



EUGENE

NEWSLETTER

PCjr CLUB

VOLUME XI
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MARCH 1995

Suite 220, 1011 Valley River Way - 116B, Eugene, OR 97401-2127

MEETING

AGENDA

The March meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will take place at the Northwest Natural Gas Bldg., 790 Goodpasture Island Road on Thursday March 9th. Setup & Library Disk sales will begin at 6:30 and the meeting at 7pm.

OFFICERS

President Rosie Janz
Vice President. Patti Tanner
Treasurer and Company Store. . . Phil Janz
Disk Librarian. Mike Ruiz
Modem Captain Gordon LeManquais
Commercial Contact. . . Dick Page
Social Director Lynn Miles Delker
Newsletter Editor Louie Levy

Association
of
Personal
Computer
User
Groups



PRESIDENTIAL PONTIFICATING

by Rosie Janz

We're one of a kind
That's all there is to it!
We're a great little club
But then you all knew it!!!

Twenty two of us took advantage of the opportunity to attend the February meeting of the only PCjr Club in the United States. Paul Jammison, our "Magic Member," got the meeting started with a spectacular card trick and by pulling three goldfish out of thin air and dropping them into a wine glass full of water. HOW DID HE DO THAT ??? ?

Kenny Wilson did a "Yeoman's Job" of demonstrating *Filing and Planning Assistant*, and showing us how he integrates them along with *Reporting Assistant* with his *Writing Assistant* program. Kenny had prepared some very understandable handouts that enabled us to follow along with comprehension of the processes he was explaining to us. I think many of us are aware of how much time and energy people like Kenny take to prepare for club presentations. I feel grateful that we have such members, and that they are willing to share their knowledge and insights with us. Because of Patty Tanner's generous loan of her video camera, Charley Coury was able to videotape Kenny's demonstration for future use. Anyone wishing to view it should call Phil to borrow the videotape.

Speaking of "helping people"... Mike Ruiz continues to help us see what rich resources are present in our Club Library. Our February meeting was no exception, as he once again chose two "winner" disks to demonstrate. Phil Janz gets the credit for elevating the "demonstrator" monitor so that we can all see it without getting a stiff neck, or sitting up so straight the person in back of us can't see.

MAYHEM PLANNED FOR MARCH

Is there a disk in the library that you think you would like to explore? Do you have a disk that you bought at a garage sale or a store that you aren't sure how to use?? Is there some help with using your computer you've always wanted to discuss with a "guru"? Do you have a program that you find useful that some of the rest of us should know about?

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...OUR PRESIDENT'S PONTIFICATINGS CONTINUE:

A "festival filled with fun fare" is planned for our March meeting. It could also be called an exploratory journey through the "sea" of one of the formerly un-chartered disks from our library, or from your personal collection. With a competent "navigator" to assist us, we will have the opportunity to work our way through program disks we have not yet sampled, or one we have tried unsuccessfully and wish to learn how to get it up and running.

Our March meeting program will be an informal approach to letting you explore disks with the knowledge that there will be a support person at each computer to assist you and answer any questions. Another aspect of this approach is that you can just observe if you prefer. To make this evening exciting and worthwhile:

- * The Club will set up five computers and provide a support person at each station.
- * YOU are free to bring one or more disks that you or someone can work with. These can be shareware or commercial programs.
- * YOU can pick a library disk and get some help in getting it up and running.

During our meeting break refreshments will be provided by Bob and Fran Williams.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

As required by our Club Bylaws, I recently appointed a nominating committee to work on filling the three positions that will be open next year: President, Treasurer and Social Director. I am hopeful that the committee members will have learned from PJ, and work the "magic" that will find us officers that will enable our club to keep growing in computer knowledge, attendance, and membership participation.

If you are approached, think twice before you say "no"... My experience has been that no one is stuck doing anything by themselves. Everyone pitches in and helps. What a great bunch of people you are to work with!!!

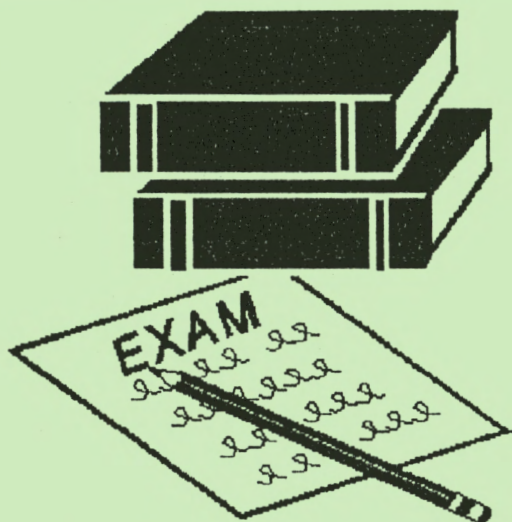
Rosie

Looking For the On-Ramp?

If you haven't taken the plunge to subscribe to one of the on-line services because of their monthly fees, check out Oregon Public Networking. Oregon Public Networking is an Internet service provider that is better known to most of us as Eugene Free Net.

Eugene Free Net provides their users with a wide variety of services and options. Like its name implies, the services are free. Still, as networks and Bulletin Boards are quite expensive to run, Eugene Free Net requests a donation from those who can afford to pay for these services. This way, those who can't afford the luxury of on-line service will be provided assistance.

If you would like to find out more about Eugene Free Net, you may write to them: Oregon Public Networking, P.O. Box 1914, Eugene, OR 97440. You may call them (voice mail) at 484-9637. If you are already on-line somewhere, their e-mail address is office@efn.org or you can get information at info@efn.org. Better yet, just use your modem to dial them: 687-2996 and log on as *guest*. We think you'll be pleased!



Word Processing for Kids -

Club Disk P-515

Possibly the first thing to note about this disk that was introduced at the February meeting is that it carries a "P" designation for productivity. Most of our software for kids are either in the "G" (game) or "E" (educational) categories.

Word Processing for Kids (WPK) is designed especially for children from 4 to 8 years of age who have something to say. Even those a little older find WPK easier to use than the word processing programs their parents are using because of its on-screen friendliness. The characters on screen are in much larger letters that make it easy for everyone around the computer screen to see. WPK has automatic word wrap just like other word processing programs, an automatic "save" feature that most of us adults really need and has an icon helpful menu instead of just numbers to help our young authors in selecting what they want to do. When your children print their work, you'll be hard pressed to tell that they created their masterpieces on a program called Word Processing for Kids!

A special thanks to Dick Page for his donation to the Club's Shareware library and to Mike Ruiz, our librarian, for making this program so user friendly!

Historical Footnote: The Keyboard Adventure Solution

Adapted from a paper by Chris Beall; submitted by an unnamed ex-IBM employee

This seems an appropriate day to record for posterity the answer to a mystery that has baffled many people during the life of the PCjr. I refer, of course, to the solution of the Keyboard Adventure puzzle. What? You've never heard of this puzzle? Well, it's time to dig your old PCjr out of the basement one last time and see if it doesn't provide just a few more moments of enjoyment. (Ed. Note: Our Juniors are NOT in the basement, Chris!)

PART 1 - THE PUZZLE

When the PCjr hit the market, many purchasers had never seen a computer before. Many USERS were expected to be children who had never seen any kind of keyboard before. To get these folks on board, the PCjr provided the Keyboard Adventure, a program that teaches a new user the functions of a computer keyboard. This program is stored in the Read Only Memory (ROM) of every PCjr. 37 pages of step-by-step instructions (starting on page 2-6 of the Guide to Operations) introduce the user to the keyboard functions.

To get to the Keyboard Adventure, you need a PCjr. Remove any cartridges and disks. If you've added a hard drive, you'll need to disable it somehow. Turn on the machine. Do not touch the keyboard. In a short time a BASIC screen will appear. Press the Esc key (If you press any other key first, you'll have to power off and try again). Welcome to the Keyboard Adventure!

Here's a summary of the 37 pages of instructions, in case you've lost the book:

Use the cursor keys to move the little man. Move him first to the L-shaped Enter key in the upper left corner. This opens a door into the box, so that you can enter it. Once the excitement stops, press various keys on the keyboard to see what they do. Two things happen:

1. If the key has never been pressed before, the little man places it on the keyboard.

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Workshops For 1995

MARCH WORKSHOP

TITLE: GETTING STARTED IN WORDPERFECT

INSTRUCTOR: Mike Ruiz

HOST: Rob Atkins

PARTICIPANTS: Molly Jones, Lynn Miles, Rob Atkins, Pauline Bacod, Helen Fry, Toki Stucky.

CLASS SPACES STILL AVAILABLE: 0

APRIL WORKSHOP

TITLE: MAKING SELF BOOTING DISKS

INSTRUCTOR: Louie Levy

HOST: Charlie Coury

PARTICIPANTS: Darlene Gotzman, Rob Atkins, Charlie Coury, Helen Fry, Pauline Bacod, Brandon Bacod. (By the way, did everyone see Brandon on TV the other night???)

CLASS SPACES STILL AVAILABLE: 0

WORKSHOP COORDINATOR'S NOTE: WE ARE BEGINNING TO SEARCH OUT MEMBERSHIP NEEDS AND IDEAS FOR WORKSHOPS THAT COULD BE OFFERED NEXT YEAR. WHAT KINDS OF PROGRAMS WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE "HANDS ON" INSTRUCTION FOR? PERHAPS WE HAVE COVERED EVERYONE'S NEEDS WITH PREVIOUS WORKSHOPS AND THIS SERVICE IS NOT NEEDED FOR NEXT YEAR. . .THERE WILL BE A SIGN UP SHEET AVAILABLE AT OUR LAST THREE MEETINGS OF THIS YEAR SO THAT YOU CAN OFFER IDEAS ON POSSIBLE WORKSHOPS FOR THE 1995-96 CLUB YEAR. THE SIGN UP WILL DETERMINE IF WORKSHOPS ARE TO BE OFFERED OR SET ASIDE. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETINGS, BUT WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST A WORKSHOP, PLEASE LET PHIL KNOW (343-1059) AND IT WILL BE ADDED TO THE "SUGGESTED WORKSHOP SIGN UP SHEET".

Is This Diskette Bad? ...Or Is Junior Acting Up?

It's a good habit to format all new diskettes using the DOS FORMAT command soon after we purchase them. Of course, if the diskettes are purchased from the Club's store, they will already be formatted. All of us need extra formatted disks on hand to make working copies of new software we purchase and to make backup copies of our data disks. You do make backup copies of your data regularly, don't you?

Sometimes, when formatting, you may have noticed that DOS may tell you that there are x number of bytes in bad sectors. Does this mean you should throw that diskette out and not use it?

Should you return it to the store where you bought it? Not necessarily.

Sometimes Junior just acts up. It could be there was a dust particle on the diskette. Remember, we are using floppy disks that are prone to collecting dust; they are not protected like the little 3.5 inch micro disks. The problem could also be a slight imperfection in the way the drive head moved as it was formatting the disk. Or, as we often say, "Junior is acting up again."

We have often found that if you reformat a diskette that DOS has said has bad sectors, it will format perfectly. And, even if the diskette proves to have a bad sector, DOS will lock that sector so we can't use it and the disk can be used perfectly well as a data disk. The moral of the story is, that just like most of our friends, Junior should be given a second chance.

A Mail Label Primer

The Smith Family 5/95M
1234 Fifth Street
Your City, State 12345

If you want to see your present status with the Club, take a look at your mailing label. All memberships are "family" memberships, so if John Smith joins the Club, everyone in the Smith family is a member. At the end of the Smith's name in the above example, we see that their membership expires in May of 1995 and their status is Member (5/95M).

The PCjr Club uses a date after your name to show when your affiliation with the Club expires. After the date, we show an M for member, an S if you are a subscriber only, and we generally put nothing or COMP if you are getting a complimentary issue.

If your subscription or membership has expired and we think that you may have overlooked renewing, we will generally highlight your expiration date with a red magic marker. After a month or so of being behind in renewing, we enclose a renewal notice to make sure you realize that the issue you are getting is going to be the last one.

Since the Club was founded ten years ago, we haven't had an increase in dues or subscription rates. Xeroxing costs have gone up considerably since that time, and postage has increased from 22¢ to 32¢—an increase of over 45%. It costs a minimum of 80¢ just to make a newsletter and get it to your mailbox.

So, keep an eye on your mailing label and make sure you renew on time. Subscriptions are still only \$12 per year (12 issues) and a membership for the whole family is just \$20. Memberships allow you full access to the Company Store, the Disk Library, the Documents Library and nearly unlimited help with your Junior. Gee, that's better than IBM's guarantee!

Louie L.

How To Get Free Software



by Gordon LeManquais

You can go to town and purchase software to run on Junior for about \$10 and up. Depending on what type of program you buy, this can be both good and bad. The bad part is that once you open the package and try it on Junior, if it does not work, the store where you bought the program more than likely will not take it back.

If you shop at home via local computer bulletin boards, there are thousands of computer programs. Unfortunately, many of these programs are duds, but most of us can afford to weed through a ton of losers just to find a few great ones because these programs are free for the taking. Well, almost free. It works like this. Most programs on bulletin boards are distributed under a weird marketing scheme called "shareware."

The shareware method of distribution works like this: you copy as many programs as you want from a local bulletin board and if you like one of the programs after you use it, you are expected to mail in a small registration fee. If you should find that the program does not work on your Junior, or if you find that it isn't something you want, you do not have to pay. You can just format over the disk, or you could give it to a friend to try out.

The shareware idea of marketing is based on trust. If you find the program useful, and you use the program, you are expected to send the creator of the program the amount they have requested for registration.

Why shop from home? It's easy and can be done at your leisure with a modem and your Junior. Just use your modem and call a local bulletin board and see what they have to offer. One local board has over 1600 files that are continued on page 7>

free while most will have somewhat less. Many are files that you either can't use on your Junior, or they are files that you wouldn't want even if you could use them. But, as your Modem Captain, this is exactly where I get files from to give to our Librarian, Mike Ruiz, who works them up for our Disk Library. So, cut out the middleman.

You can do me out of my job by contacting the bulletin boards yourself and downloading some programs. If you find some that you like, give a copy to Mike to work up for the library. This way we can all enjoy it and it'll give me some free time to go fishing!

Gordon

A Few Tips:

HANDLE DISKS WITH CARE

Never touch the surface of the actual disk with your fingers, since they'll leave an oily residue that can obstruct the data from being read by your disk drive and will transfer dirt to your disk drive read/write heads. Make a habit of holding and handling disks by their labels. And, never write on a disk label that is already on a floppy disk with anything other than a felt-tip pen. Always store your diskettes in their paper sleeves and never loose in a drawer or on a table top where dust can get on them or liquid spilled on them. Use a disk tub and close the lid when not actually in use. Never use a paper clip to post a note on your diskette!

STAYING COOL

If the temperature is just right for you, it is just right for your computer. Heat is the single most destructive agent to what's inside Junior, so keep it cool. Remove all the things that are around the air vents in your computer's case to keep the flow of cool air coming inside. Heat rises, so try not to have a shelf right over your monitor. If your monitor is closed in on all sides, you will soon find problems arising. Keep Junior out of the laundry room where lint abounds, your garage where dirt is found, the kitchen where airborne

grease is flying and, when not in use, use those dust covers.

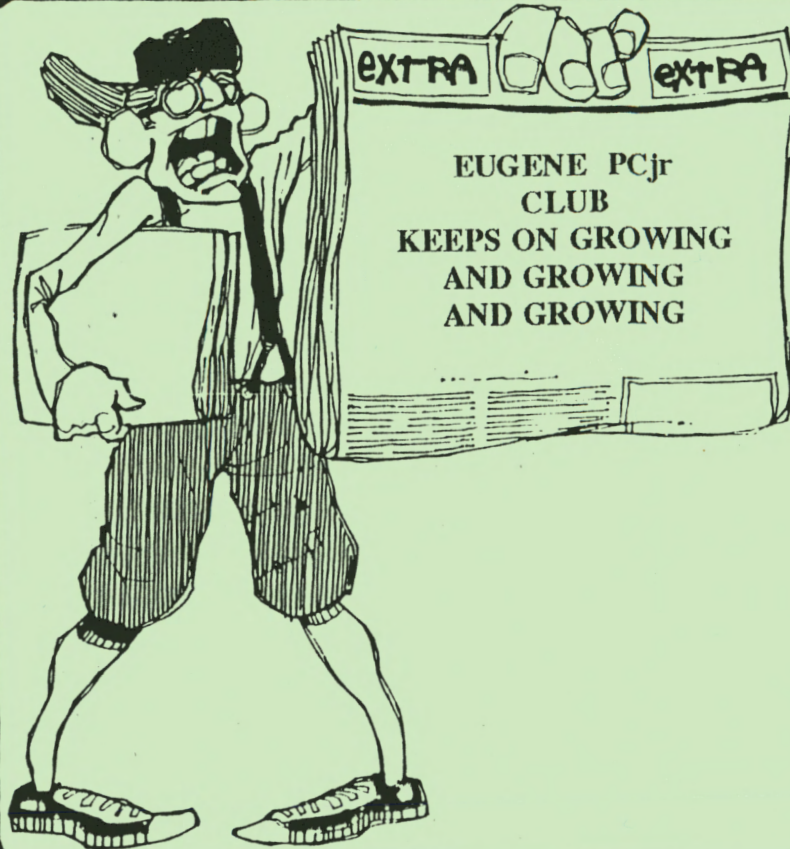
DON'T USE THOSE POWER SWITCHES

A broken switch on your monitor can cost over a hundred dollars to repair—if the replacement part is available. The on/off switch on your computer will cost less to replace, but on a PCjr it would be cheaper to purchase another power supply card than to have it repaired. Repair costs to electronic equipment requires special knowledge, so preventing repair needs carries top priority. Plug your equipment into power strips that are plugged into surge protectors. You can use the power strip to power-on all your equipment, and a power strip is much less expensive to replace than any of your equipment switches. If you don't use a screen saver on your monitor, turn the brightness down if you are away from your screen for a long period.

BACKUP

We can't say this enough. While most of us do make back up if we are using a hard drive, some do not back up their software. It can be a nightmare should you find that Spot knocked over that can of pop onto your Writing Assistant manual with the master disk in the back. A copy would have saved you much headache. Even that copy of *King's Quest* can be damaged by Suzzy's little friend. Registering your copy of *WordPerfect* or *First Choice* allows you to use your program both at work and at home only if you don't have it on two different hard drives at the same time. But, don't carry your originals back and forth to work. Use backup copies of your important software. And, if you do carry data or programs to and from work, home or school, use a "real" disk carrier to protect your valuable work and programs while they are in transit. And, write protect all disks before you make copies of them.

Some computing disasters are unavoidable. Those of us with grandchildren know this all too well.



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 +, 5 or 6:
Dick Page - 342-3193
Writing Assistant or Name Pal:
Phil Janz - 343-1059
Communications:
Gordon LeManquais - 746-1594
Hardware Problems:
Dick Page - 342-3193
or Louie Levy - 343-7592
Spreadsheets or WordPerfect:
Mike Ruiz - 687-8361
Parts and supplies:
The Company Store-Phil Janz
343-1059
Help in the Portland Metro Area:
Robert Mueller - 252-1106

"Whoever said good help is hard to
find has never called the Help-
Line of their local computer club!"



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Comp. Cent.- Univ. of OR
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

