CSC 143 Java

Events, Event Handlers, and Threads

Reading: Ch. 17

Overview

- Topics
  - Event-driven programming
  - Events in Java
  - Event Listeners
  - Event Adapters
  - Threads
  - Inner Classes
- Reading:
  - Textbook: Ch. 19 & 20, particularly sec. 19.4

Classic Data Processing

- Input specified as part of the program design
  - Example: process bank account deposits

    Repeated set of transactions

    Each transaction consists of a deposit slip (transaction header) followed by 1 or more checks to be deposited to the account
- Program expects input in required order
  - Program structure mirrors input organization

```
while (more input) {
    //read and process transaction header
    //read and process individual checks
}
```


Event-Driven Programming

- Idea: program initializes itself then accepts *events* in whatever random order they occur
- Kinds of events
  - Mouse move/drag/click, Keyboard, Touch screen, Joystick, game controller
  - Window resized or components changed
  - Activity over network or file stream
  - Timer interrupt

    (can still think of this as processing an "input stream", but point of view is basically different)
- First demonstrated in the 1960s(!); major developments at Xerox PARC in the 1970s (Alto workstation, Smalltalk)
- Available outside research community with Apple Macintosh (1984)

Java Events

- An event is represented by an event object
  - AWT/Swing events are subclasses of AWTEvent. Some examples:

    ActionEvent – button pressed

    KeyEvent – keyboard input

    MouseEvent – mouse move/drag/click/button press or release
- All user interface components generate events when appropriate
- Event objects contain information about the event
  - User interface object that triggered the event
  - Other information appropriate for the event. Examples:

    ActionEvent – contents of button text generating event (if from a button)

    MouseEvent – mouse coordinates of the event
- All in java.util.event – need to import this to handle events

Event Listeners

- Basic idea: any object that is interested in an event registers itself with the component that can generate the event
- The object must implement the appropriate Interface
  - ActionListener, KeyListener, MouseListener (buttons), MouseMotionListener (move/drag), others …
- When the event occurs, the appropriate method of the object is called
  - actionPerformed, keyPressed, keyReleased, keyTyped, mouseClicked, MouseDragged, etc. etc. etc.

    Reminder – because these are part of an Interface, you can't change their signatures.
  - An event object describing the event is a parameter to the receiving method

Example: Mouse Clicks

```
public class Mouser extends JPanel implements MouseListener {
   /** Constructor – register this object to listen for mouse events */
   Mouser( ) {
      super( );
      addMouseListener(this);
   }

   /** Process mouse click */
   public void mouseClicked(MouseEvent e) {
      System.out.println("mouse click at x = " + e.getX( ) + " y = " e.getY( ));
   }
```

• Also must implement the other events in MouseListener (if not Mouser is abstract)

Example: Pause/Resume Buttons

- Idea: add a pair of buttons to the graphical view of the ball simulator to control the simulation
- First, rearrange the code to create an extended Jframe named BallSimControl that contains the JPanel with the bouncing balls plus the pause/resume buttons

Button/View Layout

- In the constructor for BallSimControl

```
Container cp = getContentPane( );
BallGraphicsView viewPane = new BallGraphicsView( )
cp.add(viewPane, BorderLayout.CENTER);
JButton pause = new JButton("pause");
JButton resume = new JButton("resume");
JPanel buttons = new JPanel( );
buttons.add(pause);
buttons.add(resume);
cp.add(buttons, BorderLayout.SOUTH);
```


Handling Button Clicks

- Who should handle the pause/resume button clicks?
  - Not the SimModel object – shouldn't know about views
  - But need to catch the event and then call methods in the SimModel to carry out the pause/resume
  - One solution: create a *listener object*
- New class: SimButtonListener
- Code in BallSimControl

```
SimButtonListener listener = new SimButtonListener(simWorld);
pause.addActionListener(listener);
resume.addActionListener(listener);
```


Listener Object

```
public class SimButtonListener implements ActionListener {
   // instance variables
   SimModel world;        // the SimModel we are controlling

   /** Constructor for objects of class SimButton  */
   public SimButtonListener(SimModel world) {
      this.world = world;
   }

   /** Process button clicks by turning the simulation on and off */
   public void actionPerformed(ActionEvent e) {
         ???
   }
}
```


Question: Which Button was Pressed?

- Several possible answers – here's one
  - Quick & dirty – get the button text from the event object

```
/** Process button clicks by turning the simulation on and off */
   public void actionPerformed(ActionEvent e) {
      if (e.getActionCommand( ).equals("pause")) {
         world.pause( );
      } else if (e.getActionCommand( ).equals("resume")) {
         world.resume( );
      }
}
```

  - Not terribly portable – what if you wanted to translate the user interface to Chinese? – but good enough for now

Event Adapter Classes

- Interfaces like MouseListener and WindowListener contain many methods; often we only are interested in one or two
- Alternative to implementing the interface and having to provide empty implementations for uninteresting methods – *adapter classes*
- Java.awt.event includes an abstract class with empty implementations of all required methods for each of the event listener interfaces

  KeyAdapter (for KeyListener), MouseAdapter (for MouseListener), WindowAdapter (for WindowListener), etc.
  - Extend and override only what you need to create a listener object

Threads and The AWT Event Thread

- Java supports "threads": apparently concurrently executing streams of instructions.
- User programs have at least one thread running
  - Not hard to create additional threads
  - Can be tricky to coordinate multiple threads
- The Java system has several threads running all the time
- One important system thread: the AWT event dispatcher
- All AWT/Swing event handlers execute in this thread
- Consequence: your event handlers may be running simultaneously with your application code

Example: Add Balls on Mouse Click

- Would like to create a listener that does something like this:

```
class BallClickListener extends MouseAdapter {
    public void mouseClicked(MouseEvent e) {
            if (model != null) {
               model.add(randomBall(e.getX( ), e.getY( )));
            }
    }
}
```

  - Listener needs to know about the model, etc.
  - We really don't want another top-level class; what we'd like is a class definition nested inside BallGraphicsView, with access to instance variables, particularly the model object we're controlling

Towards a Solution: Inner Classes

- Java 1.1 and later allows classes to be nested
  - Inner classes define a new scope nested in the containing class
  - Inner classes can access instances variables and methods of the containing class
  - Inner classes can be public, protected, or private
- Example: Point2D
  - has two inner classes, named Float and Double
  - Are public, so can be used outside of class Point2D, as Point2D.Float and Point2D.Double
- Inner classes in event handling
  - A class like *class BallClickListener extends MouseAdapter {...}* can be a private inner class: is only needed once, and only inside the containing class

Solution: Anonymous Inner Classes

- For the mouse listener, all we need to do is create one instance of the inner class and add it as a mouse listener
  - Doesn't really need a name(!)
  - Solution: create one instance of an **anonymous** inner class
- Warning!!! Ghastly syntax ahead. Here's how to create a new object of an anonymous inner class

```
new <classname> ( <constructor parameters> ) { <method overrides>
  }
```


Example: Constructor for Graphics View

```
public BallGraphicsView( ) {
    super( );
    // Create inner class instance to listen for mouse clicks
    this.addMouseListener(
      new MouseAdapter( ) { // anon inner class extending MouseAdapter
        public void mouseClicked(MouseEvent e) {
          if (model != null) {
            model.add(randomBall(e.getX( ), e.getY( )));
          } //end overriden method mouseClicked
        }
      } //end anon class extending MouseAdapter
    );
} //end method BallGraphicsView
```

Summary

- Event-driven programming
- Event objects
- Event listeners – anything that implements the relevant interface
  - Must register with object generating events as a listener
- Listener objects – handle events by passing them along to other objects
- Event adapter classes – implementations of event interfaces with empty methods
  - Extend and override only what you want
  - Commonly used to create instances of anonymous inner classes that listen for events