



EUGENE NEWSLETTER

PCjr CLUB

Volume VIII
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1011 Valley River Way, Suite 220, Eugene, OR 97401

FROM THE OVAL OFFICE

Frank Ratti

We are already rounding the bend in the school year. I hope you have learned some new skills with your JUNIOR this year so far. It isn't for a lack of the club trying. The club has offered some meaty workshops in DOS, *Writing Assistant*, and recently, spreadsheets, which had great turn-outs and will hopefully result in many useful applications for each user who participated. Our theme has been to teach beginner oriented classes for the PCjr owner, which can be applied to use on any PC compatible computer. Just because there are Lear jets at the airport doesn't mean you can't learn about flying by starting with a Cessna.

The next two meetings are going to be dedicated to printers and graphics. February is going to be the month for printer demonstrations. I've got a basic Panasonic KX-P1180 9-pin dot matrix printer. It's a real chore to set the font (type of lettering), pitch (number of characters per inch), and other features from the printer switches. With a utility program available in the Club Library you can change all these settings from the keyboard. Paul Bonney is going to demonstrate this feature at the next meeting along with other printer applications from the disk library.

The next scheduled workshop is going to be for our youth, taught by one of their own, Lindsey Hoffman. This means that the workshop will be too advanced for most adults, but I'm sure they would slow it down a little if some of us older folks would like to sign up. Lindsey will be demonstrating a preview of the *PrintShop* workshop at the February meeting.

Another workshop scheduled for this month is going to be on desktop publishing with the PCjr, specifically putting together newsletters and flyers, lead by Louie and Phil, a very experienced pair of editors. Ask yourself, can you print and arrange text and graphics in columns newspaper style? The applications are numerous from the myriad newsletter needs of every organization to your own personal Christmas letter. Our professors emeriti of journalism will preview this workshop at the February meeting.

In addition, we will see how previous workshop participants are applying what they have learned. Michael Ruiz will review the recent Spreadsheet workshop. We will still save enough time for you to get your hands on a Junior with these demonstrators during the meeting.

Besides all this action, there will be disk library sales, sales of other computer parts and software that have been showing up at the last several meetings, as well as copious computer literature, and opportunities for group purchases from the PC-Enterprises catalog and from our "Minnesota Member," Elmer Hungate. And, if all this is not enough to get you PCjr owners out and to Ida Patterson School at 7:00pm on Thursday, February 13th, then consider the wonderful friendships and refreshments offered. My only reservation concerning this month's PCjr club meeting is how are we going to fit all this in in only two hours?

FDR

MEETING AGENDA: The February meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will be held in the Ida Patterson School Library, 16th and Polk, in Eugene, on the 14th. Set up and disk sales will begin at 6:30 and the meeting will start at 7pm.

Workshop for Feb: Desktop Publishing

The January spreadsheet workshop is now history. It was both well attended and well received. Considering the level of students he had to work with, the workshop instructor, Frank Ratti, did very well. From what I observed, everyone learned much about how to use and construct spreadsheets, and we had a good time to boot. Frank is to be commended on his patience!

Now that February is here, the workshop on desk-top publishing is just around the corner. Phil Janz and your editor have been looking forward to next week for quite some time. This workshop will cover the basics of newsletter production from conception to mailing.

The term "desktop publishing" has many definitions, but most feel that it means using an integrated software package on your computer that allows you layout text and graphics together in a document, along with columns with ruling between them. You have many fonts and type styles to choose from, and they may be used in many sizes. Well, desktop publishing with a Junior is quite a bit different.

Entry level programs, such as the *Printshop Companion* by Broderbund, or Springboard's *Newsroom*, run well on Juniors, but are not suited for professional-looking serious work. The intermediate programs like *PFS: First Publisher* and *Power Up!'s Express Publisher* do well on Juniors that have been enhanced with more memory and disk drives, but I know of no Juniors using the more complex desktop publishers like Aldus' *Pagemaker* or Xerox's *Ventura Publisher*. We have no laser printers that I am aware of in our Junior club, and few hard-drive users. Also, most of us don't purchase software that costs more than our Juniors are worth. So, in this upcoming workshop, we'll cover doing desktop publishing with programs most PCjr owners already have; like *Writing Assistant* and *The Printshop*.

When you finish this next workshop, you should be able to make newsletters for your church, your scout group, business, or even your computer club. (Boy, that would be GREAT!) You'll be able to create attractive flyers for your next garage sale or little theater presentation. So, don't be left out! Call Phil (343-1059) and reserve your spot.

MY LAST DOS 5 ARTICLE

Louie Levy

John King, perhaps the world's foremost PCjr Guru, has written articles that have been published in several newsletters on how to get DOS 5 to run on a PCjr. John was a "Beta tester" for Microsoft, and he goes to great length in his articles to give us guidance on how to get DOS 5 debugged so it will run on our Juniors.

After working many hours trying to get DOS 5 going on my Junior, I must report I failed. You should remember though, I am not a techy; I know nothing about using *DEBUG.COM*, and am still learning about DOS 2.1. Maybe I'm just a klutz, but DOS 5 never booted for me no matter how many times I tried to follow John's instructions. Like I said, *DEBUG.COM* never has been one of the DOS programs that I use. I don't want to embarrass anyone, but we have several members in the Club with DMA equipped PCjrs with lots of memory, and if they would consider devoting some time to this effort and will give us a demo of DOS 5, I will be happy to loan them my little-used copy of the program. Everyone would like to have a **POSITIVE** show and tell program on DOS 5 instead of the tell only programs your editor has been doing.

Well, just how does DOS 5 differ from DOS 2.1, the DOS most of us usually use with Junior? As I could never get it to run on Junior I can only tell you how it does on our "other" computer, a PCjr clone. Also, I can pass along to our readership what John says about DOS 5.

MORE >LAST DOS 5

Most of us know that in order to get Junior going, we begin with what we call a "boot disk." For a disk to be bootable, it must have the three files COMMAND.COM (the command interpreter), IBMDOS.COM and IBMBIOS.COM (the two hidden files). These are the three files it takes to get Junior up and running. We place these "system" files on the boot disk when we FORMAT using the /s parameter. These system files occupy 40,960 bytes of space when we format a diskette using DOS 2.1. If we use DOS 5 to format a diskette, this figure goes to 119,808 bytes. As you can see, DOS 5 takes up much more space to make a disk self-booting; nearly three times that of 2.1 DOS. This larger size also means that it takes longer for Junior to boot. But, while being three times the size, it only takes about 10 seconds longer to boot as it doesn't "double boot" as does 2.1 DOS.

If you use a RAM drive with your Junior and normally copy COMMAND.COM to drive C, you will need to make your RAM drive 30K larger to accommodate this difference in size. Also, you will need to use HUSH.COM, or the -X switch in JRCONFIG, to reset your disk drive speed to the correct stepper rate. (You need to do this last item with any DOS version from 3.0 up.)

When you boot with DOS 5, you will be left in the DOS SHELL, a menu-type, split-screen, colorful presentation of the directory listing of your boot disk. The DOS SHELL program will have to be edited to get rid of some blinking and strange colors that would be normal on other monitors, but are very strange on Junior's color display.

While most more recent software runs on DOS 5, some of our older programs won't. To solve this problem, there is a small program, SERVER.EXE, that substitutes whatever version of DOS the program calls for with "5.0."

If you are using a mouse on your Junior, some mouse drivers may have to be upgraded to run under 5.0. I have a very old (and cheap) DEXXA brand mouse that works fine with old 2.1 on Junior and equally as well with 5.0 on our Junior "clone."

While all of this sounds very negative, DOS 5 does have some pretty impressive pluses. If you have a computer with memory above 640K and an 80286 processing chip, the memory management capabilities of DOS 5 are great. If you have a 386 or 486, it is really great! For instance, when I boot Junior using JRCONFIG.NRD in our CONFIG.SYS file, CHKDSK tells us we have 517,536 bytes of "free" memory left of our original 640K. This is memory that is available to run programs. On the Junior "clone," using DOS 5, we have 634,016 free bytes. This difference in size comes about because DOS 5 allows us to load all of the DOS "stuff" up into "high" memory, that memory above 640K. About all we can do with DOS 2.1 is create a RAM drive with any memory we have over 640K.

While we were a little nit-picky about the DOS SHELL in 5.0 when used on Junior, it works well on "clones." IBM thought the shell worked so well, they are using it as a menu system on their PS/1 and PS/2 computers. The shell program gives you a directory listing on bootup of the disk from which you boot. It also allows the user to change drives, copy, move, delete or execute selective files from almost anywhere. This is great when you have more than one drive. You also can have a split screen that will show two directories on your screen at one time. This is nice for comparing files on two different disks in two different disk drives.

DOS 5 has a neat program called DOSKEY. When you load DOSKEY from your AUTOEXEC.BAT file, it remembers all of the old commands you typed at your DOS prompt. By pressing the up arrow key, you can scroll through many of the old commands you typed at the prompt. With DOS 2.1, about all we can do is press Fn 3 to repeat the last DOS command we entered.

The EDIT program of DOS 5 is excellent, especially for doing quick edits of your CONFIG.SYS and AUTOEXEC.BAT files. EDIT works much like the old *SideKick* program, but doesn't stay in memory. You can make rapid changes to text files and/or save them with other names to other disks. It's great just to use for reading README files.

Please turn page>>>>

I feel people need to upgrade DOS only when there is a reason to do so. Because of this, I saw no cause to move away from 2.1 DOS on our Junior as newer versions came out. The only reason I can see for moving to another version is when you have a real need to do so, like adding a 3.5 inch drive, or some other device that requires you to use a higher DOS. So, while we use DOS 5 on our Junior "clone" because of the clone's memory and high density drives, we are very pleased with old DOS 2.1 on our Junior.

Writing Assistant and Printer Codes Louie Levy

Everyone is looking forward to the program on printers this month. It seems that even with several articles being published recently in national newsletters about printers and printer commands, few of us are using our printers to their full potential. While nearly all printers have control switches on them, most only indicate if the printer is in "draft mode" or "near letter quality" mode. How do we get our printers to do larger print? How about italics? Where are the switches for the things we really want from our printers? This article is intended to make your printer and printer manual somewhat more useful by heading you in the right direction.

Most of us who use *Writing Assistant* know that we use Fn 5 to have our printers underline or highlight text. Few of us know how to make our printers print portions of our text in condensed form, italics or in double-wide characters as we have no function key to do this chore for us.

The average dot matrix printer will print many more characters than are on our keyboards, and they can print in many sizes. If we look in our printer manuals we see illustrations of different character sets our printers will produce, and different sizes and styles of print. Unfortunately,

most printer manuals seem to have been written by the same group of computer nerds who wrote the DOS manual, so the printer manual, to many of us, is nearly useless.

Lets go into this slowly and try to get our printer to print a word in *Writing Assistant* in the double-wide mode. Our *Writing Assistant* manual (page 6-26) tells us that we can send special printer codes to our printer by entering the following format:

PRINTER code1, code2,

The manual goes on to say that to make the word very double-wide, you would place *PRINTER 14* just before the word, and *PRINTER 20* just after it. It also informs us that we don't need to key in the word PRINTER; we can just use an upper case P. The manual tells us that 14 and 20 are the ASCII decimal codes for double-wide printing with an IBM dot matrix printer.

I don't have an IBM printer, but when I looked in the manual for my printer, I found that the codes for double-wide printing were the same. It actually says (14) Decimal to begin double-wide printing and (20) Decimal to stop double-wide printing. Therefore, if I need to print the word very in double-wide print on my printer when I use *Writing Assistant*, I would type it like this:

*P 14*very*P 20*

When the document is sent to the printer, these commands would tell the printer to print the word very double-wide. It is interesting that the printer commands that are in the text do not print. You should consult the manual that came with your printer to see what decimal codes it requires to print in double-wide.

In the above case, when *Writing Assistant* got to the printer command *P 14*, it sent the ASCII decimal code to the printer that set it to print in double-wide mode. The printer will continue to print in this mode until it receives another ASCII code telling it to print in a different mode. Actually, the printer received the ASCII decimal codes 117, 101, 114 and 121 to print the letters v, e, r and y. The *P 20* returned the printer to normal printing.

If you use *Writing Assistant*, you only have to insert the *P ASCII code* to get it to print any

Continued on next page

character that you find listed in the character set in your printer manual. This means you can print things like \$, ♦, ♥, by inserting the correct ASCII decimal code for these symbols. You would key in the *P and then insert the ASCII code for symbol and then the *.

Some writing programs allow you to insert Escape codes for the printer. You should consult the documentation that came with your word processing program to see how these codes should be entered. If they allow you to use Escape codes, you will have to set the numbers lock key on if you are using the Junior keyboard. Setting NumLock on is done by pressing Alt-Fn N. This allows the number keys at the top of the keyboard to be used with the Alt key to enter the codes.

So, take a look at that old printer manual (if you haven't thrown it away). If you thought your old printer could only do "straight text" with Writing Assistant and were thinking about buying a newer one, think again. That old workhorse will work well whether you are typing headlines for your newsletter, the newsletter text itself, or if you want to use condensed text for your by-lines.

Health Insurance for Junior

Phil Janz

If there is one inexpensive thing you can do for "jr" to keep it from getting a terminal financial ailment, it is protecting the motherboard pins that you plug the many cables and accessories into on the back of your "baby." Without plastic protectors to guide plugs in straight and even, you stand a better than even chance of bending, breaking or pushing in a pin! If you take "jr's" temperature after such a mishap, you may see the mercury go off the scale . . . a repair man rubs his hands in glee and downtime is long and perhaps fatal.

Look at the back of "jr" (dirty diapers? You have the wrong "jr") and if you don't have two grey snap-in plastic protectors in place, quickly call Dr.

Eugene, PCjr Club, and order a set. If the "coffee" is right, Dr. Eugene may even make a house call as we really believe in prevention. At \$3.50 a set, you can't afford not to protect your smallest family member!

Is It Time to Make That Big Move Up?

The ad in the newspaper said "XT clone, 640K, 2-floppy drives, 30MB hard drive, EGA monitor and lots of software. \$395 or best offer." And, have you seen the prices for new 386 machines? Carl Haub, past president of the Metro PCjr Club in Washington, DC, recently said, "386 prices (have fallen) to K-Mart levels." How true this is.

So, why are you putting off buying another computer? Prices of "real" computers keep falling and falling. All the other folks have moved "up" to newer machines; and, many times, at cheaper prices than we originally paid for our Juniors. In fact, if you got that XT in the newspaper for \$395 and sold your Junior for \$150 or so, the XT would end up costing only about \$250! That's much less than a hard drive by itself for your Junior.

Maybe you should sell your Junior and get a new machine. If you need the "power" of a 286 AT class machine, and if you are finding your Junior is too slow, you probably feel the need for additional "speed." But, wasn't it Mike Horn who said, "My computer waits more on me than I wait on it." Maybe you feel that you need a "mega-byte" hard drive. It is normal to sit at work using one of the larger machines and say that it would be nice to have one like it to use at home. But do you really need it? Maybe you don't.

Most of the Juniors owned by members of the Eugene PCjr Club already have more than 128K of memory. Is it possible that all you need to do to make you happy is add some memory to your Junior? Would adding a 2nd disk drive solve your problems? (Perceived problems?) Do you actually need a hard drive?

turn, turn, turn ➤

We have lost some of our original club members who have "moved up and out" because they purchased a "Junior Clone." But, we have other members of our club who have purchased other computers to complement their Juniors, and they remain active and viable members of the club. We also have those members who are completely happy with Junior being their only computer. In fact, some members who have a basic 128K Junior see no need whatsoever to change their machine as it is doing the job they need done.

Our diverse computer club membership includes those who have just recently purchased their Juniors. Like many of the long-time Junior club members, they are finding that their Junior is adapting speedily to their needs. Their "peanut" computer is keeping the books both for their home and business, and is producing "letter perfect" homework for the kids. It is doing correspondence and newsletters. Junior is keeping them abreast of the market via *Prodigy* while at the same time holding down their personal debt (by keeping them from putting a new computer on their credit card). Junior is doing the tax preparation this year for some of their owners, and its entertaining the whole family at the same time with games.

So, when you're tempted by the latest technology, be sure to ask yourself if you really need it. If you find the pull to be more than you can handle, check out some of the suppliers who are making that technology available to your Junior. You may find that the prices for hard drives, speed-up boards and memory for Junior have also come down to "K-Mart levels." It may be time to expand Junior! After all, that little machine surely has been dependable.

(Not So Recently)
HEARD ON THE
STREET

by Dick Page

I don't know how many of you truly can say you've noticed that my column has been missing. But Louie claims that the question has been broached to him, so he has asked me to explain a bit.

First off all, I am still banging away on my PCjr and haven't deserted Junior for one of those big, screaming 486's. (Although, in all honesty, the lack of "spare dollars" is all that has prevented me from making the move - and some day that hurdle will be overcome.)

Second, "life events" have been consuming almost all of my spare time and energy this past year. In struggling with the process of prioritizing life's demands I found that the *Heard on the Street* column has had to be placed low on that list.

I will continue to do what I can for the club and have been very appreciative of the understanding of Louie and the other club members who have had to "take up the slack" for me. Our dedicated editor (Ed: I'm getting embarrassed) continues to do a magnificent job at publishing a very interesting and useful newsletter. (Ed: Now, I'm really embarrassed!) I hope everyone appreciates the amount of effort he continually puts into making this publication a real asset for PCjr lovers everywhere.

MARCH WILL BE GRAPHICS WITH JUNIOR MONTH:

One of the interesting and fun things about computers is their ability to create images. Programs designed to do that are often lumped into the category of "Graphics Programs." I have been asked to put on a "Graphics Workshop" in March. I thought you might like to know a little bit more about the general topic of graphics programs, so I will have an article about them in the March issue of this newsletter. Be sure to look for it. In the mean time, I hope that some of our younger members will take advantage of Lindsey Hoffman's February workshop, *PrintShop for Kids*, and learn more about graphics and Junior.

See you next month!

Dick

STOP HERE
and go
HUG your Valentine!



COMING WORKSHOPS

Phil Janz

The Club Workshops offered in November and January have successfully helped Club members with Writing Assistant and Spread Sheets. The following workshops still have some available spots in front of a willing and able "jr"! Sign up and take part.

FEBRUARY:

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

This workshop meets on February 20. This date can be changed to accommodate class needs. The construction of newsletters and special occasions fliers will be the focus of this session. Fee of \$6.00 per person. Instructors - Louie Levy and Phil Janz.

PRINTSHOP FOR KIDS

This workshop meets on February 27. This date can be changed to accommodate class needs. Learn to use *Printshop* to make posters, banners, greeting cards and more! Do fun things for school projects, club projects, fund raising, birthday parties, etc. If transportation to and from the workshop is a problem let Lindsey know and something will be worked out. Instructor - Lindsey Hoffman (phone 688-6069)

MARCH:

GRAPHICS

This workshop meets on March 19. Focus will be on *drawing programs* and Junior. You might think of them as a more elaborate, electronic version of Etch-A-Sketch. (See the March issue for an in-depth article on this workshop.) Instructor - Dick Page

MEMORY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

This workshop meets on March 26. Class will cover JRCONFIG to make special purpose boot disks to utilize all of Junior's memory. AUTOEXEC.BAT files will be covered. Instructor - Louie Levy

APRIL:

PC-FILE III or EXPANDING Jr's MEMORY

This workshop meets on April 16. A

decision will be made at the Feb. Club meeting concerning the workshop topic. Instructor - Louie Levy

ONGOING MONTHLY:

WORD PERFECT

(Word Processing)

An orientation and interest meeting was held February 9 for those club members who indicated an interest in pursuing this powerful program on their Juniors. This will be an individualized workshop in that meetings will take place in each individual's home on an "as-need" basis. If you think you may like to learn more about WordPerfect and Junior, it isn't too late to inquire about this workshop. Call 343-7592 or check with Louie.

"OK, sign me up!"

PCjr Club WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, ZIP _____ PHONE _____

Workshop Name: _____

FEE (\$6 per single-night Workshop, or
\$8 per two-night Workshop: \$ _____

- * Workshop participants must be Club 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 mailed to Phil Janz, 155 34th Place East, Eugene 97405.
- * Checks should be made payable to EUGENE PCjr CLUB.

Do you have an inventory of your household possessions? You should, and there is a program in the Club disk library that will make doing this necessary chore FUN! Disk P-505, *Home Inventory* is just the ticket for providing this much needed inventory for your insurance records.

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 checks payable to:

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

WANTED: Need a copy of *Cracking the "Peanut"* by Hank Mishkoff, and SAMS' *IBM PCjr User's Guide*. Drop us a postcard with your best price. Books & Bytes, 280 Brae Burn Dr., Eugene, OR 97405-2033.

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 + or 5.0

Writing Assistant or Managing

Your Money: Ginny Dodson - 935-3863

Sierra Games: Cindy Page - 342-3193

Hardware Problems: Dick Page - 342-3193

Spreadsheets Programs:

Frank Ratti - 747-8315

For help in the Portland Metro

Area, call Robert Mueller: 252-1106



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