



EUGENE

PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405

VOLUME XV
NUMBER 1
MARCH 1999

MEETING

AGENDA

The March meeting of the Eugene PCjr Club will be held at the Church of Christ, 2424 Norkenzie Road in Eugene on Thursday, March 11th. Setup will begin at 6:30 and the meeting will start at 7pm.

OFFICERS

President Mike Ruiz
 Vice President Gordon LeManquais
 Treasurer and Company Store Phil Janz
 Disk Librarians Louie Levy
 Therese Hartman
 Modem Captain Judy Young
 Commercial Contact Gordon LeManquais
 Social Directors Chris Merrigan
 Therese Hartman
 Outreach Rosie Janz
 Newsletter Editor Louie Levy
 Publisher and Production Staff Rosie Janz
 Lynn Miles



Mike's Message

Kept together by a small band of dedicated computer users,

THE EUGENE PCjr CLUB STILL LIVES!

The Eugene PCjr Club welcomes you to 1999. You might ask..WHAT?..it's March already! Well, the March newsletter is the first for 1999. Remember, we are now sending newsletters to you quarterly. So, here we are at the beginning of another year.

Some of our members have been around since IBM first introduced the world to the PCjr in 1984, and some of our members have been with the Eugene PCjr club since 1984. Most of us have acquired juniors between then and now, and continue to experience the same enjoyment the pioneers of our club have had over time. I would like to give special thanks to our longtime members and also thanks to all of the members that stay with us from year to year.

So, here we are, headed toward the Y2K (Y2K meaning the year 2000). As we travel thru time, many juniors are still humming away. And, although people have come and gone to our club, we still have a healthy membership. By the way, what happens to PCjrs when the Y2K arrives? Are we in the same boat as others who worry about clocks that will turn back to the year 1900? Hum?

Well, our December meeting was great! The turn-out was good, the chicken was great and all of the goodies and trimmings were yummy. We should all thank Chris Merrigan and any others involved in setting up the December social gathering. I would also like to thank Darlene Gotzman for letting the Eugene PCjr Club use the church social hall for all of 1998, and particularly for the social.

Our March meeting will be a PCjr club board meeting of sorts. I'm hoping all of the club officers can attend. The subject is mine... I have concern about what our club is doing. As most of you are aware, our club provides several services. Services such as meetings, a newsletter, the club store, local member support, local placement of computers, workshops, E-mail service, the disk library and a web page. Without getting too detailed here, I again wonder whether we should continue as we have or change. Things change, and so should we. Please, if you can, attend the March meeting. If you can't, pay attention to information that will surely come your way.

Have a great 1999,

Mike

Where Is This Journey Taking Us?

"The Eugene PCjr Club has a paid-up membership of 42 (remember that many of these are "family" memberships!), with 7 out-of-towners subscribing to the Newsletter." This statement was in the January 1986 issue of the PCjr Club Newsletter. Now, 13 years later, we can say that we have 20 "local" members and 35 out-of-town members.

Our "local" membership has fallen by more than 50% while our "out-of-town" membership has gained a whopping 500%. Our Club is definitely going through change.

A few of our members are getting somewhat behind in their dues, but what we wanted to show here is the change that we are beginning to see.

We no longer get turnouts of 20 to 30 folks at monthly meetings. In fact, we are no longer having "monthly" meetings. It seems that interest (participation) has dropped off drastically on a local scale, but has picked up so far as "out-of-towners" are concerned.

Our meeting this month is going to be a critical one in the Club's history. It will be a combination General Membership and Board meeting. . .but it won't be boring! Mike will be presenting a quick overview of our current status. He'll then be asking for input on what each of us see in the Club's future. How can the Club serve the local members? What can the Club offer to support our "out-of-town" and local members? What services would you like to see the Club offer? And, the all important question: who can and will provide these services?

There are no easy answers to any of these questions, but we need to address these tough questions. We hope that you will attend this important March meeting and that you will come prepared with questions and answers!



IBM Writing Assistant and ASCII Text Files

IBM *Writing Assistant* files normally can not be used with other word processing programs and cannot be transmitted over a modem. . .at least not where anyone who doesn't have *Writing Assistant* can read them very easily. Much like the latest version of Microsoft *Word*, when you use files created with *Writing Assistant*, those receiving the files as an "attachment" to e-mail won't be able to read them easily. There is a way around this, though. In *Word*, you can "save as" an ASCII text file.

One of the most universal computer languages was and is ASCII (an acronym for American Standard Code for Information Interchange). Files that have been saved in the ASCII computer code can be retrieved by any and all word processors and can be sent via e-mail to others with an almost guarantee that they can be read on the other end.

Text files created with *Writing Assistant* can be changed into ASCII text files very easily. Our "Founding Father," Dick Page, published the directions on how to do this many years ago, so we are going to repeat his directions here.

1> After creating your text with *Writing Assistant*, save the file but do not exit. Select 2 Define the page from the Main Menu.

2> Set the margins to show the left margin at 1 and the right margin at 78. Change the top and bottom margins to zero and change the page length to zero also.

3> When you return to the Type/Edit screen, make sure you have no emphasizing in the text such as **bolding** or underlining.

4> Press ESCAPE and go to the main menu. Select 3 Print.

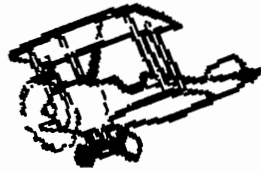
5> Where the Print Menu says PRINT TO: PRINTER, change the word printer to the filename you want to save the file as. ie: PRINT TO: MYFILE.TXT

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When you press the return key, *Writing Assistant* will then "save" the file as an ASCII text file. You may want to put the drive letter in front of the file name to direct *Writing Assistant* to save the file to the disk in the A or B drive by including the drive letter, ie: PRINT TO: A:MYFILE.TXT or PRINT TO: B:MYFILE.TXT Also, you should remember to change the name of the file to another name or you will overwrite the original file that you had previously saved in *Writing Assistant*.

These directions also apply to IBM *Filing Assistant*, *PFS WRITE* and *PFS FILE*. The new file you have created can be read by any word processor. . .or any e-mail program!

Q I am having trouble using Microsoft's *Flight Simulator*. I am using a Microsoft Booster that boosts my Junior' memory to 256K and I also use a Microsoft mouse with the Booster. Help!



A The disk that came with the Microsoft Booster has the answer; it isn't in the printed manual. MEMORY.SYS, one of the files on the Booster Disk, can be run with stated parameters, or switches. /s: and /v: The MEMORY.SYS /s: and the /v: switches determine how the PCjr's internal memory is allocated. The /s: switch controls the amount of memory used for a RAM drive, while the /v: switch controls the amount of memory that is used for the video memory buffer.

If the /s: switch is not specified, then MEMORY.SYS will automatically create a RAM drive that is large enough to fill the PCjr's internal memory. Doing this allows applications to execute out of the fast PCjr Booster memory.

If the /v: switch is not specified, MEMORY.SYS will allocate 16KB for video

memory. This will allow you to run all applications that are designed for the IBM PC and the XT. For applications that were written to take advantage of the PCjr enhanced video mode, the proper line in your config.sys file should read MEMORY.SYS /v:32

Another switch is the /w option that will make your Junior always boot into the 80 column screen.

Microsoft *Flight Simulator* has its own routines for allocating memory and will not run if your config.sys file contains the Microsoft Booster driver file MEMORY.SYS. Therefore, if you are using the Microsoft Booster and its software, you should make sure the config.sys file contains only these lines:

```
DEVICE CLOCK.SYS
DEVICE MOUSE.SYS
```

These command lines are contained in the CONFIG.SYS and CONFIG3.SYS files on the disk that came with the Microsoft Booster.

The Junior Time-Line. . .or, Remember When?

November 1983:

IBM introduces the PCjr computer. The Junior had been called "peanut" at IBM during its creation. Junior is released in two versions: "Entry Level" 64K version that ran only on Read Only Memory (ROM) cartridges at \$600 and the "Enhanced" version with 128K memory and a 5.25" DSDD floppy disk drive for \$1295.

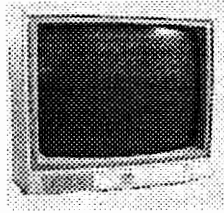
It was immediately attacked by its reviewers in two main areas: the Chiclet-style keyboard that was difficult to use and its relatively small power supply that made any expansion efforts to Junior troublesome.

January 1984:

Production delays, never fully explained to the public, forces IBM production of the PCjr to miss the important Christmas selling season. It isn't until January that they begin shipping the computers to dealers. *Continued on page four>>*

April 1984:

Along with an announced \$40 million advertising campaign, IBM brings out a color display designed for the Junior. After missing projected sales, the advertising campaign is cut back.

**June 1984:**

In an effort to enhance sales, IBM drops the list prices of the "Entry" Junior to \$599 and the "Enhanced" model to \$999.

July 1984:

Several improvements are announced for the Junior. A more traditional keyboard design is released. Using the same electronics but in a better "feeling" design, this keyboard is better received. A speech synthesizer attachment, an add-on power supply and 128K extra memory attachments are offered. Putting several memory attachments together along with the additional power could boost RAM up to 512K. The reviews for these items were generally favorable.

August 1984:

A massive (one analyst estimated it to be \$120 million) pre-Christmas promotional is launched by IBM. It included not only advertising in the media, but several direct-mail promotions, rebates for dealers and a one-year warranty for Junior.

October 1984:

In the final quarter before Christmas, IBM authorized price cuts to about \$800 for the "Enhanced" PCjr with the color monitor and sales soared. Dataquest estimated the production cost per unit for these Juniors at \$887. They also estimated that 80% of all Juniors sold that year were done so during this last quarter of 1984, and they put the total at 200,000 units.

January 1985:

After the 1984 Christmas promotion ended, the price of a Junior and color monitor went back to the \$1400 range and sales went down accordingly.

March 1985:

IBM announced they would cease production of the PCjr computer in April.

April 18, 1985:

Dick Page and Bill Roy kick off the Eugene PCjr Club as a support group for owners in the local area of the IBM PCjr computer.

After all this, some dealers sold their remaining stock of Juniors for as little as \$795 with the monitor. Many waited, hoping IBM would dump their inventory of unsold Juniors at bargain basement prices, but this never happened as far as we know.

So where are all the unsold Juniors? We have heard several stories. They were sitting in a warehouse for quite sometime awaiting an unknown seller who bought them all at auction for \$5 each. Another story was that IBM donated them to an environmental group that used them to build an artificial reef off the coast of Florida. And, "somewhere" there is a photograph of them all being plowed under at a solid waste land fill.

In April of 1985, IBM placed 3/4 page "news reports" in newspapers across the country that quoted Mark Twain: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." The ad stated that "If you own a PCjr computer you can be sure it is still a well-cared-for member of the IBM family."

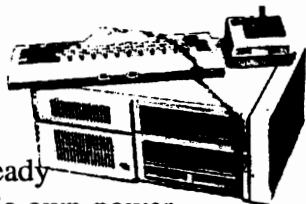
The reports we used for this article came from the July 1985 issue of *PCjr World* magazine. In the article we are told to take steps as problems that may lie ahead for the Junior. Problems such as there may not be a source of repair parts for the PCjr or that software may not be made after production of the Junior halted.

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We know that IBM did in fact pull the plug on our Junior, but many suppliers didn't. To match the 128K side-car memory expansion units from IBM, Tecmar made a memory expansion that not only gave the additional 128K, but added a parallel printer port, a clock/calendar and an additional power supply. This sold for \$395 compared to the 128K IBM expansion that sold for \$325.

Tecmar also sold a jrCadet expansion unit for \$445. This unit had 256K. Some dealers would sell both units together for \$550 and the two units would boost Junior's total memory to 512K, enough to run most any IBM program at the time.

RACORE Corporation got on Junior's band wagon and produced a Drive Two Enhancement Package that had a memory slot you could use that would provide 128K, 384K or 512K additional memory to Junior's already 128K. This unit had it's own power supply, another disk drive, a parallel printer port and a clock/calendar. And soon, they offered a unit with a hard disk drive.



Many others, such as Microsoft, came out with sidecar expansions for Junior. The jrHotshot memory expansion plugged into the main system board of Junior and could give you a 640K Junior that looked just like a little 128K Junior. Impulse and Legacy Technology made 2nd drive units and memory packages for Junior.

All of these "add-ons" have given our Juniors' their individual personalities. For many of us, Junior was our first introduction to computers. Some of us cut our teeth on Junior and BASIC. And, while many who are reading this newsletter are still using their old Junior as their only machine, we know that some of you are doing your actual computing on 300 and 400 MHz computers. . .but, you still have your old friend with you. They are really hard to give up, aren't they!

Genealogy On Display

One of our "out-of-town" members contacted us about this program. He has been using *Genealogy On Display* for over ten years and was wondering how to convert all of his records to use with his "new" computer, or, better yet, how could he get his old software to run on his new computer. Does anyone have the answer for this?

Genealogy On Display, Club Disk Number P-511, is a full-service program that works on a 128K Junior. It does require cartridge BASIC as all of the supporting files are in BASIC and in color. This is the major cause of the problems our member is having getting it to work on his "newer" machine.

The purpose of *Genealogy On Display* is to record, sort, store and retrieve records of genealogical data. Pedigree charts, family group sheets and descendant charts are compiled automatically by the program from the data you enter. Of course, all of this data can be printed

An 85-page manual is included on the disk. Printing can be somewhat slow as the program compiles and formats the data you selected. All you need to use this program is hard facts on family members. It is written for the serious genealogist, but if you have an inquisitive teenager who has a couple of grandparents, he or she could be just the right person to get this all going.

The program is not easy to start without reading the "runfirst" program. This is the way you get it going: Boot with your 128K DOS disk. Change to an 80 column screen by keying in MODE CO80. Next, key in BASIC/S:256 and press enter. Remove the DOS disk and put in the *Genealogy On Display* disk and key in RUN"RUNFIRST" and from there on just follow the screen prompts. Each time you run this program it gets easier.

Not too many genealogical programs were made for the PCjr, and *Genealogy On Display* was the best. Our "out-of-town"

Little bit more on the next page>>

member says he is keeping his Junior for two reasons: so the grandchildren will keep their hands off his new computer and so he can continue to run *Genealogy On Display*. We feel that he has another thought about his Junior. We think that when his grandchildren are grown, they may be using this SAME Junior!

Q I purchased a copy of *MathPlan Jr* at a Flea Market awhile back and it seems to be working pretty good. I know it is a "buyer beware" market, but the disks were all original and everything was there--except the documentation. I have gone "on-line" to find a copy, but have so far struck out. Any ideas?

A Yes. Try the Club Store or the Documents Library to see if this program has been donated to the Club. (Actually, you already have the copy by the time you see this in print.) But, there is an important point here.

We should all be aware that when we see "used" software for sale, in more than 99% of the time, we are not actually buying the software legally. Very little software is really "owned" by anyone. Most software programs are sold under a license agreement in that only the person who originally purchases the software has any "rights" to it. And, in many cases, the "right" to transfer ownership to someone else isn't included with the software licensing agreement.

In this case, while we are relatively sure that Satellite Software, the maker, isn't going to bring charges against someone who purchases an old copy of *MathPlan Jr*, we should all be aware of what we are doing.

When we buy a car that has someone's name on the title, usually we can get a new title that will have our name on it. Many of the companies that produced software fifteen years ago may let a person by who is not the registered "owner" of the license agreement.

But, all of us should know we are treading on thin ice when we "buy" used software.

The Y to K Problem

Please don't take the following too seriously. As you know, we hold our Club meetings at the Church of Christ here in Eugene. Member Darlene Gotzman is the Church Secretary and she hired a computer consultant to help her with the Year 2K problem (not really, but play along with us here). Here is his report ;-)

"I have gone over the church computer to solve the Y-to-K Date Change Problem. I have completed 18 months of work on this. I have gone through every line of code in every program in every system and program. I have analyzed all databases, all data files, including backups and historic archives, and modified all data to reflect the change.

"I am proud to report that I have completed the "Y-to-K" date change mission, and have NOW implemented all changes to all programs and all data to reflect kour new standards: Januark, Februark, March, April, Mak, June, Julk, August, September, October, November, December as well as: Sundak, Mondak, Tuesdak, Wednesdak, Thursdak, Fridak, Saturdak.

"I trust that this is satisfactorik, because to be honest, none of this "Y" to K problem has made ank sense to me. But I understand it is a global problem, and our team is glad to help in ank wak possible. And what does the kear 2000 have to do with it? Speaking of which, what do kou think we ought to do next kear when the two digit kear rolls over from 99 to 00?

"We'll await kour direction.

Q I have one of those "other" computers and would like to run some of those great programs I had for my Junior. I don't want to put these programs on my hard drive, but how do can I run them when I no longer have an A> on the screen?

Answer on the next page>

A Many of the programs that run on your Junior can also be run on your "other" computer. Of course, you must have a 5.25" drive on your "other" machine. If your "other" computer has only a 3.5" drive, maybe you shouldn't have gotten rid of Junior so quickly.

If you are using *Windows 3.1*, you can select the MAIN Program Manager and click on MS DOS PROMPT. This will give you a C>. From here, you can key in whatever the drive letter is of your 5.25" drive. If your drive letter is B, key in B: and press enter.

If you are using *WINDOWS 95, 98* or *NT*, click on the START menu at the bottom of the screen. Go up to PROGRAMS and then over to MS DOS PROMPT and follow the above instructions. In both cases, when you are done, key in EXIT and you will return to *WINDOWS*.

Remember that some programs were written specifically for the PCjr and these will not run on anything else. *King's Quest* is always the first one that comes to mind. There are newer versions of this old standby that will run under other operating systems so, if you just can't live without *King's Quest*, you can find newer versions at your local computer software store.

Reaching Out -- Our Outreach Program

December and January are always slow months for most of our members, but these two months seem to be when our Outreach committee has to gear up. Folks are buying new computers and are donating their old ones (and, they are not always Juniors!) to the Club's Outreach program.

When these donations are received, we inventory them and try to match up someone or a family who can put the equipment to use. If you know of someone in the area who doesn't have a computer in their home, let Rosie Janz

know.

Nearly everyone can benefit from having a computer in their home. And, if you think that a PCjr is "out of date" or "obsolete," just ask someone who doesn't have a computer if they would like to use one. Junior is still a wonderful entry machine for these folks.

A Junior is just the right computer for that single mom (or dad) on a limited budget. That senior citizen can really benefit, too, from having a computer they can use without the worry of "hurting" it. The Club can bring over and set up a very good looking computer in their home. It will come complete with some games for the kids and *Writing Assistant* for the adults. And, all for free and nothing else to buy.

In some cases, these donated computers even have modems in them. All of us in Lane County are fortunate to have Eugene Public Networking. This nonprofit Internet Service Provider is more commonly known as Eugene Free Net. EFN is one of the best things we have in the state of Oregon!

Eugene Free Net will allow PCjr Club members to connect to the Internet with our slow modems. We can have e-mail accounts and even go out on the World Wide Web, if we have the courage to do so at 300, 1200 or 2400 baud.

For those economically challenged, EFN will provide these services free of charge! If they are this generous, how can our Outreach program not be a success!

If you know someone in the Eugene/Springfield area who can benefit from having a PCjr in their home, but who may feel that this would be just too far beyond their reach, tell them about the free Outreach program of our Club. Have them give Rosie a call (343-7592) and she can schedule Phil and Louie to get in contact with them.

After all, helping people is what the Club is all about.

Our next scheduled newsletter is due to be published the second week of June--but, if something comes up before then, we'll let you know!!

**HOW TO REACH THE
EUGENE PCjr CLUB**

FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Membership is available for \$20 per year per household. Membership provides each member of the household access to the Club Disk Library, individualized help and support. It also includes a subscription to the Newsletter. All Club General Meetings and Board meetings are open to every member. To inquire about becoming a member, contact The Eugene PCjr Club, P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405.

FOR "OUT-OF-TOWN" MEMBERSHIPS:

Newsletter subscriptions are given the fancy term, "Out-of-Town Memberships." This type of membership is \$12 and brings a full year of the Newsletter to your mailing address. Requests for Out-of-Town memberships may be mailed to The Eugene PCjr Club, P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

To change your address for any type membership, you may inform the Club by mail to the Club's Post Office Box, by phone (541.343.7592) or by e-mail (pcjrclub@efn.org).

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:

Submission of articles for the Newsletter is vigorously requested and copy may be sent to the Club's Post Office box or via e-mail. Permission to reprint is freely given.

QUESTIONS and/or INQUIRES:

Questions and inquires about the availability of parts or supplies may be sent to the Club's Post Office Box or via e-mail (rp_janz@efn.org). Questions about software, operation or repair of your Junior, may be sent to the Club's Post Office Box or via e-mail (pcjrclub@efn.org). All orders for parts or software from the Club's Disk Library should be sent to the Post Office Box.

COMPLIMENTARY COPIES and/or BACK ISSUES:

If you know of anyone who may like to receive a complimentary copy of the Newsletter please send us their mailing address. Back issues of the Newsletter can be obtained for \$1 each and depending on availability. Address inquires to our Post Office Box.



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FIRST CLASS MAIL

