



EUGENE

PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 50024. Eugene, OR 97405

VOLUME XIII
NUMBER 5
MAY 1997

MEETING

AGENDA

The May meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will be held at the Church of Christ, 2424 Norckenzie Road, on Thursday, May 8th. This is the Annual Spring Cleaning meeting. Setup will begin at 6:30 and the meeting at 7pm.

The main program for the May meeting will be a presentation on Troubleshooting problems that may occur with your PCjr computers.

OFFICERS

- President Mike Ruiz
- Vice President Lynn Miles
- Treasurer and Company Store Phil Janz
- Disk Librarian Mike Ruiz
- Modem Captain Judy Young
- Commercial Contact Gordon LeManquais
- Social Director Rosie Janz
- Newsletter Editor Louie Levy
- Publisher and Production Staff Warren and Juanita Hampton



Mike's Message

by Mike Ruiz

INAUGURAL—FROM THEN TO NOW— A STORY

My first PCjr sat at the back of a classroom.

The school thought it was of no use to anyone. It had been donated, so there it sat for over a year—no one would accept it. After all it was an IBM—it wasn't a Macintosh.

It was orphaned. In the back of the class with stuff piled on top, it wasn't even a good place to pile things. It was part of the junk. Like a black goose, it had been rejected.

In a way you could say that I adopted that computer. I took it home, cleaned it up and plugged it in. The first thing I experienced was that the little computer had color! It seemed amazing to me that possibly no one had noticed it's color capability and I wondered if the school had made a mistake. And then, I began to think that possibly I had made a great buy. As I watched the machine start, it did its own thing and showed me a BASIC screen. Not knowing anything about computers, I was impressed that it started on its own. And because I knew zero about how to use a computer, I tried to work in the BASIC environment for a couple of weeks. I began to have second thoughts and began to feel that maybe the machine wasn't that good after all.

My brother was over one weekend and overheard me trying to explain my computer frustration. He said to me, "maybe you should call this guy I know, maybe he can help you out with that computer." That day was the first time I had heard Louie's name. On a whim or by chance, that evening I called Louie and discovered the Eugene PCjr Club.

The club opened my eyes to a whole new experience. That computer which sat at the back of the room could do much more than anyone had suspected. The PCjr became my answer to computer literacy. The club taught me about DOS, Writing Assistant, and best of all, about meetings, the club store, and the shareware library. I discovered other people that owned PCjrs. I became very excited about that new computer—the IBM PC Junior. I also became aware of its potential.

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Eventually, I purchased a Junior that had a second drive and learned about memory. I actually read a DOS book (yuck!). Things seemed to move along very quickly now that I had the club as a resource. Within a year that Jr became very busy and productive. Somewhere along the line I acquired WordPerfect 4.1, a word processor, in its own way, as good as any word processing program money can buy. I was beginning to feel competent. Computers no longer were a barrier.

Well, here I am today. Not long ago, here as an absolute beginner. I owe everything I know about computers to the people in The Eugene PCjr Club. I owe my computer literacy to the positive meaningful first impression I received back then. To me, the people in this club are all Presidents. Perhaps any one of you could stand here as I do today. I am really honored to stand here as your new President figure, but realize that, without the club and all of its members, this position means nothing.

I am looking forward to another great year for the PCjr club. Please feel free to call me any time. I will do my best to help anyone.

One last note: All of us were saddened to hear of the death of Juanita Hampton's mother on April 11th. Our thoughts are with both Juanita and Warren at this time.

Mike Ruiz

What To Do When Junior Doesn't Do What You Want It To Do

Louie Levy

Summer is right around the corner! Keeping your Junior up and running over the summer should be a major concern of everyone. If you live close to the Eugene PCjr Club, you know that you can just give one of the members whose name appears in our HELP list on the last page a call and your Junior will be back purring in very little time.

But, for those who live too far away from the Club to get help right away, an "uppity" Junior isn't something they want to deal with. What should they do when that dreaded error message appears, when Junior says "abort, retry or fail," or worse yet, when Junior just no longer runs at all?

Few, if any, computer repair shops will look at your Junior. If they did, the cost of nearly any repair could exceed the true dollar value of your old friend. We are very fortunate, though, that IBM built the PCjr for the long haul. It is truly one of the most reliable computers they have made. First, they seldom actually break, and second, they can do their own diagnostics should they start to "act up."

Each time you boot up your Junior, it does it's Power On Self Test (POST). When Junior is first started, this POST test displays IBM's color bar and logo on the screen and starts checking the memory that is installed. Should POST discover a problem during this check, it will display an error message on the screen and issue either one or two beeps.

The day may come, though, when a problem may prevent Junior from displaying anything, let alone an error message. Still, if you are observant, Junior can be "displaying" a message for you.

A white or black screen and one beep from Junior means that Junior is alright, but the monitor isn't. If you get two or three beeps and the white or black screen, you can be assured that your external power supply (the brick), and the internal power supply card (where the switch is located), are both okay.

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If even one of your power supplies is not producing the voltage that Junior requires, Junior is not going to start nor will it beep, and your monitor will display a white screen. See how easy things are if you just watch Junior while it starts?

Should Junior fail to complete the POST test, we normally recommend that you unplug everything that isn't essential to making Junior run. Remove the printer cable, joy sticks, keyboard and external modem if you have one. Leave only the power brick and monitor attached, but remove the connectors and then replace them to ensure they are firmly attached. This means that you should not just push them in to make sure they are firmly attached, but REMOVE them first and then reattach them. This has a way of cleaning the pins of the connectors so they can make a good connection.

If Junior still doesn't want to run, remove all of the sidecars (memory sidecards, parallel printer card, etc), any 2nd disk drives or hard drives, remove ALL of the internal cards (IR wireless receiver, 64K expansion card, modem, disk drive controller card and any cartridges that may be installed in the cartridge slots—everything but the power supply card. Junior should be able to do it's POST test with just the systems board, power supply card and power brick. You should hear one beep if it successfully completes its POST test.

Should Junior fail to complete POST with only these three components, one of them is the problem. Feel the transformer brick; if it is warm, or if you can hear it buzz when you press your ear to it, it is probably good. (The only way to tell for sure is to check it's voltage output.) If you didn't disconnect the power cable from the power supply card to the disk drive, the fan on the Junior should be running if both the power transformer and internal card are good.

If you have removed everything from Junior except for the power transformer and card and you still get two or three beeps, the systems board (motherboard) is probably bad. If this happens, check the pins on the rear of the Junior to ensure none of them are bent and touching other pins. Don't be too concerned if some pins are missing at this point; only worry about the ones that are bent.

Bent pins and improper connector alignment are, by far, the most common reason for Junior to stop working. Bent pins can be the cause of error B, C or D messages, and bent pins on any 60-pin sidecar bus can cause error messages A, F, H, I or J.

Always try to isolate the problem before calling in outside help. You can really build self-esteem by correcting your own problems and it may save time and embarrassment. Just unplugging the monitor from Junior and replugging it back solved some problems in the past. Things get loose. Connections build up "gradue" and "farbaharbich" over time and they need to be reconnected to clean them.

The May meeting of our Club is generally titled, "Spring Cleaning." We take a couple of Juniors apart and clean them. What we are trying to do is build up self-confidence while at the same time, trying to give Junior a little more longevity. This month, we are going to have some Juniors at the meeting that represent what happens when Juniors get ignored. We'll put our minds to the task of trouble-shooting these machines to find out why they won't do what they should and then show them we mean business.

Should the time come when you actually need outside help with Junior or any software that you are using, do not hesitate to call someone on the Club Help list. They are there to help. Well, not always. A member called from St. Louis about her disk drive not working and Louie put in a request to the Club Treasurer for a round-trip ticket to go help. Phil thought the cost was too much. Louie said he'd drive over, but felt that the club shouldn't be spending so much money on motels and food. Phil said that we should just send her a new disk drive with instructions on how to install it. Oh, well. So much for personalized help! So, attend the meeting this month to make sure that Junior won't get in the way of your having a good summer.

Louie

Disk Drive Rotation

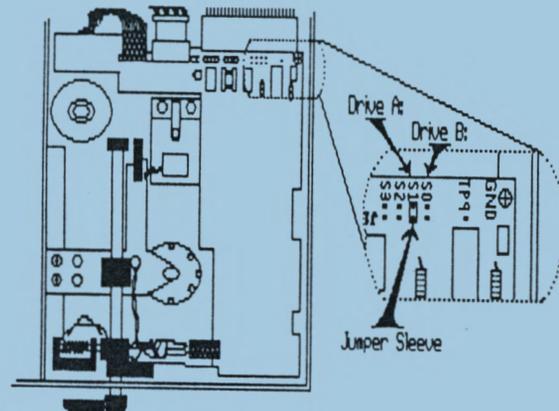
Why change Drive A to Drive B and make Drive B into Drive A? Here are some possibilities.

1. **ROTATING TIRES:** The way I use my Junior, Drive A gets a lot more use than Drive B. Just like you rotate car tires to get even wear out of them, so too, would it be good to alternate drives.
2. **ACCESS:** I find it easier to use my top drive than my bottom one because the large keyboard I have (a Key Tronic KB 5151jr) gets in the way when inserting and removing diskettes.
3. **COMFORT:** My newer second drive is quieter than my original IBM Qume drive, so switching decreases the sound irritations.
4. **DEPENDABILITY:** By using the disk drive test that is part of COPY IIPC, I found out which drive runs at the best speed with the least erratic behavior. I have made that my primary drive.

Installing the changes:

Switching is no big deal if you have ever taken apart your Junior for cleaning. (If you haven't tried exploring inside, maybe now is the time to both clean it and rotate drives!) First and foremost, unplug all power cords to the Junior. Make sure you're grounded as well. (You may have a static charge and accidentally touch a chip and zap it.) Don't wear polyester clothing. It's also best if your shoes are rubber-soled.

Remove the sidecar and the top. Disconnect the cables to the sidecar. Take off the whole snap-in upper section containing the second drive. Using the accompanying diagram of the disk drive, locate the back where the large ribbon cable connects to Junior's drive. To switch drives, move the metal sleeve (called a jumper) from SO to S1 or from S1 to SO—depending on which set of pins it came with. Reverse the sleeve on the second drive as well. (Otherwise you could end up with two Drive B's.)



Put Junior back together and you are off and running! Just remember that you have a new Drive A. So make sure you start Junior with your DOS disk in that drive.

Good luck and long may your two drives spin!

Dick Page

How To Clean Your Keyboard

By John Schwab

1. Disconnect your keyboard from the computer, remove the cable from keyboard, or remove batteries if you are not using the cable.
 2. Place keyboard upside down on a table. You should see 6 Phillips head screws. (One is located
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under the Part Number/Serial Number sticker.) Carefully remove these with a small screwdriver.

3. Gently pry the two plastic halves apart and remove the top half. This is really the underside of the keyboard. You will see the underside of the green circuit board. Gently brush off any visible dirt particles with a lint free cloth or small soft brush.
4. Pick up circuit board and remove dust from the other side.
5. Beneath the circuit board you should see a gray rubber sheet about the same size as the circuit board, and about 1/8th of an inch thick. It appears to have craters about a half inch wide all over it with little black posts in the crater centers. Remove this rubber piece gently and clean. You will notice on the other side of it as you peel it off that it has what looks like little suction cups (or tiny mounds) that act as springs for the keys below.
6. All you have left now is the inverted top half of the keyboard. You can see the bottom of each key resting in a small crater with the center of the key (looks like a round post) sticking out of the middle. If you lift the keyboard off the table, the keys will slide down, but they will not fall out, except maybe the space bar and the enter key. These are easily slid back into place. Use a small brush, or Q-tip to clean the craters the keys rest in, and make sure to remove all dust from around the posts of the keys. This will ensure easy traveling of the keys and help prevent sticking.



7. Re-assembly: First replace the rubber mat on top of the keyboard. The three small holes on the rubber should be on top and fit comfortably over the three posts for the screws. Also, the black dots should be face up. Next, replace the circuit board. The chips on the board should be face down and on top. Once again, the three holes on the circuit board should fit over the screw guide posts. Finally replace the bottom of the keyboard. The part of the keyboard that holds the batteries should be on top on the left. To ensure proper refitting, hinge the top of the bottom piece under the other half of the keyboard and lower the front gently towards you. Hold the bottom shut and replace the bottom center screw. You can now replace the remaining five screws. Tighten equally until snug. You can now re-attach the cable or replace the batteries.

This should not take more than a half hour to do, and it will also give you an inside view of how your keyboard works.

New Slate of Officers Elected

As you can tell from the first page, we have new officers! They are going to have a difficult time following our Past President, Charley Coury. Incidentally, the April meeting presentation by Charley and Paul Bonney on the History of Computers and Computing was outstanding. They were able to field the many questions from our younger members and it was interesting to see so many of the older folks in the audience who actually took part in some of this history.

Our new President is long-time member Mike Ruiz. Mike has been doing a great job with
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the Disk Library and has been working in the capacity of Modem Captain. It's nice to see him move up the ladder. Phil will once again be our Treasurer. As long as he is keeping us in the black, it will be hard for him to step down! Judy Young has come forward to volunteer as our Modem Captain. If your mail isn't getting through, Judy is the one to call.

We want to thank all of our out-going officers for the job they have done to keep our club going and prospering. Under their leadership, the Eugene PCjr Club has a WEB page on the Internet and more of us are using e-mail than ever before. Our new officers will need our help if we are going to continue as the nation's only PCjr Club. Remember, our Juniors are not collector's items; they need to be used if we are going to survive as a Computer Club! Get on the Band Wagon!



On May 2nd, the new Board met to address the "health and welfare" of our Club and to plan our future growth. Staying on top of our membership and their varied needs concerning hardware (2nd disk drives, printers, monitors, modems, Junior itself, etc.), software (DOS, Club Library programs, commercial programs like *Writing Assistant*, *Lotus*, *WordPerfect*, etc.) and their use of Junior as a production tool, is a continuing concern of those who provide service to Club members.

Each person who reads this newsletter is "the Club." Each of us has a stake in helping support the Club and its goal of providing entry level computer literacy for all Club members. . .as well as continuing to increase our own individual computer knowledge and productivity. Each of us owe this to anyone we can help. This need to help others has been ongoing since the Club was formed, but as support needs in all areas have increased over the years as the complexion of the membership has changed, and because we are now the last functioning PCjr Club in the nation, this help is getting more difficult to provide. Instead of seeking out sources of support for our Club, we have now become the "source." Our family support group has now become nationwide.

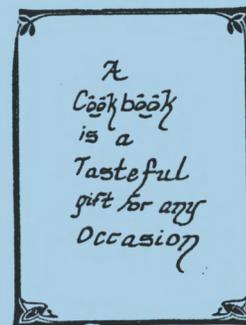
The minutes at the Board Meeting will be available on Thursday. For those of you who live outside the area, we'll be mailing them to you. We will also have a new "updated" membership listing for those interested and will be including it with the Board Minutes. And, if this isn't enough, Mike, Phil and Louie have been working on a new listing of the software in the Club's Disk Library. This new listing, with it's new format, will be updated quarterly and will be included with the mailing of the Club Board Minutes and membership listing.

Mike, Phil and Louie

Cookbooks Still Available

As the meeting went a little long last month, announcements went somewhat short! Our member in Soldotna, Alaska wants us to know that there are still copies of the Soldotna Church of the Nazarene 30th Anniversary cookbooks available. This cookbook, done in part on Lucretia Carter's PCjr, is "jam" packed with great local color, household hints, photographs of the local area and recipes from the "far North."

You can still get a copy for yourself and another for that special Christmas gift later on. Just send a check for \$18 for each one you want to Lucretia Carter, Church of the Nazarene, 229 Beluga Avenue, Soldotna, AK 99669. And, tell her that you're a Junior Club member!!



E-123 - MATH AND LOGIC GAMES

There are six challenging games for kids to explore on this new addition to the Disk Library. Target + Math, Jelly Beans, I Shot An Arrow, Leaky Tub, Math Race and Math As Art are all included on this menu-driven new disk. Younger children may have to have the directions read to them the first time they use it, but from then on, look out! Requires 256K.

Need a Junior? Read this letter:

From: Gary Robertshaw <groberts@fix.net>
Subject: A lonely PCjr

Hello Eugene PCjr Club,

We have a working PCjr, and thought that you might know someone who could use one. It's in standard original configuration, with 2-128k add-on memory modules, upgrade keyboard, 5 1/4" FDD, and some or all of the original IBM documentation, DOS, and MS Flight Simulator. Everything seems to work fine.

While I might tend to offer it free to a good home, it belongs to my 15-year-old son, who finds dollar bills few and far between. He would be ecstatic if someone would buy it for \$50 plus shipping cost. I have no idea if this is a good price, but since it's all there and working, it seems reasonable.

I feel a bit guilty getting rid of it, since it hasn't done anything wrong, but once you're used to a newer machine, it's tough to go back, and I don't really have any software for it. I have a couple of C-64's (Ed's note: Commodore computers) with plenty of software, sitting there ready to go to work, but getting shoved farther and farther into the corner because there's a 486 there, too. Someday, the 486 will probably be joining them.

If you know of anyone who is interested, drop me a reply.
Thanks!

Gary Robertshaw
Atascadero, California, U.S.A.
Voice Phone: 1 (805) 466-4394
Internet Mail: groberts@fix.net
E-Mail (alternate): roberthouse@geocities.com

If you are looking for a "new" Junior with 384K, here's a nice opportunity to help someone out while helping yourself! Give Gary a call! His son will thank you very much!

Question: I have trouble with my daughter's game programs. Some of them start by keying in GO, others by keying in the name of the game and some are "self-booting." She has to come and get help starting each one as she can't read the instructions. What can I do to help her?

Answer: A batch file is what you need! As your daughter's name is Amy, why not just rename the startup command on each disk to AMY.BAT. This way all your daughter needs to do is key in her name and the program will run! If the command to get the game going on a certain disk is GO.BAT, then, at the DOS prompt, key in RENAME GO.BAT AMY.BAT. If it's FROGIE.EXE, you would key in RENAME FROGIE.EXE AMY.EXE. Now, anytime Amy wants to play a game, she can put in her disk and key in her name to get it going.

NEED HELP? Give These Club Members a Call:

- Paul Bonney - 344-1501 BASIC or WordStar
- Louie Levy - 343-7592 PC-File III, WordPerfect or DOS
- Dick Page - 342-3193 PC-File +, 5 or 6
- Phil Janz - 343-1059 Writing Assistant or Name Pal
- Judy Young - 343-0584 E-Mail
- Gordon LeManquais - 746-1594 Communications Software
- Mike Ruiz - 687-8361 Spreadsheets or WordPerfect
- 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!"



This will be the last newsletter before Summer Vacation. No newsletters will be mailed in June, July or August and there will be NO monthly meetings during this time. The "staff" and Club Officers are all going their own way, wherever that is. But some of us will stay behind. E-Mail and snail mail will all be answered over the summer, so it isn't like the world has come to an end. Keep those Juniors busy! If you have little to do, write an article or two for the newsletter. **Have a good Summer and. . . See you in September!!**



EUGENE PCjr CLUB

P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405

Phil and Rosie Janz 12/97M
155 34th Place East
Eugene, OR 97405

FIRST CLASS MAIL

