



# EUGENE

# NEWSLETTER

# PCjr CLUB

Volume IX

Number 11

November 1993

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

## MEETING

## AGENDA

The November Meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will take place at the Northwest Natural Gas Bldg., 790 Goodpasture Island Road on Thursday November 11. Setup and library disk sales will begin at 6:30pm and the meeting will begin 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 Director . . . . . Lynn Miles Delker  
 Newsletter Editor . . . . . Louie Levy



## PRESIDENTIAL PONTIFICATING

by Rosie Janz

There must have been an early Halloween spook hovering over us at our October meeting because, although we were able to "Modem on Down to the Library," we were unable to get the library computer to "talk to us." Gordon LeManquais was later able to solve the mystery of the shy computer. We hope to get him to squeeze in another modem visit to the Eugene Library at a meeting soon. He was able to whet our appetites for exploring some of the potential uses of the modem by showing us how to peruse the information gathering and communication possibilities available in local bulletin boards. We look forward to more tips and pointers from Gordon at future meetings and in a workshop.

At our last meeting, our Disk Librarian, Cindy Hoffman, passed out copies of an inventory of what disks are presently available for purchasing from our disk library. You might compare the exploration of the disk library as we will be experiencing it at our meetings and at future workshops, to "The Dance of the Seven Veils". . . . Our October meeting could be described as the removal of just one of the "veils." At our November meeting, you will have a chance to remove several more "veils" as Cindy and her helpers give you more understanding of how the disk library works (or doesn't work) and how to get it to work when it doesn't work. You will also have a chance to choose a disk and boot it up for a fast peek.

Many of us have a better understanding of how DOS works than we used to, thanks to Louie Levy. In October, ably assisted by Mike Ruiz and Phil Janz, six of us took the beginning DOS workshop and then, nine of us attended a follow-up Saturday afternoon advanced DOS workshop. We PCjr members are very fortunate to have helpers among us such as Louie, Mike and Phil, who are willing to share their time, energy AND knowledge with us. "Thank You," each one of you. . . . We really appreciate you!!!!

In addition to a full evening of "hands on" chances to "demystify" the Club Library disks, we are sure you will want to attend our November 11 meeting for a "hands on" experience with the goodies of our "Cook Book" specialist, Juanita Hampton. We'll save a space for you!!!!!!  
 Rosie



## Computer Becoming<sup>V</sup>Literate: Coming Workshops

by Phil Janz

The September Club Newsletter provided a complete description of this year's both scheduled and potential workshops. Please refer to that issue, along with this newsletter, if you are interested in "learnin 'n doin."

### NOVEMBER:

#### **YOU CAN MAKE CLUB LIBRARY DISKS WORK ON YOUR "jr"**

Unlocking the mystery of getting a club disk to run after you buy it and take it home! An overview of software in the Club Library along with the participant's choice of a program from the library for "hands on" exploration. Fee of \$6.00 per person.

Instructor - Louie Levy

#### **MAKING YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS CARDS WITH "jr"**

A fun personalized holiday activity! Create and print a variety of seasonal cards for family and friends. Colorful paper for your cards, along with matching envelopes, will be included in this workshop. Fee of \$6.00 per person.

Instructor - Cindy Hoffman.

### POSSIBLE WORKSHOPS FOR 1994:

- \* How To Use PC-File - What Can I Do With This Program?
- \* Using PC-File - Putting This Powerful Program Into Action
- \* Introduction To Writing Assistant
- \* Making Full Use Of Writing Assistant
- \* Writing Assistant Files - Organizing And Being Able To Find Documents You Have Created And Filed Away
- \* Orientation To Word Perfect - A Possible Lead-In To Individual Instruction
- \* Orientation To The Modem For "jr" - A Possible Lead-In To Individual Instruction
- \* Becoming Proficient In Creating Mailing Lists And Labels Using PC-File And Name Pal
- \* Using PC-Calc To Keep Your Bank Account In The Black
- \* Using PC-Calc To Track Small Business Expenses & Income
- \* Using "jr" To Inventory Your Possessions At Home
- \* Adult Games
- \* Making Signs, Banners, Cards & Stationary With Print Shop



If you are interested, sign up at the November Club Meeting or call Phil Janz (343-1059) or Louie Levy (343-7592) so your name can be added to a class roster.





## THE CLUB STORE

The CLUB STORE items for use with "jr" are displayed and are "for sale" at each Club meeting. Some hardware components, commercial software programs, manuals, books, etc., are available at a fraction of their original cost and even the cost as listed in commercial catalogs. Want to expand your Junior's memory? Would you like to protect the pins on the back of Junior from bending or breaking? Need to purchase preformatted disks? How about adding a 300 baud modem? Why not check with Phil Janz to see if we have what you need. . . New in the STORE is a 512K IBM sidecar for memory expansion and, if you are using Writing Assistant, the STORE has two auxiliary programs: Reporting Assistant and Filing Assistant. You may contact Phil at the regular meetings, call him at (503) 343-1059, or drop him a note at the address on the front of the Newsletter.

Editor's note: That 512K sidecar sure would be nice for Christmas!

K I N G ' S

Q U E S T

When old news becomes real old we tend to forget it altogether. It was brought to our attention that games many of us seldom play anymore are just being found by our newer members. So, we need to look at our old news again, as it just may be new news to someone else.

King's Quest players need to be made aware of the Ctrl/V keys. If you press this key combination, the drawing routines slow down giving the impression that an invisible artist is painting your screens. It really looks neat! Try it just as the little guy goes from one screen to another. When you begin to get tired of the slowness, all you need do is press the "q" key and everything will be restored to normal.

This "slow-draw" mode for King's Quest isn't in the manual because this feature has no influence on the way the game is played. Still, it sure does make some of the same old screens come alive.

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You will have fun while your children learn the ancient art of Japanese paper folding when you use Club Disk E-102, Origami. Works well with 128K and the BASIC cartridge.

## Incoming Kudos from Coventry, CT

We really appreciate the kind words that Bob Gauthier had in the October issue of the Newsletter of the Central Connecticut PC (PCjr) Group. Being easily embarrassed, I wasn't going to insert this in our newsletter, but then again, we all need our egos boosted every once in a while, so here's Bob's article:

### HATS OFF TO THE EUGENE PCjr CLUB

There was a time when every state had at least one PCjr users group. That was back in the mid 80s after Big Blue pulled the plug on the ill fated PCjr.

Back then there were over half a million PCjrs out in the field and nobody to support them. A great many of those half-million PCjr owners were novice users like myself. Where do you turn when you need help? A user's group, that's where.

PCjr users are a rare breed. I think that it is because of the way IBM slammed the door on them back in 1985. Because IBM dropped the jr the way they did and failed to support it after the great "fire sale," that left many jr owners with a thirst for a kind of revenge. People were determined to make the junior do things that IBM never intended it to do.

This determination is what kept the PCjr users groups thriving. But when  
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the prices of "clones" started to drop, and PCs became more and more powerful, it became less and less cost effective to keep upgrading poor little jr.

Soon junior's popularity began to drop, and with that the user groups began to fold up. Our group was one of them. And though we still support the junior, our primary aim is for the more powerful 386 and higher machines.

Almost every pure PCjr group has folded now. Either closing their doors forever or joining larger groups and becoming a SIG of that group. Almost, I said. For there is still, in this great nation of ours, one pure PCjr user group still alive and thriving. Several thousand miles from us. Located in the northwest corner of the country, in Eugene, Oregon is the Eugene PCjr Club. This is a group of dedicated die-hards that recognize that the PCjr was, and still is a valuable and productive computing machine. And to you, Louie Levy, (fellow newsletter editor for the group) and the rest of the Eugene PCjr Club, we tip our hat and say congratulations, and well done. Keep up the good work.

Bob Gauthier



A>



## The DOS Prompt Command

The DOS Main Menu of "A>" can be very intimidating to someone who is new to computers, and it can be pretty mundane to some of us old timers. But, the DOS prompt of "A>" or even "C>" does not need to be what greets you every time DOS is ready for your command.

How would you like for it to say HELLO THERE GOOD LOOKING! WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE FOR ME TO DO? Or, how about THE OLD CLOCK ON THE WALL SAYS THAT THE TIME IS....SO LETS GET STARTED!

The DOS command that lets us change our prompt is the internal command, PROMPT. This command is easy to use and may be inserted into an AUTOEXEC. BAT file on boot-up.

If DOS doesn't hear from you as to what type prompt you would like to have, DOS will give you a prompt of only the drive letter and the familiar ">" symbol. However, it could just as well include such things as the time and date, the current directory or any personal message you may desire.

To use the PROMPT command, just key in the command:

PROMPT

followed by any message you desire, including any of the parameters that may be used with the command. For example, if you key in:

PROMPT LET'S GET TO WORK

your A> will be replaced by

LET'S GET TO WORK

If you get intimidated by this new message, key in:

PROMPT

and you will be back to the mundane A>.

PROMPT \$T\$\_P\$\_

will give you the time and your normal A> and also let you know what current directory you are in. But, if you really want to get fancy, try this one:

PROMPT The Time is \$T\$\_The Date is \$D\$\_The Drive We Are Logged On To is \$N\$\_ (all of this is one line) giving you a prompt of

The Time is (and the time will display)

The Date is (and the date will display)

The Drive We are Logged On To is (and the drive letter will be displayed)

None of these prompts are really recommended for everyday use. They are given here only as examples for you to experiment with. By experimenting with these prompts we gain understanding into another one of DOS's internal commands.

Go turn your Junior on right now and try out PROMPT. Some of them can be fun and some can be quite creative.

Remember Curt Greer's prompt:

\$e[1;32m `o.O'\$\_\$q(\_\_\_\_)\$q\$\_ \$e[1;5;31 mU\$e[0;37m \$p\$g

If all goes correctly, your prompt will be a cat that is licking his chops waiting for your mouse!



# Abort, Retry, Ignore

by Dick Page

**WARNING: Answer "Abort, Retry, Ignore" Messages CAREFULLY.**

If you get this message from DOS when attempting to copy files from one disk to another, DO NOT switch disks in the target drive and hit R for Retry. You will end up with a hopelessly scrambled mess on the disk.

Such a situation can occur if you tried to copy onto a disk with the write-protect notch covered. The temptation would be to just insert a different disk and "Retry." DON'T DO IT!

When DOS prepares to copy files, it first reads the directory from the target disk. (And it determines from this directory and the File Allocation Table where free space is located on the target disk so it can write the data from the file you wish to copy. ed)

If you switch the disks, it will write the in-memory copy of the directory onto the new disk that you have inserted. This new disk will erroneously list the directory of the other disk and will be unable to access those files. This is because the files aren't really on the new disk, just the directory is there.

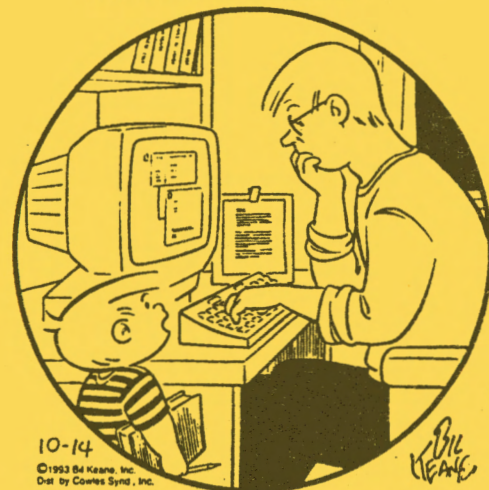
There are several other ways that a wrong response to "Abort, Retry, Ignore" will produce scrambled contents on a disk. The safest method (if copying files are involved) is to Abort all such operations, correct the problem, and then key in the necessary commands once again. Retry is safe for simple operations like DIR that do not involve moving data from one disk to another.

largest producer of computer software has introduced the Microsoft Support Network. This network went on line the first of October, and offers technical support for more than 120 products.

All of us know that the vast portion of these help calls are for Microsoft Windows. Windows has generated much revenue for the Redmond, Washington firm, but it looks like the documentation isn't enough for users to stay on top of the software.

There are three levels of help. A large corporation can get a help package for \$20,000 while the rest of us can call in for only \$2 per minute, with a maximum charge of \$25 per call. If you are like me and need a lot of help, Microsoft offers unlimited individual help for only \$195 per year. That really says a lot for Windows!

## THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"If you help me with history, I'll help you with the computer."

## The Price for Help is Going UP

Few of us call Microsoft for help, but if you do, expect to begin paying \$2 per minute for their assistance. The world's

**PHRASE CRAZE ● G-207** You are a guest on that favorite TV game show, Wheel of Fortune. You compete with two of your friends or with two strangers from the studio audience. Great for both adults and young members of your family. Works well with 128K. Cindy Hoffman, the Disk Librarian, has it ready for you! Makes a wonderful gift!





## REMEMBER WHEN?

Looking through some past (way past) newsletters, we came across an article on some communication from Mouse Systems. Seems they wrote to the club to advise us they were closing out their PCjr line of mouse products. They were giving the club a "great close-out price" for the Mouse with "pop ups" for \$60 (regularly \$195) and the PCjr Mouse with pop-up and PC Paint for \$80 (regularly \$220). Aren't you glad you waited!

A store locally here in Eugene had Info brand 3-button mice for \$9.99. The box said "For IBM PC XT/AT, 386, 486 and Compatible." I guess that means Juniors as the mouse works fine! The clerk warned the mouse may have problems with DOS 5. He really had a strange look when I told him that it would be used with DOS 2.1.



## Veterans Day

We honor veterans of all wars, both declared and undeclared, on November 11th. This day is picked because the signing of an armistice between the Allies and Germany at the cessation of the hostilities in World War I took place on this date in 1918.

In 1954, the holiday was changed from Armistice Day to Veterans Day. Don't forget to run the flag up Thursday, say "thanks" to a vet, think about the MIAs, ponder on those who have given their all when their country called, no matter which nation they may have represented, and come to the Computer Club meeting!

After Thanksgiving, if you need help with what to do with the leftovers, give Warren Hampton a call. Warren is the Club expert on MenuMaster. . .and he's also a vet!

## Modem News

by Gordon LeManquais

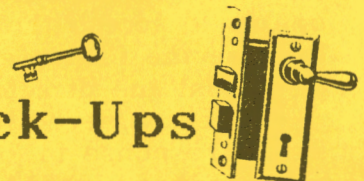
With Thanksgiving here we know that Christmas is just around the corner. What better gift could you give Junior than a modem! A modem will not only give you a lot of fun, but it will open up new vistas for your children.

We are lucky to have so many Bulletin Boards in the area. They are there just waiting for your call. You can log on to them and talk to other people, leave messages or just read the news or learn tips and tricks about computing. There are also a lot of software programs that you can download.

This will be the last *Modem News* for the year as I will have to miss the December issue. Just because you won't read about modeming doesn't mean that you shouldn't be logging on to the many Bulletin Boards in town.

If you need any help about what kind or type of modem Santa Claus should be looking for, give me a call or see me at the meeting on Thursday. I look forward to talking to you.

Gordon



## Program Lock-Ups

There are increasing questions that deal with the subject of program lock-ups and how to cope with them. All of us have experienced them.

Lock-up is just what it says; the program we are running quits and locks everything up. Nothing you do will work. No inputs from the keyboard seem to be getting to the screen. You even try Ctrl/Alt/Del to reboot and this doesn't work. There is nothing to do but turn Junior off and do a cold boot.

The *jr Newsletter* published an article back in April 1987 on installing a reset button on Junior, which goes a long way in overcoming the problem of program lock-up. When nothing works, you press the little button and Junior does a hot boot, just like you had pressed the Ctrl/Alt/Del keys.

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The major issue with the reset button installation is that you must drill a hole in Junior's case. Once the hole is drilled, the rest of the job is easy. Still, Cindy said she wasn't about to let Norm near her Junior with an electric drill, let alone a soldering iron.

Some of us generate strange looks when we slowly disconnect the BASIC cartridge and quickly reconnect it. Still, his works quite well, and according to Jess Ramacher in another article from the jr Newsletter, doing this only occasionally shouldn't put too much strain on the connectors. Unfortunately, this method of rebooting does much to tarnish the image of anyone who is supposed to know what they are doing.

Much of our initial problem of program lock-up lies in the BREAK command. This is yet another one of DOS's internal commands that can be turned on or can be turned off by our order. Unless you have ordered BREAK to ON when you booted, DOS will check for Ctrl/Break only during standard input, standard output, standard print device, or asynchronous communication adapter operations. What this actually means in English is that Junior won't execute a BREAK from anything other than your printer or a modem. If you want Junior to begin checking for Ctrl/Break when a program asks for it, you must turn BREAK to ON before hand.

As Junior users, most of the time we enter FN BREAK (the function key and then the B key) from our keyboards, Junior will stop midway in a program and will enter the ^C character, leaving us at the DOS prompt. How often DOS checks for a FN BREAK being entered at the keyboard depends on whether the DOS BREAK command is ON or OFF. Normally DOS only checks to see if you have pressed the FN BREAK when it reads from or writes to a device.

You can require DOS to check more frequently by entering BREAK ON at the A>. This can be done before loading a program by placing the statement in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file. If you have it in your CONFIG.SYS file, the format is

BREAK=ON

Anytime you would like to see if BREAK is on or off, just key in BREAK at the A>

and DOS will tell you its current status. The DOS manual covers the BREAK command on page 2-33. Turning BREAK ON will usually allow us to get out of a program without having to do a cold boot, although it is not infallible.

Someone once said that adding BREAK ON to your AUTOEXEC.BAT file was like adding antifreeze to your automobile. If you want to protect yourself from program lock-ups, you must first take precautions!

Louie Levy

## HELP!

Once more, the Editor and Staff of the Newsletter are seeking help from our membership. We need to liven up this monthly communication and we need YOUR help to do it.

Newsletter editing is an ever-changing and demanding task. It was only a few years back that some of our members were asking for articles that dealt with more complex programs and that were of a more "techie" nature. But, as the character of our Club is constantly changing and we have more and more members who are new to computing, we have had some requests to "get back to Basics." And, this is where you come in.

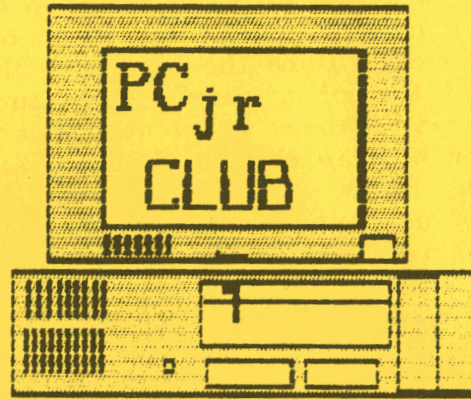
If you are one of the old-timers in the Club, think back to those problems that were in your way to "demystifying" Junior. Write a short article about them and send it in to us. We need to help those new to computing understand the mysteries of DOS, Word Processing, Spread Sheets, Data Bases or games.

Also, if you have some tips or tricks that may help someone who has recently purchased a "new" Junior, drop us a line. Let's spice this old newsletter up with a variety of new articles!

If you are new to computing and feel that you don't have the knowledge to write an article on something technical, how about an article on how Junior became a member of your family. An article on what your family does with Junior would make good reading. This type article helps those who may not be using Junior to his full potential.

We really look forward to hearing from you. . .and your Junior!





## DOS INTERNAL COMMANDS

BREAK	CHDIR (CD)	CLS
COPY	CTTY	DATE
DEL(ERASE)	DIR	ECHO
EXIT	FOR	GOTO
IF	MKDIR(MD)	PATH
PAUSE	PROMPT	REM
REN(RENAME)	RMDIR(RD)	SET
SHIFT	TIME	TYPE
VER	VERIFY	VOL

*We're Never Too  
Busy To Help Our  
Members*



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