



EUGENE

NEWSLETTER

PCjr CLUB

Volume IX
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May 1993

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

MEETING

AGENDA

The May Meeting of the the Eugene PCjr Club will take place at the Northwest Natural Gas Bldg., 790 Goodpasture Island Road on Thursday, May 13th. This meeting is the Annual Spring Cleaning Meeting. Disk sales will begin at 6:30 and the meeting will start at 7pm.

OFFICERS

President Rosie Janz
Vice President. . . . Christine Brown
Treasurer Phil Janz
Disk Librarian. . . . Cindy Hoffman
Modem Captain Gordon LeManquais
Commercial Contact. . . Dick Page
Social Directors. . . . Virginia and Court Pierce
Newsletter Editor . . . Louie Levy
Contributing Editor . . To Be Appointed

PRESIDENTIAL PONTIFICATING

by Rosie Janz

At the May meeting, I was elected president of the Eugene PCjr Club. The "Oval Office" has now been replaced by the "Kitchen Table." Vice President, Christine Brown, has agreed to share the task of writing the monthly "president's letter" with me. . .so watch for her by-line.

As Frank Ratti metaphorically "handed the gavel" over to me on election night, I thought how much I have appreciated his friendly, open, and inclusive leadership style. Hat's off to you Frank for a job well done!



The April "Share and Tell" meeting could accurately have been described as a "Family Variety Night." Thanks to Megan Sundahl, our generous "Easter Bunny," members and guests of all ages were motivated to share how they were using their Juniors. Many of us were inspired by the variety of new and creative ways that we might make use of our Juniors.

Specifically, some of the products shared and/or goals members have achieved in partnership with Junior were: A "surplice letter" for campers with candy words added; writing and illustrating an essay for a competition to win a horse; a dad helping his son do advanced math and graphing algebraic formulas; teaching an "at risk" young person to read and to write and produce his own stories; storing and updating school inventory data; producing a cookbook; producing a newsletter mailing list, several data bases, a yearbook and directories for a national organization; writing newsletters, master menus and food purchasing orders for a large group; composing music and storing it on disk; using a program to sharpen up bridge game skills; creating a step by step program for children to use to learn to key-board; writing letters to inform, protest and influence; writing a



HIP HIP HURRAY TO ALL
WHO SHARED !!

"Steamy Novel" and a poem about families (should get a Pulitzer!!!). Not to mention writing several resumés, post cards to announce club meetings, producing a database of old movies for the VCR, and a database of music titles found in a collection of magazines. This is not all; it's just all that I can remember!

...our President's pontificatings continue:

The password at the May 13th meeting will be "Involvement Options". Led by our "experts," we will have an opportunity to "Spring Clean" our Juniors, take a "Guided Tour" under Junior's hood, and/or install a reset button on our Juniors. (See article, "Special Note for May Meeting" right after the Treasurer's Report.) Reasons enough to be there??? If not, you could always just come to solve the mystery of what scrumptious goodies Kurt and Sheila Sundahl will be offering us.

Rosie Janz



TREASURER'S REPORT

By Phil Janz

During this past year the Club has been able to maintain its checking account balance as well as keep a small inventory of computer parts, equipment and books on hand for sale at Club meetings as a service to the membership. Membership dues remain the Club's primary source of income and the monthly Newsletter continues to be the major expenditure. Club financial results from September, 1992 to April, 1993 are:

* Checking account balance on August 1, 1992. . . \$173.78
(Beginning of this Club year)

* Checking Account balance on April 30, 1993. . . \$276.38



* Membership & Subscriber dues income \$300.00

* Unpaid membership dues. \$ 75.00

* Accounts payable to Club through "Store". . . \$230.50

* Current "Store Inventory" \$300.00

* Time Deposit balance (Savings). \$616.73



A detailed financial report will be presented at the Spring Board of Directors meeting and will also be available at our September 9, 1993 meeting next Fall.

Program Highlights

SPECIAL NOTE FOR MAY MEETING

Our final meeting of this year will be a "hands on" session for all who attend... Keeping your computer partner "squeaky clean" makes for trouble free keyboarding during the coming Summer and Fall months. In order to plan carefully for the May 13th meeting please review the following options and respond by phone to either Louie Levy (343-7592) or Phil Janz (343-1059) before Tuesday, May 11:

- * OPTION #1 - Anyone wanting to Spring Clean your own personal Junior needs to bring the CPU (Central Processing Unit) & keyboard to the meeting. You will be assisted in vacuuming out dust, hair, etc. Also cleaning the drive heads and oiling the drive itself. Finally, taking apart the keyboard and cleaning its "inner self." There is no need to bring your monitor. The Club will have all needed cleaning materials on hand for your use at the meeting.

- * OPTION #2 - Anyone wanting to become familiar with Junior "Under Its Hood" needs only to bring this desire to the meeting. The Club will provide a 128K Junior for you to work with during the meeting. We are able to have eight work stations available. You will learn what cards and cables are inside of the CPU, their purposes, as well as being able to remove and replace them!
- * OPTION #3 - Anyone interested in installing a reset button on your Junior's CPU needs to bring your CPU to the meeting. This device will re-boot Junior without having to turn the main switch off and on, or keying in Ctrl/Alt/Delete. All parts and tools will be available at the meeting. There will be an at-cost charge for the re-set button itself.

In order for us to plan and prepare for this portion of the Club meeting, it will be most helpful if we know in advance which option you would like to take part in. Again, please let us know prior to the meeting.

Phil Janz

A Reset Switch??

Louie Levy

What is a reset switch and why would anyone want one on their Junior? Well, to begin with, most folks don't need this addition to their computer; especially if their computer is a Junior.

Have you ever had your computer just quit on you? I don't mean have you ever had it quit running; I mean just stop in the middle of something where the keyboard won't operate. When you give up and try to reboot, even using the Ctrl/Alt/Delete key combination won't work. About all you can do is turn off your Junior and turn it back on.

A reset switch operates much like the Ctrl/Alt/Delete "hot boot" maneuver on page 3-25 in the Guide to Operations manual in that it interrupts Junior's power momentarily, performing a system reset. You guessed it, this is where the name comes from.

If you are one of those who only use Junior for work, you probably will never use a reset switch. But, if you are like many of us and use your Junior as a learning tool the way it was intended to be used, then you get yourself into situations many times where a reset switch would come in handy. When all else fails, just press the little red button and Junior is up and running again.



Letter to the Editor from the American Diabetes Association, Lane County Chapter:



Enjoyed your article "You Bought Another Computer" in the April Newsletter. Our Chapter's first computer was a donated Junior, which was enhanced via a generous donation from one of your members, Mr. Elmer Hungate, and supported by the Eugene PCjr Club, through your voluntary good nature. We have always appreciated your help. Now that we have grown to need a larger and faster computer, Junior is serving as a stand alone data entry and word processing terminal for our volunteers at the Affiliate office in Portland.

We hope to continue the friendship developed.

Sincerely,

Al Burns,

Community Director and Vice President

Many thanks for the kind words from Al and for proving again, that:

PCjr
LIVES

POST: Junior's Power-On Self-Test



Like all computers, the PCjr does a complete self-test of its systems before it will let you enter data, play games or perform work. This test begins as soon as you turn on the power to the Central Processing Unit (CPU).

Most of us assume Junior will pass this self-test, so we plug our monitor, Junior printer all into one surge protecting power strip and flip the switch. By doing so, we save wear on the switches of the individual components.

But, when there is cause for us to wonder if Junior is behaving correctly, we need to have the monitor on prior to powering on Junior's CPU if we are going to see all of Junior's self-test.

Each time you power on Junior, it will run its Power On Self-Test (POST). During this test, the IBM logo appears while the computer checks and counts its memory. If POST detects a problem during this test, it will display an error message, if possible, to let you know what problem it encountered.

The first thing POST does is insure that Junior can send a stable video signal. It delivers this signal to your monitor and what is shown on the monitor is known as the IBM Color Bar Display. This Color Bar Display has Big Blue's logo and the 16 colors that Junior is capable of producing all displayed in the center of your monitor.

After the Color Bar is transmitted to the monitor, the CPU begins testing each memory chip in Junior and displays the results in the lower right of the screen. This test is actually done twice, but you will only see the numbers displayed once. The total you see on the screen should equal the total amount of memory your Junior has.

After completion of the memory test, POST continues by checking for attached devices. If a disk drive is present, it will test to see if it can communicate with the drive and while it is doing so, you will see the drive light come on momentarily.

Junior will check for other devices that may be attached by looking at the ports where they should be. If a modem is in the proper slot, or if it is connected to the proper serial port, the slot or port will pass the test. If there is a keyboard cord attaching your keyboard to the "K" port on back of Junior, all is well. If you do not have a keyboard attached to the "K" port, POST will check to see if the infrared sensor is plugged to the proper socket on the motherboard.

POST continues its check with every filled and vacant port on Junior's motherboard until it is satisfied that all is well and then Junior will issue one beep. POST will then allow the CPU to access the disk drive. If no disk is detected in the drive, the CPU will default to internal C-BASIC v C1.2 which is on a ROM chip on Junior's motherboard. If there is a PCjr Cartridge BASIC detected in one of the front slots on Junior, it will load the J-BASIC v J1.0 instead.

Remember, one beep and Junior is A-okay!

But, how about those times when Junior isn't feeling well? If you get two beeps when Junior begins its start-up process, it indicates that some sort of problem was found in the POST test. The problem may only be a minor difficulty and be nothing serious.

For instance, if a keyboard key was accidentally pressed while the POST test was in progress, Junior will signal you with two beeps and stop its boot-up process. Junior can be pretty whimsical sometimes.

Many times, Junior may give two beeps and display a message at the bottom of your monitor's screen. These messages are known as "error messages" because they inform you of some error Junior detected while it was doing its POST test.

Some error messages are only to inform you of minor problems you can quickly solve, like the message: "Non-systems disk. Replace and press any key when ready." You can change the disk, press the "enter" key and continue on with your computing session.

Other messages are more important and the computer won't allow you to

DO
NOT
PASS

continue. Unfortunately, most of the error messages are in codes rather than in plain language, so what follows is a listing of common error codes and what they mean.

Two beeps and a horizontal line across the top of the monitor's screen, and that's all, means that errors were detected in one of the following areas: the computer's registers, the Read Only Memory (ROM) chips, in the 64K memory chips on the motherboard or on the 64K memory board, or it could be something called an "8259 Interrupt Error."

As you can see, computer technicians don't want us common folk to know much. Few repair shops will actually track these problems down, but instead will replace whole components until the problem has been eliminated. Come to think of it, don't most auto repair shops do the same? Still, this problem may only be a 50 cent fuse that needs replacing.



ERROR A: The "error A" message is indicative of a memory error on the motherboard, on the 64K internal card or in a memory sidecar. If it is the sidecar, the message may have been caused by a poor connection due to dirty pins on the attachment bus of the sidecar. Many times the problem may be solved by just removing and then replacing the sidecar. If the problem is with the 64K internal memory board, removing and reconnecting the card may solve the problem.

ERROR B: Most always, two beeps and this message means that a keyboard key was pressed (it only takes a light touch) while Junior was booting. It will also occur when a problem arises with the infrared (IR) keyboard receiver inside Junior. When it happens, just reboot, being careful not to touch the keyboard. If the IR unit stops working, a keyboard cord will eliminate the part altogether, and will save you the cost of batteries for your keyboard.

But, and very seldom, you can get an "error B" message if your monitor is going bad. If you keep getting this message and you have eliminated the keyboard, you may suspect your monitor as being the culprit. Remove the connector from the "D" terminal on Junior's backside and reconnect it. Dirt may have

been the problem.

ERROR C: A highly unlikely problem that indicates you have troubles with your cassette tape storage 'wrap back.' Most all of us use floppy disks instead of a cassette tape recorder as our storage medium so no one should see this problem.

ERROR D: Two beeps and an "error D" message means that trouble was found in the serial port (the "S" connector) on the back of Junior. This may not be a problem unless you are using a serial device that is attached to the port like a modem or IBM's thermal printer.

ERROR E: If you have a PCjr internal modem, a problem was detected with it during the POST test. Look on the good side: at least it wasn't Junior.

ERROR F/G: Error F means an error was detected in ROM (the Read-Only Memory) on the motherboard. Error G indicates a problem with a ROM cartridge (like your Cartridge BASIC or PCE's QuickSilver cartridge) that is plugged into one of the slots on front of Junior or with the connectors of these slots. Sometimes the error message also shows "the high order byte." (Those technicians again.)

ERROR H: This indicates a disk drive problem. Disconnect the large flat cable at the back of the disk drive and reconnect it. More than likely, this message was caused by a failure to get a complete check of the disk drive due to a dirty connection. Actual disk drive failures are rare, but still, over time, disk drives can fail.



Sometimes POST may encounter a problem that prevents it from displaying information on your monitor's screen. Should this happen, you'll see either a white or a black screen and may hear two or even three beeps. While this surely indicates a problem, the fact that Junior did the POST at all is a good indication that Junior's power transformer, the "brick," and Junior's internal power supply card are both okay.

If a problem such as a bad transformer or bad internal power supply card prevents POST from running, you'll always see a white screen and you'll never hear any beeps.

Several members of the Eugene PCjr Club have copies of IBM's Technical Reference Manual and Hardware Maintenance and Service Manual which they will be glad to share should you desire to read more about "error messages."

If you have any problems with your Junior that you can't resolve, should it be hardware or software, do not hesitate to contact your club. We have members who just love to work on Juniors! Also, there is a listing of "Help" numbers you may call for assistance on specific topics that is published every other month on the last page of this newsletter.

Your club also has many computer components on hand in "The Company Store." Should you ever need a part for your Junior, call Phil Janz (343-1059). Everyone should also keep club member Elmer Hungate's parts list on hand for that dreadful day when Junior gives you two beeps!

Louie

Modem News For May:

GETTING PCjr ON LINE

by Gordon LeManquais



Do the possibilities of telecommunications get you thinking what it would be like to use Junior to connect yourself to Bulletin Boards (BBS) and more?

You only need two things to get started. The first is a modem and the other is telecommunications software.

A modem takes the signals from Junior and converts them to tones that can be reliably transmitted over telephone lines. The PCjr does not normally come with a modem, but they are easy to purchase. When you get a modem, it could be either an internal or external type. (Most external modems will work with Junior, but there are only two makes of internal modems that can be used with a PCjr.)

Next, you need some type of telecommunication program. This software will tell Junior how to send and receive information. When you purchase a modem the chances are it will come with a

telecommunication program. This software may or may not work with your Junior.

There are several programs in the club library that will work no matter what amount of memory your Junior has. If you have only 128k of memory or if you have 640k, there are programs that will get your modem up and running. The club library has Telix and Procomm, and will soon have several other programs, Digiterm, PC-Talk and JR Tele. You do not need two disk drives or have a lot of memory to use a modem with your Junior. If you have 640k, you can use most any telecommunication program. Still, if you have only 128k you can use JR Tele or PC-Talk.

There are a lot of different things you can do to use a modem, and if you need help, just ask; that's what the club is here for.

Well, this meeting will be our spring house cleaning (Junior cleaning that is). See you there, and bring your Junior!

Also, this is the very first meeting for our new President. Lets give Rosie, and first husband, the Treasurer, and the rest of those who have volunteered to serve, all the help and support that we as members of the Eugene PCjr Club can.

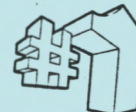
Happy modeming.

Gordon

Results of Survey

A recent survey done by Logitech noted that while most respondents said their computers were valuable aids on the job, they also said their computers were quickly becoming their "companions." The article in the March issue of Parade magazine noted that many "users have gone so far as to give their PCs a pet name."

Maybe this has a lot to do with why so many of us are reluctant to give up our Juniors!



PRINTER POTENTIAL

by Cindy Hoffman

Many of us have printers with untapped potential. They are capable of printing double-width or compressed characters. They can also emphasize or enhance the print.

Our printer manuals come with codes and escape sequences to utilize these features, but all this becomes too complicated for many of us. Fortunately, we have help right in our Club Disk Library.

There are five different programs that utilize many of these printer features and produce various fonts or printing styles: PC-DESKMATES, TYPEWRITE, PC-FONT, FONTMENU and PC-WRITE. Two of these programs are specifically for setting printers and the others have font settings as a feature of a larger program. All of the programs are compatible with the Epson line of printers and the IBM Graphics Printer. PC-DESKMATES works with any dot matrix printer. PC-WRITE works with any printer. And, there is evidence that the other three programs are not exclusive to Epson or IBM Graphics printers. The best way to know if your printer is compatible is to try it.

PC-DESKMATES is one of the easiest and friendliest ways to make simple changes in printing styles. A menu-window appears at the touch of keystroke while you are using another program, offering two sizes (double-wide and compressed) and two densities (emphasized and enhanced) and some combinations. You may also use these fonts with the typewriter function on the menu.

TYPERITE offers the same font options as above plus superscript, subscript, bold, underline and more combinations. You may use these options with this typewriter-emulating program or load another program and the font setting will remain. To change fonts, you must reload the TYPERITE program.

PC-FONT sets your printer for condensed, compressed, or double-wide characters in combination with double-strike, emphasized, and correspondence densities. There are also four line-spacing options and the ability to print 243 characters. (The Epson printer

normally will print only 96; the IBM 196.) It is also possible to change fonts within a document.

FONTMENU has all the options of the other programs plus some additions that include graphics settings and foreign language characters. This menu-driven program is the most comprehensive and probably the best if you just want to set your printer.

PC-WRITE is a word-processing program that offers most of the popular font options. It can be completely customized to your printer and keyboard. So, if nothing else works, this will. It will, however, take some fiddling and studying the manual before you can start printing.

Having the ability to change fonts easily can be very useful. Compressed print can be used to print large spreadsheets or on-disk program manuals. Near-letter-quality correspondence can use double-strike or enhanced, and double-wide for overhead transparencies. For diskette directory labels, condensed print can be used. If you haven't experimented with font control, our Disk Library is ready to serve you!

ALWAYS HAS BEEN. . .

ALWAYS WILL BE???

by Rosie Janz

The other day, I got to wondering how successful I would be with learning new and different ways to make my Junior a tool in my life's "chores" without the support of members of our club to help me when I get stuck. I know how frustrated I get sometimes when I just don't seem to be able to figure something out by myself. Having much more of a passion for the product than the process, I think perhaps without this help, poor old Junior would have become replaced with a potted plant.

Instead, thanks to our active, supportive and informative club members, I am continuing to learn more and more ways to enjoy and utilize my Junior. . .

continued on last page>>>

to say nothing of many of the neat people I get to meet and mix with that I probably never would have gotten to know otherwise.

For many of us, because the Club was up and running when we joined, it seems like we will always have the chance to be actively involved. Another look might reveal that the Club is just beginning it's ninth year and that's because we ARE the Club. . . It will only continue as long as we participate. Hope to see you at the May Meeting!!!

Rosie Janz



CLEAN UP
YOUR PCjr!!



Bring Junior
with you on
Thursday



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FIRST CLASS MAIL

