

EUGENE

NEWSLETTER

PCjr CLUB

VOLUME XI

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1011 Valley River Way 116-B, Suite 220,

Eugene, OR 97401

MEETING

AGENDA

The December meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club is the Annual Christmas Potluck. It will take place at the Church of Christ, 2424 Norckenzie Road on Thursday, December 14th. Setup will begin at 6pm.

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 Production Staff Warren and Juanita Hampton

Association
of
Personal
Computer
User
Groups



Charley's Corner

by Charles Coury

Turkey and Thanksgiving sales are over. Christmas lights are up. The Christmas tree trucks are loaded and heading for California. Gifts are all bought and wrapped ???!

This is the traditional season called Advent. The Advent season, from early December to Christmas day, marks the beginning of the church calendar. Sort of like January for tax payers, September for school kids -- and the PCjr Club. The historical churches turn over their cycle of remembrances and holy days back to the starting point of a new church year. Advent for Christians is supposed to be a time of: preparation, anticipation, waiting.

I suppose it might be sacrilegious to make application to computers from such a spiritual time. But then I don't personally believe electronics is outside the scrutiny of the Almighty.

Preparation: Last month's game demonstration meeting was a big hit around our house. Andrew (my 8 year old) picked up a submarine game called Gato and has been playing it ever since. Now he's checking out library books on WWII submarine warfare and watching Clark Gable in Run Silent, Run Deep. He's one club member getting a lot from our meetings -- and is prepared for more!

Anticipation: We're looking forward to more exciting meetings next year. Two meetings will be on modems and the internet.

Waiting: Now all that is left is to wait for the 2nd Thursday for our annual Christmas party get-together. Just look on page four for Helen Fry's details.

Charley

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Three years ago this article appeared in the Atlanta, Georgia *The Orphan Peanut*. We are reprinting it this month as a kind of celebration of Christmases past. We never want to forget our roots as a PCjr Club nor do we ever want to forget those folks throughout the country that have helped the Eugene PCjr Club survive the onslaught of constant upgrades. Our hats are off, and Christmas wishes go out to old friends, Bob Gauthier of the Central Connecticut PC (PCjr) Group and to David Wilson, editor of *The Orphan Peanut*.

And Then There Was Only One. . .

By Bob Gauthier

[Editor's Note: Bob Gauthier and his newsletter have been one of the constants in the ever-shifting map of the PCjr's fortunes. We thought he summed up the PCjr experience about as well as we've seen it, so as part of our exit we'd like to pass on his comments. Enjoy them, and thanks for everything, Bob!] (David Wilson, editor, *Atlanta Orphan Peanut*.)

Seven years ago there were literally hundreds of PCjr user groups scattered 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 junior 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 bunch to be made in a marketplace where there were over half a million potential buyers.

Soon you could see products that made junior behave more and more like its 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 industry, somewhere, somehow, somebody would come along and design a way to make that technology work on a PCjr. The "never give up" attitude gave the PCjr users a reputation of being the strongest diehards that the computer industry has ever known - or will know, for that matter.

But things began to happen in the computer market. First there were the 386 machines. With these new machines on the market the prices of 286 machines began to drop. With all the effort by third party vendors put towards making the junior a 286 machine doing all the things that a "true" 286 machine at almost the same speed, pricing began to come into focus. For what you would spend to upgrade the junior to a 286 machine you could go out and buy a "true" 286 machine and eliminate having to know any special "tricks" to get it to run; compatibility was not an issue on a "true" 286.

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

To make Windows run properly you need at least a 386 machine with TONS of hard disk space and TONS and TONS of extended memory. These are some things that the junior will never have.

But you might be saying "so what, I don't need a 386 machine and I don't want to run Windows." That's fine, but with the 486 machines on the market and the 586 machines on the horizon, vendors are just about giving away 286 machines (if you can find somebody that still sells them). This poses the question of cost effectiveness. In the marketplace today you could actually pay less for a brand new 286 machine complete with all the trimmings than it would cost you to upgrade your present PCjr to a comparable machine without the question of compatibility.

Now don't get me wrong. I'm not knocking the junior. It was and still is a fine machine. I still own mine (though it's not my primary machine) and most likely will hang onto it until it dies. I just gave you that brief PCjr 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.

(continued on page three)

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.

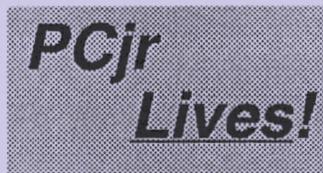
During 1991 I knew of only 4 pure PCjr groups across the U.S. that were still in existence. Most had disbanded and some had merged with, and become SIGs (Special Interest Groups) of larger PC user groups. By mid 1992 that number had dwindled to 2 groups, the Atlanta PCjr User group of Atlanta, Georgia, and the Eugene PCjr Club of Eugene, Oregon.

But now there is only one. The Atlanta group announced in their last newsletter that they were planning to call it quits. They were undecided as to what would become of the group (whether to merge with the larger Atlanta PC User Group or disband altogether) and that was to be decided at their October 5 meeting.

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 years. I have reprinted several articles from their newsletter in this newsletter because they always had interesting and helpful articles. They will be missed dearly by myself and by anyone else associated with the PCjr. But like the PCjr itself, even they are a vanishing breed, their legacy will go on forever because deep in our hearts we all know that no matter what happens.....

Bob Gauthier



So, we're here. Still kicking our Juniors, saying that as soon as they quit we may buy a new machine. But, our Juniors haven't quit!! Few of us own cars that are as old as our Juniors! Some of us have seen our Juniors go off to college with our children, only to return again in four years. One member is back to using a 128K Junior because her grandchildren have taken over the two

640K machines she used to have.

The way I see it, PCjr users are the same folks who are used to only the best. They drive the same car for ten years. They recycle their newspapers and pickup chewing gum wrappers from the sidewalks. Some of them eat strange things like quiche and smoked salmon. They change their oil and clean their furnace filters. In other words, they use only the best. . .computers that don't break. . .like the PCjr!

I guess the Eugene PCjr Club will be here for quite some time. As long as our Juniors work, so will we!
ALL of us in the Club!

Scary Note:

Now that the rainy season has hit the west coast quality control and our mailing labels are becoming unglued. We had two November newsletters returned to our office because the mail label fell off! We wish to apologize to anyone who failed to get all the important information in the November issue. If you were one of the folks who didn't get your issue, drop us a post card and one will be in the mail to you.

If you don't get a newsletter by the second Wednesday of the month, call us! Your publication staff has never missed a publication date in 10 years, so if you missed any issues, let us know. We also keep back issues of the Newsletter should you desire any of them.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

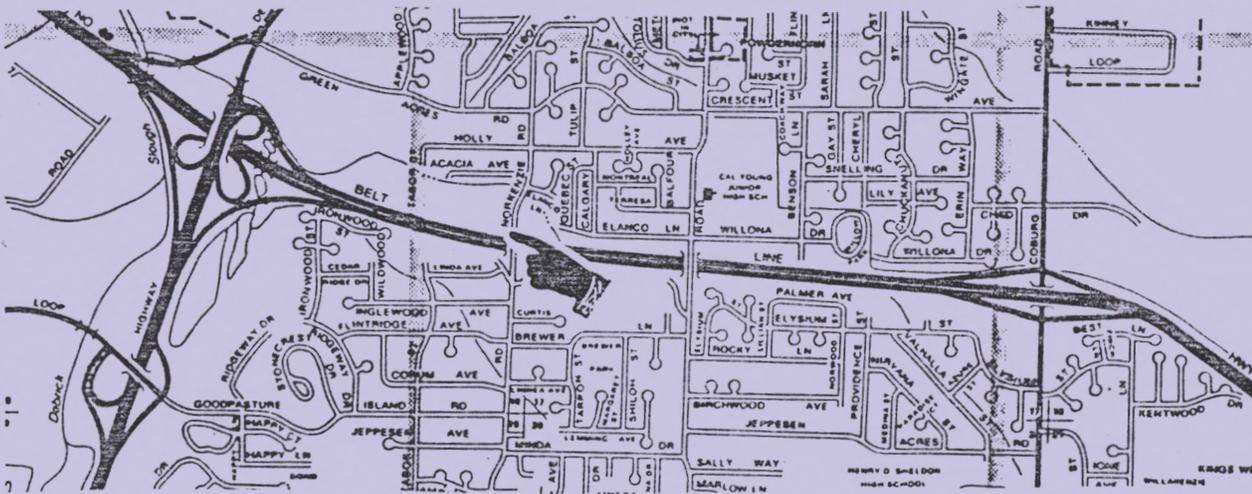


Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

From Everyone
in the
Eugene PCjr Club

★
Bill Sharp
Lynn Miles
Mollie Jones
Paul Bonney
Paul Jameson
Barbara Castleton
Phil and Rosie Janz
Dick and Carol Page
Helen and Dennis Fry
Mike and Jeanne Ruiz
Eileen and Louie Levy
Ken and Diane Wilson
Bob and Fran Williams
Patti and Bobby Tanner
Tami Pitt from Creswell
Christine and Ron Brown
Jessica, Tina and Melissa
Darlene and Roy Gotzman
Roy Arbins from Milwaukie
Eric and Lynda Christiansen
Warren and Juanita Hampton
Lucretia Carter from Soldotna
George Sorensen from Lincoln
Clyde Dodge from Mountain View
Sue and Arthur Kasten from Dexter
Stan and Holly Sparks from Monroe
German and Merlis Toledo from Miami
Louis and Virginia Pirillo from Oelwein
Clifford and Margaret Bell from Tualatin
Bob and Joyce Denning from Vancouver
Robert and Marge Kalcinski from Raleigh
Court and Virginia Pierce from St. George
Pauline Bacod's Family (Jim and Brandon)
Janet Grantham Family (Janet, Jeff and Kyle)
Elmer Hungate and Shirley Traff from Galena
The Stucky Family (Roy, Toki, Anna and David)
The Sundahl Family (Sheila, Kurt, Ian and Megan)
Rally Electronics (Sue and Virgil Jacob) from Lincoln
The LeManquais Family (Gordon, Sharon, Kent and Reana)
The Robert Atkins Family (Rob, Lisa, Isaac, Joshua and Mariko)
The Charles Coury Family (Charlie, Karen, Andrew, Matthew and Peter)
The Lambright Family (Carol, Keith, Cameron, Melissa, Spencer, Andre and Audra)
The Roggenbuck Family (Karen, Dave, Russell and Elizabeth)
The Snare Family (David, LeeAnn, Andy and Rebekah)

Annual Christmas Potluck



DIRECTIONS: The big intersection above on the left is the Beltline and Delta Highway interchange just north of downtown Eugene and Valley River Center. Just north of the interchange, take Green Acres Road east (right). The first road past the shopping center (Homebase, The Future Shop, GI Joes and Food Connection), is Norkenzie. Turn south (right) onto Norkenzie and go two short blocks. The Church of Christ is on the right side (the correct side) just before the Beltline overpass. Drive around the church and park in the back parking lot. The church's address is 2424 Norkenzie. If you have ANY problems, call Phil (343-1059) or Louie (343-7592) for better directions.

(a little more information on the next page)

It's time for the Annual Christmas Pot Luck! As usual, the club will be furnishing fried chicken, coffee and punch. If you can, bring a main or side dish and either a salad or a dessert. If it would be difficult for you to do this, or if you are just one person, don't worry about bringing anything; no one will go away hungry!

Our gift exchange is always fun. This year, we'll be doing things somewhat differently, but if you want to participate, bring an inexpensive gift or a white elephant gift for each member of your family who will be taking part. Again, if this is a problem, remember that Junior owners don't worry about the small stuff. Just come!

Darlene has made arrangements for us to meet in the Church's recreation room the same as last year. Plan on getting there between 6pm and 6:30pm as we'll be eating at 6:30 sharp! We don't want to start without you!

Helen Fry



Making Self-Booting Disks

By Louie L.

Why do you need to learn to make self-booting disks? Here are just a few reasons:

- Programs we use like *WordPerfect*, *Lotus* or *Writing Assistant*, work better when run from a RAM drive. Without a special self-booting disk, we would have to reboot Junior with a custom boot disk that would make a RAM drive, change disks and copy the necessary files to this RAM drive before we could run our program. A self-booting *Writing Assistant*, *Lotus 1-2-3* or *WordPerfect* disk would solve all this disk-swapping.
- If there are children or family members who are not comfortable with DOS commands, making self-booting disks of their favorite programs would mean they could run them anytime without having us at home to "set up" Junior for their programs. Self-booting disks make family members more self-sufficient and less dependent. . .freeing up time for you to do other things like writing articles for your computer club *Newsletter*.
- Many of our programs require "special" boot disks; *Police Quest*, to name one, requires a special configuration before it would run on a PCjr. A self-booting disk for these programs would take away our having to remember all the idiosyncrasies for these programs each time we want to run them.

All self-booting disks begin with our making a "systems" disk. A systems disk is a formatted disk that has had the DOS systems files transferred to it. We use the term "transferred" instead of "copied" because two of the system files are "hidden" files. Hidden files are files that can't be normally copied or erased.

To make a disk a self-booting disk, there must be the three DOS files, *COMMAND.COM*, *IBMBIO.COM* and *IBMDOS.COM* on the disk. If we did a DIR of a newly formatted systems disk we would only see one file, *COMMAND.COM*. This is because the files *IBMBIO.COM* and *IBMDOS.COM* are "hidden" files; they don't show up on the screen so we can't erase them (easily).

When Junior finishes its POST test, the Power On Self-Test, and begins to boot, the next thing it does is read the diskette in the A> drive. If it is not a self-booting disk, you will have the message, NON-SYSTEM DISK or DISK ERROR - REPLACE AND STRIKE ANY KEY WHEN READY. If the diskette in Drive A> is a systems diskette, Junior will boot.

As Junior starts to boot, DOS reads the file *IBMBIO.COM* that sets up Junior's Basic Input-Output routines. Simplified, this sets up your hardware: the routines for inputs from the keyboard, disk drives, joy sticks and other input devices, and the output routines to the monitor, disk drives and anything you may have attached to the serial port on Junior.

Next, DOS reads the file *IBMDOS.COM*. This short program figures out where your memory is located and where it should place the command interpreter, *COMMAND.COM*. Once it does this, the program *IBMBIO.COM* operates the command interpreter to see if there are further commands on the start-up disk. It will look for only two files: *CONFIG.SYS* and *AUTOEXEC.BAT* files. If none are there, it will operate the internal command, *DATE* and *TIME*, and once you enter them, leave you at the A>.

(continued on next page...)

To make a systems disk, follow the instructions on pages 2-89 through 2-95 in the DOS 2.1 Manual. At the A> we key in
 FORMAT B: /S

DOS will tell us to insert a diskette into Drive B and to press any key when ready. Once the disk is formatted, DOS will transfer the systems files to the newly formatted diskette.

When this is done, we need to ask ourselves, "What do we want our disk to do?" We next need to jot down a few notes as to just what it is that we want our new self-booting disk to do. For our example, we will say that we want to make a self-booting Writing Assistant, a program that most Junior users use or have used in the past. Also, for our example, we will assume that you have a copy of Writing Assistant that isn't copy protected.

So, in the case of Writing Assistant, we will want our computer to display an 80 column screen instead of just 40 column. The second thing we want it to do is prompt us for the date. Once we have inserted the correct date, we will want our self-booter to execute the program by keying in WRITE for us.

Now, we need to determine what commands are needed to do all of this. So, if we want an 80 column screen, we need the command, MODE 80. If we want to insert the date so that our files will always have the correct date, we will need to execute the internal DOS command, DATE. All of us know that to execute Writing Assistant, we key in WRITE to get it going. These are all the commands we need in our AUTOEXEC.BAT file.

For small AUTOEXEC.BAT files, the easiest way to write them is to use the "Copy to the Console" command: COPY CON. If you are using a single drive Junior, make sure the newly made disk is in the A: drive, we would key in COPY CON and the name of the file we need to create. In our case, it's

```
COPY CON AUTOEXEC.BAT (enter)
```

When we press the enter key, we lose our prompt, but the cursor returns to the left side of the screen so we can key in our AUTOEXEC.BAT file.

We have already said that the first thing we want DOS to do is to change to an 80 column screen. To do this, we would key in the command

```
MODE 80 (enter)
```

Along about now we should remind you that DOS doesn't care if we key in lower case letters or capitals; DOS knows all.

The next thing we said we'd need is to insert the date. Key in
 DATE (enter)

Now, to execute Writing Assistant, we need to key in
 WRITE (enter)

This is it; this is all we wanted this self-booter to do. To make sure it doesn't do more, we need to put an-end-of-file character at the end of our AUTOEXEC.BAT file. To do this, we press Fn 6. This inserts the characters ^Z, or "control Z," which is cryptic for "this is the end of the file." When we press the (enter) key, DOS writes the file to the disk and tells us

```
1 File(s) copied
```

Should you want to look at your newly created AUTOEXEC.BAT file, just key in
 TYPE AUTOEXEC.BAT (enter)

Now, we need to determine what files we need on our disk to run the programs we want. If our disk is to be truly self-booting, all of the files we need to run our programs must be on the disk. The first thing we say we wanted to do was to change our screen to 80 column. In order to change to an 80-column screen, we must have MODE.COM from our DOS disk on our new self-booter.

DATE is an internal DOS command so we don't need to copy a file on the disk for that. We do need the necessary Writing Assistant files. These files are WRITE.EXE, WRITE.NON, WRITE.SWP, and the dictionary files, WORDPRF.WDL and WORDPRF.ADL.

We need to copy MODE.COM from our DOS disk, so place the DOS disk in the A: drive and key in

```
COPY MODE.COM B: (enter)
```

DOS will tell you when to place the new self-booter into the B: drive.

Next, we need to put our Writing Assistant disk into our A> drive and key in either

```
COPY WRITE.EXE B: (enter)
```

```
COPY WRITE.SWP B: (enter)
```

```
COPY WRITE.NON B: (enter)
```

or, we can use the wild card symbol to copy all
(just a little more on the next page>>>)

the files that begin with WRITE by keying in
 COPY WRITE.* B: (enter)
 This works especially well if we have two disk
 drives on our Juniors!
 Then, for the dictionary files, key in
 COPY WORDPRF.* B: (enter)

When this is all done, put the newly made self-
 booting Writing Assistant disk into the A> drive
 and press Ctrl/Alt/Del to reboot our computers.

We need to wrap up some loose ends here.
 This new disk does NOT address any additional
 memory you may have added to Junior. To do
 that, we would need to make a CONFIG.SYS file
 on the disk that would load the memory manage-
 ment software, JRCONFIG.SYS. Next month,
 we'll cover this little ditty. CONFIG.SYS files
 are fun!

Never hesitate to drop us a note whenever
 you need help along these lines. . .the PCjr Club
 is here to help!



Gift of Computer Magazines Rounds Out Documents Library

The Christmas Spirit reared its head and bit our
 Founding Father, Club Guru and Tooth Fairy,
 Author, Editor and general all-around Good-guy,
 Dr. Dick Page. Dick donated his whole collection
 of *Compute!*, *Compute!'s PC*, *Family Computing*
 and *Home Computer* magazines to the Club's
 Documents Library. And, Dick left all his little
 yellow Post-It™ tabs on the good stuff!

Many of our membership may not know
 that *Home Computer* was published right here in
 Eugene by Emerald Valley Publishing. All of
 these magazines carried articles on the PCjr and
 are really interesting to read.

Doctor Dick's gracious donation really
 rounds out the Club's collection. We now have
 COMPLETE collections of *Compute!*, *Home
 Computer*, *Family Computing*, *PCjr Magazine*,
The Junior Report and many of the old PCjr
 computer clubs' newsletters.

We need to thank many more folks who
 have donated "stuff" to the Club. Our Club has
 come far from the time when we had to ask some-
 one to disconnect their Junior and bring it in each
 month to use at the meeting. We now have a
 couple of Juniors that are owned by the Club to
 use at our meetings, at the work shops, and in our
 community outreach programs. There have been

too many donators to name (and some requested
 that we not use their names), but if any of you are
 reading this, all of us in the Club want to say a
 hearty "THANK YOU!" And, we wish you and
 your's a very merry Christmas!

All of us at the PCjr Club

Looking for some
 economical gifts for that
 computer nut? Here are a
 few ideas for those of you who
 missed shopping at the company
 store last month*:



Disk Drive Cleaning Kit- under \$5.00
 Printer Paper- \$5.00 up
 Mouse Pads- \$5.00 up
 Mouse Pockets- \$3.50 up
 Mouse Stations- \$12.00 up
 WordProcessing Rulers- \$4.00 up
 A Month on Eugene Public Network- \$7.50
 Gift Subscription to the Newsletter- \$12.00
 Copy Holder- \$5.00 up
 Disk Tubs- \$6.00 up
 Windows '95- \$89.00
 Can of Peanuts- \$2.50
 Coffee Cup Warmer- \$5.00
 Euphoria Chocolate Disks- worth anything you
 pay

(* Some of this stuff isn't in the Company Store.)

DECEMBER MODEM NEWS

BY GORDON LEMANQUAIS

Well, it's that time of year again for all the good
 things to happen to everyone that has been good.
 Have you?

There is not much to say, except if you are
 thinking of a Christmas gift Junior could always
 use, how about a modem? They have never been
 cheaper.

There might be a surprise coming up at the
 Christmas potluck, so come to the meeting and
 find out.

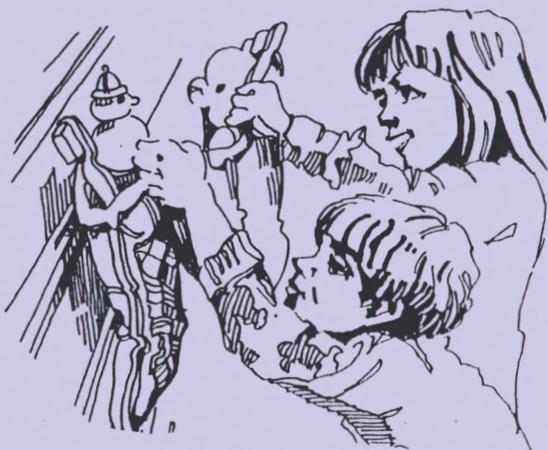
Remember the easy way to go to the
 Eugene Library is by using your modem. If the
 book you are looking for is there, you can save it
 until you can get to the library. If it isn't in, by
 using your modem, you saved gas.

See you at the party. Merry Christmas and
 Happy New Year to all. . .and have a safe
 holiday.

Gordon

DID YOU KNOW THAT ALL MEMBERS CAN PUT A FREE ADVERTISEMENT ON THE BACK OF THE NEWSLETTER?

FOR SALE: Panasonic KX-P1080i Printer with cable, \$35 delivered and setup (within 50 miles). Louie, 541 343-7592.



EUGENE **PCjr** CLUB

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Eugene, OR 97401

FIRST CLASS MAIL

