



EUGENE NEWSLETTER

PCjr CLUB

MAY 1995
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1011 Valley River Way 116-B, Suite 220, Eugene, OR 97401

MEETING

AGENDA

The May meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will take place at the Northwest Natural Gas Bldg., 790 Goodpasture Island Road on Thursday, May 11th. Setup and disk sales will begin at 6:30 and the meeting at 7pm.

OFFICERS

President Charles Coury
Vice President. Patti Tanner
Treasurer and Company Store. . . Phil Janz
Disk Librarian. Mike Ruiz
Modem Captain Gordon LeManquais
Commercial Contact. . . Dick Page
Social Director Helen Fry
Newsletter Editor . . . Louie Levy
Publisher and Coeditors Warren and Juanita Hampton

Association
of
Personal
Computer
User
Groups

Charley's Corner

by Charles Coury

As an 11 year old 6th grader I was placed in remedial reading with Miss Klyne. But only the top readers in Miss Van Dyke's class got to publish the school newspaper. Not to be left out, despite our poor reading skills, we started a magazine called *Charley's Corner*.

To our shock, the principal at Harvey Clark Elementary decided two newspapers were too much publishing activity for a grade school. *Charley's Corner* was closed down. This month's newsletter inaugurates, after a 27 year hiatus, the return of *Charley's Corner*.

This is what I love about the PCjr Club. We all feel at times like we are in Computer Remedial Reading with Miss Klyne. Maybe that's not so bad. I looked up the meaning of Remedial. It means "intended to remedy or improve." Isn't that a great reason for a computer club? To remedy our lack of computer knowledge and improve the skills we do have -- all with the support of one another.

Let the computer whiz-kids with their powerful computers have their place. We have ours; in the PCjr club where we find help to navigate the sometimes strange world of computers. After all, I guess I learned to read in the end. And thanks to the PCjr Club I even get to publish *Charley's Corner* again!

Thanks to the Louie and Phil team, the undisputed backbone of the PCjr Club, May's club meeting will be *rejuvenating*.

- 1) P.J. plans to show us the workings of the *Print Partner* program.
- 2) Next, 3 Work Stations to interact together are planned. Come prepared to focus on one, or all (be sure to read Phil's article on the next page for details):
 - a - Louie will demonstrate Thin Font and Reset Switches
 - b - Spring Cleaning for your PCjr
 - c - Learning about the innards of your PCjr

These work station times are a great chance to learn the specifics of your PCjr and to enjoy rubbing shoulders with each other. Come and enjoy the camaraderie.

Charley

KNOW A PEANUT PERSON
TELL THEM ABOUT US!

MAY MEETING - HANDS ON!

Phil Janz

Our final meeting of this Club year will provide an opportunity for all attending club members to consider several ways to roll up their sleeves and get involved with "Jr". The options are: <1> Get your "jr" cleaned to prolong its life 'n useability. . .learn how to keep it clean, too! <2> Become familiar with what is under the lid of your "jr". . .you too can disassemble and reassemble all of the "body parts"! <3> Bring your Central Processing Unit (CPU) and have a "Thin Font" module or a "Reset Switch" installed.

Preceding this part of the meeting Louie will demonstrate and discuss the values of "Thin Font" (if you do a great deal of word processing this will be an eye-saver for you!) and a "Reset Switch" (if your keyboard locks up this will be of value to you).

In order to make this "hands on" session work for the May 11 meeting, please review the following options and phone either Louie Levy (343-7592) or Phil Janz (343-1059) before Tuesday, May 9 so that we can be prepared to meet your needs:

OPTION #1

Anyone wanting to Spring Clean their own personal "jr" needs to bring the CPU and keyboard to the meeting. You will be assisted in vacuuming out dust, hair, mouse droppings, etc. We will also help you clean the disk drive heads and lubricate the drive itself. Finally, we will help you take apart the keyboard and clean its "inner self". There is no need to bring your monitor or brick. The Club will have all of the needed cleaning materials on hand for your use. Janet Grantham has already said that she and "Jr" will be there for cleaning!

OPTION #2

Improving your "jr". This work station can accommodate four people. Two for adding *Thin Font* and two for Reset Switches. The Store has two *Thin Fonts* for sale and two Reset Switches, which are free. Bring your CPU and you can watch/assist as the new feature is being added to your CPU. Mike Ruiz has spoken for one of the *Thin Fonts*, so there is one left.

What Are Our OPTIONS??

OPTION #3

Anyone wanting to become familiar with "jr", "Under Its Hood", needs only to bring this desire to the meeting. The Club will provide a 128K "jr" for you to work with during the meeting. You will learn what cards and cables are inside of the CPU, their purposes, as well as being able to remove and replace them!



Remember, 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 phone Louie or Phil prior to the meeting, give us your name and the Option Number YOU want to participate in.

Cheerful "Computering"

All of us know that when Junior is happy, we are happy. We are happy because everything works! We never get those one-liners like Abort, Retry or Fail, Bad or missing command interpreter, Insert disk in drive A and press any key when ready, or Error II. So, how can we keep Junior happy and content? Here are just a few things we can do and they not only apply to your PCjr, but are valid for that Junior clone you use at the office.

✂ Take care of your floppy disks. Use paper sleeves to keep dust and fingers off the magnetic surfaces of your diskettes. Never lay them loose in a drawer where who knows what can (and will) happen to them. Purchase a disk tub to keep your floppies in good order. . .and keep the tub closed when you are not using it.

✂ Backup your software programs. Most software we use isn't copy-protected, so we can use the DOS DISKCOPY command to make copies of our programs and important data disks. We can't say BACKUP enough.

✂ Don't carry original copies of your software 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.

✂ Keep all of the documentation and registration numbers for your commercial software together. This way, should you ever need to call for help, you will have all the necessary information ready for the tech folks (should they ever answer your call).

✂ Put your "good" floppy disks up high, away from small (read: gummy and sticky) hands. If your youngsters aren't as careful as they should be with some of your programs, make special copies for them to use and keep a few backups for those times when jelly gets on their copy. Once the jelly gets hard on your disk drive's read/write heads you will have more problems than just ants.

✂ Use a surge protector! While an economical power strip is fine to prevent wear and tear on Junior, your monitor and your printer's power switches, they won't prevent damage from power spikes. Plug the power strip into a "real" surge pro-

tector. (Read Dick Page's *Power Strips and Surge Protectors* right after the Treasurer's Report on page five.)

✂ Provide adequate power for your computer and its peripherals. Try to keep other power-hungry accessories off the same circuit that Junior is using.

✂ When not in use, cover your computer and printer. This not only keeps dust and cat hair away from your equipment's innards, but may prevent damage from spills or overhead water leaks.

✂ Use grounded electrical receptacles. Should your home not have three-prong grounded wall outlets, use a "cheater" to facilitate plugging the three-prong plugs into your two-prong outlets. Be sure to attach the grounding wire from the adapter to the screw that holds on the outlet's cover.

✂ Make your computing area as comfortable as possible to avoid strain. Use a good chair, a wrist pad, a mouse stand with wrist support and a good copy stand. Also, keep your monitor screen clean and in focus to avoid eyestrain.

✂ If you use Energine® or some other solvent to remove old labels from your disks, keep this flammable liquid away from your computer and other electrical equipment.

✂ Give Junior some breathing room. If you tidy up around your computer not only will you be able to work more efficiently, but it will keep Junior cool. You will be amazed how much more will be accomplished without all that stuff cluttering up the area, and how much longer Junior can work when it's cool.

✂ Set times for each family member to have some periods alone with the computer. While it may be fun for children to help other children play with Junior, they can also learn by themselves. Also, have the older children (and the older adults in your home) keep a log or diary using Junior. While they learn word processing they can be keeping family historical data for future use.

✂ Record the serial numbers of your computer and equipment and give them to Louie to record in the Club's database. Should disaster strike, a phone call will get them all for the police report or

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insurance claim. You should also keep a complete listing of model numbers and a listing of your software.

By taking a little time now with the above steps, you may save yourself a lot of grief in the future. And remember, this month is "spring cleaning" month. Bring your little leprechaun in and get some of that dirt and dust out of his innards. Both you and your Junior will enjoy Phil's "hand's-on adventure!"

Shrinkwrap; the on-going adventure



The past couple of months we have been discussing computer piracy in the newsletter, and it has generated some interest from our readers. In fact, it has produced more comments than anything in the recent past!

One of our readers copied some comments by a nationally known computer columnist that was published recently. I was shocked to read that this columnist crossed over the party line.

Most of us remember the young man who was arrested for having copyrighted software on his bulletin board back east. His "pirate board" has mostly commercial software that could be down-loaded. The case was dismissed because the judge said that, by letting the case go forward, it would open up all of us for prosecution for copying even a single program for our personal use.

Our last Workshop that showed how to make self-booting disks would have required us to get releases from Microsoft and IBM before we could proceed. You would have had to use your own copy of DOS to format a systems disk if we were to follow the letter of the law. This is what led the author to comment that the way license agreements are at present is "simply ludicrous."

Well, these are strong comments, but just why can't I buy an old copy of WordPerfect from someone who has upgraded to WordPerfect for Windows? Are they a crook if they sell me their old software; or am I a crook if I buy it? In their efforts to prevent large companies from buying one copy of a program and using it on every computer they have, software manufacturers have turned all of us little guys into crooks.

When we buy a new keyboard we think that we actually own both our old keyboard and our new one. So, we sell the old one for five bucks. This is not the case with software. We don't "buy" software; we purchase only a license to use it. Therefore, it's illegal for us to sell our old software unless we are at the same time transferring our license agreement to any newly purchased upgrade also.

A comment was received about video taping a program from the TV. The writer said he felt it was alright to record a movie from the TV, but wasn't alright to make a copy of the same movie if it was rented from a video store. After all, it says at the beginning of the movie that we can't copy it. I guess my comment is, what's the difference so long as I tape it for my sole use and for my personal enjoyment? Still, we can't tape (copy) software for our sole use and enjoyment.

A comment was made that as long as we aren't using the software to earn money (using it commercially), it may be alright to make a copy of programs that we use at work. This person said that using the copy at home to "practice" with made her a better employee. This doesn't fly. She was using productive accounting software for her rationale, but the same license agreement applies to game software. Using office software at home may make you more competent, but it doesn't mean it's legal.

Again, thanks to all for your comments. We would like to hear your views on this subject, so drop us a line. You won't be identified!

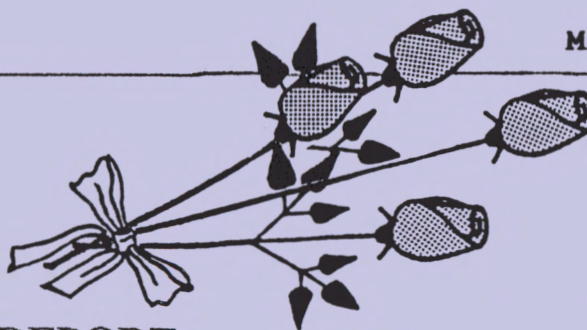
And, Perhaps the Most Important Item of All:

Elections were held at the April General meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club. Rosie Janz passed the gavel of leadership to our new President, Charles Coury. Perhaps because of his "fiscal responsibility," it was unanimously decided that Phil Janz would continue as Treasurer.

All of us look forward to another good year at the Nation's only PCjr dedicated computer club. Under Charley's guidance, with some help from his son, Andrew, the club is sure to have a bright future.

Nearly everyone received a rose from Rosie at last month's meeting. We all continued on top of next page...

need to thank Rosie for all she has done for the past two years. We have grown in size and have prospered both financially and with computer knowledge. A bouquet of roses should go to Rosie for a job well done!



TREASURER'S REPORT

By Phil Janz

Again, during this past Club year we have been able to increase our checking account balance as well as keep a growing inventory of computer parts, equipment, software and reference books on hand for sale at Club meetings as a service to the membership. Membership dues remain the Club's primary source of income but the "Club Store" has been doing an expanded business as some Juniors are being obtained by the Club and sold intact or parted out for member purchase to enhance their own Juniors. As an example, during this past Club year we have:

- * Placed six complete Juniors into new homes.
- * Enhanced three members' Juniors from 128K to 640K.
- * Added printers to four Juniors.
- * Added large keyboards to three Juniors.
- * Sold 66 library disk programs.

Busy Times

Note: The monthly Newsletter continues to be the major Club expenditure.

Club financial results from September, 1994 to April 1994 are:

\$ Checking account balance on August 1, 1994 . . . \$ 851.64
(Beginning of this Club year)

\$ Checking account balance on April 30, 1995 \$1051.88
(Balance projected from 4-21-95)



\$ Membership and Subscriber dues income \$ 588.00
\$ Unpaid membership dues \$ 40.00
\$ Accounts payable to Club through "Store" \$ 219.50
\$ Current "Store" inventory - estimate \$ 550.00
\$ Time Deposit balance (Savings) \$ 644.82



A detailed financial report was presented at the Fall Board of Directors meeting on September 17, 1994. A current detailed financial report will be submitted to the Board of Directors at their coming Spring, 1995 meeting. This report will be available at our first Fall meeting on September 14, 1995.

Phil Janz

POWER STRIPS and SURGE PROTECTORS

by Dick Page

Do you have your PCjr plugged directly into a wall electrical outlet? If so, you should consider purchasing a very important additional piece of hardware - a power strip or a surge protector.

What is a power strip or a surge protector?

Power strips and surge protectors are electrical outlets with 3 to 6 plug-in sockets attached to a single electrical cord. They usually have an on/off switch and an indicator light showing whether or not the electrical power has been turned on.

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A surge protector additionally protects the devices plugged into it from damage due to dangerous, unanticipated changes in the quality and/or amount of electricity going to the connected devices.

Why do I have to buy another gadget for Junior?

If you are using your PCjr's main computer and monitor On/Off switches to turn Junior on and off, you are wearing out an expensive, hard to replace switch and will render Junior unusable until that switch is repaired.

What's the difference between a power strip and a surge protector?

Power strips only increase the number of available electrical outlets and give you another on/off switch. They can look deceptively similar to surge protectors. In that sense, they are a cheap imitation of a surge protector – so make sure you are buying the correct item!

Power strips do not provide electrical protection. A surge protection device is needed for that. Surge protectors have additional electrical circuitry built in which filters out or stops unwanted, hazardous electrical impulses from zapping the sensitive parts of Juniors circuitry.

Where do these dangerous impulses come from?

There are a number of ways the quality of your electrical supply can be disturbed or compromised. Just having too many appliances using your general electrical supply can cause problems. You don't need to blow fuses to bother Junior. Your computer equipment is much more sensitive than those fuses. Brown-outs and black-outs as well as lightning strikes can also wreak havoc.

How much will it set me back?

Power strips only cost a few dollars. Surge protectors can cost much, much more (but may be worth the expense). It is hard to advise how much to pay for a

surge protector. The cheapest ones don't really do much good. And once they have been challenged by a surge, they may look like they are still OK – when, in fact, the essential electrical component of the surge protector will have been destroyed. Only the more sophisticated surge protectors can reset themselves and continue to protect your equipment after each assault.

But I've seen surge protectors for \$20 to \$120. Which should I get?

This is another situation where you probably get what you pay for. It all depends on how "pure" (how filtered) your electric power needs to be and how long you want the surge protector to last. A \$30 to \$40 device is usually sufficient. But, a \$60 to \$100 "power command module" that sits underneath Junior can be much more convenient than an on/off switch under your computer table. (Computer equipment manufacturers are willing to make a wide variety of gadgets in order to take whatever dollars you are willing to give up.)

Is an Uninterruptible Power Supply (U.P.S.) a surge protector?

Yes. A very fancy one that has a built-in battery and a sensing device that provides electricity to your computer should the electricity to your facility go out. It costs more than most surge protectors, but gives you time to save your current computer project and shut down Junior without losing data. If you don't like losing those five pages you just typed into your word processor, a UPS may be what you need.

A power strip, surge protector, U.P.S. The choice is yours. Good luck!

Dick Page



Modem News

You've heard much lately about electronic mail, electronic banking and computer bulletin boards. We have covered this at several meetings and also in this newsletter. Gordon LeManquais' article in March told us about all the free software that can be "downloaded" from local bulletin boards. So, what's keeping you from taking the big step and entering "cyberspace?"

PCjr owners all over the country are tapping into all of these resources. They are leaving E-mail in everyone's mail box from Packwood to their grandchildren away at college. Junior owners are transferring funds from savings into checking to cover those checks they write to buy everything from those surge protectors to hot tubs. YOU CAN DO IT, too!

What's the best way to go about doing this? Well, let's look at what's the cheapest and easiest way; just in case you decide you don't need to be on the information highway and don't want to jump in up to the limits of your bank account.

First, you will need a modem. This connects the phone to your Junior. Just as we talk into a phone and the sounds are converted to electrical signals, Junior uses a modem nearly the same way. The modem converts the digital electrical signals that Junior produces and makes them compatible with telephone equipment.

Besides calling other computers, you will be able to use your modem to call other humans just as you are doing now. Once you tell Junior (by cursoring down to the person you want in the modem program's dialing directory and pressing enter) what number to call, you can just pick up your phone and tell Junior to get off the line before the person answers. Many of us "older" (and nearly blind) PCjr owners use our modems to dial for us as we have found that Junior never makes mistakes in dialing numbers no matter how long they are. Your modem becomes a very accurate speed dialer.

Of course, to call another computer, the computer has to answer. If a human answers, they will get a terrible hissing noise that I'm sure we've all heard by now. It is this noise that modems use to recognize each other. This is what they use to exchange information to establish their electronic link. The software you use with your modem will translate this noise back into readable characters. Well, sometimes readable.

External modems connect to the back of Junior at the S connector (next to the color display port). You will need to purchase a "serial adapter" from one of your favorite suppliers (the Club Store, Legacy Technologies, Elmer Hungate or PC Enterprises). These are spendy little connectors when you compare their cost to that of garage sale modems.

Speaking of garage sale modems, make sure that it works and that it will be a modem that will work with your Junior. Also, be sure you get the documentation with any modem you purchase. If you purchase your modem from a Junior suppliers listed above, you will know that it will work on your computer!

Speed is normally something that we PCjr owners are not concerned with; if speed is of concern to you, why are you using a Junior? Still, speed is a concern with most bulletin boards. Speed in this context has to do with how fast we can transmit data. The slowest modem on the block is the IBM PCjr Internal Modem that runs at 300 baud.

It is difficult to explain things you know nothing about. But, if you try to download a file that has 50,000 bytes, it could take over half an hour with a 300 baud modem. Most bulletin boards feel that 300 baud modem users take up too much time so they have restricted use to 1200 baud or greater modems.

Many bulletin boards are free while some charge a small fee. On line services generally give you some free time to begin with, and will then bill your credit card each month. Some areas on these "for pay" services are billed to you at higher rates, but you will be told up front what these charges are. Also, most local boards will let you log on for free the first time even if they do have a charge. They are all friendly and will tell you what's going on. The major problem with any bulletin board or on-line service is becoming an addict. There is no "Modems Anonymous." If you get hooked you probably won't realize it until you receive your divorce papers.

Don't worry about making mistakes; you can't do anything from your modem to damage the bulletin board. . . or Junior. It may take a little practice to become comfortable with this type of communication. But, you will be learning in the privacy of your own home with Junior. Before you know it, you'll be flying along on the information highway!



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

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

Summer is Here!

During the next couple of months, should something come up where you need the services of your PCjr Club, give one of these members a call. If the person you need is on vacation, call another member; he or she just might know where that first person is, or they may have the answer to your question at their finger tips.

If your Junior quits or starts acting a little funny, call us. While the Club doesn't have meetings in June, July or August, we still are functioning. After all, that's what a Junior Club is all about!



See You in September!



PCjr CLUB

EUGENE

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

