

p.3 DOS Patch Utility Ver. 1-2
p.4 PFS File - 7 IBM vs. A...
p.7 Software Compatibility
p.8 IBM Writing Asst Upgrade to 256K +
p.10 Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?

The Junior Report®

The National Newsletter for PCjr Owners

Volume 3 Number 1

January 1987

Junior's Third Birthday

It's Junior's third birthday and I've forgotten to buy a present. Oh, well, maybe tomorrow night I'll head over to the software store and check out the new software. And then again, I might just stay home and enjoy my current favorite - Mean 18. Who knows, maybe I can finally beat my nine-year son in a match. That would be wonderful to beat him in a game - any game. Win or lose, however, I would still have to be thankful to be playing any new game, creating any graphics, or composing any new articles on the PCjr on its third birthday. I mean, almost two years after that dark day in March of 1985, we're still using our Juniors for spreadsheets, personal finance, graphics, education, and entertainment. When you think about it, it's an incredible feat.

When IBM unceremoniously dumped Junior a bit after its first birthday, the future of PCjr computing looked bleak. After witnessing the demise of the Osborne, Texas Instruments 99/4A, and the hapless Adam

computer, the critical computer watchers were licking their chops at the prospect of manhandling an IBM orphan. It was like a pack of hyenas ready to pounce on a helpless calf separated from the safety of its brood. The anti-IBM crowd was rejoicing. Everyone, including many PCjr owners themselves, expected the Junior would become simply an expensive paperweight. Well, it didn't happen, due to many factors, some expected and some unexpected. The most obvious ones are the proliferation of successful PC clones, thus forcing software developers to shift into PC compatible gears, the fact that the Junior is almost 98% PC compatible, and that over 360,000 PCjr's have been sold. That is a very respectable number that both hardware and software developers have not overlooked so far. To put it succinctly, there's just too many of us to ignore.

The PCjr will run *most* new commercial software programs. It will run *most* Public Domain programs.

Most does not mean all, but that doesn't bother me. I can live with most. If a new word processor won't run on the Junior, I'll just buy one with the same or better features that will. The Psion Company produced a beautiful chess program that unveiled 3-D graphics. I was impressed. The only problem was that it didn't run on the Junior. Later, ChessMaster

Continued on page 18

INSIDE STORIES

- o Editor's Notes.....p. 2
- o Letters.....p. 3
- o PCjr basic program for cartridges.....p. 6
- o PCjr Software Compatibility.....p. 7
- o Souping Up the Writing Assistant.....p. 8
- o Review: Where in the World is Carmen San Diego?.....p. 10
- o Review: SynPhonix - Junior speech synthesizer.....p. 14
- o Expansion Board Problems.....p. 21
- o Public Domain.....p. 22

Junior Report[®] **EDITOR'S NOTES**

Don't look now, but we're in the middle of a revolution. Fortunately, for all of us *make love, not war* veterans, the revolution is of the software nature. Go to almost any software store and you'll see the cost of many programs plummeting to very reasonable prices. Twenty-five percent discounts are not unusual, and we're starting to see programs like Electronic Arts' One on One and Pinball Construction Set going for \$12.95, a far cry from their original \$40.00 price tags. Are software companies getting nicer or smarter? Probably a little of both. It certainly cannot be entirely attributed to the software shakeout that Adam Osborne predicted, but it certainly is a welcome sight. What has ignited the software price fallout in the Chicagoland area is the opening of several new **Egghead Discount Software** stores. Several of you on the west coast are used to Egghead's very low prices and its "no questions asked" return policy - a must for Junior owners.....the rumor mill is milling again with another prediction that IBM will unveil its new **home computer** with an ad campaign set to start right around Super Bowl time. This new entry into the home and educational market will feature an Intel 8086 microprocessor, 3 1/2 inch floppy disk drives, a mouse, 512K, analog/digital color monitor, and sound capabilities and enhanced graphics of a PCjr. Its cost? Probably around \$1200. for the whole package. Look for a major promotion during the Super Bowl XXI telecast.....we try our darnest to let our readers know of problem products or computer companies that are getting some bad press because of poor customer relationships. In other words, some people are getting the short end of the stick. None of our

subscribers have written about problems, fortunately, but two companies have been mentioned prominently in other journals. They are **The PC Network**, a discount retailer of hardware and software products that spends megabucks on advertising, and a familiar name to PCjr owners - **Creative Firmware**, a producer subscribers have written about problems, fortunately, but two companies have been mentioned prominently in other journals. They are **PC Network**, a discount retailer of hardware and software products that spends megabucks on advertising, and a name familiar to PCjr owners - **Creative Firmware**, a producer of second disk drives for the Junior. Again, we haven't received any complaints, but if any of our readers are experiencing any problems with any company or product, please let us know in order to help other Junior owners avoid any aggravation. We have enough already.....Many of you have written asking about the possibility of using an **8087 math co-processor** in place of Junior's standard 8088 chip. The advantages of this chip is an increase in the speed that the PCjr can perform certain mathematical functions, provided the particular software program is written to make use of the chip. Examples of these are Lotus 1-2-3 version 2.0 and Borland's Turbo Pascal. In order to use a 8087 chip in your Junior, you must have three items - 1)an 8087 chip, of course, 2)a PCjr that does not have its 8088 microprocessor soldered to the motherboard, and 3)an accessory board that plugs into your 8088 CPU socket into which your new chip is installed. Unlike the NEC V20 chip, the 8087 is pretty expensive (around \$120. from mail order

Continued on page 18

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Junior Report® LETTERS

I have a PCjr with a Racore expansion system, 640K, and DMA. I had been led to believe that this setup would allow me to run Symphony, a program I use on my office's IBM XT. However, just at the worst times, the program freezes and I have to re-boot to get it going again. Perhaps, you or some of your readers may have experienced the same problem. I need some good advice.

H. Olono
Chicago, IL

Dear Mr. Olono,

The problem you speak of can be attributed to a bug in DOS 2.1. Please see the next letter.

I would like to share something I have learned about DOS 2.1 that would be of interest to everyone with a PCjr. You may have written about it but I haven't seen it in the 6 or so issues of your publication.

I bought the PCjr over a year ago and increased the memory to 640K using the Tecmar add-ons. I have had many problems with the keyboard locking up. When this happens, I had to reboot and would lose everything I had stored in memory. I was very frustrated and brought the computer back to the dealer then later to IBM's own service facilities. No one knew what was wrong.

About a month ago, at a PC users group meeting, I learned that the **keyboard lockup problem was due to bugs in DOS 2.1** and that the problem was described in the IBM Exchange magazine. I called the IBM 800 # and asked them about the problem and was told, "oh yes," there was such a problem and all I had to do was to go to my nearest IBM dealer who would have the patches to DOS 2.1 to correct the problem. It turned out that the IBM dealers never heard of the problem and didn't have the software to correct DOS 2.1. They did order the software for me and I made the corrections which eliminated the keyboard lockups and also the strange

messages I sometimes would get on the monitor.

The software that should be requested is described as **"DOS Patch Utility Ver. 1.2"** and if the dealer is not familiar with it, have him call 1-800-222-PCjr, the support number for the PCjr.

Morris Gisser
Tamarac, FL

Dear Morris,

Thank you for the valuable information. Everything we do here is aimed at increasing the productivity of the PCjr owner, and the patch you speak of certainly goes a long way in doing that. We had ordered the patch last month and were hoping to provide it for our readers in next month's issue. For those who can't wait, please use the IBM toll-free information number.

Please help clear up some things for me. I have a PCjr with one disk drive and 128K memory. I desperately need to upgrade but not sure the way to go. The jrHotShot looks good but will it work with Creative Firmware's second drive? A friend suggests I purchase the 10 Meg Diskitjr. How would this work? Would I store all the programs on the hard disk and use my one disk drive as drive B? I have a couple of programs that require 256K of memory. Would having the hard drive replace having to upgrade to more memory? As you can see, I'm a real novice. I use my system for word processing and after two years, I may have become a little restless but I still love my Jr. So much I want to know and so little I understand. I am now discovering database programs besides others. I received Writing Assistant with my system and am told that the only database program I can use with it is the Filing Assistant. Is this true? I need a database program that I can keep a list of names and addresses and one I can make labels with. The only problem I have with Writing Assistant is it doesn't do temporary indenting and after

Continued on page 4

Letters....

(Continued from previous page)

typing four pages my disk is full so I have to save the document after every four pages. This can be a problem when typing up large documents. I know having more memory would solve this problem, but it leads right back to the question, would having a hard disk solve this problem? Please help un-confuse this poor soul. I hope you'll not get lost by all this because I certainly am. The only two things I'm absolutely sure of is having purchased this wonderful machine and investing my money in your excellent newsletter. I will be looking forward to your reply in the upcoming newsletter. Thank you very much for your patience and your help.

Ron Brown
Plantation, FL

Dear Ron,

Your letter is very worthwhile because it covers several problems experienced by other PCjr owners. It is clear that you realize the importance and value of a hard disk drive. A hard drive has nothing to do with memory, but is simply a huge data storage device operating from a package slightly larger than a conventional disk drive. A 10 meg hard disk can contain the equivalent data found on about thirty floppy disks. In other words, you can place most of your useful programs on your hard drive and not have to keep feeding your floppy disk drive with each program diskette and its accompanying data disk. The real beauty, however, is the speed at which programs run on the hard drive perform. The structure of the hard disk allow data to be accessed much faster than on conventional drives. Programs, especially those that must access the disk often like Wordstar, become lightning quick. Database searches are completed in one-tenth of the time. But it does not increase your PCjr's memory. In other words, you would still need an expansion board like the jrHotShot (which does work with

Creative Firmware's second drive) before you could run programs that require 256K or more. Remember, however, that the jrHotshot plugs into your 8088 co-processor slot on your motherboard. If your chip is soldered in, it would be best to try a memory expansion sidecar like IBM's or Racore's.

The Writing Assistant can use files from the Filing Assistant as well as from PFS File. The programs are similar and are very well suited to the basic needs described in your letter. The document size generated by the Writing Assistant is limited not by disk size, but by the RAM or available memory of your system.

Though this document size can be increased with greater memory, the Writing Assistant remains your basic word processor which has as its greatest asset its ease of learning and use. If you do get the chance to increase your PCjr's memory, and do require a more powerful word processor, try a program like WordPerfect 4.1, in which the ability to create "form letters" and a simple data base are built-in.

I presently have an enhanced jr with one IBM expansion add-on and the parallel port add-on. I want to add a second disk drive, I'm thinking of a Racore Drive II Plus with DMA and the 512 memory board. I also intend to buy an AT keyboard package. This will cost around \$750.

My question, is this the way to go or at least a safe way to upgrade my jr? Is this cost effective? I'm a computer nut only to the extent that I like using it, I don't like programming, and I don't want to mess around with the insides.

I'm a new subscriber and I'm sure you have covered these questions in other Junior Reports. If my questions have been answered there, I'll gladly order those back issues. In any event, I would be interested in getting back issues of The Junior Report.

I've been a subscriber of *PC World* for a

Continued on page 5

Letters....

(Continued from previous page)

time, my first issue of the Junior Report has more information that I want than the last year of PC World.

Steve Gotelaere
Superior, WI

Dear Steve,

\$750. seems like a lot of money to spend for anybody. If you absolutely need a second disk drive, the Racore setup with DMA received a very good rating from owners in the last readers' survey. To be really cost effective, why not try just an expansion board with 512K and RAM disk software? We have two Junior setups here that utilize these "electronic disks" that function for all intents and purposes like second disk drives. Best of all, you don't have to fool around with Junior's intimate parts. An AT-styled keyboard is nice, but a PC-XT keyboard will be quite sufficient for most PCjr owners. The final decision has to be based on what exactly you use your Junior for.

We get more mail requesting the availability of reprints than any other kind. Starting next month, we will start to offer reprints of particular issues, with the hopes of making every issue available within a few months.

I'm a new subscriber and I've learned a lot from my first two issues. I have the Microsoft Booster and I want to replace the old chips with the newer ones. But in both issues you have only talked about the IBM and Tecmar memory boards. I want to try to replace them myself because it shouldn't be too hard to do from what I have read especially when my board has the sockets already in place so the chips come out without having to worry about any soldering. Would you tell me if this is actually going to be easy to do and if I would have to set the DIP switches differently? Any advice would be appreciated. Also, would you have the chips available?

Greg Jabaghourian
Fresno, CA

Dear Greg,

It's not that easy. The fact that an expansion board has sockets doesn't necessarily mean that the board can accept 256K chips. The Tecmar JrCaptain was developed to accept either 64K or 256K chips, and once 256K chips are used, there are DIP switches that can be set to recognize the extra memory. The Microsoft Booster was not designed to accept these higher chips, and to be quite honest, we do not have much experience with these boards. We do know that Solid Rock Electronics in Arlington, Texas has a service to upgrade the Microsoft board, so maybe you can give them a call to ascertain the degree of difficulty in boosting these sidecars. Perhaps, another reader who has done this particular conversion successfully can drop us a line.

I heard from a dependable source (PCjr Group in Texas) that there is way to run a 2400 baud modem with a Junior. Do you know how to do this?

Jim Weeber
Goshen, IN

Dear Jim,

Let's face it, the PCjr isn't a perfect machine. However, telecommunications is NOT one of its weak points. Several 2400 baud modems have been used successfully with the Junior. Two that have been mentioned prominently are the US Robotics 2400 and the Hayes 2400 modems. Both of these can be connected to your Junior through its serial port and special PCjr serial port cable.

The Junior Report reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and length. Due to the volume of mail that we receive, we cannot answer mail personally, but will try to answer as many questions as possible in this column, especially those that would be of interest to all PCjr owners.

CARTRIDGE INSPECTION ON THE PCJR

(In response to last month's letter from Frank Sheffield who had inquired about a program to inspect the cartridges on the PCjr, Mr. James Fahy of Cos Cob, Connecticut has submitted this basic program that will do just that. We thank Jim for sharing this program.)

```
1000 ' exploring cartridges
1100 'main program outline
1130 GOSUB 2000
1140 FOR CARTRIDGE = 1 TO 2
1150 GOSUB 3000
1160 NEXT CARTRIDGE
1170 GOSUB 4000
2000 'initalization routine
2030 KEY OFF
2040 CLS:SCREEN 1:COLOR 1,2
2050 PRINT "Cartridge exploration program"
2060 PRINT
2070 TRUE = 1
2080 FALSE =0
2090 RETURN
3000 'CHECK OUT ONE CARTRIDGE
3040 PRINT "CHECKING CARTRIDGE NUMBER ";CARTRIDGE
3050 BASE.SEG = &HE000 - &H1000 * (CARTRIDGE - 1)
3070 FOR K = 0 TO 63
3080 DEF SEG = BASE.SEG + K * 64
3090 GOSUB 5000
3100 IF SIGNATURE GOTO 3140
3110 NEXT K
3120 PRINT "NO CARTRIDGE SIGNATURE WAS FOUND."
3130 RETURN
3140 PRINT "A CARTRIDGE IN THIS SLOT WITH ";
3150 PRINT PEEK(2)/2;"K BYTES OF MEMORY."
3160 OFFSET = 6
3170 LIST.COUNT = 0
3180 PRINT "THESE COMMANDS ARE ON THIS CARTRIDGE"
3190 WHILE PEEK(OFFSET) > 0
3200 NAME.LENGTH = PEEK(OFFSET)
3210 OFFSET = OFFSET + 1
3220 LIST.COUNT = LIST.COUNT + 1
3240 IF NAME.LENGTH < 20 THEN 3270
3250 PRINT "CARTRIDGE NOT CODED AS EXPECTED!"
3260 RETURN
3270 PRINT "";
3280 WHILE NAME.LENGTH > 0
3290 PRINT CHR$(PEEK(OFFSET));
3300 OFFSET = OFFSET + 1
3310 NAME.LENGTH = NAME.LENGTH - 1
3320 WEND
3330 PRINT
3340 OFFSET = OFFSET + 3
3350 WEND
3360 PRINT LIST.COUNT;" COMMANDS WERE FOUND"
3370 RETURN
4000 ' FINISH SUBROUTINE
4030 PRINT
4040 PRINT "END OF EXPLORATION PROGRAM"
4050 PRINT
4060 PRINT "PRESS 'B' TO RETURN TO BASIC
4070 PRINT "OR ANY OTHER KEY TO RETURN TO DOS"
4090 IKEY$ = INKEY$
4100 IF IKEY$ = "" GOTO 4090
4110 IF (IKEY$ = "B") OR(IKEY$ = "b") GOTO 4150
4120 PRINT
4130 PRINT "RETURNING TO DOS!"
4140 SYSTEM
4150 PRINT
4160 PRINT "RETURNING TO BASIC!"
4170 END
5000 ' CHECK FOR 55AA SIGNATURE
5030 SIGNATURE = FALSE
5040 IF ((PEEK(0) = &H55) AND (PEEK(1) = &HAA)) OR
((PEEK(0) = &HAA) AND (PEEK(1) = &H55)) THEN SIGNATURE = TRUE
5050 RETURN
30030 PRINT
```

PCjr COMPATIBILITY: A FIRST LIST

It's a dirty job, but someone had to do it. Compiling a preliminary list of PCjr compatible software was difficult but with the aid of readers, other newsletters, and our own experiences, we have assembled this little list of software for you to peruse. Please keep in mind that this is only a preliminary list; we are going to depend on Reader's Survey #4 in next month's issue to verify the accuracy of this list. But rejoice in the fact that someone, somewhere, sometime had said that each of the programs below has run on old Junior. Some restrictions are noted, such as 256K requirements, but we're sure we might have missed some others. As always, follow the PCjr Golden Rule - Never buy software that cannot be returned, and Never Eat Yellow Snow.

Artificial Intelligence	Casino Parlor Games
A Mind Forever Voyaging	Certificate Maker
A+ series	Championship Boxing
A> Cook	Championship Golf
Alge-Blaster	Championship Lode Runner
Alpha Build	Chart Master 6.2
Alphabet Zoo	Chem Lab
Alter Ego	Chessmaster 2000 (256K)
Amazon	Christmas Kit
The American Challenge	Circus Maximus
Amortizer III	Classmate
Ancient Art of War	Clip Art Volume I & II <i>30/25</i>
APBA Baseball	College Decision
Arcade I (256K)	Computer Baseball
Arcade II (128K)	Conflict in Viet Nam
Archon	Cornerstone 5.2
Art Gallery I & II	Crossfire
Art Studio	Crosstalk XVI 3.61
Ballyhoo	Cut & Paste
Bank Street Story Book	Cutthroat
Bank Street Writer Plus	DAC Easy Accounting
Baron's Computer SAT	Dam Buster
Bartender's Guide	Deadline
Basic Building Blocks	Decision in the Desert
Battle of Antietam	Dig Dug
Black Cauldron	Disk Optimizer
Board Games	Dollars and Sense
Bop 'N Wrestle	Donald Duck's Playground
Breakers	Dragon World
Bruce Lee	Early Games for Young Children
Build a Book	Easy as ABC
C Compiler 4.0	Enchanter
Calendars and Stationary	Evelyn Wood Dynamic Reader

Continued on page 16

DOCTORING IBM WRITING ASSISTANT

By Dick Page

(This is a reprint that first appeared in the April 1986 issue of the Junior Report. It was written by Mr. Dick Page of the Eugene PCjr Club, one of the five top PCjr groups in America. The club meets regularly once a month, and can be contacted at P.O. Box 3695, Eugene, Oregon 97403. We again thank the Club and Mr. Page for this valuable article.)

Please note before starting:

1. Use instructions "256K+" only if you have a Writing assistant Backup Copy which is made to work on a PCjr with 128K of memory and you have now purchased a memory sidecar which boosts the total memory to 256K or more.
2. Use instructions "128K" if you have a Writing assistant Backup Copy which is made to work with 256K of memory, but your Junior only has 128K.

CHANGING A 128K BACKUP DISKETTE FOR USE ON A PCjr WITH AT LEAST 256K+

Note: These instructions are for altering your backup copy of the Writing Assistant Version 1.01 and will not work if you have Version 1.00.

The Writing Assistant Master Program Disk contains the WRITE, EXE, and WRITE.SWP programs which will work for 256K or more computers. WRITE.NON also needs to be on the Backup diskette.

To alter your Backup diskette to address your 256+ machine, you must first erase the WRITE.EXE and WRITE.SWP programs from your backup diskette by typing the following at the DOS A> with your Backup diskette in Drive A:

```
ERASE WRITE.EXE
```

Now press the return key. Next type at the A> ERASE WRITE. Again press the return key. Remove the Backup diskette from your drive and insert the SAMPLER diskette in the drive. At the A. , type the following:

```
COPY WRITE.EXE B:
```

Press the return key. When you are prompted to "insert the diskette for drive B:", remove the SAMPLER diskette and insert the Backup diskette. When you are prompted to "insert the diskette for drive A:", remove the backup diskette and insert the Sampler diskette. (This will have copied WRITE.EXE from your your Sampler diskette to your Backup diskette.) Next copy WRITE.SWP from the Sampler diskette to the Backup diskette by typing the following after the A> with the Sampler diskette in the disk drive:

```
COPY WRITE.SWP B:
```

Continued on page 9

Press the return key and again switch diskettes when prompted. (This will have copied WRITE.SWP from your sampler diskette to your backup diskette.)

After the A>, next type DIR to see if WRITE.NON is on your Backup diskette. If it is there, your Backup diskette is now ready to use (If it isn't there you probably have version 1.00, and not version 1.01. Look on your Master Program and Sampler diskettes (using the DIR command) for the program and copy it, if available, to the Backup diskette using the command COPY WRITE.NON B:).

To start the Writing Assistant without displaying the IBM logo, at the A> type WRITE rather than the G. As always, once the main menu is shown, your your 256K Backup diskette can be removed and your "Data" diskette can be placed in the drive. If you have successfully altered the Backup diskette, the **only time you should need to re-insert the Backup diskette is when must use the spelling checker**. If you are asked as you switch from the main menu to the other selection screen to insert the program diskette, then you have not successfully altered your Backup diskette and must read and follow the the above must follow the above instructions more closely. Good Luck!

128K Instructions

Changing a 256K+ Backup diskette for use on a 128K machine.

(Note: These instructions are for altering your Backup copy of the Writing Assistant version 1.01 and will not work on version 1.00. The Writing Assistant Master Program Disk contains the WRITE.SWP programs which work for the 128K computers. The Writing assistant Sampler Diskette contains the WRITE.EXE and WRITE.SWP programs which will work for the 256K or more computers. WRITE.NON also needs to be on the Backup diskette.)

To alter your Backup diskette (used for PCjr's with 256K or more) to work on a PCjr with only 128K, you must first erase the WRITE.EXE and WRITE.SWP programs from your Backup diskette by typing the following at the A> with your Backup diskette in Drive A:

ERASE WRITE.EXE

Now press the return key. Next type at the A> ERASE WRITE.SWP.

Again press the return key. Remove the Backup diskette from your drive and insert the Writing Assistant Master Program diskette into the drive. After the A> type the following:

COPY WRITE.EXE B:

Press the return key. When you are prompted to "insert the diskette for Drive B", remove the Master Program diskette and insert the Backup diskette. When you are prompted to "insert the diskette for Drive A", remove the Backup and insert the Master diskette. This will have copied WRITE.EXE from your Master diskette to your Backup diskette.

Next copy WRITE.SWP from your Master diskette to your Backup diskette by typing at the A> with the Master diskette in the drive: COPY WRITE.SWP B:

Press the return key and again switch diskettes as above when prompted. This will have copied WRITE.SWP from your Master diskette to your Backup program.

After the A>, next type DIR to see if WRITE.NON is on your Backup diskette. If it is there, your Backup diskette is ready to run on a 128K PCjr. If it isn't, follow the directions given in the first part of this article to find and copy this file. Again, good luck!

Junior Report[®] REVIEW

Program Reviewed

Where in the World is Carmen SanDiego?

Distributor

Broderbund Software
San Jose, CA 99999
(415) 479-1170

Price

\$39.95

Minimum requirements

128K PCjr with color monitor* (see review)

Reviewer

Diana Fisher

Where in the World is Carmen SanDiego? I haven't found her yet, but I have tracked and jailed a few of her cohorts and climbed upward in the ranks of the Acme Detective Agency. I accomplished this through exhaustive world travel and careful investigating, while never moving from my PCjr.

Where in the World is Carmen SanDiego?, long available for the Apple computers, is now on the IBM software shelves. It's one of those learning packages that comes disguised as a game. Most of these, with the notable exception of Master Type, won't fool your children for long. Math facts hiding in a castle are still math facts. But Where in the World is Carmen SanDiego? keeps the whole family coming back for more.

Because I was chief "licker and paster" of S&H Green Stamps in our house when I was young, my mother would let me have a book for myself when we went to the redemption center. There was never much available in the catalog for one book, but I did find a Rand McNally World Atlas on one of those redemption trips, which I still have. It's an antique now; the world has changed. The child who closely examined each pink, purple, and yellow country and followed rivers and mountain ranges with her finger now has children of her own who are learning about the world.

Along with English grammar, geography seems to have joined the ranks of the forgotten

subjects in my children's schools. But a software package like Where in the World is Carmen SanDiego? stimulates the child's curiosity to learn on his own. The program includes a copy of the New York Times World Almanac, as well as an "Official Interpol Map" of the world and descriptions of Carmen's notorious gang. As you begin playing, you must sign in and be recognized by the Crime Computer as a new detective. You will be classified as a "rookie" and you must climb through the ranks to Ace Detective by solving crimes. Your case is assigned and a time limit is set to solve it.

You begin in the city where the crime takes place and immediately check your connections, or possible destinations to travel next in your hunt for the suspect. By investigating locations in the city you're in, you can gather information about your suspect and about your next destination. When you know a fact about your suspect, such as his or her hobbies or physical characteristics, the Crime Computer will help you narrow your choice of suspects. Eventually all but one suspect will be eliminated, and Interpol will issue you an arrest warrant.

The trail around the world to catch your suspect is a geography lesson in disguise. The possible destinations include three or four cities, and your first job is to identify which countries these cities are located in (of course being a

Continued on page 11

Carmen....

(Cont'd from previous page)

sophisticated, well-rounded ADULT, you will know immediately that Bamako is the capital of the African Republic of Mali -- leave checking the Official Interpol Map to the kids). For information on the more subtle clues, however, the World Almanac is the place to go. These clues may include the color of a flag, the currency or natural resources of a country, or even an animal native to the region. It's not terribly difficult to narrow the choices down, but it's a challenge that stimulates a child's curiosity for information, as well as teaching the use of a valuable reference tool.

Where in the World is Carmen San Diego? contains an element many other learning software packages lack - competition. Playing it is a requirement in the upper grades of my son's elementary school, and a high detective rank is something to brag about. My daughter is a freshman in high school and plays the game frequently. After an evening of writing a report or identifying vocabulary words (cheating blatantly with Borland's Turbo Lightning Thesaurus) she will solve a couple of Carmen San Diego cases to unwind. She is the highest-ranked detective in our house (only because I don't have the TIME, of course) and she frequently uses the Almanac for other school assignments.

I've found only one problem with the program, which I immediately brought to Broderbund's attention. **If you use DOS 2.1, the game crashes continually.** DOS 3.0 and 3.1 work fine, but you must have more than 128K of memory to use these higher versions of DOS. I bought the program two months ago, and at the time Broderbund assured me that they would fix the problem immediately. Since the program is a big seller, and since this is a major problem, it may have been corrected. Checking with your local software dealer is probably futile, but Broderbund's technical support people are very

helpful. They can be reached at (415) 479-1170, Pacific Time.

For those of you boring adults who hope your children will learn something with a home computer (other than manual dexterity with a joy stick), this is a wonderful program to buy. Try it out yourself first, of course, because you'll have difficulty getting it away from your kids. Apple owners are lucky enough to have a new version of this program, Where in the USA is Carmen San Diego?, and by the time it's available in an MS-DOS version, my children will probably have graduated from high school. But I'll buy it anyway. It's much more fun than my 1960 edition of the Rand McNally World Atlas.

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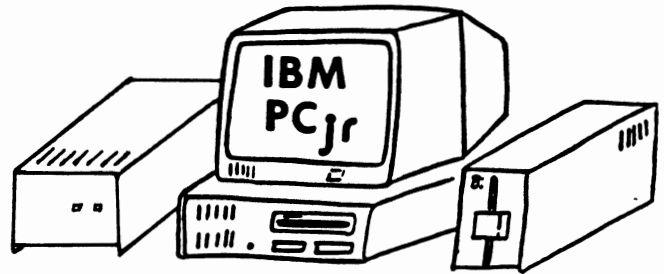
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Junior Report® **REVIEW**

Product Reviewed

Symphonix jr /PT

Distributor

Artic Technologies

2234 Star Court

Auburn Heights, MI

Suggested Retail Price

\$205.

Minimum requirements

128K PCjr, DOS 2.1

Reviewer

Jim Streator

How would you like to have your computer talk to you? For example, every fifteen or thirty minutes, the computer could tell you what time it was. This might be a nice feature. I would probably get to appointments on time if I had this running on the computer in my office.

How about being able to program your computer to speak text to you? Or sing you a song? This opens up many possibilities. For someone who is not able to see well, receiving a talking letter or having a talking book might be quite exciting. Adding some music would be icing on the sound cake.

The Synphonix electronic speech articulator is capable of all of the above and more. All you have to do is plug in a board into your jr modem slot and run some software. Text files can be spoken through a BASIC program on the utility disk. Through DOS, a program can be run that will allow you to use the keyboard PrtSc function to speak any words or characters on the screen. This function allows you to play with the speech capabilities of the board with minimum trouble. Pressing Fn PrtSc provides you with a menu for changing the rate, volume, pitch, and tone of the spoken words.

A problem is that there are no hints as to what the various changes will do. There are 10 rate, 10 volume, and 10 pitch settings along with 26 tone settings for a total of 26,000 different combinations. Experimentation is called for. I

found that there was considerable variation in the sound generated using the various settings but I really did not feel like making too many trials to find sounds I liked.

Never fear, alternatives are available. There are some programs on the disk that allow you to make changes and rerun a word and listen to the changes in the sound. Or, using BASIC or Pascal, you can write a short program that makes the changes and speaks a word. However, this requires you to learn how to program the board using BASIC or Pascal.

Many of the features of the board can be accessed easily. For example, some nice software, the Phonetic Speech Editor is included with the synthesizer. With it, Lexicons, or vocabulary files, can be created fairly easily. Some sample Lexicons are provided. But many of the features are best used after you learn how to deal with linguistic sounds called phonemes and how to program these sounds into the synthesizer. If you are a programmer and like to spend many hours doing this, fine. If you see the utility of this product but would like to use it easily and quickly, you probably will not like it.

While the package does not use a lot of memory, by the time DOS 2.1 and any needed synthesizer software are loaded, a 128K Jr has only 67K free, but a 256K Jr has 180K available. If SynPhonix is to be run in the background, it would be wise to have at least 256K memory.

Continued on page 15

SynPhonix....

(Continued from previous page)

BASIC could not be run on a 128K machine booted with DOS 3.0 since DOS 3.1 takes more memory than DOS 2.1.

The manual tells how to boot your computer and protect synthesizer software from being erased by other programs. I have a couple of programs that require at least 180K and both of these erased SynPhonix in the unprotected mode, but did not erase it in the protected mode. As was the case with all of the instructions in the 128 page manual, instructions for setting the protection mode were correct and understandable. The lack of an index was a bit irritating.

Now we come to the important part. How good is the sound? Will you be so fascinated with the creation of life-like sound that you will need to be sure the sound clock is booted to remind you to go to bed? Probably not.

I had some students stand out of sight of the screen and try to determine what the board was saying. If an incorrect key is pressed, the phrase "invalid key" is spoken. I was told it was "invalid e". Times involving the 11 o'clock hour were difficult to understand. We even heard echoes on the sound. A program called "Spelling Tutor" sounded like "Smelling Tutor". Phrases involving "quiet" were hard to understand since "quiet" and "quite" sound very much alike. Many years ago (at least four), my children had a voice synthesizer attached to a Texas Instruments 99/4A computer. The sound coming from this was equal to the SynPhonix and the control of the sound was easier than with the SynPhonix.

Granted, if I had spent a lot of time modifying some of the rules used by the synthesizer, the speech might have sounded better. Using an external speaker helped, but an external amplifier with an equalizer might have been

better since the sound could have been tailored both by programming and by electronic modification at the amplifier.

On the supposition that demonstration programs are supposed to show a package in the best possible light, the SynPhonix fails as a singing synthesizer. The rendition of the tune "Daisy" was enough to make a serious musician listen to WLS. (For non-Chicago area readers, this is not a compliment!) Granted, the music and singing parts of SynPhonix are mentioned only incidentally in the printed brochure that advertises the synthesizer. This probably indicates the lesser significance of these aspects. I would not let the lack of quality music keep me from buying a synthesizer unless music was critical to my needs.

For certain limited, specific applications or where the user is willing to do considerable programming, or if somewhat imperfect sound is better than no sound, this board might be quite usable. But I will save my \$200. and wait until there is an inexpensive, realistic, easily modified synthesizer on the market.

HCjournal Update

We have just received our current installment of the HCjournal (Volume 2), and did not have the time to fully review this volume for our January issue. The current installment has eliminated the question and answer section, and features two PCjr-specific articles and programs - **Get Seg**, a program that allows you to see what BASIC's default value for the DS register is, and **PC Character Editor**, a program that allows you to design your own custom character sets.

PCjr Compatibility....

(Continued from page 7)

Executive Filer	Jingle Disk (256K)
Executive Writer	Karateka
F-15 Strike Eagle (New version)	Keyboard Cadet
Fahrenheit 451	Keyworks
Filer's Choice	Kids On Keys
Finance I & II	Kidwriter
Flight Simulator	KinderComp
Fooblitzky	King's Quest I, II, & III
Forbidden Castle	Learning DOS
Gambler	Leather Goddesses of Phobos
GATO	Linkword French
Get Organized	Linkword German
Gettysburg	Linkword Spanish
Ghostbusters	Lode Runner (PCjr version)
GMAT	Lotus 1-2-3 (disk version requires 256K and special driver available from Lotus.)
Goldfinger (256K)	Lotus 1-2-3 (PCjr cartridge version)
Golf's Best	Lovejoy's SAT
Grammar Gremlins	Lunar Explorer
✓ Graphics Library I & II ^{#36/25}	Luscher Profile
Graphics Scrapbook	Macro Assembler 4.0
Graphics Sports	Managing the Market (256K)
Graphix Toolbox	Managing Your Money 3.0 (256K)
Greatest Hits (256K)	Mastertype
Greeting Cards	Math Blaster
Gulf Strike	Mean 18 (256K)
Hacker I & II	Mickey Mouse's Space Adventure
Hellcat Ace	Microleague Baseball
Hey Diddle Diddle	Microsoft Access
High Stakes (256K)	Microsoft Chart 2.0
Hitchhiker's Guide	Microsoft Multiplan 2.01
Hobbit	Microsoft Project 3.0
Holy Grail	Microsoft Quick Basic 2.0
Homework Helper Reading	Microsoft Word
IBM Software - Please see <u>The Directory</u> , the catalog for PCjr compatible software	Mind Mirror
Inca	Mindprober
Indiana Jones (256K)	Moonmist
Infiltrator	Moptown Parade
It Figures	Mr. Cool
J.K. Lasser's Your Money Manager	Mr. Pixel's Cartoon Kit
Jet	Mr. Pixel's Paint Set
Jim Fixx's Running Program	Multimate 3.31

Continued on page 17

PCjr Compatibility....

(Continued from previous page)

Murder by the Dozen	Rendevous with Rama
Music Construction Kit	Sargon II & III
Music Studio	Scenery Disks for Flight Simulator
Newsroom	Scorecast
Newsroom Pro	Seven Cities of Gold
NFL Challenge (384K)	Shanghai
Norton Commander	Sidekick 1.5
Norton Utilities 3.1	Sideways 3.11
Number Works	Sign Master 5.1
Oil's Well	Silent Service
One on One	Smart Money 1.0
Oo-Topos	Snooper Troopers
Orbiter (256K)	Solo Flight
Pac Man	Sorcerer
Paper Airplane Construction Set	Space Games (256K)
Paperback Writer	Space Quest (256K)
Partner (256K)	Spell It
People Organizer	Spellbreaker
Perfect Score	Spitfire Ace
PFS: First Choice	Sportsman
PFS series of productivity software	Star Trek
Piece of Cake Math	Starfleet
Pinball Construction Set	Starflight (special instructions & modifications)
Pitstop II	Strategy Games
Planetfall	Studymate
Planner's Choice	Submission
Come Play with Pockets	Success with Algebra
Pockets Goes to the Carnival	Summer Games II
Pockets Goes on a Picnic	Super Sunday
Pockets Leads the Parade	SuperKey 1.1
Pockets Goes on Vacation	Swiftcalc
Print Shop /40	Sylvia Porter's Personal Finance
Print Shop Companion	Symphony (384K)
Print Works	Tass Times
Printmaster and Printmaster Plus	Tellstar 2
Prokey 4.0	Temple of Apshai trilogy
PSI 5 Trading Co.	Thinktank
Quicken (192K)	Tink Tonks
Reader Rabbit	Touch
Real Software	Touchdown Football
Reflex 1.1	Toy Shop
Reflex Workshop	Transylvania

Continued on page 20

Editor's Notes....

(Continued from page 2)

obtained from Legacy Technologies, which can be contacted at 1-800-228-7257. Another source for this "8087 daughterboard" is the TIAC Manufacturing Corporation located on 3084 Spring Street, Port Moody, B.C. Canada V3H 1Z8.....good news for those of you who missed out on the IBM PCjr peripheral sale that ended last December 25th, and wanted some extra joysticks. We have been notified by a company that wishes to enter into the PCjr-compatible joystick market with either a whole kit or an adaptor kit for existing non-Junior joysticks. Stay tuned for all the gory details.....and finally in the It's Bound To Happen department, we have received a few letters (three to be exact) that expressed disapproval over the use of a certain adjective in the editorial of the October 1986 issue. I'm sure many of you felt it was out of place, and after reading the issue later, I would have to strongly agree. It was a very, very poor choice of words, and I would like to apologize for that error. It won't happen again. Personally, it's not really hard for me to apologize for my goofs - I get a lot of practice at it. But let's definitely keep the profanity out the newsletter and back on cable TV where it belongs.

Birthday....

(Continued from page 1)

2000 was released that featured 3-D graphics and a reportedly stronger game of chess. I bought the latter. Someone's going to get my money - the company that writes PCjr compatible software.

1986 was a very good year for Junior. We saw that most software publishers were still supporting the PCjr. There is more software available for it now than there had been in March of 1985. Sure there have been some disappointments this year, but the quality of PCjr-compatible software today more than makes up for any programs that exclude the Junior. Perhaps the best news for the Junior owner in 1986 was the unveiling of new products for the PCjr led by the jrHotShot, an internal memory expansion board, and new

ROM cartridges that provide a variety of new functions. More products are scheduled for 1987.

As Junior owners discover the benefits of more memory, second disk drives, enhanced keyboards, and 1200 baud modems, they're finding the gap between PC and PCjr computing narrowing. Despite the apparent good news in 1986, we PCjr owners are constantly battling the fear of obsolescence. So far our fears and the dire predictions of Junior's demise have yet to be realized, to everyone's surprise. 1987 will be a pivotal year for the PCjr, but for now, let's just relax a little bit and savor our present situation, and enjoy Junior's third birthday. To quote one of my favorite professors, Dr. Frankenstein - "It's Aliiiiiivvaa!" And kicking.

IBM AND TECMAR EXPANSION BOARD UPGRADES

We are really catching up with back requests for IBM and Tecmar board RAM upgrades. If you have been on the list for a while, you will be notified shortly. After upgrading, you will have 640K of total RAM in your PCjr to play with. All work will be done by qualified technicians headed by Brian Cook. Once we have your request on file, you will be notified by mail when we are ready for you to UPS your board to us for the work, which we hope to be completed in two weeks time. The cost of either upgrade will be \$145. US currency (Computerland wanted to charge one member \$300. for the same service.) We will guarantee the work and the 256K chips for 90 days. If you should any questions concerning this service, please let us know in your request, and we will try to answer them before you send us your board. More detailed instructions will be included in your notification. Send all requests to The PCjr Club, P.O. Box 59067, Schaumburg, IL 60159 - 0067, to the attention of Brian Cook.

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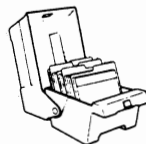
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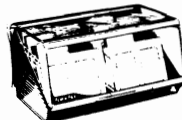


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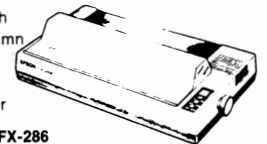
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Some Expansion Board Blues

An epidemic of system crashes has broken out among many PCjr users with expanded memory who have had their computers for a year or more. Technicians think the problem stems from dirt or tarnish building up on the connector pins on the side of the system unit where the memory cards attach.

The problems take several forms. Some users report their systems will count only 128K of memory on startup, then boot. Others find their systems count 128K, report an "Error A," and then lock up. Sometimes the computer will, after repeated trying, find expanded memory and work properly, sometimes not.

In some instances, the computer will crash after counting all of the memory and booting, in others, it will report an "Error A" somewhere between 128K and the end of the memory count.

Some users who have removed their sidecars have found their system will work again once they replace it. Others have no luck after removing and replacing the memory boards.

The problem has been found with boards from Tecmar, IBM, and Microsoft. Lou Davidson of Baltimore, who has upgraded memory boards for PCjr user groups, says customers have sent him a number of apparently faulty sidecars which he has been unable to get to fail in tests in his shop.

That is what has led him and partner Dave Wissman to suspect a problem with the connector pins, which are part of the PCjr, not the memory boards. The boards have a set of female connectors into which the pins plug.

Davidson found a rash of similar complaints from PCjr users on CompuServe's PCjr SIG. He recommends periodic cleaning of the connector pins using rubbing alcohol and an artist's brush with bristles long enough to reach into the pin housing, but not stiff enough to risk bending the pins.

Another problem reported by expansion board owners that we have read about is the sudden failure of the board after extended use. It seems the problem is due to a five volt regulator on the heat sink fin in the Tecmar JrCaptain expansion boards, which have had their memories increased to 512K. None of the other brands of expansion boards have reported this. This socket apparently can lose its retention force and become intermittent under the extra heat load of the 512K memory on some boards. The regulator and power supply can easily withstand the extra load, but not the inexpensive socket. The solution? Remove the cheap socket and solder the power supply cable directly to the board. So as you can see, life isn't always perfect on the expansion board farm.

(Parts of the above article is reprinted from the Metro PCjr Journal, and from a very informative letter from Mr. Paul Cedfeldt of New Jersey.

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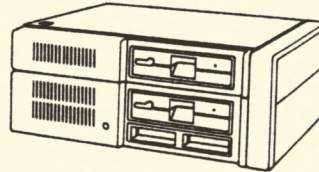
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