



EUGENE

PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405

VOLUME XIII

NUMBER 4

APRIL 1997

MEETING

AGENDA

The April meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will be held at the Church of Christ, 2424 Norkenzie Road, on Thursday, Apr. 10th. 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 will be an overview of the history of computers.

OFFICERS

President Charles Coury
Vice President Lynn Miles
Treasurer and Company Store Phil Janz
Disk Librarian Mike Ruiz
Modem Captain Mike Ruiz
Comercial Contact . . Gordon LeManquais
Social Director Rosie Janz
Newsletter Editor . . . Louie Levy
Publisher and Production Staff Warren and Juanita Hampton



Charley's Corner

by Charles Coury

Dear PCjr members,

The history of computers: from gears to electricity, from light bulbs to transistors, from interconnected circuits to integrated circuits, from copper to silicon, from Algebra to Boolean. Each gain has a pulsating, if at times technical, story to tell about the invention of computers. But the heartbeat behind the stories, I have realized of late, is good old Mr. Time.

"For it is unworthy of excellent men to lose hours like slaves in the labor of calculation which could safely be relegated to anyone else if machines were used." This was Gottfreid Leibnitz's astonishingly clear insight exactly 300 years ago. Time is the crux of the matter.

"Computers, for that matter all digital electronic devices, are extremely dumb tools. But they are extremely fast extremely dumb tools. . . . At a switching speed of once per second, computers would be impossible. At 1,000 times per second merely impractical. Switching at a million times per second, computers become important. At a billion times per second completing one step of the problem every nanosecond they become the foundation of a revolution that has swept the world." (*The Chip*, by T.R. Reid).

"Once you become reconciled to the nanosecond," said Robert Noyce the inventor of the integrated circuit, "computer operations are really fairly simple to get your head around." The central concept of computer operations is that the machines operate inconceivably fast. Speed is the computer's secret weapon.

After all, at around a switching speed of 1,000 times per second it would take a whole second for a computer to add 2 + 2. Charles Babbage, who many believe built the first true computer, or at least designed it, in the middle of the last century ran into this wall. His was a mechanical punch card machine, not electronic. Electricity, which moves at the speed of light, enjoys the speed prize. The rate of operation, not the actual capability, of Babbage's machine was just not fast enough to revolutionize computations. This was the basic reason why, Babbage reflected later, his machine more or less disappeared from view.

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Eugene PCjr Club Offers Friendship & Support

The Eugene PCjr Club is a model of what a good computer club should be. Serving the Lane County area, the group provides a remarkable variety of services for local members. Those living in other parts of the country who can't attend the monthly meetings, get help from the club in many other ways, especially by the Newsletter.

Several of the club's members have volunteered to help other PCjr owners with specific problems or questions they may have. A list of these members' telephone numbers and email addresses along with the area of expertise that person has to offer, is published in this monthly newsletter. These "Help Lines" offer assistance with a variety of subjects.

At the Club's monthly meetings, usually attended by 15 to 20 members, there are guest speakers, question and answer sessions, along with hardware and/or software demonstrations. Members share tips and experiences they've had with software programs or tell of the many uses they have found for their PCjrs.

Joining the Eugene PCjr Club can provide a great deal of comfort for PCjr users who often feel isolated because their computer is now over 12 years old. But, their longevity has proven that this little computer was made for the long haul. And, while many PCjr owners have purchased other computers to do special needs, many are still using their Juniors for everything from games to running small businesses.

Those of us who put this Newsletter together for you every month realize that no matter how good the newsletter may be, it's not the same as being able to get together with other people who own and operate the same computer you do. We wish that each of you reading this could also be participants in our monthly meetings.

Ten years ago, we could count many PCjr Clubs around the country. The ones we remember are the PCjr Group of Alabama in Birmingham, the guys in Monterey, California, the PCjr Users Group in Sacramento, PCjr SIG in Minneapolis, Palmetto PC - PCjr Club in West Columbia, South Carolina, the New York group in Brooklyn, Ventura City PCjr User Group, The Junior Putter in Moline, Illinois, The Pensacola Group, the San Francisco PCjr Users Group (the largest in the nation), the Tri-Town PCjr Users Group in South Windsor, Connecticut, the Mohawk PCjr Users Group in Albany, New York, the San Diego PCjr Club, the Chicago Area PCjr Users Group, Blue Grass PCjr Group in Lexington, Kentucky, N.W. OKC Jr Orphans Group in Midwest City, Oklahoma, the PC-PCjr Group in Cincinnati, in North Kansas City, Missouri, of course the Puget Sound PCjr Users Group in Lynwood, Washington, the PCjr SIG group at the Boston Computer Society, the Cheltenham, Pennsylvania group, The Atlanta Georgia Junior Club and the group in Fort Worth who were actually in Roanoke, Texas.

We miss them every one. But some have "become of age." There's the Fox Valley PCjr Association that grew and expanded into what may be the largest computer society in the Midwest. We still exchange newsletters with them along with our friends at the Metro PC-PCjr Club in Maryland. These groups are still with us because of their membership's philosophy of sharing knowledge and helping others. And, this is what it's all about. I hope Carl Haub of Metro will forgive me for this rewrite of his article from ten years ago and for using his quote, "I will never get rid of my Junior!"

SUCCESSFUL SOFTWARE FAIRE

by Phil Janz

At the March meeting the attending membership became involved in the evening program, *SOFTWARE FAIRE* by dividing into six small groups doing "hands on" at six PCjr's. Their task as a small group was to review two new shareware disks and record their findings to see if any of the twelve programs should be worked up and put in the Club Disk Library.

The evening went from very rewarding to extremely frustrating! The one thing everyone seemed to agree upon was a feeling of deep appreciation for the previous disk librarians (and a few others) who have taken the time and energy to work up and make available all of the disks in our Club Library—especially the programs that are "self-booting."

Results from the evening were:

Add to our library:

- * *Mr. Label* - Makes all kinds of labels.
- * *Players Choice* - Fun games. Solitaire is great!
- * *Math & Logic Games* - Six great games for kids.
- * *Double Trouble* - Maze type games for kids. Varied levels of difficulties.
- * *Home Budget Management* - Works well with included documentation.

Do not add to our library at this time:

- * *Games III*
- * *Study Aids*
- * *Family History*
- * *Disk Cat*

Not sure; someone needs to look at this one again:

- * *Check Processor*

Did not have enough time to review:

- * *PC Chess*
- * *Scrabble*

We will see if the six recommended disks can be included in our Disk Library by our April meeting. If not, soon after.

Taking Junior Into The Millennium

Clyde Dodge

I suspect that by now everyone with a computer has read the latest version of "The Sky is Falling, The Sky is Falling..." that deals with a computer's ability to know what happens when the clock runs over into the year 2000. "They



are all going to show that it is suddenly 1900 again!" That's the gist of the articles I have seen.

Is it all a bunch of hogwash? I have tested my IBM PCjr and I find that it knows what comes after 1999. The operating system for this test was DOS 3.3. I set the date to 12-31-1999 and then set the time at 23:59:00 and then kicked in ALARM which puts the time on the screen. What would it do?

The seconds ticked off. The millennium kept getting closer! (Hurry, turn the page!)

FINALLY it HAPPENED! The clock ticked past 23:59:59 and showed 12:00:00. But, wait! You have to look at the DATE.

OK, I typed DATE, and there it was: 01-01-2000! Not just 00 for the year, either! 2000 was spelled out for those who feared the worst.

What d'ya mean, that's not a test? OK, let's do it with DOS 2.1 that came with my now 13-year-old computer. Set the date again; 12-31-1999. Now, set the time; 23:59:00, and by the time I flipped the ALARM disk into place and typed it out, the minute was gone!

With shaking hands I typed DATE. And, THERE IT WAS.01-01-2000!

So, now when these Programmer rip-off artists offer you a \$100 program to "fix your clock," what are you going to say? Let's have some good one-liners from our readership.

Clyde Dodge

"My computer may be "obsolete" but it can tell time!"

My Junior doesn't do Windows, but it sure can read a clock!"

"Does 2.1 mean that DOS is good until the 21st century?"

"www.microsoft.com" "Hello, what's the date???" "I don't know; call www.askibm.com"

Send us your one-liners and we'll print them next month!

Compassionate Ministries. What a great deal!

To order a copy, write to our Junior Club member, Lucretia Carter, c/o Church of the Nazarene, 229 Beluga Avenue, Soldotna, AK 99669.

The book has more than just great locally collected recipes. There are color aerial views of Soldotna, several pages of local information and photos, some helpful hints and craft ideas. Wonder if we'll be able to tell what parts of the book were done on Lucretia's PCjr!

Have Fun Learning our History



We are looking forward to hearing Production Team II's presentation at this month's meeting. I'm sure they will be telling us about the old Computer-Tabulating-Recording Company (IBM). But, one thing that I would like to reprint is part of an article from the Atlanta (GA) Computer Currents back in February of '91.

This article told about the "power users" of computers in the Atlanta area in 1969. Here's their list:

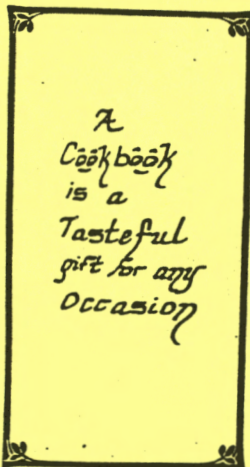
USER	SYSTEM	RAM	PRINTERS
City of Atlanta	IBM360/30	65KB	1
Delta Air Lines	IBM360/30	32KB	1
Georgia Tech	IBM360/30	65KB	1
" "	Burroughs	32KB	2
" "	UNIVAC1180	131KB	3

What they were getting at is that only the Computing Center at Georgia Tech had more than 500K in its entire operation and only had 6 printers! The Eugene PCjr Club has some members who have more computing power in their "obsolete and underpowered" Juniors than the whole of Georgia Tech had in 1969.

The meeting this month on the History of Computing should be pretty interesting!

Soldotna Church of the Nazarene Cookbook

If you want to try some good. . .no, GREAT recipes from Alaska, the cookbook we reported on last month is ready. The cost is \$18 (includes all shipping to the lower 48) and all earnings will go to Hunger & Disaster Relief through Nazarene



Build a Computer Tool Kit. . . Before You Need It

Louie Levy

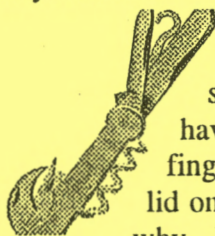
We have all had those temporary setbacks where our computer has failed us. Most of the time, these problems are not fatal. Usually, just tightening up the printer cable, plugging the lose line cord back into our surge protector or just cleaning our disk drive will get us back to our interrupted job. Still, all of us need some tools in the house to work on our computer. . . just in case.

The Club has a tool kit over at Louie's to use for these emergencies, but if he is out of town or it's in the dead of night (or before he gets up at 10am), this kit may not be available. So, we are going to go over what essential tools you may need.



We highly recommend that you begin to collect these items and put them in a small bag in the bottom drawer of your computer desk where they will always be handy. Their small cost just may save you some money but WILL save you some precious time.

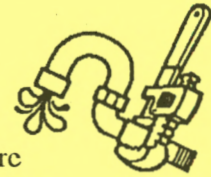
Many computer stores and catalogs have preconfigured tool kits for as little as \$8. Just remember that you usually get what you pay for. Building a kit from scratch costs very little and you will know the quality of the tools you have.



The first item everyone should have is a screwdriver. If you have ever broken your fingernail prying up the lid on Junior, you know why. But, if you have a

PCjr clone computer, you need this screwdriver to change expansion boards. You actually need two medium screwdrivers, a straight-slot and a Phillips.

Many clones use hexagonal-headed screws on their cases. For these nuts, instead of trying to use a small Crescent wrench, you are much better off using a nut driver.



A nut driver looks like a screwdriver, but it really is a six-sided wrench with a handle. While some hex-nuts also are slotted for a screw-driver, a nut driver is much easier and safer to use.

You should also have a small screwdriver to unfasten cables and connectors. Many printer cables and serial adapters use small slotted screws to hold them onto your computer.

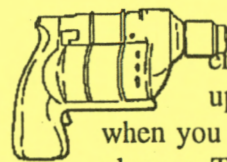
We also recommend a pair of tweezers for picking up those screws and small parts you may drop inside your computer. We don't mean the small personal size you may have in your boudoir, but larger solder or mechanics' tweezers. These have a better gripping surface for holding small parts.

If you have ever used a medium sized medical hemostat, you know how useful this tool can be for holding small parts. This tool is like having another hand. Flea markets and discount tool merchants usually have a supply of hemostats, so you can avoid purchasing from medical supply houses where the price may be somewhat higher.

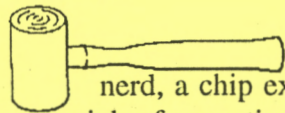
If you ever lose a part that tinkles all the way down into the bottom of a Junior clone, you will appreciate having a three-pronged parts extractor. These look like a long hollow tube with a syringe-like plunger at one end and the other end has three prongs that open up on extension and close when you let up on the syringe plunger. These are much better to use than the long magnetic type that you do not want close to computer disks or hard drives.

A little flashlight can be indispensable. Looking into the slots on the back of Junior

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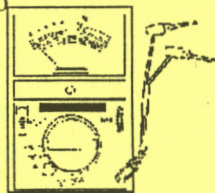
for bent pins is a chore without a light. We even have a small mirror, much like Dr. Dick's dental mirror, to use to reflect the light up under disk drives or other spots to check on things.



If you are getting to be a real nerd, a chip extractor will make the job of unseating and pulling out chips without damaging them from the circuit boards much easier. In this same light, a chip inserter, to me, isn't of much use. I find that the added pressure they exert when the pins are not exactly aligned do more damage than they are worth. But, this is personal and you may be better at using this tool than I.

Little antistatic tubes for spare parts make a nice addition to a computer tool kit.

Screws that hold the backs on Junior clones and on the PCjr keyboard have a tendency to come up missing. Having spares available is nice. Don't use old pill bottles unless you have determined them to be static-free.



Under no circumstances should you ever let your teenager or spouse know of your computer tool kit! Those small screwdrivers are just right for fixing that Walkman or model and your kids will NEVER return them to the tool kit nor the kit to the drawer. Also, your spouse will feel the hemostats are just the ticket if they need a small hobby vice and your spare parts will disappear overnight. So, hide your computer tool kit near your Junior and don't tell anyone. This way they will be there when you need them!

Tip for Modem Users

The call-waiting feature on phone systems may interfere with your use of on-line services and computer bulletin boards.

Fortunately, there is a toggle feature that works on most systems.

Dialing *70 on 12 button phones, or 1170 on 10 button phones should turn off the call-waiting feature. Repeat the procedure when you want to turn call-waiting back on.

With most modem software, these prefixes can be programmed to be dialed whenever you are dialing your local provider. If you are unsure how to do this, call your local computer club's Help Line.

While we're on modems, we may as well hit e-mail some. We all know this means of communication is great. It's simple, to the point, and many times costs nothing, especially if we have access to it from work. Still, we all need to be aware of it's down side.

E-mail should not be used to write anything to anyone if you want to keep the correspondence confidential. Just by the nature of the way e-mail is handled, it can be looked at by others. From your Junior to your server, where it may reside for quite sometime, and then to other servers as it makes its way to wherever it is that you are sending it, there are copies of your e-mail.

Nearly all servers are so inundated with vast quantities of mail that in all probability, no one will ever see what you write. Still, you should be aware that any of the servers who are handling your mail could be served with a subpoena to "open" their files should ever a law enforcement agency feel the need.

I am sure that no one in the Junior Club would ever write anything to anyone that would be questionable, but we all need to know that things like bank account numbers, credit card numbers, PIN numbers and the like, should never be sent to someone needing this information by e-mail. FAX it, write it or telephone any confidential information; don't e-mail it. More than likely you would never have a problem, but then again. . .

Continued from page one:

And so we see again the truth of Solomon's wisdom, "There is nothing new under the sun." Not that humans don't come up with new inventions. But plus a change, plus *plus ça change plus c'est le même chose*: the more things change, the more they turn out to be the same. The search for a faster, less toilsome way may take on a new look, but the impulse springs from the same motive.

Join us at this month's club meeting for some fun trivia about the history of computers.

Example. Do you know where the term "de-bugging" comes from? The answer is crazier than you think.

Example. What great scientist and his colleagues wrote (to the tune of Clementine) the following song and what breathtaking discovery does it refer to?

*In the dusty lab'ratory,
'Mid the coils and wax and twine,
There the atoms in their glory
Ionize and recombine.*

Chorus:

*Oh my darlings! Oh my darlings!
Oh my darling ions mine!
You are lost and gone forever
When just once you recombine.*

See you there!

Charley Coury

Election of Officers

The April meeting is the Annual General meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club. This week we will be holding elections. The nominating committee has been hard at work to come up with capable talent to serve the Club in the capacity of President and Treasurer.

According to Article 4 of our By-Laws, "The Club membership in attendance at the Annual General Meeting (April) shall elect officers for vacant positions and be governed by the office of President, Vice-President and Treasurer."

As 1997 is an odd year, we need to vote for a President and a Treasurer. The incoming President will then appoint a Disk Librarian, a Contributing Editor (I wish), a Social Director and a person to serve as Commercial Contact.

The duties of the President say that he or she "shall create an agenda for each meeting, preside at all meetings and shall ensure that they are conducted according to an agenda and in an orderly fashion. The President will hold a Club Board Meeting each year, coordinate group activities and shall be the signing officer for official documents of the Club."

"The Treasurer shall collect and deposit all monies in an account in the name of the Club. The Treasurer shall maintain proper financial books and records in accordance with standard accounting practices. He or she shall furnish a report to the Board of Directors at the end of each fiscal year and upon resignation or" Well, it goes on and on.

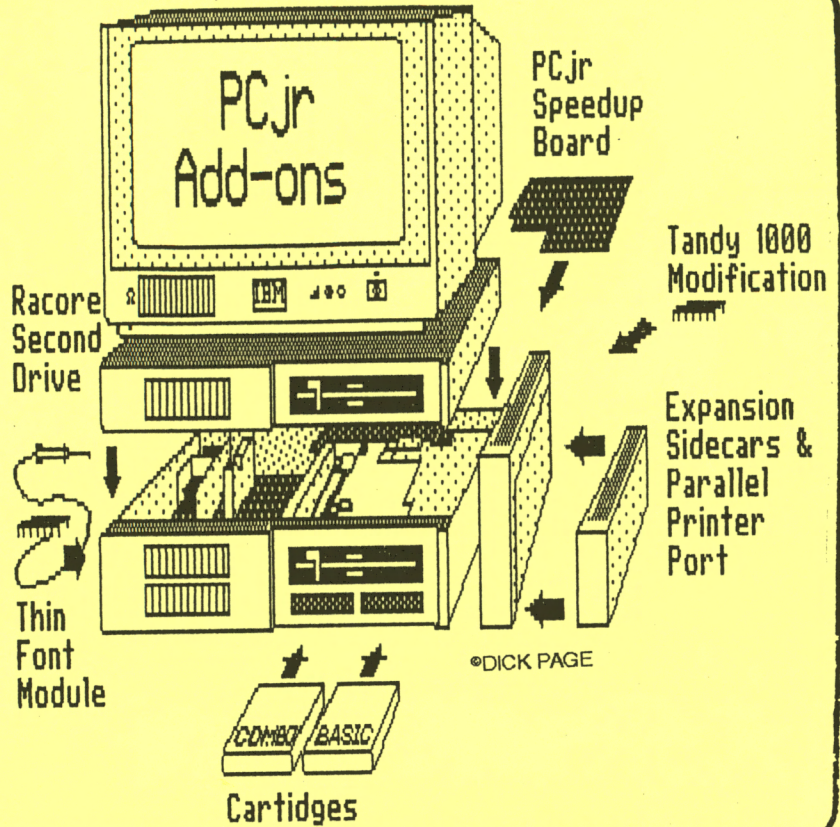
If you would like to run for one of these offices, give either Lynn Miles (484-5063) or Rosie Janz (343-1059), our nominating committee members, a call today. But even if you feel you can't serve as one of the officers of the club, you can vote! So, be sure to attend this important meeting.

*Who's
Number One
in the Club?
YOU ARE!!*

NEED HELP? Give These Club Members a Call:

- BASIC or WordStar: Paul Bonney - 344-1501
- PC-FILE III or WordPerfect: Louie Levy - 343-7592
- PC-FILE +, 5 or 6: Dick Page - 342-3193
- Writing Assistant or Name Pal: Phil Janz - 343-1059
- Communications: Mike Ruiz - 687-8361
Gordon LeManquais - 746-1594
- Hardware Problems: Dick Page - 342-3193
Louie Levy - 343-7592
- Spreadsheets or WordPerfect: Mike Ruiz - 687-8361
- Parts and supplies: The Company Store
Phil Janz - 343-1059

"Whoever said good help is hard to find has never called the Help-Line of their local computer club!"



EUGENE PCjr CLUB

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