FROM THE OVAL OFFICE
Frank Ratti

The school year is now a routine, summer a distant memory. Most football teams have at least four games under their belt, and most students have had at least one term paper assignment. The fragrant summer evening of our Peanut-picnic in September is already a nostalgic memory. We missed you, if you could not attend. For the first time in several years the picnic evening was balmy with very little hint of fall. There was, however, ample baked poultry, boiled corn, and pumpkin pie, not to mention pizza. It was kind of like the first Thanksgiving, which is appropriate for the pilgrim pioneer computer owners of Eugene.

The monthly PCjr club meetings will now begin as a regular routine on your monthly calendar. Remember the second Thursday at Ida Patterson School, October 10. We are trying to make meetings more interactive. VP Cindy Hoffman has volunteered to reintroduce members to the disk library. Each month we will demonstrate selected disks with the object of challenging you to use them at home. For you hardware fans Terry Kohler is going to review some of the most recent offerings from the PC ENTERPRISES Catalog. He is also going to bring back the General Motors new car disks. There will be an opportunity to buy a car following the meeting. Maybe you haven't been using your Junior lately, because you need to learn how to operate DOS. Here's an opportunity. Louie Levy will introduce the first club workshop on DOS for October.

One great new addition to our monthly meetings is a 640k machine graciously donated to the club by past newsletter editor, Patricia Dawson. She attended the September picnic. Louie has done a little fine tuning and mid-air mechanics with it and now has it running on all cylinders. This Junior should be able to run all the software in the library and the programs you bring from home.

You have a PCjr. Make the most of it. Come to the Eugene PC-Junior Club meeting and make owning a Junior worthwhile.

                                                FDR

Editor's Note:

Looks like the big guy in the oval office has much planned for us this year. The workshops were a great success last year and the interest seems to be just as high now. I won't get into them here as Phil covers them pretty well in his complete synopsis beginning on page 6. Just one reminder: if you don't see the class you want, call Phil Janz. Phil is riding herd on these classes and would like to hear what the members want, not what the board thinks the members want. Call him at 343-1059 and tell him you would like a class on CD ROM drives for Junior, or whatever.

If you missed the picnic in September, like Frank said, you missed a good one. The weather was just great; it always is great here in September. The company we had at the picnic was what made it so nice. Thanks to all of you for making it a success. And thanks to Paddy Dawson for the donation of her oldest child, "Junior." Some of you old timers remember Paddy who was our newsletter editor back when the Eugene PCjr Newsletter was voted "best in the nation." Paddy's Junior is a 640K Racore machine with DMA. Again, Paddy, thank you from all of us. You have lifetime support from our vast technical staff for your new computer.

Well, I don't want to take up space in this newsletter with my amblings, so we'll get on with some articles that are more interesting.

What to Do When Junior Breaks!
Based on the PC Enterprises 1991-92 Catalog

Keeping Junior up and running is one of your major concerns. If you live close to your PCjr Club you have very few problems as you can always find help in the membership. But many of our members and newsletter subscribers don't live close enough to attend the monthly meetings. Indeed, we have folks in the wilds of British Columbia, Manhattan and Boonville who never can get to meetings. . .what do they do when Junior breaks? The below article, from the 1991-92 PC Enterprises catalog, has the answers:

The IBM PCjr is certainly one of the most reliable home computers ever sold--nevertheless, even the most reliable computers may, at time, require service. That's why service should be a real concern. What would you do if someday your PCjr should break?

Relax. It's not likely you'll ever need to send your PCjr to the repair shop. Thanks to a considerable number of diagnostic tests which are built into the PCjr, the PCjr may be the easiest computer ever designed to troubleshoot and repair. If your PCjr ever breaks you'll have a choice. You could purchase just the parts that you need, or send your entire system to us and let our trained PCjr technicians diagnose the problem and professionally install any replacement parts that you need.

That's the beauty of owning a PCjr. You'll never have any trouble finding parts or someone knowledgeable to service your computer. Large inventories of PCjr spare parts exist, and should we ever run out of a part, PCE will simply produce one that's better (we've already done this with the internal memory card). Unlike other companies that abandoned the PCjr, PC Enterprises has remained the PCjr specialist and is committed to servicing the PCjr for as long as the need exists.

Diagnosing Problems by Yourself

The PCjr's built-in self test allows most people to determine which replacement part they need without sending the system in for service. Once you determine which part you need, repair can be just as simple--even if you're not technically inclined. Here are a few basic things every PCjr owner should know which concerns the PCjr's built-in tests, and what to do if a problem is ever experienced. We suggest you skim through this section now, and refer back if you ever encounter a problem.

While it's always difficult to diagnose a problem without seeing the system, many years of troubleshooting experience with the PCjr often cause us to suspect certain parts. For this reason we've used a "probably, but not

always" approach in this section--
intended to allow you to benefit from
our experience.

Each time you turn your PCjr on,
the PCjr runs its Power On Self Test
(POST). During this test the IBM logo
appears while the computer counts its
memory. If POST detects a problem it
will display an error message when
possible. Sometimes POST starts to
run, but the problem prevents it form
displaying information on the screen.
If this happens, you'll see a white or
black screen and hear two or three
beeps. (This is a good indication that
your computer's power transformer and
power supply are both okay. If a
problem prevents POST from running at
all, as a bad transformer or power
supply certainly would, you'll always
see a white screen and you'll never
hear any beeps.)

If the computer does not complete
POST, the basic troubleshooting
procedure is to identify the problem by
removing everything which is not
essential to complete POST. Start by
unplugging everything from the rear of
the PCjr except the power transformer
and monitor. Next, remove all
cartridges and sidecars, retesting the
PCjr after each step. Also, remove the
internal Memory Card, Wireless Receiver,
and Disk Drive Adapter card. The PCjr
should successfully complete POST with
just the power transformer, power
supply, and system board installed. If
it does not, the problem is with one of
these parts. If the transformer is
warm, it's probably, but not always,
good. If you hear the PCjr's fan
running, both the transformer and
power supply are probably, but not
always, good. If you have removed
everything from the PCjr except the
power transformer and power supply,
and you still hear two or three beeps,
the system board is probably, but not
always, bad.

Always check for bent pins and
that your cables are plugged into the
correct connectors on the rear of the
PCjr. The keyboard, joystick, light
pen, and cassette cables are often
plugged in the wrong connector. Bent
pins, which prevent proper connector
alignment, are absolutely the most

common problem that we see and have
accounted for white and black screens,
two or three beeps, or plug-in items
not working. Bent pins found on the
rear of the PCjr can cause POST errors
B, C, or D and on the 60 pin sidecar
expansion bus causing errors A, F, H, I
or J. Always check the outside
unoccupied bus connector too. Also,
when checking for bent pins, remove
each sidecar and check all the way
back to PCjr. Sometimes multiple pins
are bent or sometimes a bent pin goes
without notice until a new add on
device is purchased.

If the computer completes POST
without displaying an error message,
you can run additional built-in
diagnostic tests. These tests are
extremely helpful, especially if you have
a memory or disk drive problem.
However, if you have more than one
floppy drive you may need a
Configuration Cartridge to test
additional drives.

Always first try to isolate the
problem by following the previously
described troubleshooting procedure,
however, the information below may also
be helpful. And remember, if you have
a problem, we're just a phone call
away. (We will reprint the second half
of PC Enterprises' article next month.)

PC Enterprises phone number and
address is:

        Customer service desk:
             (908) 280-0025
        Order desk:
             (800) 922-PCJR
        PC Enterprises, PO Box 292
        Belmar, NJ 07719

    *"The knowledge you gain today by
experimenting with your jr will surely
be of value in the future."*
Crider Associates in the jr Newsletter

Purchasing A 2nd Junior
by Louie Levy

As fall approaches many of us feel that winter is just around the corner. It will soon be time to come indoors from the summer heat and think about things to do inside now that the weather is becoming more brisk. The first thing we do in our home is crank up Junior and see how he made it over the inactive summer months. If you belong to the Eugene PCjr Club, your Junior should be in fine shape as he completed his annual check-up back in April at the "Spring Cleaning." But, just as some folks don't prepare their lawn mowers for winter, some didn't take the necessary steps to keep Junior alive and healthy for another year.

If your Junior sounds somewhat noisy when you boot, maybe it's time to clean it and give it a good check-up. You can refer to chapter 6 in the Guide to Operations that came with Junior, or you can check out a copy from your local PCjr club library. This self-test goes far in showing you how your Junior is doing. If you need to go a little further than just a physical, use the instructions found in the IBM Hardware Maintenance and Service Manual.

There is much you can do as a user to keep Junior happy and healthy. The cleaning will help prolong the life of your disk drive and if you look around the little blower fan attached to the back of the disk drive you will see how Junior's environment is interacting with its components. If someone has been smoking while computing you will see the brown nicotine stains on the fan, disk drive and portions of Junior's motherboard and disk drive controller card. Other things are sucked into Junior by this fan as it tries to keep Junior cool: lint, dust, dog and cat hair, etc. These stains, and the associated dirt and dust that all homes have, help lock in heat causing Junior to fail sooner than he should.

If you have had to purchase a component locally for your Junior you probably already know that very few computer repair shops have anything associated with Junior in stock. While IBM still supports our munchkin, many shops have "moved on" to more profitable machines. . .read: ones that break more often than Junior. This leads us to the meat of this article: consider buying a spare Junior CPU. I know this sounds ridiculous to many; you don't buy a spare car or TV to keep around in case the one you use everyday should break, but it may be very profitable to do just this for Junior.

Consider the following: You bend or break a pin on the rear of the CPU when a family member moves Junior to another room. Cost of repair, $50 to $100 depending on if you remove your motherboard or the repair shop does it for you. Or your power supply gets zapped during a thunder storm; $35 to $65--if the shop can find another one to exchange, or if they can do circuit board trouble shooting. Due to low voltage your transformer (brick) dies; where do you go in town to find another? Radio Shack? Think again. If the mother of all boards needs replacing in your Junior, look at the prices from suppliers who advertise in the magazines and newsletters. You have to exchange your old board in some cases, but in all cases, you must do without Junior's familiar hum while you wait for the new or repaired board to arrive in the mail. And take a look at the cost! If you use Thin-Font or a V-20 chip, just pray that the new board doesn't have soldered-in chips.

Juniors have never been cheaper. It is a good time to consider that second machine for many reasons other than just to "part out." When that neighbor kid comes over, or the grandkids, let them play with the spare so none of your favorite games get zonked with sticky fingers or spilled pop. Let them bang on the old chicklet keyboard all they want; they won't hurt the one you use for word processing and they won't spill popcorn on it.

So, here are some guidelines to use when buying a used Junior. Of course, price is important. The CPU and brick can be had at garage sales or through word of mouth advertising for around $75-- $100 if they are working. While at this price they may not be in top notch shape, you should make sure they are in at least working order. Boot up and if you get the logo and then "disk boot failure" on the screen, it may be caused by only a faulty disk in the drive, dirt, or even a bad or dirty disk drive. Your club should have someone who will help you determine the problem and advise you. Just remember that a nonworking Junior holds about as much value to someone as

one bookend. Still, even a "dead" Junior has some good working parts and has value to someone with a working Junior. Read on.

A nonworking Junior can be very valuable if you "part it out." Seldom will everything in a Junior break all at once. You may only have to put in a good copy of DOS (one without peanut butter on it), or replace the fuse in the "brick," or the power supply card to have a good spare CPU. Be sure to look at the connectors on the back of Junior. If the pins are broken in the keyboard connector socket, consider using the Synetics internal keyboard adapter. . .or just put batteries in the keyboard and sell your keyboard cord at the next club meeting. If the pins on the display connector are broken, use a monitor that plugs in to the serial port or one that uses the V terminal on Junior.

The IBM color display is a hot item. They can be purchased anywhere from $75 to $125 in good working order. Most any TV repair person can refocus them and adjust the horizontal and vertical controls for you if you can't find someone in your club to do it for you. DO NOT open up your monitor and go probing inside. There are megavolts inside, even with the plug removed from the outlet, just waiting to make Junior an orphan again. STAY OUT of your monitor. Still, a dead monitor may only need its internal fuse replaced.

All of this is good reason to become a member of a computer club. In nearly every one of them there is someone who actually enjoys making dying Juniors well, or giving CPR to dead CPUs.

If you can get a used CPU that works, you have a spare power supply ($50--$75), 64K card ($50), disk drive controller card ($50), disk drive ($60), diskette drive fan ($10), external power supply (brick) ($45), the little infrared keyboard receiver ($40), another keyboard ($25), the CPU case ($30) and a motherboard ($98). These prices were copied from a recent catalog of a well known Junior supplier. You may also get a spare parallel printer attachment ($90) or BASIC cartridge ($20--$55) and even another copy of DOS. There may be a lot of software with a used Junior.

So read the ads in the newspaper and stop at garage sales; there are many Juniors out there and there is much life left in the old "orphan."

Louie

need help?

We received very little input for the "What Did Your Junior Do This Month?" column over the summer. Call us (343-7592) or write and we'll keep it anonymous unless you tell us otherwise. Our hope is that your uses of Junior will give others ideas how they can put their Junior to use; remember that a Junior in use is a happy Junior. So, here are some things that we know Juniors did during the summer:

Using WordPerfect 4.2, a Junior is keeping track of a book inventory for a local book dealer. *Books and Bytes*.

Using Writing Assistant, the wife of the president of a local computer club finally got caught up on her letter writing.

Using PC-FILE, the local chapter of the American Diabetes Association made mailing labels for its newsletter.

PC-FILE also made the mailing labels for our newsletter; and WordPerfect was used to actually write the newsletter.

Writing Assistant was used to produce several other newsletters during the summer by another of our club members.

What did YOUR Junior do this month? Drop us a line and let us know.

"Hands On" Classes
for Club Members

Phil Janz

Club meetings will provide software overviews as part of the regular program, and then there will be additional evening workshop opportunities, using a specific program, to provide a "hands on" experience for those Club members who want to add to their skill level by registering and participating in the appropriate class. The Club meeting demonstration will make it very clear as to what the workshop class will focus on! Members may sign up ahead of time by completing the included registration form and mailing it in, or waiting until the appropriate Club meeting and signing up at that time.

There will be a $6 Club non-refundable registration fee per one-day workshop or an $8 fee for a two-session workshop for each registered individual. The fee will reserve a working place in the workshop and also provide the person with a Club Library disk that includes the program being used in the workshop. The workshop host will receive the workshop free. . .anyone interested in "hosting" and "learning" at the same time? Hosting does not imply responsibility for teaching the class--just a place where the class can happen. Part of the registration fee will provide refreshments for each workshop.

Participants need to bring one blank diskette to each workshop so a working copy of the program can be duplicated for "take home" use. Personal ownership of any program used in a workshop is not a pre-requisite for attending and participating. Depending on the specific workshop, each participant will be individually keyboarding a PCjr, or in some cases, two people per machine. Bringing your own PCjr to the workshop is not a pre-requisite for registering. If you should want to use your own machine, let the instructor know and your wishes will be granted.

The thrust of these workshops is to provide opportunities for interested Club members to receive help in actually learning how to make better use of their computer. Club Membership is $20; this entitles any family member to register for a workshop.

COMING WORKSHOPS

October 17.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop on DOS (Two Sessions)
Instructor - Louie Levy
Description: What makes Junior go? The POST test and what happens when we "boot."

October 24.....7:00 p.m.
Continuation of DOS Workshop
Instructor - Louie Levy
Description: Tell Junior what YOU want it to do; format disks, copy programs and find out how to make those Club Library disks work.

November 21.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop on Writing Assistant (Two Sessions)
Instructor - Phil Janz
Description: How to create and edit documents, including Spell Check. How to save and retrieve documents; how to print documents.

November 26.....7:00 p.m.
Continuation of Writing Assistant Workshop
Instructor - Phil Janz
Description: Moving text within a document; custom formatting and combining files; adding words to the personal dictionary.

November 19.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop: Writing Assistant For Students & School Work
Instructor - TBA

November 25.....7:00 p.m.
Continuation of Writing Assistant For Students & School Work
Instructor - TBA

January 16.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop on Spreadsheets
Instructor - Frank Ratti

February 20.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop on Desktop Publishing
Instructors - Phil Janz and Louie Levy

February 27.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop: PrintShop for Kids
Instructor - Cindy Hoffman

March 19.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop on Graphics
Instructor - TBA

April 16.....7:00 p.m.
Workshop on PC-FILE
Instructor - Louie Levy

Various Dates Monthly TBA
On-going workshop: WordPerfect on the PCjr
Instructor - Louie Levy

FILL OUT THIS FORM

ADDITIONAL WORKSHOPS?

Discussion of the "Workshop Programs" will be held at our October meeting. If there is membership interest in additional workshops we will talk about how they can be added. If you will be unable to attend the October meeting to voice your suggestions on this endeavor, PLEASE give us a call--we need your input!
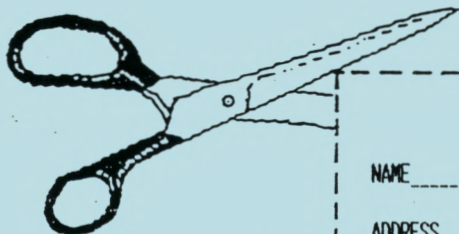
PCjr CLUB WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/ZIP _____ PHONE _____

WORKSHOP NAME   FEE

                                        TOTAL $_____

* Workshop participants must be members in good standing. Club memberships are "family" memberships, and anyone in the family is eligible to participate.
* Early registration is encouraged to ensure that the workshop will be able to take place.
* Registration slips may be given to Phil Janz or Louie Levy at regular meetings or mailed to our treasurer's home (155 34th Place East, Eugene 97405), or to the Club Post Office Box.
* Make all checks payable to EUGENE PCjr CLUB.

come learn

The EUGENE PCjr NEWSLETTER is available for $12/year or as part of the paid-up Eugene PCjr Club membership at $20/year. Nonsubscribers may receive a free copy of the Newsletter on request. Our Editor accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of the information, tales, opinions, myths or materials contained in this Newsletter. Reprint permission is freely given; please credit the appropriate author and the EUGENE PCjr CLUB NEWSLETTER. All offerings and contributions are encouraged and are gratefully accepted.

Make check or money order payable to:

EUGENE PCjr CLUB, 1011 Valley River Way, Suite 220, Eugene, OR 97401. Please furnish the following:

Name_____

Address_____

City_____State_____

PCjr Lives!

NEW OFFICE HOURS FOR NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The Newsletter office will be open most days about 9 or 10am, occasionally as early as 7am, but some days, as late as noon or 1pm. I will close the office about 5:30 or 6pm, occasionally as late as 11 or midnight. Some days, or afternoons, I won't be here at all, and lately I've been here just about all the time, except when I'm some place else. But, I should be here then, too. Some times it's best to call first.

EUGENE PCjr CLUB

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