



EUGENE

PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Volume VIII
Number 12
December 1992

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

MEETING

AGENDA

The December meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club is the Annual Christmas Potluck and will be held in the recreation room of the Church of Christ, 2424 Workenzie Road in Eugene on Thursday, Dec. 10th. Setup will begin at 6pm.

OFFICERS

- President Frank Ratti
- Vice President. Christine Brown
- Treasurer Phil Janz
- Disk Librarian. Paul Bonney
- Ass't Disk Librarians Lindsey Hoffman
Cindy Page
- Documents Librarian Simon Ratti
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

FROM THE OVAL OFFICE

Frank Ratti

Can you believe it's December, 1992? Weren't we just recently throwing steaks on the "barbie?" Have you raked those leaves yet? They are all down by now. Highway 242 at McKenzie Pass is closed for the season; I hope you are carrying your traction devices. These are the mandates of the winter season that is upon us. As good Oregonians we don't flinch at the change of the season, but even welcome the inclement weather. We know what to do with it. We dress up and go out anyway.

I am contemplating what are the characteristics of Oregonians that results in the last active chapter of an IBM PCjr Club in the United States. Isn't the ALAMO in Texas, and the Little Big Horn in Montana? Why is this group holding out with their Juniors when the rest of the world has moved on to Seniors? Clubs in major cities have folded one by one. Certainly most of the Junior computers still exist on owner's desks or in their garages. Some have surely gone on to higher and faster, but many aren't being used for lack of imagination and loss of support. There are several reasons why the Eugene Club is still active, and I can think of at least three important ones right off my RAM.

1 - VISION! The club has articulated a mission over the past few years and kept to it. This is to serve the needs of the beginning computer user to which the PCjr is ideally suited. As other computers proliferate, the Junior is available for next to nothing to those who wants to hunt for one. Even in its smallest memory setup one can learn DOS, word processing, BASIC programming, spreadsheet and database principles, and a host of other basics for computer literacy.

2 - LEADERSHIP! The leaders of this club, and I don't mean just the officers, have kept contributing to the mission of the club to teach computer literacy through the PCjr to whoever wishes to learn. Many of the original members, who have long ago graduated to higher levels of knowledge, keep active to offer workshops and personal assistance to recent Junior users.

3 - FRIENDSHIP! Computer knowledge and lingo is 51% of the mix of the Eugene PCjr Club. The other 49% is lasting friendships that have arisen that will certainly outlast the club itself. The Christmas Potluck is a good example of what has worked well. On this occasion we let the Junior take a back seat. Usually, it plays holiday disk-o carols. Food and friendship are the software demonstration of the evening. We invite spouses and significant others who have never touched that thing on the counter, but have been meaning to one of these days. We have a gift exchange, and perhaps a surprise or two. Come and celebrate our continued existence as a club and share in this annual meal with us. PEACE ON EARTH, AND GOODWILL TOWARD ALL PERSONS.

Frank Ratti

Merry Christmas!

CLUB'S CHRISTMAS PARTY PLANS

Our Christmas pot luck has become one of the favorite club gatherings of the year for members and their families. We aren't sure if it's the food...the gift exchange...or just the friendly atmosphere that always seems to happen.

So that you and your family won't forget to join us for our 1992 Annual Christmas Party, MARK DECEMBER 10TH ON YOUR CALENDAR NOW!!!!

The Hoffmans (bless 'em) have once again made sure that the kitchen and recreation rooms will be available to us at the Church of Christ, 2424 Norkenzie Road. We hope members will begin to arrive around 6 pm. We plan to eat by 6:30. In order that we will have a variety of food to eat, those who can do so are asked to bring two dishes --- a main dish or a side dish and either a salad or a dessert. If you aren't able to prepare so much food, or if you are just one person attending, one dish (or whatever) is just fine. Please bring your own table service. The club will furnish beverages and a bucket of fried chicken.

A gift exchange is again planned for those who wish to participate. Bring either a "white elephant" or an inexpensive item, (it doesn't have to be a computer item). Be sure to bring one wrapped gift item for each member of the family who wants to participate.

I HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US.....BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!!!

Rosie Janz



E-Z DIRECTIONS: The large intersection above is the Beltline and Delta Highway interchange just north of downtown Eugene. Just north of the interchange, take Green Acres Road east (right). The first road past Delta Oaks Shopping Center (Best, GI Joe's, Price Chopper, etc.) is Norkenzie. Turn south (right) onto Norkenzie and go two short blocks. The Church of Christ is on the right (correct) side just before the Beltline overpass. Drive around the church and park in the back parking lot.



The following is only a small part of an excellent article written by Bob Gauthier, Secretary and Newsletter Editor for the Central Connecticut PC (PCjr) Group in Coventry, Connecticut.

And Then There Was Only One

Seven years ago there were literally hundreds of PCjr user groups located across the United States. Virtually every major city had at least one, and more often than not, two PCjr groups. IBM had just pulled the plug on the Junior and users were forced to pull together on their own to gain the support that they needed and deserved.

During the years that followed, believe it or not, the popularity of the PCjr actually grew. There were so many users that were not content with letting the Junior do what it was designed to do, (very little). They wanted to push Junior far beyond that. They wanted Junior to become a machine that one could do more than just play cute games on.

When hardware and software vendors caught wind of this they all realized that there was a buck to be made in a marketplace where there were over half a million potential buyers.

Soon you could see products that made Junior more and more like it's big brother the IBM AT. Sure, with each of these new enhancements you had to know little tricks to get the Junior to perform with them, but just the fact that you could get them to run with, say a hard disk or a second floppy drive, gave the user a sense of accomplishment that is far too complex to put into words.

When new technology was developed for the rest of the PC industry, somewhere, somehow, somebody would come along and design a way to make that technology work on the PCjr. That "never give up" attitude gave the PCjr users a reputation of being some of the strongest bunch of die-hards that the computer industry has ever known or will ever know for that matter.

But things began to happen in the computer market. First there was the 386 machines. With these new machines on the market the prices of 286 machines began to drop. . . .

But I believe that the real straw that broke the camel's back was when the 486 machines hit the market and the industry started pushing that dreaded program called Windows. . . .

However, upgrading Junior was not what this story was to have been about. I just gave you that brief Junior history lesson so that you might better understand what I am about to say, or at least understand why what I am about to say has come to be.

Like I said at the start of this story, in 1985 through about 1990 there were hundreds of PCjr groups nation wide all bonded together with one thing in mind. That was to keep the Junior alive and make it do far more than it was designed to do. These groups were all successful, but by the end of 1990 there were only a handful of true PCjr groups left.

During 1991 I know of only four pure PCjr groups across the U.S. that were still in existence. Most had disbanded and some had merged with, and become SIGs (special interest groups) of larger PC user groups. By mid 1992 that number had dwindled to two groups, The Atlanta PCjr User Group of Atlanta GA and the Eugene PCjr Club of Eugene OR.

But now there is only one. The Atlanta group announced in their last newsletter that they were planning to call it quits. . . . Whatever action is taken, will become official on the 31st of December, 1992. That's when the Atlanta PCjr Users Group, as we know it today, will cease to exist.

It is sad to see a group such as the Atlanta group have to call it quits after so many productive years. I have reprinted several articles from their newsletter in this newsletter because they always had interesting and helpful PCjr related articles. They will be missed dearly by myself and by anyone else associated with the PCjr. But like the PCjr itself, even though they are a vanishing breed, their legacy will go on forever because deep in all of our hearts we all know that no matter what happens.....

*****PCjr LIVES*****

From the Newsletter of the Central CT PC/PCjr User's Group by Bob Gauthier.

SO, WHY ARE WE STILL HERE?

Bob Gauthier's insights into the demise of PCjr clubs are well founded. When a club is built around only one model computer, it is difficult indeed to keep members if their interests begin moving away from that one machine to another.

It is difficult to say why the Eugene PCjr Club is still in existence let alone give reasons why it is so healthy. One reason may be that the Eugene Club targeted those who need help with Junior rather than targeting those who just own "computers." Junior owner's do have special needs as Bob so eloquently put it when he said that you must learn the "tricks" required to get some software going on Junior that are not required if you own other machines. Most of the Eugene PCjr Club members only own PCjr computers. When a member purchases another machine they may stay with our club for a while, but soon they move to the Eugene PC User's Group, the club that addresses all DOS and OS/2 machines.

Another reason for our longevity is that we try to follow the Junior when the owner sells it. We know what it feels like to be orphaned, so we search out the Junior's new owner and they soon take the old owner's place in the Club. We do this because we feel that we have something to offer the beginning computer user, and many times, Junior is a person's first DOS machine.

Perhaps a third reason for our being is that although the past owner of a PCjr in our area may no longer need our help with his or her Junior, they may need a little expertise with their new machines and feel uncomfortable asking in the surroundings of a new club. As a couple of our members have some knowledge of 486 and 386 "Junior clones," the Eugene PCjr Club can still help them through their transition period with their new machine.

One problem we have heard in the past that has caused great clubs to discontinue is leadership. While they have had good leadership in the past, no one feels comfortable taking over any of the offices; they may feel intimidated by the excellent performance of the

"old" president or vice president, so no one will come forward to replace them. Soon, the club only has a few at the core who "run" the club and, when one of them "moves on," the club is left with no one to fill the void. Members of the Eugene Club are no different. When it comes time for one member to step down from office, he or she will help the new officer perform the job. While it would be easy for past officers to "run" the club usurping the new officer, this has never been the case. It is the sole responsibility of the new officer to do the job to which they were elected.

We feel that Junior owners are special. Remember how VW bug owners used to honk at each other? Or, how Berkenstock shoe wearers always seem to stump the same toe? How about college grads always buying the same gaudy rings or yuppies always having to own Golden Labs and Jeeps or Broncos? Well, folks who own Juniors are special; at least everyone who owns a Junior is special to the Eugene PCjr Club whether they are members or not!

So, I guess we'll be here another year. After all, Junior hasn't broken yet!

WHAT'S NEXT?

Excerpts from the October issue of The Orphan Peanut, official organ of the Atlanta PCjr Users Group.

Today, one can have a PCjr with an 8086/8088 10 MHz V20 Microprocessor which means the Junior will operate at 9.54 MHz. In addition to its standard 16 color graphics display and three voice arcade quality sound, a simple modification allows one to run Tandy and compatible programs in 16 colors with the Tandy 4 voice arcade quality sound. With a memory sidecar and a second drive, Prodigy and many of the IBM PC programs are accessible in 16 colors by use of a simple screen driver added to the boot program. In addition to CGA, the PCjr may be modified to accept a VGA sidecar giving the Junior VGA, EGA, CGA and MDA graphics. By first adding 640KB of RAM memory one may later extend to 736KB of RAM and extended memory to one megabyte. While the original PCjr had

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one 5¼" 360KB floppy, there are available 5¼" 720KB and 1.2MB drives and also 3½" drives with 720KB, 1.44MB and 2.88MB. Additionally, hard drives to 80MB with or without SCSI Host Adapters are available for the PCjr. (The Eugene PCjr Club has one member who's Junior uses a 127MB hard drive and DOS 5.0 and another with two 20MB hard drives.) With the SCSI Host Adapters, a CD-ROM with the equivalent capacity of thirty 20MB hard drives and 340ms of access time as well as a 21MB Floptical drive which also accepts 720KB and 1.44MB diskettes may be added. External tape backup systems with either 40 or 80MB are available to go with increased storage capacity. If a turbo drive is added to the Junior, it will out perform an IBM PS/2 model 70 with a 386 micro-processor. In fact, WordPerfect 5.1 loads in just over two seconds. A 101 keyboard, Microsoft mouse, light pen, joysticks, and optical scanners with an LPT Scan Adapter attached to a parallel port are all available for use as PCjr attachments. Finally, since the PCjr has two cartridge ports there are cartridges available which make the PCjr almost 100% BIOS and up to 5.0 DOS compatible with other IBM and compatible computers which makes the PCjr compatible with Windows 3.1.

In summary, with a PCjr expanded as explained briefly above, one may operate in a Windows 3.1 environment, use most mid-range modems up to 2400 Baud with communications programs such as Hayes EZ Smart Comm, Pro Comm Plus, Econnet, and PC-Talk I, II and III; use spreadsheet programs such as Quattro Pro, PFS: Plan, Lotus 1-2-3 and Microsoft Excel; use database programs such as DataPerfect, Fox Base, Fox Pro, dBase, Paradox and PFS: File (and PC-File 6.); use word processing programs such as AMI Professional, Bank Street Writer, PFS: Professional Write, WordStar, WordPerfect, LetterPerfect, Textra, QEdit and Word Publisher; and use desk top publishers such as Express Publisher and PFS: Publisher.

(We are only repeating a small portion of this article that shows the power your Junior can have should it ever become necessary. Still, we should stand by our guns and say just as Bob Gauthier said in the opening article in this newsletter, one should be aware of the amount of money one can put into Junior as opposed to another machine.

As for us, we'll stick with Junior until he quits doing what we need him to do!)

SEASON'S GREETINGS

A (fictional) NOTE FROM AL

My favorite writing program, er, I mean, my favorite word processor is Writing Assistant. I used this program to write this note to you novices who are still using the old obsolete PCjr computer. I don't mean to berate you fellows as I started out with the old Junior myself.

I purchased my 128K Junior back when the PCjr first hit the market and it was a doozie! It was top of the line with DOS 2.1 and Writing Assistant. It did everything I needed to do, and more.

When I joined the computer club, one member had a 128K IBM memory sidecar on his Junior bringing his total memory up to 256K. As this was twice as much as I had, and as the price was only a little less than \$500, I upgraded.

Another member had some handouts and I learned they were done with a printer that he had connected to his Junior. Boy, that would be great, too. So, I bought a Silver Reed daisy wheel printer (another \$495, +\$37.50 for the printer cable and \$95 for the parallel printer sidecar) and was in business with the latest technology.

Three months went by and I was very happy showing off my new computer to my friends. Happy, that is, until a neighbor showed me a "GARAGE SALE" sign that had graphics in it that he had done using "Print Shop" and his new Okidata 9-pin printer. It cost less than my daisy wheel, only \$389, so I upgraded.

Nearly six months went by before a new member of our Club showed up with the new RACORE expansion unit on his Junior. Not only did he have his memory up to 512K, but he also had a second floppy drive! This time it cost only \$595 to upgrade.

Three months later, I upgraded my memory to 640K as it only cost \$135 to do so. After all, I needed to keep up with the latest technology.

The next Christmas my son said he wanted the new version of King's Quest.

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When I went to the store and asked the clerk if this new version would run on a Junior, the clerk looked at me kind of funny and said that he didn't know there were any Juniors still running. I was shocked. I had never had any problems with my Junior and told this guy so, but he said that most folks had moved up to the PC-AT; he told me my Junior was obsolete. When I asked him what an AT was he explained to me that it was the latest in computer technology and ran at phenomenal speeds when compared to what I was using. New technology is never cheap, but for only \$2118 I upgraded.

I also upgraded from your club: I joined the MegaHertz Computer Society. At last, I was computing with the herd at the forefront of technology.

Soon, I had purchased a 1200 baud modem that I later upgraded to 2400 baud so I could communicate with the local library faster. (I haven't upgraded to 9600 baud as the local public library doesn't support 9600 baud yet.) Also, I upgraded my 9-pin printer to a 24-pin when they came out, even though my old printer ribbon was still good, as I felt the \$300 difference was well worth the price considering the upgrade.

When I upgraded my 286 for the 386SX, I goofed. I actually didn't understand the difference between 386SX and 386DX, but, as my dealer had become a pretty good friend by now, he allowed me nearly full credit on my old 386SX when I upgraded to the 386DX with the 80MB hard drive. Yep, I moved up to a larger drive from my old 40MB drive so I would have the room to run Windows when I upgraded to this new "operating system."

My dealer allowed me nearly \$35 trade-in on my 24-pin when I traded up to a laser printer. I had just put in a new ribbon and felt that I should have at least been allowed \$40, but my dealer assured me that he was selling me the latest model laser with PostScript fonts at very near his cost. And you have to admit that this letter to you looks very professional.

I don't understand why you guys are so far behind in technology. I tried to fax you this article using my new modem/fax card that I got with my 50MHz 486 machine. It is the latest technology now that I have installed OS/2 on my 425MB hard drive. OS/2 only takes up 31MB of my hard drive. The modem/fax program takes up very little

space when you think about it.

I almost forgot why I'm writing! I appreciated it when you helped me get Writing Assistant working under Windows and when you helped me get it going with OS/2. My question is, how do you change the tab settings in Writing Assistant, and why won't my copy of Junior Music Machine run now that I have upgraded to the cutting edge of technology? My son hasn't encountered these problems with our old Junior, but then, the Junior is obsolete.

AI

300 baud Junior Internal Modem Software - Now that this modem is being made available at such low prices, the question has come up as to what software can be run on a 128K Junior. Kermit meets the requirements, but needs two disk drives. Minitel runs, but is somewhat limited. Two that work well and are recommended are PC-Dial jr and jrTele.

Christmas Shop at

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Season's Greetings



Happy Holidays from
The Eugene
PCjr Club!



128K PCjr with Color Display. Also, 512K Impulse sidecar (works intermediately), 2nd stand-alone disk drive, Comrex Comwriter daisywheel printer w/keyboard (to use as electronic typewriter), jr WordStar, cartridge Lotus, Financial jr and much more. All for \$250. John, (503) 485-7353.



Two drive 512K PCjr with monochrome monitor ("B" drive needs repair.) 2 keyboards, WordPerfect, Lotus 123, original manuals and an Okidata printer. \$275. Call Lou, (503) 484-0490. If not at home, leave message and number for Lou will call back.



EUGENE **PCjr** CLUB

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