



EUGENE

PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Volume 3
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Dec. 1987

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



On behalf of the Editor and all the Eugene IBM PCjr Club Members, please have a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season.

Season's Greetings

AGENDA

A> December 10, 1987 will be the date of our annual potluck and Swapmeet celebrating the Christmas and Hannukah holiday seasons. Please remember to bring either the salad or main dish as arranged. The Club will provide dessert and refreshments. This will be a time for celebrating, for comraderie and for just plain good eating and fun. Hope to see you there!

The Potluck/Swapmeet will be held in the Ida Patterson School Cafeteria, 16th and Polk, Eugene. Also, do bring your computer-related items for sale, trade, or give-away. Club disks will be available for sale as well.

PC-RESOURCE NEEDS WRITERS
- Writer's Digest, Dec. 1987 -

"On a scale of 1-10, with 1 signifying a novice and 10 an expert, PC-RESOURCE's coverage ranges from 3-7," advises Editor-in-Chief Eric Maloney. The monthly, subtitled "The Practical Guide to MS-DOS Computing," is for users of the IBM PC (and Junior), XT, and compatibles, "though much of our material applies to the AT and compatibles as well."

"We'd like to see some good, down and dirty DOS and programming tutorials for beginners and intermediate users," Maloney says. "We're also looking for tutorials on undocumented features of commercial software." He does not want to see articles on online communications or shareware. Articles generally run 1,000-3,000 words.

Terms: Pays 10-30 cents per word, on acceptance. Buys all rights. Submissions: Query with published clips. Writer's guidelines for self-addressed stamped envelope. Free sample copy. Articles are reviewed by a Submissions Committee. 80 Elm Street, Peterborough, NH 03458.

ARTICLES NEEDED!

The idea behind our EUGENE PCjr CLUB is "users helping users." Please share some of your experience and expertise by writing an article for our award-winning Newsletter. For more information, call Paddy Dawson, Editor, 689-9337.

NEEDED: Greeting and Christmas cards, new and used. Also needed, paper used on one side only. Call 689-9337.



The EUGENE PCjr NEWSLETTER will accept advertising as follows:

COMMERCIAL AD RATES/insertion:

- 1 page - \$18.00
- 1/2 page - \$ 9.00
- 1/4 page - \$ 5.00

CLASSIFIED: "For Sale" ads are \$2 per 25 words for commercial transactions; free to members where information only is exchanged.

Our Club members are seeking high quality, competitively priced hardware and software for their Juniors. We'd like to hear from you?

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X-CHANGE: CABLE TV FOR YOUR PC
- TCI Cable ad, Eugene, Oregon -

X-Change is a new basic service from your cable television company. It's a family information service bringing the latest stock quotes, news, educational, shopping, sports, weather, and high tech news right to your personal computer. It's a new way to use your cable service.


You'll need a cable TV connection, compatible computer (IBM PC, XT, and AT as well as 100% compatibles. Also, Apple IIC and IIC) and X-Change Software Kit. A small receiver is included in the Kit to direct the signal from your cable connection to your PC. X-Change in no way affects your cable TV service. You can use your TV and PC at the same time with no adjustments.

X-Change costs nothing extra each month. It's available now as part of your basic cable service and can be easily installed. There is a one-time purchase cost for your X-Change Kit. The Kit includes software, receiver, cable connectors, and easy-to-follow installation information. The X-Change Kit is now being offered at a special introductory price of \$59.95 plus shipping and handling. (Offer expires 12-31-87). For more information, call your local cable television company.



MEMBERS, PLEASE NOTE!

Check the date on your mailing label. The date shown is your renewal for your membership and/or Newsletter subscription. Please keep your membership active and renew your dues BEFORE they expire. Thank you!


 HEARD ON THE STREET

- Dick Page, Eugene IBM PCjr Club,
Eugene, Oregon -

EXTENDED WARRANTY ADVICE: Murray Bowes, author of the PERSONAL COMPUTER BUYER'S GUIDE, suggests that you only purchase an extended warranty on a computer if it covers the printer, keyboard and disk drive(s). These components are the most likely to break down. (DENTAL PRODUCTS Magazine, 10/87)

STATIONFALL is INFOCOM'S sequel to the very popular PLANETFALL comic text adventure game. THE LURKING HORROR is the first INFOCOM interactive fiction game. They both list for \$39.95. (FAMILY COMPUTING, August 1987)

INFOCOM has recently released three new adventures. PLUNDERED HEARTS (\$#.95) is set in the 17th century as you sail on a schooner bound for the West Indies. NORD AND BERT COULDN'T MAKE HEAD OF IT (\$39.95) is INFOCOM'S first collection of short stories involving word plays (puns). BEYOND ZORK (\$49.95) is a blend of interactive games. With tantalizing titles like these, and INFOCOM'S good reputation, my curiosity is aroused. (FAMILY COMPUTING, October 1987)

BORDER ZONE, a real time spy intrigue, is now available from INFOCOM. The interactive story is divided into three chapters. The story is seen from three viewpoints: an easy-going American businessman; an ambitious, young American spy; and a ruthless KGB agent. All three become entangled in an assassination plot. Other INFOCOM games cause time to pass only after you make a move. With BORDER ZONE, the clock is always ticking away. It lists for \$39.95. (THE STATUS LINE, INFOCOM'S Newsletter, Winter 1987)

SIERRA ON-LINE has announced a police adventure game, POLICE QUEST-SEARCH FOR THE DEATH ANGEL. In the style of the KING'S QUEST series, this text adventure game has the high quality graphics expected from a SIERRA ON-LINE program. It was written by, and based on the life of a real California Highway patrol Officer. Using clues you gather, you try to bust up a local drug-trafficking ring. While it isn't "Miami Vice", with a bit of ingenuity and some key-banging, you, too, can save the day! (FAMILY COMPUTING, October 1987)

Lots of news from INFOCOM. They have dropped the price on two more of their old, but popular, programs. WITNESS and FOOBLITZKY have been added to the \$14.95 "Classic Titles Series". Others in the series are: WISHBRINGER, DEADLINE, STARCROSS, SUSPENDED, INFIDEL, and SEASTALKER. They are no longer available in retail stores but can be purchased direct from INFOCOM by calling toll-free 1-800-262-6868. (THE STATUS LINE, INFOCOM'S Newsletter, Summer 1987)

Got the Bard's itch, but not the talent? Maybe this \$9.95 poetry program is what you need. YOUR PERSONAL POET (from COMPUTER POET, Box 7707, Incline Circle, NV 89450, call 1-800-422-POET) produces greeting card quality prose either in a "light limerick" or a "sentimental" 15-line poem. You are asked to answer ten questions to help create the poem (such as recipient's name and character traits, sentiment desired, and whether you want a Post Script appended). Included with the disk are 6 sheets of greeting card paper, 4 greeting card covers, and 4 envelopes. (PC WORLD, July 1987 and COMPUTE!, June 1987)



HOLIDAY/EVERY DAY
CLUB PROGRAM GIFTS

D001: PC-FILE III, ver 4.0
 D002: PC-CALC, ver 2.0
 D003: PC-WRITE, ver 2.7
 D004: PC-DIAL
 D005: E-Z UTILITIES
 D006: PC-FONT, ver 2.04
 D007: PCjr EDUCATIONAL GAMES
 D008: PCjr ARCADE GAMES
 D009: PCjr ARCADE GAMES II
 D010: ULTRA-UTILITIES
 D011: ORIGAMI
 D012: HOME INVENTORY
 D013: COMPUTER TUTOR
 D014: TIME & MONEY
 D015: FONTMENU, ver 1.1
 D016: FREEWILL
 D017: MATH TUTOR
 D018: PRO SET FOOTBALL
 D019: DOSAMATIC
 D020: PC-CHESS
 D021: ZORK UTILITIES
 D022: EQUATOR
 D023: DISKETTE LABELLER
 D024: THE CONFIDANT
 D025: BIBLE-Q
 D026: CHECKBOOK MANAGEMENT
 D027: WORDWORKS
 D028: PC-OUTLINE
 D029: STOCK TRADER
 D030: MONOPOLY
 D031: COLORPAINT
 D032: PHRASE CRAZE
 D033: DEMO DISK #1
 D034: DEMO DISK #2
 D035: ADVENTURE
 D036: XMAS FUN
 D037: GENEALOGY ON DISPLAY
 D038: JUNIOR MUSIC MACHINE
 D039: MUSIC & EDUCATIONAL PROG.

D040: CARD GAMES
 D041: FUNNELS & BUCKETS and
 D041: AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER
 D042: PC-DOS HELP
 D043: PINBALL RALLY
 D044: FASTYPE, TYPERITE
 D045: NORLAND HANGMAN
 D046: EASYWRITE, LABELFILE
 D047: PC-DESKMATES
 D048: HIGHSCHOOL EDUCATIONAL
 D049: STOCK CHARTING SYSTEM
 D050: PC-PICTURE GRAPHICS
 D051: SAGE TRADER
 D052: PC-STYLE
 D053: PINBALL RALLY II
 D054: STARGAZER
 D055: FRENCH & SPANISH TUTOR
 D056: GERMAN & ITALIAN TUTOR
 Recent Additions: ORACLE,
 MENU MASTER

* For more info and prices, see
 Louie Levy, Disk Librarian.



Q. I have a data disk with more than 80 files. It is difficult to locate any particular files as they seem to just be entered at random. Is there any way to alphabetize or organize these files?

A. Yes. That is the function of the DOS "Sort" command. First, enter the SORT.EXE command on your data diskette. Then, when you want to see the files in alphabetical order, issue the command DIR:SORT. The computer may take a few moments, but it will then display the files in alphabetical order, along with several PIPE notations at the head of the column. This is a one-time display unless you have a self-booting data disk and an AUTOEXEC.BAT file containing the SORT command. (Ventura Personal Computer User's Group 8-86, Camarillo, CA)



UTILITIES ON LOCAL BULLETIN BOARDS
 - Mary Burich, Eugene PC User's
 Group, August 1987 -

The following utilities are available on the Eugene and Springfield bulletin boards. The experience and opinions expressed here are mine. Yours may be different.

ARCHIVE: This is an easy utility to backup and restore a hard disk. The program is menu-driven with on-line help. **ARCHIVE** takes the (form) hassle out of backing up the data on my hard drive. Before I discovered this simple program, I had not backed up my hard drive in six months, simply because I found the process tedious using the DOS **BACKUP** and **RESTORE** facilities. **ARCHIVE** makes doing what I should do easy.

NT and **VTREE:** Both of these utilities are an improvement on the **DOSTREE** and **DIR *** commands. **NT** displays the directory tree structure on a hard or floppy disk. **VTREE** does the same, and also lists the current system date and time and the number of free bytes on the disk in question. I use either one of these utilities when I prepare a system for users who need to be reminded of the major programs (sub-directories) on their hard disk systems, but have the familiarity with DOS not to need a menu system such as **AUTOMENU**. I simply include **CLS** and **NT** or **VTREE** as my last two commands in the **AUTOEXEC.BAT** on the user's hard disk. (Some may use the **DIR *** command last in the **AUTOEXEC.BAT** file, but I prefer not to display the **COMMAND.COM**, **CONFIG.SYS**, and **AUTOEXEC.BAT** files on the root directory).

PTOUCH and **RENDIR:** I use **PTOUCH** to change a file's date and time stamps and **RENDIR** to rename a sub-directory. While both of these programs duplicate features of **PCTOOLS**, I find it faster and easier to place these in a **UTIL** sub-directory. Place **UTIL** in the current **PATH** and have them handy instantly, rather than bothering to load **PCTOOLS** from the DOS command line or using up **RAM** with **PCTOOLS** resident.

BROWSE: This is an alternative to the DOS **TYPE** command. The program allows scrolling up and down a text file and right past 80 columns. While **BROWSE** is an improvement on **TYPE**, I use **LIST62A**, which provides the same features and plenty more.

FILL: This utility simplifies the process of transporting a large number of files, some big, some small, from a sub-directory of one hard disk to another hard disk. Before I discovered **FILL**, I had two ways to tackle this job. I could **COPY** each sub-directory file separately onto floppies, checking each file size and the free space on each floppy as I proceeded. Or I could **BACKUP** the sub-directory onto a number of floppies and then **RESTORE** the files onto the second hard disk. **FILL** is a third alternative. Like **BACKUP**, **FILL** optimizes floppy disk space. Unlike **BACKUP**, however, the files are transported in their original executable form. First, the program builds a list of the files in the sub-directory, sorts this list by size order and copies the biggest file to the first floppy. Then it copies the largest file that can be copied in the remaining space of the floppy, and so on. **FILL** prompts for another floppy until the sub-directory is completely copied to floppies. I then simply **COPY** the files on the floppies to the second hard drive.

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CDIR: Commented Directory has received a lot of press in the last few months. The main program (CDIR.COM) creates a file of comments (CDIR.CMT) for every file (program, text, etc.) on a floppy or a hard disk. Floppy drive users may create one CDIR.CMT on each floppy, while hard disk users may create one master CDIR.CMT on the hard disk which contains the comments for any or all files on the hard disk and all floppies. Comments may be up to 65 characters in length and can be recalled easily from the DOS command line. Comments might typically be a file description, or the proper syntax of a rarely-used DOS command or program switch. CDIR accommodates the addition and deletion of files by providing the option to append comments to the CDIR.CMT for new files and by suppressing comments for files which have been deleted. Certainly, READMEs and disk catalog programs can be used to keep file descriptions, command syntax and program switches handy, but I find CDIR especially useful precisely because of its capability to handle the addition and deletion of files quickly, easily. Loading a wordprocessor to edit a README or re-running a disk catalog program whenever I create or delete a file is simply more trouble.

RAMDISK and ADJRAM30: Both of these utilities are alternatives to the DOS VDISK.SYS device driver. In my experience, I found VDISK annoying because I would set certain switches in the DEVICE=/DOS/VDISK.SYS line in my CONFIG.SYS so that the system would ask (1) whether or not to create a RAM drive for the current session, and (2) the size of the RAM drive, if created. Then, until I re-booted, I was stuck with the choices I had made during the booting process. Now, with

RAMDISK, I can set up a RAM drive after the booting process, as the need arises, thus saving RAM for TSR programs and applications when a RAM drive is not needed. However, once established, RAMDISK does not allow the RAM drive to be re-sized. If I need to reclaim RAM from the RAM drive for an application program, I must turn the RAM disk off and lose all the files it contains. Once the RAM drive has been created with ADJRAM30, I may increase or decrease its size, and am warned if decreasing its size will cause a number of files to be lost. ADJRAM30 then, outshines RAMDISK in terms of flexibility. However, ADJRAM30 requires that I establish a RAM drive of at least 60K during the booting process. The choice, then, between RAMDISK and ADJRAM30, involves the relative importance of saving 60K of RAM for applications programs and the ability to re-size the RAM drive, once created.

Q. I like the Junior's color graphics, but the screen is a little fuzzy on text. Is there anything I can do about this?

A. SYNECTICS SOFTWARE & SYSTEMS has a ROM chip (\$18) that replaces a chip on the motherboard. The chip comes with software that gives the user a choice of how to set the video font, either by running a program from the DOS command line or by installing a RAM-resident utility which allows the font to be changed from the keyboard. One of the two available fonts uses a single-dot character to produce thinner, sharper text. Another choice is a second monitor, a monochrome monitor. Using an A/B switch, you can use the color monitor then switch to the monochrome for word processing. (FOX VALLEY PCjr ASSOC., Plainfield, IL, 10/87)



BORLAND, MICROSOFT BASIC PACKAGES
WON'T RUN ON JUNIOR
- Metro PCjr Journal, June 1987 -

In a major blow to the PCjr community, both Borland and Microsoft have introduced new BASIC editor/compiler packages that will not run on the PCjr. The Borland package also generates programs that will not run on the Junior. The two firms are locked in an all-out struggle for supremacy in the market for BASIC compilers. Microsoft got there first with versions 1 and 2 of its QUICKBASIC compiler. Borland responded with the new TURBO BASIC, which Microsoft immediately answered with an update of QUICKBASIC.

BASIC has long been the most widely used programming language for microcomputers, largely because it is relatively easy to learn. The trouble with BASIC has always been that it permits unstructured code which, even when compiled, executes slowly. As a result, both Microsoft and Borland are striving to make their compilers create faster programs. One way they are doing that is to bypass the computer's BIOS and address the hardware directly. Since the memory and other addresses on a PCjr are different from those on a PC (and on most clones, which copy the PC addresses), these packages will not work properly on a Junior. (The Microsoft compiler will actually run, but the editor that is part of the package will not).

The fact that the compiler/editor packages themselves are incompatible is not so bad. There are other BASIC compilers that will run, including TRUE BASIC, which is said to generate tight, fast code. And there is now a public-domain patch around to make the Microsoft editor work. If Microsoft wins the fight to have the dominate BASIC compiler, the Junior community will be

unaffected. But if Borland wins, and Borland's success with TURBO-PASCAL suggests it won't be easy to beat, then the Junior users could lose big. Innumerable users know BASIC and there could soon be a large harvest of good new TURBO BASIC software that won't run on a PCjr.

The reason given by Borland and Microsoft for not supporting the Junior is that they have enough compatibility headaches with all the various PC's and clones, not to mention a whole new line of IBM machines, to bother with the PCjr. Microsoft says it made no attempt to support the Junior in Version 2 of its QUICKBASIC, but it just turned out to run on a Junior.

It will be especially disappointing to Junior users to lose Borland's support, since the company had made all its earlier products compatible. The new TURBO C PACKAGE is said not to run either, and some Junior users are worried that the next update of TURBO-PASCAL also may not. A little mail to Borland might help the cause.



Q. The Clock-Calendar battery on my TECMAR jrCAPTAIN is dead. Where can I get a replacement?

A. The battery (Sanyo CR 2430) is a 3-volt lithium-manganese (Li-Mn) cell and can be obtained from TECMAR by calling 216-349-3130. You can also find them at Radio Shack or other electronic stores. Note the orientation of the polarity (+ and -) on the old battery on the board prior to removal. The battery is not soldered but held in place by tension on the two leads. Pull the old battery straight out and insert the new battery in the same position. (FOX VALLEY PCjr ASSOCIATION, Plainfield, Illinois)

Happy Holidays!

The EUGENE IBM PCjr NEWSLETTER is available for \$12/year, or as part of the paid-up Eugene PCjr Club membership at \$20/year. You may obtain one free copy of the Newsletter on request before subscribing. The overworked Editor accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of the information, opinions, or materials contained in this Newsletter. Reprint permission is freely given; please credit the appropriate author and the EUGENE PCjr CLUB NEWSLETTER. All contributions are gratefully accepted.

Q. My new PC compatible freezes up after only a few minutes. What's the problem? T.G.Merle

A. Your problem may be either hardware- or software-related. A flaky RAM chip may be causing the problem. Running a memory diagnostic program will tell you if the system's memory is in good shape. If a bad chip isn't causing the difficulty, check your computer's operating mode. Many new compatibles come equipped with a "turbo" mode that increases the machine's operating speed. Unfortunately, some programs resist the faster processing mode, resulting in a fatal system freeze-up. Reboot, and switch the computer back into the normal mode. (PC WEEK, 2-17-87)

Make check or money order out to:

EUGENE PCjr CLUB, 1011 Valley River Way, Suite 220, Eugene, OR 97401, with the following:

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____



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Season's Greetings