



EUGENE

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405

PCjr CLUB

VOLUME XII
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MEETING

AGENDA

The April meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will be held at the Church of Christ, 2424 Norkenzie Road, on Thursday, Apr. 11th. This meeting is the Annual General Meeting. Setup will begin at 6:30 and the meeting at 7pm.

The main program for the April meeting is "Financial Software for Junior." *Home Budget jr*, *Financier jr*, and *Managing Your Money* will be reviewed.

OFFICERS

- President Charles Coury
- Vice President Patti Tanner
- Treasurer and Company Store Phil Janz
- Disk Librarian Mike Ruiz
- Modem Captain Gordon LeManquais
- Commercial Contact Dick Page
- Social Director Helen Fry
- Newsletter Editor Louie Levy
- Publisher and Production Staff Warren and Juanita Hampton

Association
of
Personal
Computer
User
Groups

Charley's Corner

by Charles Coury

Dear Club Members,

I read recently that picturing your computer as a sophisticated calculating machine is a fuddy-duddy way of thinking. Naturally, that's just how I described the PCjr in a past newsletter (but I won't ask if you remember!). So I dug into the article to see where I had gone wrong. This "counting machine" metaphor was too linear, too mechanical, too left brained, too western white male . . . you get the picture. Computers were moving us into a brave new world of lateral thinking, right brained, relational oriented, global civilization.

It recalled to mind Marshall McLuhan, the famous thinker on communication. It was his theory, formulated in the 1960s, that the method of communicating itself, not so much what was being communicated, possessed the real power to shape our lives. He coined the phrase "the media is the message." In other words, it wasn't so much specific programs on TV, but TV itself as an electronic media, that was molding us in its image.

In the past, the printing press did this to our ancestor's lives. What McLuhan called the Gutenberg Revolution (after the first off-set printer). This new media created a new civilization, the one we are now in the midst of shedding: Linear, sequential thinking, with jobs rather than roles, alienation in relationships, politics of nationalism, science versus art, etc.. More than just scribes were left behind with the advent of the "book culture."

But now as our culture begins to interiorize the electronic world of the computer (of which TV will become a subset), we are destined for an equally complex and tumultuous revolution. What will it look like? Everyone from Bill Gates to Newt Gingrich is weighing in to answer that question. But I'll give it a shot next month, to finish up my first year as President. And if you've been able to wade through these five wordy paragraphs, it probably means you're still part of the Gutenberg Book Culture. Maybe you didn't watch enough TV!

Please look inside for some more practical articles.

Regards,

Charley

HOW'S YOUR MONEY FLOW?

Phil Janz

Is April 15th your lucky day? Do you have a love/hate relationship with the IRA (or is that the IRS)? Why not attend the April 11 Club meeting and find out how you can make 1996 -1997 a bonus year for keeping track of and recording your home finances. . .and for



years thereafter.

Your Club is offering demonstrations and discussion of three such programs. Coming on line will be:

* **HOME BUDGET, jr.** A financial management program designed specifically for home use. No bookkeeping or accounting experience is necessary to operate the program since it is very easy to learn and use. This program will be demonstrated by **Darlene Gotzman**.

* **FINANCIER jr.** A computer-aided system for organizing records for use by people with some backgrounds in computers or accounting. A powerful program for storing and organizing all types of data. This program will be demonstrated by "**PJ**" **Jameson** {Besides being our resident magician, "PJ" does wonders with numbers too!}

* **ANDREW TOBIAS, MANAGING YOUR MONEY WITH THE IBM PCjr.** A financial management system that includes seven integrated programs to assist you with planning your financial future. This program will be demonstrated by **Roy Stucky**.

All three financial programs were written especially for the IBM PCjr. Come and listen to see if one of these financial programs might make your life a little easier.

Phil Janz

But, Will It Run On Junior?

Louie Levy

One thing about our Juniors is the wide range of programs they are able to run. Sure, sometimes you have to add more memory, run some other program to configure the machine, or do mental gymnastics to adapt Junior's keyboard. But in the end, if the program will run on the old PC, your PCjr can usually get it going.

But what if it doesn't? At the last meeting we saw two programs that run well on the Junior, but we also saw that many of us had problems getting these commercial programs going. What would a person do at home if this happened?

Suppose you purchased some software which is known to run on the PCjr, but it won't run for you, at least not the way you think it should. Your computer locks up unpredictably so that the only way to get going again is to do a "cold" reboot. The screen goes all wacky instead of giving you the neat graphics you saw when the program was demonstrated at a meeting or was run on a friend's Junior.

We all know some of the things to try: changing the RACORE switch from PC mode to jr mode, running MODE 80 or 40, changing from a MAX MEMORY boot disk to a 128K boot disk and many other things.

David Wilson once wrote that when he had this experience his first reaction was to take an analytic approach. He ruled out static electricity if it was a humid summer day. He ruled out a dead keyboard (if the batteries were new or he was using a keyboard cord), and a machine problem (if he had run the Ctrl-Alt-Ins diagnostics). After doing all this, David said he was stumped, but not because he couldn't find the answer. He simply had no convenient focus for his question.



continued on page three...

What David needed back then--and we have now--is a Club Disk Library of software and a knowledgeable Librarian who knew how the programs ran. A good computer club library is a way to focus questions and raise the probability of good answers.

Programs in our PCjr Library are known to run on our lovable orphan. Any special requirements are noted in the README files. There are text files which explain, describe or instruct on a wide range of topics. There are small utility programs to do little things like sort directories or change key assignments, and big utility programs to do things like edit every file on a disk. There are special programs which make other programs work on the PCjr and that allow you to access all of Junior's potential.

So, what other type programs are in the library? There are data base programs, spreadsheets, and word processors for kids as well as for adults. There are games and educational programs for every level and age group, and programs which make the PCjr's 3-tone sound chip "sing pretty." There are public domain programs, which have no registration fees, and shareware programs, which usually do.

And there's a disk librarian. Our present librarian is Mike Ruiz, and at the April meeting we will be voting to either keep Mike on or replace him with a new volunteer. The Club's Disk Library and Librarian are important club resources. Mike has put a lot of effort into the Library these past two years. All of us have seen the results.

By the way, David's lock up problem was solved by his installing the IBM DOS21 patches on his boot disks. Ask Mike about them; they are in your library.



How jr Cartridges Work

By Bob Magnuson

While reading in one of my books about computing (many of which are devoted to the PCjr), I became interested in how Junior cartridges work. The cartridge concept is not new in the computer world, yet IBM felt it could be used only in the Junior. Gradually, we are seeing more sources for cartridges that do different things for our Junior. There's a Video Cartridge that speeds up screen writes, a Keyboard Buffer Cartridge that stores keystrokes so your Junior won't beep at you when you type too fast, a Keylights Cartridge, a PC ID Cartridge and others.

So, how do cartridges work and what are some (if any) differences between the PC line and the PCjr in this area?

In the memory map of your Junior, there are portions of upper memory that are left open. These will be filled with the ROM (Read Only Memory) that is contained on one or two IC chips inside the cartridge. When we speak of address space, we are talking about addressable memory locations, all of which must be unique in 8088-CPU-based computers (like our PCjr).

The cartridge contains some header information at the very beginning of the ROM address space, and this info is used during the starting boot process to tell DOS

- 1) if the cartridge slot is/isn't empty,
- 2) if the cartridge present is the BASIC language cartridge or something else,
- 3) if there is a non-BASIC program that should now take control of the computer, and
- 4) if there are any special command words that DOS should remember.

The fourth point, above, explains why you can type "BASIC" at the DOS prompt and immediately get BASIC without any disk drive turning on. BASIC (a program) is contained wholly in the cartridge space, and is loaded into memory. (Of course, that presumes you have a

continued on page four. . .

BASIC cartridge plugged in....) If you were to make your own cartridge, and put the command word "printer" in the header information, in simple terms you could type "printer" at the DOS prompt, and instantly DOS would start running the program inside the cartridge, without looking on any disk drive.

If the cartridge contains BASIC code, you would have to have your "BASIC" cartridge plugged in one slot, and the special BASIC cartridge plugged in the other slot. Cartridges that contain BASIC code are just like the files stored on disk, except the code is permanently etched into the IC chips in the cartridge.

The reason that DOS (and the computer) restart when a cartridge is removed or inserted is that DOS really wants to know that header information for any new cartridge inserted. The computer "re-boots" and goes again to read the header format to know what cartridge program is available.

In a PC, the memory configuration replaces memory space for cartridges with "slots". Most of us Junior owners thus recognize the major difference between our Junior and a PC-XT or the like. Those models have "slots" in which plug the various "boards" (very similar in concept to our sidecars). In many PCjr hardware discussions I've heard, people wonder why the Junior can't utilize the "cards" that plug into an IBM PC or PC-XT. With the address space available, what's the difficulty?

Since the Junior was built to be a "budget" machine, slots would have made the Junior too similar to a PC for marketing purposes. Thus the removable side panel that enables us to install sidecars on our PCjrs was a compromise to the slot concept. And, if it were possible to install, let's say, an EGA "board" into our PCjr, the software just doesn't exist to make a PC-XT "board" work with a Junior. But, now we seem to have gotten off the topic of cartridges....

This article first appeared in the jrReport

✓ Checking Out Your PCjr

by Colin Tuttle

The PCjr has a feature which even the PC-AT doesn't have. It is a feature which can be essential to proper performance of your computer, yet many people have forgotten that it exists. It is the internal test program which you can call up by pressing the Control-Alt-Insert keys simultaneously.

The first thing the test checks out is the memory. You are then given a visual menu listing of test options. Within this menu, you can check out your Diskette Drive, your Video Display Light Pen, Joystick, Sound, Keyboard, Modem and Printer.

The test will tell you if each item is working properly, and if anything is wrong, the test will suggest that you take your computer in for service. By using the tests you can get an idea as to which item on your computer is acting up, rather than paying a technician to determine which item is working incorrectly. For more information on the test program on the PCjr check the *Guide to Operations* book which you received with your Junior. (If you do not have the *Guide*, see Phil for one from the Company Store.)

If you are a bit more technically inclined, and like to repair your own computer, you can also use the test points to tell you in greater detail what is wrong with your computer. To get this added information, you will need to purchase the *IBM Hardware Maintenance And Service Manual for the IBM PCjr*, IBM Number 1502294. It is getting difficult to locate this manual, but it is still obtainable through mail order companies and the Company Store. (Rally Electronics has them at last report.)

If you get the service manual, you also receive several strange looking plugs, which plug into the connectors in the back of your PCjr. When these plugs are used, you get additional codes on your test screen. You can

continued on page five. . .

look up the codes in the manual, and determine what could be wrong and possible corrective measures. The only real disadvantage of the manual is that many times, the corrective measures are costly replacements, such as to "replace the system board," rather than replacing a specific chip on the system board. They are however, for the most part, not extremely difficult fixes. You are told to replace a board or part, as opposed to soldering a wire or chip. The manual also shows diagrams, how to replace most parts of the computer, as well as how to make some adjustments.

This manual is the manual used by technicians to diagnose any problem you encounter with your computer. If you feel comfortable opening up your PCjr (after all, it is out of warranty now) and taking it apart to try to fix it, then you should definitely get a copy of the Hardware Service Manual. If, on the other hand, you are intimidated by your computer, and would rather never look inside the case, then you should definitely avoid looking at this manual, as it shows you exactly how to disassemble your PCjr, and even more importantly, how to re-assemble what you have dissected.

(The above article was originally published in the OKC Jr Orphans Chronicle.)

Does Your Screen Look Like This Instead of Looking Like This?

If you find yourself trying to read a screen full of large letters in lines that break up in strange ways on your PCjr's screen, your computer is probably in what is called 40 column mode. This means that words will be printed within 40 spaces across the screen. Since most computers use 80 spaces across the screen, you have to give your PCjr instructions to display words in 80 columns so you can read text files easily.

To do this, type at the A> prompt:
MODE CO80

When you try reading the text file again and you will find a vast improvement.

When we boot our Juniors using memory management software like JRCONFIG, it is automatically placed in 80 column mode.

from the Atlanta Orphan Peanut

So, What's Happening?

Louie Levy

A lot goes on in your club that sometimes doesn't get seen. A lot of interesting processes are going on that allow us publish an 8-page newsletter each month, stage an interesting meeting agenda every 30 days from September to May, and answer mail to those who write the Club from the "hinterland."

One of the main processes is the election of officers each year. Before we vote for a new Vice President at the April meeting, our President appointed a nominating committee who met to see who they felt would come forward to serve our Club. Several upcoming positions are not elected positions, but are appointed by the President. The committee had to find members who would "volunteer" to be appointed.

My job is the newsletter editor; one of the upcoming positions that will be available. The editor scrounges around to find articles that hopefully will be of interest to the membership. Of course, much goes on at the meetings that could be reported in the newsletter, but this wouldn't be of much interest to those who live in the "outback" like Lucretia in Soldotna, Alaska or Clyde in Mountain View, California.

Some members contribute articles to the newsletter. Knowing that I am not very techie, some of our membership send in articles they feel will be of interest to others in the Club. Thank goodness they do! I really appreciate it when others contribute to the newsletter.

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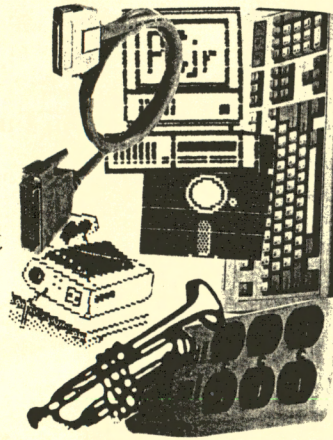
I key it all in, sift it, expand and compress it until I come up with eight pages to take to the copy shop. Warren and Juanita Hampton pick it up, gather and fold the sheets together. They run PC-File and make the labels so they can lick, stick and stamp the newsletters and get them in the mail on time. They do this every month, September through May.

Another process we do is getting the Board together and actually *planning* our meeting agendas. (I bet you thought they just happen, didn't you!) Our last meeting that Patty Tanner and Phil Janz put together was a great success! It would be hard to comprehend the time they spent getting it ready. I know because I helped them some. Think about how they got six computers to run at one time, twelve copies of two different programs made, all the DOS disks, labels, writing and Xeroxing handouts, buying balloons (a lot of huffing and puffing), finding extension cords, and meeting together before the meeting to see just what was needed to be accomplished to pull it all off.

Patty and Phil tied it altogether with little outside help and produced a great meeting! Of course, our "magician in residence" PJ Jameson had a hangup with his magic performance and he literally lost his shorts, but Brandon Bacod, the Junior member of our Disk Library research team, gave a great demo of *Nyet Plus Two*, Library Disk Number G-213. Again, only PJ and Brandon know how much time and effort they spent in preparation to deliver such a professional performance.

Ever notice how our Disk Librarian, Mike Ruiz, has a new addition to the library nearly every month? These disks don't come already set up to run on Junior. And they don't come from the Bulletin Boards with labels already on them. Time. Both Mike and Brandon spend a lot of time trying out these programs to make sure they'll work on our Juniors. Another unseen process.

Phil Janz hauls in the Club Store and hauls it back out every single meeting. Ever



notice how he has exactly what we need. . .and at a price that can't be beat? He must read a lot of catalogs (or visits a lot of Goodwill stores!) to get all that "stuff" he has. I have no idea how he keeps it straight, but I'm sure glad he does. He also keeps the Club out of the red with his "creative" book-

keeping. He must use PC-Calc on his Junior!

There's more people who make this thing called the Eugene PCjr Club work.



Our President, Charlie

Coury, is at every meeting holding things together and keeping us in line, following the agenda so we get out in time. Helen Fry makes sure someone brings the goodies--she has never failed us even when I have blundered to remind the folks in the newsletter that it's their time. And, what would we do without our "angel" Darlene Gotzman? I guess we'd be meeting in some park in the rain somewhere. And Patty Tanner! Patty carries on whenever our prez is gone, and she always has neat door prizes (thanks again to Dick Page and all those others who donate to the door prize stockpile).

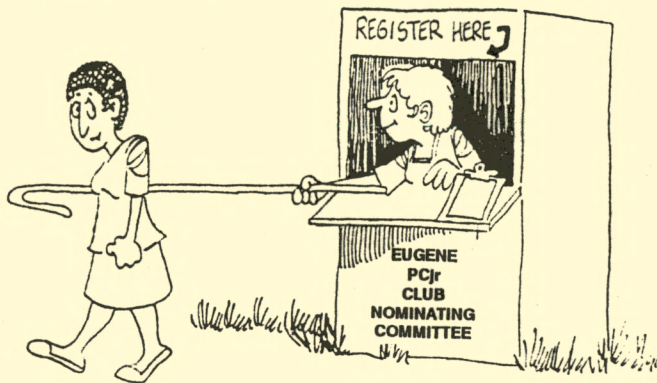


And, Gordon, where did that door prize drawing kit come from and all that modem information? None of us would ever be "on line" without our modem captain, Gordon LeManquais. We wouldn't know that person next to us without Juanita and Warren Hampton keeping up all those name tags (that most of us seem to take home after each meeting).

Then there's those who volunteer to make "home visits" to help one another, and keep our neighbor's Junior running are a big asset. All of us deserve an "atta person" for our efforts in keeping our Club alive and well.

I know I have left many people out of this list. I just needed to let you know that a lot of behind-the-scene efforts go into keeping the Eugene PCjr Club the best (and only) PCjr club in the nation!

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS AND DRAFTEES:



Mike Ruiz and Rosie Janz were appointed as a nominating committee by president Charley Coury, to seek a nominee to run for the two year elective position of Vice President. Lynn Miles Delker agreed to be the nominee for that position.

The committee also is soliciting members who would be willing to serve as Disk Librarian, Modem Captain, Newsletter Editor, and as the Commercial Contact Person. President Coury will be appointing volunteers for these positions at our pending April meeting. Appointees will also be expected to serve as members of the club's Board of Directors.

Rosie Janz

Q Okey, guys, why can't I get "on line" to the U of O's Library anymore? I don't have trouble with the Eugene Public Library. Did the phone number change or are we shut out?

A You can still get into *Janus*, the U of O's on-line card catalog. . .and the OSU and U of California system. Have your modem dial 346-5975. When the Knight library answers and asks for your login, key in, in lower case letters, janus. You will next be

asked for your status. Most of us would answer with g for guest. Check off that you are using VT100 or VT102 emulation and you are in. Try it once; you will be amazed at the speed the U of O *Janus* system completes a search for the book you are looking for!

Q "Why is the PCjr so slow?"



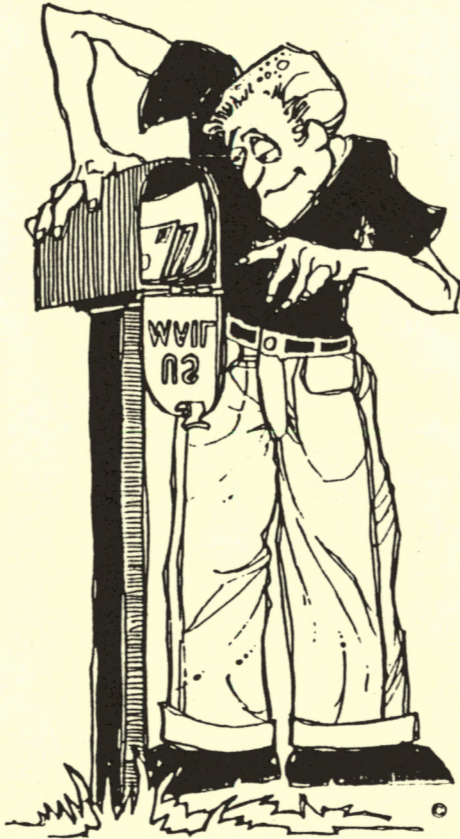
A You must be a quick person to ask such a question! All of us have heard the pun "my Junior waits on me much more that I wait on it." But, seriously, our Juniors *are* slow, especially when we compare them to newer computers. In fact, even a computer that was brand new last year would seem slow if you compared it to one of today's Pentium machines.

Our Juniors use Intel Corporation's 8088 micro processing chip. The speed of processing chips is measured in megahertz, and the 8088's speed is 4.77 MHz. So, if you compare it to some of the newer computers that are running at 100 or even 200 MHz, the Junior is barely crawling! But, we sure like our "pretty baby" even if it does crawl. It may crawl to the finish line, but it still gets the job done. You may want to reread Clyde Dodge's article "The PCjr and Obsolescence" in the March issue of the *Newsletter*.

Q "Could I use my PCjr to send a FAX?"



A That's an interesting question! Most Junior owners have modems, but I don't know of anyone who is using a fax modem with their Junior. Everyone I know who sends messages with their Juniors do so via e-mail. Maybe your question will generate some answers from our members! How about it, if you're doing faxing with your Junior, drop us a line. So, I guess we'll have to answer this question later.



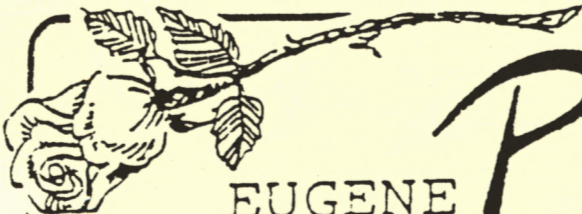
We've Moved!

Well, actually we haven't really moved. The Club has maintained its address at a commercial mail facility for the past ten years or so. As things move on from time to time, the mail room lost it's lease and decided to quit altogether rather than move. So, we moved our address. You can contact us by writing to either:

The Eugene PCjr Club - P.O. Box 50024 - Eugene, OR 97405

or

The Eugene PCjr Club - 280 Brae Burn Drive - Eugene, OR 97405-2033



EUGENE **PCjr** CLUB

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