



Underground Robot News

August 1, 2011

Austin, TX

Issue #2

Upcoming Events

An Afternoon with a Robotician!

Come enjoy refreshments and meet a premier leader in humanoid robotics, Dr. Luis Sentis.



2:00 pm August 6th, 2011-
Barnes and Noble Arboretum

BARNES & NOBLE
BOOKSELLERS

Who's Who in Texas Robotics



Dr. Luis Sentis

The University of Texas made a valuable addition to its mechanical engineering department last year when they hired Dr. Luis Sentis as an assistant professor. Since then, Dr. Sentis has

taken a lead role in UT's human centered robotics group which is continuing his research aimed at modeling and controlling whole-body compliant skills of humanoid robots. Dr. Sentis has also created a class at UT titled "Topics in Human Centered Robotics" which aims to get students excited about humanoid robotics.

Dr. Sentis was previously employed at Stanford University where he developed control systems that have been used on highly advanced robots like Honda's Asimo robot. Dr. Sentis and his researchers hope to continue to advance robotic capabilities, right here in Texas.



Robot Beggars Bring Home the Bacon




These days, it seems like every highway on-ramp is occupied by someone begging for cash. These cardboard sign toting folks may not be excited to hear that they may soon be facing robotic competition. Researchers from Korea in association with MIT have recently produced DONA, the world's first charity robot. This cute little robot is designed to petition passersby for donations for charitable causes by moving its arms and head.

In the public tests conducted thus far, DONA has been a major success. While the guy ringing the donation bell at Christmas time may seem commonplace and easy to ignore, DONA is a fresh idea that captures people's attention and motivates them to give. So far, all of the proceeds gathered have been donated to Save the Children which helps to educate children in Africa but others are planned to help other causes. Hopefully, in the future, more robotic hands can be extended to help the humans in need. Watch the video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqjvPiYNoDc&feature=player_embedded

Robots in Hollywood!



This month's robot movie is *Blade Runner* starring Harrison Ford. This movie follows ex-police officer Rick Deckard (Ford). Deckard was an expert in hunting down and deactivating organic robots known as replicants but has since retired. However, after several replicants kill a shuttle crew and escape into L.A., Deckard is brought back onto the force. *Blade Runner* is certainly thrilling but also very thought provoking. As we develop more advanced military robots, how will we know when they are smart enough to autonomously know who to fight? Even though this movie is almost 30 years old, it is still very applicable to the world of robotics. I give it 3 out of 4 gears. 

DOOR PRIZES!

Come to the August 6th Afternoon with a Robotician event for your chance at fabulous robot prizes!