



EUGENE

NEWSLETTER

PCjr CLUB

Volume 6

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

MEETING

AGENDA

The January meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will be held in the Ida Patterson School Library, 16th and Polk, on the 11th. Set up and disk sales will begin at 6:30 and the meeting will start at 7pm.

OFFICERS

President . . . Phil Janz
 Vice President . . . Elleen Levy
 Treasurer . . . Christine Brown
 Disk Librarian . . . Cindy Hoffman
 Ass't Disk Librarian. Lindsey Hoffman
 Modem Captain . . . Mike Luttio
 Commercial Contact . . . Jack Hart
 Social Director . . . Juanita Hampton
 Newsletter Editor . . . Louie Levy
 Newsletter Co-Editor. Dick Page
 Founders and First President . . . Dick Page, Bill Roy
 Ginny Dobson

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

by Phil Janz



The PCjr Board of Directors met on January 2, 1990 and spent considerable time considering and discussing programs for our remaining winter/spring Club meetings. I am happy to report that you can look forward to interesting and meaningful sessions. . . learning and sharing together with a special focus on how "kids" can play a larger role in what we do with "junior".

- . January 11 - CARTRIDGES - Louie Levy, adult member and Lindsey Hoffman, junior member.
- . February 8 - ENHANCING AND ADD-ONS - Dick Page, adult member and Cindy Page, junior member.
- . MARCH 8 - SHARING PRODUCTS PRODUCED ON jr - entire adult and junior membership. (Board Members will contact you for this unique event).
- . APRIL 12 - SPRING CLEANING - traditional annual event that allows everyone to "spruce up" jr. Also, an opportunity for hands on "taking apart" and "putting together" your own hardware within a supervised and supportive atmosphere. Your jr. works better and you feel better!
- . MAY 10 - SWAP MEET and hopefully a demonstration on how "jr" can be integrated with a VCR and slides!

The Board is in the process of revising its membership survey form and will be mailing this to all club members in the near future. One new area within the survey will focus on obtaining information about children who use the computer. It is our sincere wish to move towards some type of a Junior PCjr group or club so that more family participation can be experienced.

Come and join us at Ida Patterson School library. . . The Board and I will strive to meet your software and hardware needs and Juanita Hampton, Club Social Director, will meet your needs as she arranges for coffee and goodies to tide us over during the meeting. Looking forward to seeing you on Thursday, January 11.



WOMEN AND COMPUTERS

by DICK PAGE

The Autumn 1989 issue of Sierra News Magazine in several places speaks to the issue of women and their use of computers. It specifically comments on use of "entertainment-type software" by women and on Sierra On-Line's own perspective. Those comments were interesting and I would like to share some of them with you.

Sierra On-Line, Inc. (the makers of many terrific PCjr-enhanced programs such as the King's Quest series) was started by a woman, Roberta Williams, and her husband Ken Williams. They have included women characters in many of their software programs, the most prominent being Rosella in King's Quest IV.

Most game software companies do not feel it is worth it to tailor games for women. In a sense Sierra On-Line agrees with that because they do not produce any software specifically designed for women. However, they realize that 45% of adults who use PCs in their homes are female. So they claim to be making software products that appeal to both men and women (and families, too).

And they seem to be succeeding quite often. While most game publishers claim women as only a small percentage of their primary game players, Sierra boasts one in four as female users. And the very popular KQ IV ("The Perils of Rosella") has approximately 40% of its users who are female. Sierra also notes that most of their fan mail comes from women.

An article they quote from Ad Week's Marketing Computers, June 1989 concludes with the following:

"Software publishers who write off the female market as a waste of resources should think twice. If a growing number of women are using PCs at home, innovative product development and aggressive marketing just might convince women users to take a breather from their word processing and household demands to have some fun.

"Game companies are making a big mistake by concluding that women don't like games just because they don't like the games that are currently available," says [Brenda] Laurel [a game design consultant]."

[Editorial by Dick: In this information age, our country needs women to be computer literate and not computer phobic. One way to introduce them to this marvelous, enriching device is through computer games. To only produce macho flight simulator or shoot-um-up arcade games not only excludes most women from computer games, it deprives the U.S. of the potential computer skills of a large portion of our citizens who could more readily help with the challenges we face as we approach a new century.

[While some of Sierra's programs are sexist in orientation, I applaud the efforts with much of their software at being inclusive of women. I hope other software companies soon come to realize that it is also in their best interests to do so.]

**You're the
Winner...**

More Cartridge Slots???

Surely you have some cartridges sitting by your Junior. Cartridge BASIC, PC ID cartridge, all those game cartridges, not to mention all the cartridges from PC Enterprises; there just doesn't seem to be an end to them. Still, Junior only has two cartridge slots. What's a body to do?

The answer came awhile back in an article in the Jr News letter. Synectics has introduced a product called "Siamese Slots" which plugs into one of Junior's two slots. Two cartridges can then be plugged into the Siamese Slot unit. Another manufacturer, PC-Enterprises, has a stand-alone unit that has four slots. This unit connects to one of your present slots via a cable. As the largest maker of cartridges, PC Enterprises is also taking steps to combine more than one application into one cartridge.

The Siamese Slot is in the \$25 price range, and the total number of cartridges you can run at one time would be four, if you use two of these devices. The PC Enterprises product is in the \$30 range and will allow you to use up to eight cartridges should you utilize two of the devices.

It seems that most of these cartridges are compatible with each other. If you aren't sure of what's available, here is a partial listing:

CARTRIDGE BASIC provides a version of BASIC that takes advantage of the color and graphics capabilities of the PCjr. Other versions of BASIC, though they can be run on Juniors, do not do this.

QUICKSILVER cartridge boots up your Junior quickly and silently by replacing a portion of the IBM memory test and eliminating the single beep if the test is successful. It also modifies the keyboard BIOS for greater software compatibility.

JRVIDEO cartridge speeds up Junior's screen writing routine by replacing the normal routine of BIOS with a much faster one thus effectively speeding up most computing tasks. (Ever notice how Junior pauses when the screen has to write a long DIR listing? It's waiting for the BIOS to finish writing to the screen.)

KEYBOARD BUFFER cartridge enables you to use the keyboard while the disk drive is running without losing characters and hearing that beep, or locking up your program. It also fixes bugs which can cause software to crash or hang up.

PC ID cartridge "fools" software into thinking it is running on a PC rather than a Junior. This increases your ability to run some software.

CLOCK cartridge provides Junior with a clock. This will date the files you save with the correct date instead of January 1, 1980.

CLOCK/CALENDAR cartridge provides both a clock and a calendar to your Junior. No more date-time prompts!

CONFIGURATION AND CONFIGURATION

PLUS are cartridges that set up your drives and display when you boot. It also acts like an ID cartridge, while the PLUS version provides indicator lights for your cap, num and scroll lock keys which were left off the Junior keyboard.

COMBO cartridge combines the jrVideo with the Keyboard Buffer and Quick-Silver cartridges into one cartridge with room for the next up-grade!

This list doesn't include the multitude of game cartridges or special application cartridges like those with Electronic Desk, Lotus 1-2-3 or WordPerfect for the PCjr. Also, those cartridges built from ROM cartridge kits are not included. The advantage of these cartridges is that they do not use any of your Junior's



RAM, leaving memory free for other tasks.

At the meeting this month I hope to present an overview of these cartridges, what they do . . . (and with help) how they do it.

Louie Levy

(If you are using any other cartridges, bring them in to the meeting to show us!)

Still MORE Cartridge Slots!!!

We received some information this month from Richard Schneider about his efforts in trying to acquire more slots for his Junior. Here he tells us the result of his work.

MAS SLOTS

"There are numerous products on the market to enhance your junior by accessing the cartridge slots. Unfortunately there are only two slots. Both slots are identical and are wired in parallel so they can be multiplied in a fashion similar to plugging a multi-outlet extension cord into a wall socket. Through experimentation I have found any number of additional slots can be added. Problems arise when they become too far away, or when incompatible cartridges are used. I have successfully tapped into the right-hand slot and added seven additional slots. These seem to work for setup cartridges: Jrvideo, Jrsynchro, Quicksilver, etc. Problems appear to arise when application cartridges such as BASIC, Colorpaint or Managing Your Money are plugged in with each other.

My solution is to reserve the left-hand slot for applications and utilize the right-hand slot, plus its seven extension slots, for setup-bootup cartridges. There are several ways to do this. Basically, a 36 contact card edge to contact the slot, a cable and the extension slots. I utilized a "Keylights" cartridge, soldering 36 conductor ribbon cable to the appropriate contacts inside, with the cable exiting through a slit cut in the bottom. I utilized the "Keylights" cartridge as the solder points are present and, if something was going to protrude

from the slot, it might as well do something. You can also make your own card edge (I did, and its not fun) or purchase empty cartridges. The cable then goes under Junior, makes a folded ninety degree turn to the right, and on to the seven slots. As I can't find 36 pin card-edge connectors for ribbon cable, I utilized 40 pin connectors. Pins 37-40 are removed and a groove is cut, carved or burned across the connector at pin locations 39 and 40 to allow the right side of a cartridge to slide in, as the connector is wider than the cartridge. The seven connectors were then affixed to a 1/8 inch plastic board to make the adaptor rigid.

The project takes three to four hours: two for assembly and an additional one to two hours to test for continuity and shorts, and for debugging the errors found. The result is an empty left slot, "Keylights" in the right, a cable that disappears under junior, and reappears on the right side at a board with seven slots. I originally planned on putting the slots in a pretty case but they look nifty exposed, they are easier to access and the cost is \$10 less. That's nine functional slots counting the "Keylights" cartridge. Presently, I have Quicksilver, Jrvideo, Jrsynchro and Basic plugged into my prototype plus "Keylights" at the well head. I must remove BASIC to run other applications."

Richard ended his letter with prices for instructions, kits and completely built MAS Slot units. If you are interested in getting more information, write to Richard Schneider, POB 42147, Point Mugo, CA 93042.

Richard adds that "mas" means "more" in Spanish.

DUST - A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

DID YOU KNOW ?: If a hard drive Read/Write head comes in contact with just a speck of dust while running, it is the equivalent of a car running over a rock 8 inches in diameter!

From the Feb '89 issue
of Phoenix PCUG News

Green Grass Grows on the other Side of the Fence

If you are not a member of a PCjr club you are missing out on all the good conversation that goes on at meetings. At the end of last month's meeting I was packing up the Club's Junior and one of our newer members, who I'll call "Joe," had the following things to say to "Phil," our President, who was helping me.

Joe asked Phil, "Did you see that ad in Sunday's paper for a Junior? I called them and they said it had 640K, a color monitor and loads of software. I was floored when they said that all they were asking was 500 bucks. I feel like I really got took on my outfit! It only has 512K and I paid \$550 for it."

Prez Phil said, "Actually, Joe, I felt that you got a pretty good deal when you bought your machine. Did that machine in the paper have one or two drives?"

"It only had the one drive, but it had 128K more memory than the one I bought, and . . ."

Old Prez interrupted with, "You know, Joe, your's has two drives; two Fujitsu drives, and they are sure quieter than the old Qume drive I have."

"Yeah, they're quiet alright, but I still wish that I had seen that 640K deal before I bought what I did."

All the way home that night I thought about Joe's two deals and how he felt after finding what he thought to be a better bargain after he had already made his purchase. Is there a \$50 difference between 512K and 640K? If so, is it safe to assume that we should reduce the "value" of a Junior by \$50 for every 128K it doesn't have? Is there a \$50 difference between one and two drives?

I thought about the \$550 price tag that Joe had laid out and then tried to remember what I had seen at his house one day when I helped him make some "boot disks" for his new

Junior. There was Writing Assistant, DOS 2.1, Electric Desk, King's Quest, the old Koala Pad and more sitting on the shelf. He had a Keytronic 5151 keyboard, the Junior Color Display, a RACORE Drive II with 386K on top of his 128K Junior and a Epson FX80 printer. I told myself that all of this seemed to me to be a good deal, too. When I got home I decided to see just what Joe's system cost its original owner.

The following prices for Joe's equipment are from the October, 1984 issue of PCjr Magazine and from my own original invoices of the same year:

128K Junior and color display, \$999; Parallel printer adapter, \$99; Printer cable, \$30; Racore Drive II w/384K, \$595; Electric Desk, \$295; Cartridge BASIC, \$95; King's Quest, \$25; Koala Pad, \$99; Keytronic keyboard, \$255; Epson FX80, \$470. Not counting taxes or any shipping, this amounts to \$2962! The Writing Assistant was "free" with Junior... but not BASIC; one or the other, but not both! Looking over my old invoices, I see that I paid 37.50 for a box of 10 Elephant "We Never Forget" disks! I wonder what the past owner paid for the two Fujitsu drives?

Somehow, as I started looking back over the Club's copies of these old magazines, I began to see just where Phil was coming from. Fifty dollars, whether one way or the other, is the same color of the grass growing on the other side of the fence.

Louie Levy

PCjr
LIVES

Let's All Do Our Part

Awhile back the Club requested that members save and bring in the proof-of-purchases (the UPC Bar Codes) from the Memorex products they purchase. Only ONE person has done so!

Come on guys and gals, we can do better than this. We were hoping to get some software to give away as door prizes, but is this really fair if only one person is involved?

Look around Junior's room and see if you have any Memorex boxes and cut out the UPC codes. Bring them into this month's meeting -- next month will be too late.



HEARD ON THE STREET

by Dick Page

DO YOU KNOW YOUR SYMBOLS?

Some of the symbols we've come to know (and love?) have uncommon names. See if you know which names match up with which symbols.

- | | | |
|-------|-----|-------------------|
| 1.) [| [] | a.) Tilde |
| 2.) & | [] | b.) Piping Symbol |
| 3.) - | [] | c.) Ampersand |
| 4.) ~ | [] | d.) En Dash |
| 5.) ^ | [] | e.) Left Brace |
| 6.) - | [] | f.) Caret |
| 7.) { | [] | g.) Em Dash |
| 8.) | [] | h.) Left Bracket |

(The answers are found later in this newsletter.)

LOUNGE LIZARD TIP

In the December issue of PC World a reader, Jerry Torres, writes in with a speed-up tip for owners of Sierra On-Line's *Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Longe Lizards*. He tells of a way to skip the series of start-up questions needed to confirm your age. All you have to do is press <Ctrl><Alt><X> keys to go directly to lizard land.

NEW RELEASES FROM SIERRA ON-LINE

Several new games are soon to be released by Sierra On-Line.

Codename: ICEMAN was developed by the designer of *Police Quest I & II*. You play the role of secret agent Johnny Westland. Using a nuclear-powered attack submarine, a one-person diving vehicle and scuba gear you attempt to crack the deadly security of a terrorist base and rescue a hostage ambassador.

Hero's Quest I is the first Sierra game which allows players to construct their own character by choosing from a list of possible skills and abilities. This is how Sierra describes the setting: "A dozen years ago, the barony of Spielberg was a peaceful land of majestic mountains and sleepy valleys, ruled by a brave and respected ruler. Then the ogress Baba Yaga arrived with dark magics and evil curses, and a cloud of gloom fell over Spielberg. The baron's children have disappeared and monsters roam the countryside '...until a hero from the east frees the man from the beast, the beauty from the band, and rids evil from the land...'"

The Colonel's Bequest is a murder mystery starring a college student, Laura Bow, who visits a roommate's old family mansion called the Dijon plantation in 1926. Your job is to discover who is killing off the relatives of the rich and eccentric old Colonel Dijon. Developed by the designer of the King's Quest series, Roberta Williams, this should prove to be a quality program with lots of depth and complexity.

Leisure Suit Larry III - Passionate Patti in Search of the Pulsating Pectorals involves a female lead character who is in search of Larry, "the man who got away", in the perilous interior of a tropical island. Designed by the creator of the first two Leisure Suit Larry games, this program will surely be jam packed with witty adult humor, colorful graphics and plenty of challenges.

D.O.S.'s ALPHABET 42 LETTERS LONG?

You probably have always been told that the alphabet is 26 letters long. Well, D.O.S. doesn't think so. (Those people at Microsoft and IBM seem to have a different perspective on things than most of us "normal" people.)

When D.O.S. alphabetizes, it includes the sorting of several symbols and has a specific pecking order. You can make use of that fact when sorting lists - be it filenames or mailing labels.

Some of the symbols come before the letters and some after. And some others aren't available for filenames and sorting at all (because they have specific meanings and/or functions with D.O.S.). Remember also that DOS treats all lower case letters as capital letters when used in filenames.

Available symbols which sort before the alphabet (in their order of sorting):

! # \$ % &
' () - @

After the alphabet:

^ _ { } ~

Punctuation that can't be in D.O.S. filenames;

= | " + ; , .
[] / \ < >

Special "Wildcard" symbols for filenames:

* ?

A second kind of sorting is that of lists. When sorted by D.O.S.'s SORT.EXE program all the characters are sorted by their ASCII Character Code numbers. There is a three-place code number assigned for each character used by Junior. This is called its *ASCII value*. (A copy of the listing of ASCII Character Codes is found in Appendix G of the BASIC manual.)

SORT.EXE places lower ASCII values before higher ASCII values. Thus, the spacebar-created space (with a value of 032) is listed before the exclamation point (with a value of 033). And lower case "p" (value 112) comes after number nine (value 057) when run through a sort.

I find this information especially useful when working with my database.

A DAFFY BYTE

What do you call a person who would rather work on his/her speedsheets than go out on a date?

* * An Infomaniac * *

(modified from
the Oct '89 issue of
Fox Tales)



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Make check or money order out to:

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

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

I am interested in purchasing the following items for my Junior: Keyboard, Power transformer, some of the original manuals and Cartridge BASIC. Give me a call, or bring them to this month's meeting. Christian De Lay, 343-1815.

Answers to:

"DO YOU KNOW YOUR SYMBOLS?"

- 1.) [[h - a left bracket]
- 2.) & [c - an ampersand]
- 3.) - [g - an em dash] {longer than an en dash}
- 4.) ~ [a - a tilde]
- 5.) ^ [f - a caret] {is that as in beret or as in diamonds?}
- 6.) - [d - an en dash] {shorter than an em dash}
- 7.) { [e - a left brace]
- 8.) | [b - the DOS piping symbol] {Does anyone really know what this is called? I don't.}

Let software & hardware developers know that we're still here.

Write

I've got a PCjr!



"PCjr"

on all warrantee cards and computer correspondence!



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FIRST CLASS MAIL

