EUGENE PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

FROM THE OVAL OFFICE
Frank Ratti

Can it be April already? The year is flowing by me faster than the Rogue at Agnes in December. Unseasonably this year in Oregon we have April flowers without any showers. However, as far as the Eugene PCjr Club is concerned: "Every time it rains, it rains peanuts from heaven" to borrow a spring lyric.

The club has had a virtual windfall of machines and parts of machines come into our possession recently. See Phil Janz for a precise inventory. For example, we have an offer from a generous Junior owner, who has an "extra non-working machine," to donate it to the club for the purpose of donating it in working order to the local chapter of the American Diabetes Association, who need to upgrade their Junior. Negotiations in progress. We also have been accumulating parts and accessories from various sources (all legal, I presume), which will be on sale during the meeting. The sales and swapmeet have become a regular part of our meetings, with the inventory growing monthly.

We are going to major in a presentation on "How to buy a Junior" in April. This topic includes what to look for, pitfalls to avoid, and the right price. We are going to have a good opportunity to try some library software, or trouble shoot your own with our own resident experts. Louie Levy is also going to show how to use the Junior to diagnose its own problems such as faulty motherboards and broken terminals. This is something you can do at home, and apply to the garage sale Juniors you may find in your travels.

The April meeting also serves as our "brief" annual business meeting at which we will elect a Vice-President for 1992-1993. Christine Brown has graciously accepted this nomination. The other appointed positions that serve on the club board are Newsletter Editor = Louie Levy, Newsletter Co-Editor = Barbara Castleton, Social Director = Rosie Janz, and Modem Captain = Gordon LeManquais. No club banks or post offices here. These people keep the club alive with their willingness to serve. We are especially appreciative of the new members who have become active in supporting the club in the past year.

Our monthly meeting are a balance of hands-on keyboard practice, enjoyable interaction with each other, and listening to informative presentations. As is our tradition we meet the second Thursday at Ida Patterson School, Eugene, April 9th. Come, learn, and enjoy.

Recycled Floppies

The Club has sold literally hundreds of floppy disks at the monthly meetings and by mail, but every now and then, the question comes up: "How can the Club sell such good quality disks at such a low price?"

We purchase our diskettes in quantity from a leading software manufacturer. These disks had the firm's programs on them along with the company's label. As newer versions of their software is made, these already labeled floppies can no longer be shipped. All of us know how difficult it is to remove old labels, so this company puts a new blank label over the old and they bulk-erase the disks and make them available to us as "recycled media."

When the Club receives them, each diskette is formatted to ensure there are no bad sectors or other problems with any of them. Next, we package them in lots of 10 and make them available to the membership at 25-cents each--a lower price than many generic disks in town. Each and every disk that the Club sells is guaranteed. If you are ever dissatisfied for any reason, let us know. After all, it's YOUR Club!

Girl Scout Computing Merit Badges

The Eugene PCjr Club held a workshop in conjunction with the Western Rivers Girl Scout Council this past month and five young women in Troop 172 earned their Computing Merit Badges.

Troop Leader Chris McKinnon, invited EPCjrClub members Phil Janz and Louie Levy into her home where they set up five computers so each Scout would have her own machine to use in the earning of the coveted badge. The workshop went well, and we highly recommend that other computer clubs try doing this in their communities.

One item that the participants had to do was review a software program. Here are what the young women had to say:

"The *King's Quest* games are very enjoyable. The object in *King's Quest 1* is to find the King's crown. You have to find treasures to help you on the way because you come upon some villains, and you have to give them certain things.

"In *King's Quest 3*, you have to find a princess to marry. Again, you have to find treasures to give to people to get to the princess.

"In *King's Quest 4*, you have to kill a wizard to go save your sister from being eaten by a dragon. You have to find things on the way to make potions with. These things help you get away from people and animals.

"I don't have *King's Quest 5*.

"*Alley Cat* is an enjoyable game for children about 7 to 10 or 11 years old. In this game you jump through windows and catch mice, eat out of dog food bowls, avoid mops, eat fish, hang on laundry, jump on trash cans, break a bird cage and catch the bird. After doing one of those things, you have to go through a window and go up hearts to kiss a female cat.

"*Below the Root* is a very good game. You have to find keys and unlock doors and find like a scared person to learn about someone's death. You then have to catch people. You have a time limit for doing all this. This is a very fine game and I recommend it to people of about 9 to 15 or 16.

"The graphics for all these games are pretty good. *Alley Cat* has the best graphics. *Below the Root* has the worst."
       Stephnie Saiz
       Troop 172

"*Where in the World Is Carmen San Diego?* -- This game

is educational because you have
to have an encyclopedia to solve
the clues. The game will give a
clue and you will look up part
of the clue such as a name. This
will give you an idea of which
country to go to next. As you
chase criminals through dif-
ferent countries, you also fly
through different time zones.
The graphics of this game act-
ually look like the figures it
is representing and not stick
figures. I recommend this won-
derful game.

"*Landmine* -- In this game,
you try to cross a field filled
with landmines. The game is on
total luck. You can change the
number of lines for more dif-
ficult games. The graphics of
this game are not very extrav-
agant.

"*Heart* -- This game's con-
cept is close to *PAC-MAN* except
you can select the different
levels, joker as the lowest
level and queen being the
highest. Also, the graphics are
unexcitable. For this game
there is a wide age group, from
about 7 and up."

                   Kelly Guinn
                   Troop 172

"*Alley Cat* -- In this game,
the object is to get yourself (a
cat, kitten, or alley cat; it's
up to you) into various rooms of
a building while also avoiding
dogs, eating mice, and dodging
brooms, clothes and other items.
I recommend it for smaller
children.

"*Tapper* -- In this lively
game, you're a bar tender who
has to serve his angry customers
who await him in an old-time
tavern, a baseball park, et cet-
era. But, be careful, if you let
a glass break, or don't satisfy
your customers, you're a goner!
This game was fun, but it's not
the kind that you want to play
hour after hour.

"*Karate Championship* --
Karate Championship was the
hardest to control game that
I've ever seen. You push arrow
keys helplessly in hopes to
manage a kick, punch, hit or
some other move against your
opponent. Its graphics aren't

by any means exciting, in fact,
I think washing the floor of
Carnegie Hall with a lint brush
would be more exciting, but some
people might like it (if they're
psychos and think they're Care
Bears)."

                   Caroline Lundquist
                   Troop 172

"The 3 games that I played
on the computer were good games.
One of the games I played was
Suju. *Suju* is where you get four
scrambled words and you have to
figure out the words. When you
are done with the words, you
have to figure out a phrase. The
game is quite fun. You can
learn how to spell different
complicated words.

"Another game I played was
Super Maze Games. On these
games you get to play different
maze games. The maze games are
not all that exciting, some of
them are boring and dull.

"The last game that I played
was *Jigsaw*. *Jigsaw* is a fun
game that has puzzles to put
together. I like the "tub" and
"Valentine" puzzles, but the
"Valentine" is a little harder.
There are other different puz-
zles that you can try to put
together that are harder."

                   Natalie Hangsleben
                   Troop 172

"*Wheel of Fortune* -- This is
the first game I played. It is
a lot like the TV show except
you play by yourself and still
have one, two or three people
that you control. This game
does not need a lot of skill but
just a lot of guessing. I think
it is fun and it is hard to get
tired of.

"*Antix* -- This game is a
game of skill and logic. The
object is to cut down the space
the two balls in the box have
and the part you cut away is the
part the balls are not in. If
the balls touch you while you
are cutting away the box, a
siren goes off. Once you cut
away 76% of the box, you get a
bonus of points and then you get
a different box with three balls
in it. And so on and so on.
This game is also very fun.

(continued from page 3)
      "*Leisure Suit Larry in the
Land of the Lounge Lizards* --
This game is an X-rated game and
you have to be 18 or over to get
in. But, if you know the
answers to the questions that
are there to keep you out if you
are under age, you can get in.
The object of the game is to get
through every obstacle and get
to the penthouse. I think this
game is really hard, but it is
fun. There are some dirty words
so this game is not appropriate
for little kids--including
myself.
      "*Solitaire* -- This is a card
game almost exactly like the
real game. If you know how to
play the real game this game is
easier. It's really a lot of
fun suitable for all ages. No
special skills are required."
                Darcy McKinnon
                Troop 172

A note from Troop 172:
      "Girl Scout Troop 172 would
like to thank the PCjr Computer
Club for sponsoring our Computer
Fun Badge Workshop on Saturday,
February 29th. We all learned
lots of things such as format-
ting a disk, word processing,
saving our document, and print-
ing it. The documents we each
wrote consisted of three reviews
of computer games that we had
played before arriving. It was
especially interesting to see
the inside of the computer and
see how it works. We liked it
when the disk was taken apart
and we could see the inside of
it too. A special thanks to
Louie Levy and Phil Janz for
their hard work and cooperation
in helping us earn our Computer
Fun Badge. It was nice of them
to give us the Mosaic and Puzzle
computer game to play when our
work was done. It was also nice
of them to join us in our
Friendship Circle to close the
workshop. We greatly appreciate
what your club has done for our
Girl Scout troop."

There you are folks. These
young women are to be congratu-
lated for their unbiased reports
of some of the software they
have used in their homes and at
friends' homes. Both Phil and I
really enjoyed being with these
young women. None of them were
intimidated by their computers.
Your editor thanks them all for
furnishing the above reviews.
And Phil and I both thank the
members of the Eugene PCjr Club
for furnishing us with enough
computers to put on this work
shop.

All American Junior

With all the hype lately about
international markets and the
balance of trade, have you
checked under Junior's lid?
      Of the chips that are marked
on Junior's motherboard, here's
the number and point of origin:
      Japan   2
      Malaysia   9
      Korea   3
      Indonesia   2
      Philippines   6
      Singapore   10
      Mexico   1
      El Salvador   6
      Taiwan   1

The internal power supply card
had the following:
      Japan   4
      Mexico   3
      Italy   2

The 64K memory and display card:
      Japan   4
      Malaysia   1
      El Salvador   2
      US of A   4

The color display says "made in
Japan" on the outside; I'm not
about to open it!
      So, what this boils down to
is that we purchased Big Blue's
finest computer. IBM took the
best parts from all over the
world, combined them into a pea-
nut shell and gave us Junior.

More on Compatibility...

We discussed quite a bit about compatibility at the March meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club, both software compatibility and hardware compatibility. Perhaps these words from the September and October 1989 issues of the *jr Newsletter* are the most valuable on this subject:

The most important step to take when you have problems running software on a PCjr is to use a CONFIG.SYS file on your boot disk that reserves at least 32k for video. For most brands of memory expansion, Larry Newcomb's JRCONFIG is the easiest to use and is available from nearly every vendor who sells Shareware. It is very easy to install and works well with virtually all brands of memory expansion units. There is complete documentation on the disk.

When using JRCONFIG, the article in the *jr Newsletter* suggests that you use -t3 and either -v32, -v64 or -v96, depending on how demanding the software is that you are trying to run. The article suggests that you make several boot disks with the above parameters to use with different software.

Another suggestion if you are trying to load and run larger databases or integrated software, is to use the FILES= statement in your CONFIG.SYS. Try adding FILES=20 after following the directions in JRCONFIG to make your CONFIG.SYS file. (If you need more information on making a CONFIG.SYS file, you didn't take the Memory Management Workshop last Saturday. Better call someone for help!)

The *jr Newsletter* suggests that if you are using DOS 2.1, you should be using a "patched" version. (The patch can be installed for you if you will bring your working copy of DOS (not the original copy) to the meeting Thursday.) The patch will fix some bugs that were in the original DOS 2.1 that can cause your Junior to lock up. Using 3.1 DOS or higher will solve some problems, but these versions use more memory.

Software will run faster when it is loaded into high memory--memory above Junior's 128k. If you fill this low memory with a ramdisk or a large video buffer, programs will be forced to load in this "higher" memory area which will speed up programs considerably.

The article notes that if you have problems with either the keyboard or joystick, try using the one that doesn't give the problem. If the joystick is a problem, try using the key-board instead. Switch.

More often than not, the memory requirements listed on software boxes are the amount of "free" memory required for the program to run. As a rule of thumb, you can figure that you will need about 128k more memory to run a program on a Junior than on a PC. While this is not always the case, you should remember that quite a bit of memory is used just to boot. You may want to boot your computer and then run CHKDSK.COM on your DOS disk to see just how much "free" memory you have left available to run programs. You may be surprised. (After booting my Junior with JRCONFIG.NRD, ZANSI.SYS and THINFONT, I have 515k left from the original 640; it used 140k to boot.)

Many thanks to the Atlanta *Orphan Peanut* for reprinting the compatibility article.

"As we have said many times in the past, we can't give you what you want and need if we don't know what it is, and the effort required to be interesting, helpful, and informative is magnified when we don't know what our members feel about whatever we're doing."
        David "Faulkner" Wilson
        Editor, "Orphan Peanut"

If Only I Had. . .

How often do you think about another computer? There are many times that we all have said to ourselves, "if only I had another drive," or, "if only I had a little more memory," or a hard drive, or VGA color, or faster modem, etc, etc. "My PCjr is alright most of the time, but sometimes I sure wish I had. . ."; you know how it goes.

So, how often does Junior let you down? If it is only seldom and it is also because of some software you want to run, have you looked at all the options open to you? Let take a look at some.

If we had to name one thing that holds us back most often from doing the things we want to do, it is memory. If you have only 128K of memory, the options you have in software are very limited. There used to be many programs that would run on 128K, and many of us are still using them. Writing Assistant, PC-Write, PC-File are a few of some of the great programs that run well on 128K of memory. As these programs became better and more powerful, the amount of memory they required to operate became greater. Some of us increased our Juniors to 256K or even 512K.

Now, 640K is required to run the vast majority of current software. Many times, we can overcome other minor problems "if we only had enought memory." So, this may be your first consideration before you look toward another computer. Maybe all you need do is add memory.

"If only I had another disk drive" I could do disk copying much, much faster. I could use that software that keeps looking for Drive B. The data disk for my wordprocesser (data base, graphic program, etc.) could always be put up in Drive B, ready for those files I need to retrieve or save. The Help (or

dictionary, or thesaurus) disk could be there. If only. . ..

Well, instead of buying another computer to solve this problem, there are many vendors who sell 2nd disk drives. The cost of adding one to your junior may be much cheaper than you think; and much easier. You don't even need a screwdriver in most cases. Also, that second drive could be a 3.5" drive that would allow your Junior to be much more versatile.

That 2nd (or third) drive does not have to be a floppy drive. How about a hard drive? If you added a 40MB hard drive to your Junior, there would be very little that you would ever need for quite some time. We saw one priced at only $395 complete.

". . .for only a $100 more"

If your first reaction is to say that you have seen used PC's in your local newspapers advertised for that, you may want to jot down a few notes: like, wasn't the drive a 20MB, and, wasn't it USED (for how long?) did the PC have a color display as good as Junior's, could you read the PC monitor (even when it wasn't turned on), did it run as quiet as Junior, and last but not least, was it as dependable as Junior? That $395 price was for a brand-spanking new drive and power supply (not used every day for the past five years) and it uses SCSI technology (not MFM as the PC does). I don't know about you, but I think it'd be great to boot Junior and look at a menu for a change, instead of seeing the A>. Wouldn't it be neat to see a listing of all your software on screen instead of looking at all the disks in your file box? Just cursor down to the program you want to run and press "enter." No looking for disks, no disk changes, no danger of formatting program disks. What a great option. (And an 80MB drive is only a hundred dollars more!)

DATES TO REMEMBER:
APRIL 9
   PCjr Club Meeting
   7pm
   Ida Patterson School
APRIL 11
   PC-FILE Workshop
   10am
APRIL 16
   Eugene PC User's Group
   7:30pm
   Harris Hall

APRIL 19
   The Computer Group
   1pm
   EPUD
MAY 3
   7pm
   Newsletter Deadline
MAY 14
   PCjr Club Meeting
   7pm
   Ida Patterson School

WHAT ABOUT "HANDS-ON" CLUB WORKSHOPS?
By Phil Janz

Providing opportunities for Club members to experience a personal
introduction to new software or brushing up on rusty program
skills has been a mainstay of our group for the past two years.

Our workshops have done at least the following four things for
the Club and its membership:

* Raised funds for the Club.
* Provided a service to Club members.
* Provided hands-on opportunity for Club members
  to learn a variety of programs that they can make
  use of at home. . .A Club meeting demonstration
  is an exposure to new programs but practical
  application rarely carries over to "jr" at home!
* Provided an opportunity for some Club members to
  share knowledge and skills with other Club
  members.

For example, during 1991-92 we presented nine workshops that
involved 33 students. . .But of that 33, there were only 15
people who signed up for one or more workshops. The same names
kept cropping up on different workshop rosters. The question
becomes, how can the program needs of more Club members be met?
The Club realized $205 dollars from fees, less workshop expenses,
and the profit has made it possible to purchase and have
available various vital computer parts, disks, etc., for the
membership.

**At the April meeting those in attendance will discuss their
feelings and ideas about continuing workshops next year.** Soon
after the meeting a workshop questionnaire will be mailed to each
local member so that individual and family input can be collected
and made available to the Board of Directors during their Spring
meeting.

I always ask myself, "What would I do if our Club ceased to be
active?" That question is really scary to me because I am so
much a "product orientated" Junior user! Now, when I come
nose-to-nose with new needs or old problems, I can holler 'help'
and someone hears me and helps me, or I sign up for a coming
workshop that will assist me in getting the job done. It is
frightening to think of hollering 'help' and the only sound I
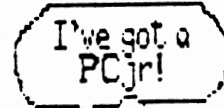hear is the hum of Junior!

April **Printer Sale**

JUKI 6100 daisy wheel printer with tractor, 8K buffer, many typestyles, ribbons, manuals. Low usage, $225 or trade? Call Al, (503) 343-0735 later 344-0332.

TANDY ink-jet color printer, CGP220, $20. May work with Tandy brand computer and software, but not with a Junior. Doug McKinnon, (503) 343-9891.

24-Pin SEIKOSHA SL-80AI dot matrix printer. 16K buffer, pull tractor, ribbons and manual. $150. Also, SILVER-REED EXP500 daisy wheel printer, friction feed, ribbons and manual, $50. (503) 343-7592 or write care of the Eugene PCjr Newsletter Editor.

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

I've got a PCjr!

"PCjr"

on all warrantee cards and computer correspondence!

EUGENE PCjr CLUB

1011 Valley River Way, Suite 220
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