



EUGENE

PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

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

MEETING
AGENDA

From the Oval Office
by Frank Ratti

The October meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will take place at the Northwest Natural Gas Bldg., 790 Goodpasture Island Road. Setup and disk sales will begin at 6:30 and the meeting will start at 7pm.

OFFICERS

- President Frank Ratti
- Vice President. Christine Brown
- Treasurer Phil Janz
- Disk Librarian. Paul Bonney
- Ass't Disk Librarians Lindsey Hoffman
Cindy Page
Simon Ratti
- Documents Librarian Dick Page
- Modem Captain Gordon LeManquais
- Commercial Contacts Warren Hampton
Juanita Hampton
- Social Director Rosemary Janz
- Newsletter Editor Louie Levy
- Newsletter Coeditor Barbara Caselton
- Contributing Editor Dick Page

Yes, it is October. The potluck picnic was a culinary success as usual. Sometimes, I wonder whether some members of this club are more interested in the refreshments than the multi-faceted computer education offered. Of course all are welcome to the Eugene PCjr Club meetings and workshops no matter what your original motivation, because we believe we have something to offer anyone who owns a Junior computer.

This club is entering its 8th year of existence, and is still going strong with a newsletter, monthly meetings, hands-on workshops, and, most importantly, active members. Whether you have upgraded your machine to match the macro clones on the market, or you just purchased an original 128k machine, we will try to tailor a program to meet your level of expertise.

Our Workshop Coordinator, Phil Janz, reports that the Writing Assistant For Student Classroom Assignments workshop is a GO. Phil and Louie Levy are looking forward to interacting with the group of young people who have signed up for this important class tentatively set for Sunday afternoons, October 18 and 25.

The club is entering new territory for the October meeting. After many successful years meeting in the Ida Patterson School library, we are switching venues to a new meeting location. Our new meeting room in the Northwest Natural Gas Building promises to be quite an improvement over our past meeting space. We are looking forward to some new capabilities in this room and are going to try out one this month. October is going to be modem month with a presentation coordinated by Gordon LeManquais. Gordon has invited a friend, Tony Sabbato, who is the operator of the Dr. ROM local bulletin board. Tony will demonstrate to us various aspects of local bulletin boards, sources of shareware, and other applications of modems. Our new meeting location has the capability of direct phone access to our computers, which we didn't have in the past.

We need your enthusiastic participation to make this change of meeting places a success. The October meeting will be a great beginning. The address is 790 Goodpasture Island Road (next to K-Mart). See you there!

MODEM DEMO ON SLATE FOR OCTOBER MEETING

It is time for another modem demo! I don't know what it is about modems that has most of us befuddled, but whatever it is, very few members of our club use their modems. It must be something inherent with PCjr users: we just keep our distance from trying out anything that is new to us.

Yes, I have a modem. In fact, I have two modems. Have I ever used either of them? Yes, again. I have contacted the local library twice to look up books. That's it. I did log on to a local Bulletin Board a while back but that's about all I did. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know how to retrieve anything, let alone how to save anything to disk.

Well, after our October meeting, we'll all be out there "telecommunicating." This month's program will be presented to us by Dr. Rom's Bulletin Board. The Dr. Rom BBS is run by Dale Hayes and Tony Sabbato and it is on line 24 hours a day. Club member Gordon LeManquais has contacted these guys and they are very understanding of our problems. Tony Sabbato is going to come on Thursday night and demonstrate to us, using Gordon's PCjr, just how easy it is to call Dr. Rom's BBS, how to "log on" and do all the things we have been so paranoid about.

This promises to be a great first meeting in our new "home" at the Northwest Natural Gas building. All of us thank Gordon for making contact with the operators of the Dr. Rom Board and getting them to give us this important program. It is difficult for us to comprehend the amount of Shareware programs available locally through the BBS systems; there are over 40 bulletin boards in the Eugene/Springfield area. It will be nice to get the key to unlock this new area of computing to all of us!

DON'T MISS OUT!

Wesley Mercer to Edit *The Orphan Peanut*

When a newsletter editor retires, it is next to impossible to find a replacement. About the only thing scarcer than hen's teeth is a new newsletter editor. This is just what our sister club in Atlanta, Georgia has found. Wesley Mercer, brave member and masochist, has answered the call of the Atlanta group and has taken over the editorship of *The Orphan Peanut*.

Past editor, long-time friend and mentor, David Wilson, who has been listening to "Goober Peas" for the past several years, will be marching to a different tune. David is stepping down as editor to pursue the Atlanta Club's outreach program. His new tune may be "Let Me Hold Your Hand" as he searches for ways to get unused Juniors and other computers into the hands of needy and anxious folks at the CCC Homeless Women and Children's Shelter in Atlanta. It's my understanding that this PCjr guru had success getting a Commodore up and running. "Atta Boy, Dave!"

CINDY PAGE - Member of the Month

Along with "Atta Boys," we need an "Atta Girl." Did everyone see Cindy Page's picture in the local newspaper back in August? Cindy was the recipient of the Young Answers Outstanding Volunteer Award that is given by the Youth Development Commission. Each month, the commission honors an individual or team of volunteers for a community service project exemplifying the diversity, ability and generosity of youth.

All of us have appreciated what Cindy has done for the Eugene PCjr Club, and we share her pride with this award she so justly deserves. We also thought it was great that she mentioned her affiliation with the Junior Club in the newspaper! "Atta Girl, Cindy!"

Something For Baby

This was the title of an article by Sandy Shapiro in the *jr Newsletter*. Sandy said that she (he?) hears about adults using their computers for writing, filing and keeping track of expenses; teenagers use the computer to do homework and play adventure games and younger children are into educational games like Reader Rabbit. Sandy says, "What about programs for toddlers?"

Well, Sandy sent in a neat little BASIC program that originally appeared in *Family Computing Magazine* called "Babybox." Whenever a key is pressed or the joystick is moved, a random sound and color response is generated. If it can hold Sandy's 18 month old son fascinated for hours, we felt it would be a neat program to pass on.

Load BASIC (if you have the BASIC cartridge in your Junior, type in BASICA and you will go to the BASIC prompt), type in the following CAREFULLY, and save it to disk. Sandy does note that children under two (and those over two, also) can be very hard on a keyboard, so it is suggested that you have your toddler use an old chicklet keyboard.

We appreciate the *jr Newsletter* for printing Sandy's article. If you own a Junior, we feel it is absolutely necessary that you subscribe to the *jr Newsletter*. You may think that by belonging to a Junior Club or a Junior SIG group that you are keeping up, but the *jr Newsletter* is THE SOURCE of information for and about the PCjr; especially "techie" stuff that many of us in the trenches can't write about. Make note of the address at the end of this article and send in your check!

```
10 DEF SEG=0
20 SCREEN 1,1
30 WIDTH 40
40 KEY OFF
50 STRIG ON
60 CLS
90 LOCATE 4,14:PRINT "*-BABY BOX-*"
100 LOCATE 8,2:PRINT "PRESS THE KEYS"
110 PITCH=0
```

```
120 IF STRIG(1) <> 0 OR INKEY$ <> ""
THEN 170
130 IF PITCH=0 THEN 120
140 SOUND PITCH,20
150 COLOR 0,1
160 GOTO 110
170 POKE 1050, PEEK(1052)
180 FOR D=1 TO 200
190 NEXT D
220 COLOR INT(RND*3)+1,INT(RND*2)+1
230 PITCH=RND*180+150
240 SOUND PITCH,2
250 GOTO 120
```

A subscription to the *jr Newsletter* costs \$23 for 12 issues (24 pages per issue!). It is covered by a satisfaction guarantee and you can begin getting your very own copy by writing to:

jr Newsletter
Box 163
Southbury, CT 06488

...and tell them you heard about their great publication in the Eugene PCjr Newsletter.

And speaking of the *jr Newsletter*, we don't usually get into articles about hard disk management in our newsletter, but Joe Sturgil had a note in this same issue of the *jr Newsletter* that we feel should be repeated.

Those of us with hard drives have a DOS directory with many files that could be deleted as we don't use them enough to warrant their taking up space. Junior users also have a few files that we have located on our "root directory" on our boot disks. Files like LIST.COM, PKXARC, CLEAN and others. If you would make a DOS directory or UTIL on your boot disk and copy these files to these directories, you could always have immediate access to them. All you need is to have both DOS and UTIL in a PATH statement on your boot disk.

We won't take up the space here to explain how to create the PATH statement, but if you have any questions about them, check pages 2-108 and 2-109 in the DOS 2.1 manual, or bring the question up at the next meeting of your computer club.



VIRUS ALERT

Reprinted from the *Central Iowa Computer User* (Des Moines) and the GTBBS via *Q Bits*, the Newsletter of the Quad-Cities Computer Society. We did change a few to keep up with current events.

- George Bush virus - Doesn't do anything, and you can't get rid of it until November.
- Dan Quayle virus - Changes spelling of some words in your spell checker such as "Potatoe" and "Lousey."
- Bill Clinton virus - This virus mutates from region to region; we're not exactly sure just what it does.
- Al Gore virus - Uses up all of the environmental space in your memory.
- Ted Kennedy virus - crashes your computer but denies it ever happened.
- Warren Commission virus - Won't allow you to open your files for 75 years.
- Jerry Brown virus - Blanks your screen and begins flashing an 800 number.
- David Duke virus - Makes your screen go completely white.
- Congressional virus - Overdraws your disk space, but shows a positive balance.
- Paul Tsongas virus - Pops up on December 25th and says, "I'm not Santa Claus."
- Pat Buchanan virus - Shifts all output to the extreme right of the screen.
- Richard Nixon virus - also known as the "Tricky Dick virus;" you can wipe it out, but it always makes a comeback.
- H. Ross Perot virus - same as the Jerry Brown virus, only with nicer fonts, and it appears to have had a lot of money put into its development. Just

when you think it's gone, it keeps coming back.

The League of Women Voter's reminds us that October 13th is the deadline to register to vote in Oregon for the November election. If you haven't registered yet, there is a form in all local phone books. Do it now.



*I have a spelling checker,
It came with my PC;
It plainly marks four my revue
Mistakes I cannot sea.
I've run this poem threw it,
I'm sure your please too no,
Its letter perfect in it's weigh,
My checker tolled me sew.*

Quoted by Penny Harper in "The Reader's Digest"



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Swap Meet

The Eugene PC Club will be holding it's Computer Swap Meet on Saturday, October 24th from 9am to 1pm in the old A & R building in Santa Clara Square shopping center. You can't miss it; just look for the banners. There will be tables full of used computers, parts, software, and there will be lots of "stuff" at the silent auction. Many programs will be demonstrated: DOS 5, OS2, QUICKEN, MANAGING YOUR MONEY and much more. For directions, contact Dick Page, Phil Janz or Louie Levy. As Dick says, "Be there or be square!"

Importing Writing Assistant Files Into Windows Applications

Because of its user friendliness, many PCjr owners use *Writing Assistant* at home to create documents that will later be used in an office environment where there are other word processors running under the Microsoft *Windows* environment. Word processors that run under *Windows* will import documents from other word processors, but none in the past have been able to import good old *Writing Assistant* files. In order to use these *Writing Assistant* files, the Junior user usually saves their documents as an ASCII text file by "printing" it to disk, then using this ASCII text file at work. Now there is a program that allows nearly any word processing program to translate *Writing Assistant* files.

Mastersoft's *Windows Word for Word* allows someone in the *Windows* environment to both import and export text files in *Writing Assistant* format. They make several versions to chose from no matter what your office is using: a DOS version, one for *Windows*, an OS/2 ver-

sion and even one for Macintosh. This should keep our old *Writing Assistant* going for quite some time!

You can contact Mastersoft, Inc. at 6991 E. Camelback Road, Suite A320, Scottsdale, AZ, 85251. *Windows Word for Word* lists for \$79.

Clearing Up Version Numbers

by Dick Page

As you may have noticed, many software programs have a "Version Number" included after the program's name. While the intention of including this number is to help clarify whether the program has been revised, it often just leads to confusion. Maybe some comments on version numbers will help.

The first thing to know is that there is NO standard in the industry; they can do whatever they want. So, comparisons can be deceiving.

Generally speaking, when a program first comes on the market it is labeled Version 1 (or "V 1.0"). If a substantial change or numerous little changes are then made, the updated version jumps a full number. Version 1.0 becomes V2.0. If only a few minor changes are made in the program the version may only change one or two tenths. V2.1 to V2.2 for example.

Some software publishers add letters (V3.4A2) or they call the first version available to the public "V2.0" reasoning that the original "rough cut" pre-release trial version, usually called "Beta Version," should be considered Version 1.0.

Remember that major upgrades (as from V3.0 to V4.0) may cause you more heartaches than pleasure. The software publisher may have rushed this "major improvement" to market without adequately testing it. If you have Version 3.0 you may want to wait for V4.1 rather than buying V4.0. The minor upgrade to V4.1 might be just getting rid of all the glitches in the major upgrade to V4.0.

Also, in comparing similar types of software, don't use the version number as the determiner of which program to buy. One company's brand new program (V1.0) may have fresh, innovative features and thus be better than another company's longstanding program which has undergone many revisions.

Good luck choosing software. Just remember -- "It's a jungle out there! Buyer beware!"

Origins of Courier Typeface

Condensed from PUBLISH! magazine, Jan/Feb '87 by Dick Page

One of the most popular typefaces is Courier. It was originally designed for IBM in 1952 by Howard G. Keller. It has been estimated that Courier is available for 75% of the business typewriters in the U.S. We have come to accept it as the proper look for typical business letters and documents.

Courier is considered a "monospaced" or fixed-pitch face. All characters fit into a cell of the same width and thus take up the same amount of space when printed. In Courier, the "i" has been stretched and the "m" squeezed to approximate the width of the "n". Its lowercase letters have been extended, and its capitals condensed to fit into the single width.

By contrast, the "m" of many professionally typeset letter styles is twice as wide as the "n" and three times as wide as the "i".

Utilizing monospacing was necessary in order for the mechanical typewriter to easily space each letter as it was typed. Unfortunately this makes Courier less legible and less attractive.

Courier does, however, have artistic origins and some artistic flair. That's because it is based on a slab-serif type style called Egyptian, first produced by English type-founders early in the 19th century. In the early 20th century, avant garde designers constructed geometric Egyptian typefaces like Memphis, Beton and Stymie, from circles and

straight lines. In Howard Kettler's fixed-pitch interpretation of the style, the circles were converted to ellipses, but the construction principles remained evident.

Next time you read a typewritten letter look at the typeface used. It probably is the old IBM-created standard, Courier.

Odds and Ends for Junior's Eternal Life

Is the V-20 chip for you? This micro-processor replaces the main processing chip (the 8088) on your Junior's motherboard. The V-20 is made by NEC and can improve your computing performance by up to 30% in some applications. If there is enough interest in using this chip, the Club can get up a group order and install them at a future meeting.

How about a reset switch? A reset switch is a little red button on the front of your Junior that you press to reboot. It works when Ctrl/Alt/Delete won't. A reset switch installed by the Club will set you back only \$5, and the Club gets it all! 

Want to extend the life of Junior? Heat is the biggest enemy to any computer. If you have been bringing your Junior in for the annual Spring Cleaning each year, more than likely, your Junior has never failed you. If you haven't been able to take advantage of this free offering from your Club, there are still things you can do for self-help.

Most of us have our monitors sitting on top of our Juniors. Take it off and vacuum it. It has mesh screening inside that keeps most spiders and bugs out, but you need to remove all the dust that collects on both the top and rear of your monitor if you want to keep it cool. 

While you have the monitor off, remove Junior's lid. Most will come off by just lifting up on the rear portion of the lid, but you can use a flat blade screwdriver in the slots provided on the

continued on next page>>

rear of Junior to pry up on the lid if necessary. Look inside. If you find dust and dirt around the rear of your disk drive, it needs to be cleaned! If you use the vacuum here, also use caution. Fast air flow can set up a static charge that can zap some chips, so be careful. Use a soft brush and try to keep the vacuum cleaner attachment away from the components on your motherboard.

You should not keep Junior or your monitor boxed in. What we mean is that you need to give Junior, or any other computer, monitor and printer, room to breath clean, cool, fresh air. Don't stack books next to Junior and don't shove the monitor up against the wall.

You can also extend (or save) Junior's life by using a surge suppressor. Most surges occur when power is applied or when it is initially turned on. Some businesses never turn their computers off thereby avoiding that first surge every day.

When you think about what can wear out in your Junior you should think about what moving parts you have. The switch on the back is the part that fails more often than the other moving part, the disk drive. If you use a surge protecting power strip, you can save wear and tear on Junior's switch by using the switch on the strip instead. There are other pluses when you do this. One is the power transformer isn't left on all the time, generating heat. If you use the switch on the power strip to power on Junior, your printer and your monitor, you will be saving wear on all the switches AND the transformer. Believe me, it is much cheaper to replace a power strip than any of the switches in your computer setup.

One item that can be classified as insurance is called "socket protectors." They cost only \$5 from the Club or other vendors and they go a long way in preventing damage to the delicate pins on the backside of Junior. Much damage has been done by nearly all of us by plugging and unplugging our joy sticks, keyboard cords, monitors and other components into Junior. The socket protectors help guide these plugs into the sockets preventing damage to the pins on the motherboard.

If you want to extend your printer's life, like Junior, you should clean it from time to time. Use a vacuum cleaner to remove dust from the cooling slots and to remove paper dust from the printer's innards. All parts should be kept free of dust with a cover. A small drop of oil on gears and guide rods will go a long way in keeping your printer perking.



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