



# THE ALICE NEWSLETTER

LEARNING TO PROGRAM WITH ALICE

October 2010

Volume 6, Number 3

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All,

With all of the challenges involved in moving nearly 2500 miles west, this newsletter, originally scheduled to be sent out in early September, has been slightly delayed. However, there are some exciting stories, and I hope you'll enjoy them.

### Alice A Cool Project Idea, from



As "back to school" season arrives and children return to school after a long summer, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has proposed a challenge to help ensure students are being smart about their Internet activity. The statistics can be chilling; a 2006 study found that one in seven children receive some form of sexual solicitation online, and of those, over half are asked to send a picture (Wolak, Michell and Finkelhor. Online Victimization of Youth: Five Years Later. Alexandria, VA, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. 2006.). To help promote awareness and to provide tips necessary to keep children safe, the FBI's, Internet safety program, FBI- Safe Online Surfing Internet Challenge (FBI-SOS) is proposing a national competition designed to keep children safer online.

FBI-SOS is a free, online educational program that promotes cyber citizenship and teaches students how to recognize and react to online dangers. The program delivers critical Internet safety information in a fun, competitive format to students in 3rd through 8th grades.

Designed to meet state and federal Internet safety mandates, FBI-SOS teaches students about Internet safety and cyber citizenship as they complete a challenging online Pre-Quiz, Scavenger Hunt, and Post-Quiz. The program is not only educational but also promotes a fun competition between schools. At the end of each month, schools with the highest scoring students in the nation are awarded the FBI-SOS Trophy and receive a visit from the FBI. A total of 63,385 students from 426 schools representing 40 states have participated in the program since its inception in 2005. FBI- SOS was adopted as a National Initiative of the FBI's Cyber Division in October 2009.

The FBI is asking students from across the country to create an animation, using CMU's Alice software, expressing the importance of one or more of the safety concepts taken from the FBI-SOS Internet Challenge. Participating schools must register at the FBI-SOS website ([www.fbi-sos.org](http://www.fbi-sos.org)) before February 1, 2011. Finished submissions are to be no longer than 45 seconds and must be submitted in Quicktime Format. At this time, the competition is available to middle and high school students. All animations



## Links

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

[alice.org](http://alice.org)  
Download Alice, Alice community

[visualization.sju.edu](http://visualization.sju.edu)  
The Center for Visualization website. Archive of past newsletters; listing of grants; useful information for users

must be submitted to the FBI-SOS website by March 31, 2011. FBI-SOS representatives will review all submissions and make the top scoring creations available for online voting via the FBI-SOS website. After all votes are tallied, the creators of the winning submissions and their supervising teacher(s) will be recognized by the FBI, the Alice Project team and FBI-SOS Administrators. Please visit [www.fbi-sos.org](http://www.fbi-sos.org) for more details.

**Editor's note:** While the formal competition is only seeking submissions from K-12 students, I am planning to use this "assignment" for my 200 students in CS105 Introduction to Computing at Stanford University this fall. I also intend to share with the FBI the "best" public service announcements (as voted by the class, during the animation fare at the end of the term).

**Editor's note 2:** I had a hard time finding the competition at the FBI-SOS website [www.fbi-sos.org](http://www.fbi-sos.org). It turns out you need to click on the Alice icon at the bottom of the page to access the competition information."

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## RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENT: Alice3 Beta 3.0.0.2.9



Latest version: 3.0.0.2.9  
system requirements

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### More downloads:

[NetBeans plugin](#)

[Alice 3 Offline Installer](#)

[Alice 3 for other operating systems](#)

[Alice 3 download archive](#)

**Alice3 Beta version 3.0.0.2.9 is now available** for download at <http://www.alice.org/3>

The default download link is an Online Installer. If you want an Offline Installer, select the Alice3 Offline Installer in the **More downloads** list of links. In Alice3 Beta version 3.0.0.2.9, you will see an obvious improvement in the interface appearance (fancier scroll bars and tabs, buttons that look like buttons, etc.) due to an update to Java 1.6\_u21.

We are excited about the implementation of many new features, including:

- Instance drop-down menu in Code Editor (Object tree is still in Scene Editor)
- Reorganization of the Class access drop-down menu
- Direct access to subparts in the methods panel
- Direct access to an instance parameter in methods panel (no subterfuge needed!)
- Wrapping of control tiles and variable tiles (no more elastic, shrinking tiles)
- Camera Views in Scene Editor (Starting, Layout, Top, Side, Front)
- Camera Markers can be added in Scene Editor
- Snap grid option in Scene Editor to aid in alignment of objects

Also, an expanded list of Preferences is now available in the Window item of the Menu Bar. One option to check out is the Locale menu. A volunteer has been helping us take our first steps towards internationalization by providing the Russian and Ukrainian localizations. If you would like to volunteer to provide Alice with translations to other languages, please send mail to: [support@alice.org](mailto:support@alice.org).

## A Cool Combination of Alice and Basketball

While I was at the Grace Hopper Conference last week, I came across Brett McKenzie, who, with his students, had two neat Alice posters describing recent activities at Roger Williams University. I really liked both the partnership with the local chapter of Girls, Inc., as well as using the combination of playing basketball and creating animations as a means to excite late elementary and middle school girls about the possibilities of computing. Here is Brett's report concerning the first of those posters:

"Shooting Beyond Boundaries: Young Girls and Programming  
Presenter: Casey Aiello (Roger Williams University)



In response to an NGCP grant, undergraduate women from the Roger Williams Lady Hawks varsity basketball team and women CIS majors collaborated on a combined basketball clinic and computing workshop for under-served girls. The computing workshop reprised the basketball clinic by having the girls' program animations of the drills they had just done in the basketball clinic. The





## Contact Us !

- To recommend a colleague to the Alice Newsletter
- To share your success stories with other users
- To announce your upcoming events / plans using Alice
- To give us your comments, corrections or alerts us of omissions

### CONTACT:

**Barbara Conover**

*Project Manager*

Center for Visualization  
Purdue University  
West Lafayette, IN 47907

EMAIL:

bconover@purdue.edu

**facebook**

### FACEBOOK GROUP:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups.php?ref=sb#/group.php?gid=106038903458>

Join in discussions to share Alice thoughts with other instructors!

poster reports also reports on the visits to stimulate interest." Please contact Brett directly for further details.

Dr. W. Brett McKenzie  
Associate Professor CIS  
Gabelli School of Business  
Roger Williams University  
Bristol, RI 02809 (401) 626-0806  
[wmckenzie@rwu.edu](mailto:wmckenzie@rwu.edu)

## An Alice Educator Listserv

Don Slater shares the following:

A mailing list for Alice educators is now available. On the alice-teachers list, educators will be able to ask questions, post ideas and nifty assignments, and support other members of the Alice teaching community. The list will be moderated to make sure that only those posts that are of interest to the Alice educational community will be distributed.

The following link will take you to a web page with more information about the list. This list is by subscription only but at NO COST and with NO SPAM. Please complete the form at this ListServ website to request a subscription to the list.

<https://lists.andrew.cmu.edu/mailman/listinfo/alice-teachers>

## Using Peripherals with Alice

Tamara Dakic ([tdakic@gmail.com](mailto:tdakic@gmail.com)) sends us the following request:

The arrival of the newsletter reminded me to email you the youtube link (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8qx1uPZhd0>) to the project completed

by my Fall semester students Parker Busswood and Brett Gibson. They used a guitar peripheral to control their Alice Rock Band game!

Capilano University COMP 107 - Rock Band Project

capilanou107 6 videos Subscribe



using a Wii Remote (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKmDC6BqKJY>),

but Parker and Brett beat me to it.

So, now that we know what is possible, we are thinking of making it a part of the course. A lot of our students have this kind of device at home, so we can get something really cool really easily without any additional costs to the university. I am trying to make the Wiimote work with Alice now. I can control a game by pushing the buttons on Wiimote, but would really like to use the translation/rotation sensors. Do you know of anyone who has attempted this? I would appreciate some help.

I am teaching at Capilano University in North Vancouver, Canada and we started teaching Alice in fall 2007.



## An Alice Camp for Middle Schoolers

Erik Amerikaner shares with us a link to a summer program he ran this past summer involving an Alice camp he ran at a local community college <http://www.vcstar.com/news/2010/jun/29/colleges-offer-career-technical-classes-to/>

For further details, please contact Erik directly.

Erik Amerikaner, Computer Technology Instructor

Oak Park High School

Oak Park, CA 91377

Email: [eamerikaner@oakparkusd.org](mailto:eamerikaner@oakparkusd.org)



## Calling all K-12 Teachers: A request for a few minutes of your time to complete a short survey

There has been more of a concern that K-12 teachers have a difficult time finding high quality curricular materials. Certainly, lots of folks have found [aliceprogramming.net](http://aliceprogramming.net), but there are many resources that simply aren't being found. Michelle Hutton, who is looking at this problem, sent us the following:

I am working with Steve Cooper, Mehran Sahami, and Paulo Blickstein at Stanford University on a project about online repositories of computer science educational materials. An online repository is any website that has multiple resources. Educational materials are anything you would use to help you teach - lesson plans, activities, handouts, etc. Two examples of online repositories of educational materials are CS Unplugged (<http://csunplugged.org>) and the CSTA Source (<http://csta.villanova.edu/>).

We need your help to learn what websites you use to get materials for your classes and why you do or do not use online repositories of educational materials. I implore you to fill out this very short online survey:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZX88MF6>

Thank you for your help!

Michelle Friend Hutton

mfh@pobox.com

Please feel free to contact Michelle with any questions, and please fill out her short survey!

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## 3D Alice Programming Contest in Macao

Unfortunately, this video is only available in Chinese, but it does illustrate the current reach of Alice.

<http://video.moglik.com/v/hu1H6n-yFpw/%E6%BE%B3%E6%B8%AF%E8%A6%96tdm-alice-3d-programming-contest.htm>





## On the lighter side: Only at an Alice Workshop!

Donna Schaeffer, an Associate Professor of Information Systems in the School of Business at Marymount University was attending our Chicago Alice workshop this past summer, and noticed this taxi when she looked out the window during a break. She ran downstairs and got a few photos . . .



**Stephen C. Cooper, PhD**  
Associate Professor,  
Computer Science  
Department  
Stanford University  
coopers@cs.stanford.edu

**Wanda P. Dann, PhD**  
Associate Teaching  
Professor  
Director, Alice Project  
Carnegie Mellon  
University  
wpdann@andrew.cmu.edu

Hope that you all are having a superb fall semester/quarter. If you are in the Silicon Valley area, please stop by for a visit. I've now been here for more than a month (Steve), and the closest thing to rain I have felt is when the wind blows water from the fountains onto me as I pedal by on my bicycle!

Regards,  
Wanda and Steve