object in the Object tree
- In the Properties panel of the Details pane (under the Object tree), you will find a tile

labeled "skin texture", which in the green grass template, is a texture map named "ground.GrassTexture".

This is what needs to be replaced. The problem is that the texture map is actually a graphic image file buried within the template world.

So, let's say you want to replace the green grass texture map with with the moon texture map. There are two ways to do this:

First approach:

- 1) Save your world.
- 2) Open a world with the moon template.
- 3) Right mouse click on the ground and save it.
- 4) Open your original world, and import (File-import) your moon ground (Chapter 4 of our text deals with this in more detail)
- 5) Remove the original ground object.

Second approach. This takes advantage of the fact that an Alice template world is actually a zipped file and you can unzip the file and find the texture map. I

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believe that you will find (in the unzipped files) an image named "image.png" -
- this is the texture map.

- a) Extract the "image.png" file from the zipped template world. Renamed the extracted image to something like "moonTexture.png"
 - b) In Alice, click the Properties panel for the ground object. At the bottom of the panel, find the Texture Maps subdirectory and click the Import Image Map button.
 - c) Use the popup window to locate the extracted image and click on the Import button to bring the new texture map into the world. You should see a new tile with the name of the new texture map on it.
 - d) Finally, drag the new texture map tile up to replace the grass texture map. You should see an immediate change of the ground appearance.
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A Cute Alice Story (out of the mouths of babes)

"Last night at the dinner table, when Tamara, my almost-9 year old, was complaining about Samuel, 6, chewing with his mouth open, I suggested that she make an Amanda animation using Alice with Samuel (the monkey) chewing with his mouth open. She looked at me and matter-of-fact informed me, "Daddy, I can't. Because there is no method to do that. And, if you try, it will tell you there is no such method. And, I don't know how to make my own methods. Maybe you could find out how I can make my own methods?" So, she must be getting some of the concepts and terminology."



Robin Snyder
Savannah State University

Keep your calendar open for next summer!!!!

Alice and Media Comp workshops in the planning stages for:

Las Vegas July 26 – 30, 2008
Orlando August 9 -13, 2008

More information as details become available!!

Till next issue, Steve & Wanda