



EUGENE

PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 50024. Eugene, OR 97405

VOLUME XVII
NUMBER 1
SPRING 2001

MEETING

AGENDA

There is no meeting scheduled for March.

OFFICERS

President Mike Ruiz
 Treasurer and Club Store Phil Janz
 Social Director Lynn Miles
 Newsletter Editor ... Louie Levy

Mike's Message

by Mike Ruiz

Here we are well on our way into the year 2001. March to be exact. We have been exposed to a new Republican President for some time now (we have listened to his state of the union address) energy costs are skyrocketing beyond anyone's imagination and the other day Seattle experienced an earthquake that measured over 6 on the Richter scale.

When I was driving home today I noticed daffodils, crocus and trees showing flower buds. The weather has also been very nice the last couple of days. Spring seems to be here. I must have missed the usually miserable stormy, rainy and cold winter months. I have also heard that people are wondering if we here in the Pacific Northwest have had enough rain and snow this year to build up the necessary reserves of water to get us through the summer months. I have a feeling we haven't seen the last of the rain yet. With a start like this year, 2001 might stand out as a year to remember.

And as I ponder these experiences and write this message, I wonder what our club might be doing this year. The PCjr club leadership feel it's an important time for our club. Leaders of the club and I have several tough questions to answer that might give us direction in planning for the future of the club. We need your help. A questionnaire has been attached to this newsletter that when returned will help us out tremendously. Please do your part in returning the questionnaire. I thank you now for the time you might spend helping us to answer our questions.

As the weather changes so will we. I've begun my Spring cleaning and I'm dusting off my golf clubs and planning to get my fishing license this week. My energy level is rising as the sun begins to shine. One of my new year resolutions is to exercise more. Here it is March and it's taking the warmer climate to make me think about my plan. The warmer weather makes me want to get out and walk or run. I bet you are thinking the same.

I hope all of you are have a great year. Hang in there,

Mike



What Went Wrong?

The following table outlines some common problems encountered with the PCjr. It's source is the PCjr Diagnostics Manual and Albert Allen's PCjr Power.

Post Error	Problem Area	Probable Cause
No beep. No image or wrong image on screen	Power	Power board or System board
One beep. No image or wrong image on screen	Display	System board or 64K memory and display expansion card
Two beeps. No image or wrong image on screen	Power	Power board or System board
Three beeps. No image or wrong image on screen	Memory	64K Memory and Display Expansion
No beep. ERROR 0AXX	Memory	System board
No beep. ERROR 0BXX	Memory	64K Memory and Display Expansion (ERROR A)
No beep. ERROR 0CXX	Memory	64K Memory and Display Expansion (ERROR A)
No beep. ERROR 1YXX	Memory	System board
No beep. ERROR 2000	Keyboard	Keyboard (ERROR B)
No beep. ERROR 21XX	Infra-red	Infra-red receiver
No beep. ERROR 2200	Keyboard	Keyboard (ERROR B)
No beep or Serial	Cassette	System board
No beep. ERROR 24XX	Modem	Internal modem
No beep. ERROR 25XX	Cartridge	
No beep. ERROR 26XX	Diskette drive	Diskette drive adapter (ERROR H)
Advanced POST, or portion of it goes into loop	System board	System board (ERROR 23XX)
Any ERROR message not listed in this table	Service plug	Ensure that service plug is good and installed correctly. Repeat advanced POST. If same message, replace system board.

We would be the first to admit there are several approaches to Junior repair. The above chart goes far in helping no matter what approach you take. If you are into the techie stuff, you really do need the Technical Reference Manual with all the little test plugs and maybe even a copy of the Hardware Reference Manual. Both are available through the Club Store.

There is another approach. If Junior doesn't boot, it means something is broken. Replace the whole thing; they're only about twenty dollars and then you don't end up burning the dining room table with the soldering iron.

Seventeen Years and Counting



It is hard to believe that the PCjr was introduced by IBM seventeen years ago, back in 1983. Actually, it wasn't until 1984 that it was released for sale. At a price of nearly \$2000, Junior was a slow starter. But, this all changed when IBM dropped the price to an amazingly low \$999 just in time for the Christmas season late in the year. Sales really took off.

To pay a thousand dollars for a 128K single drive computer took a lot of thought for many of us. The Commodore 64 was the top seller at the time and it cost about \$150. Of course, it was hard to compare that machine with a "true IBM computer" like the Junior!

After all, Junior had twice the memory, came with the single-sided, double-density 340K disk drive, a "wireless" (but dinky) keyboard and a color monitor. All these components were available for the Commodore, but they were expensive accessories.

The accessories available when we bought our Junior were really not accessories in the real sense of the word: DOS 2.1 (the computer would only run in BASIC without it), Cartridge BASIC (required for nearly all games that were available), and *Writing Assistant* (about the only way to save documents to disk). I can still remember agonizing over which two of these accessories to choose. If you decided to purchase all three, the third one would cost you an additional \$95!

The IBM won hands-down for most of us, as it was a "real" computer. You could tell by the available software. Titles like *Multiplan* and *VisiCalc*, *Dollars and Sense*, *Lotus 1-2-3* and *PC-Write*. This told us this computer was a full-fledge, industrial-strength, cutting-edge COMPUTER. Not simply a "game" machine where the main source of software programs was Toy-'R-Us. The price of OUR software was nearly always over a hundred dollars.

Soon, we were shocked to hear that IBM was twisting arms to get its own employees to purchase the remaining stock of Juniors for less than \$400 each! The plug was being pulled and the door shut by IBM for support of our trusted Junior. Orphaned before it was three.

Not too shabby by today's standards! Most computer models are on the market only about three months now before a newer, faster one takes its place. New operating systems won't even run on computers you purchased only two years ago! But, let's get back on course here.

Big Blue not only abandoned Junior, it let nature take over its Boca Raton, Florida property where the "Junior Operations" were first started. But, it was too late. Junior was out on its own and it never looked back!

The computing industry was growing by leaps and bounds and many people got their start on Junior. Learning BASIC, LOGO and assembly languages led many to C++ and into "Java-Jobs." Junior has been very instrumental for many of today's highly-paid computer professionals.

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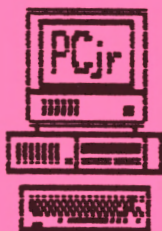
We would be the first to admit that there are very few people who are still using their Juniors today, but still, we know of several who use their Juniors on a daily basis. What is more unusual, they have been using their Junior on a daily basis for seventeen years!

A few of our present members have owned their Juniors for many years now without ever having spent anything on repairs. Some of our members have owned their Juniors for less than a year! It is this diverse group that makes doing this newsletter a constant challenge.

Keeping this diverse group in mind while you read the newsletter, remember that if the articles are not about things you are interested in, it may be because you haven't let us know what you want. The "squeaky wheel gets the grease" is a true adage.

Not only is the newsletter at a juncture right now, but so is the club. The board has constructed a survey as there aren't enough squeaky wheels right now to tell them where the grease should go. Fill it out and tell them just what you want from the club.

Louie



ANOTHER JUNIOR FINDS A NEW HOME!

by Rosie Janz

Sometimes in the past, local club members have helped find people who are interested in "adopting" one of our "orphan" Juniors. As our club's official outreach person, I have found making that connection with new Junior "parents" both fun and rewarding. Being able to place "Jr" in a setting that allows our little computer to assist folks in becoming computer literate, or even to just get over that "I can't do computer stuff" syndrome is terrific!

Since last year, Louie and Phil have installed "Jr" in the homes of single parent families, financially disadvantaged families,

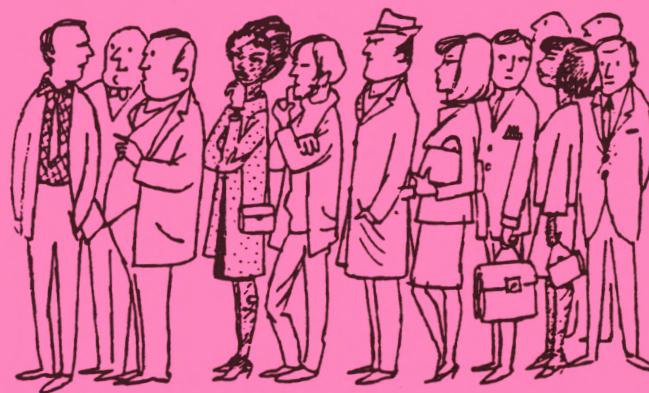
and just recently ... in the recreation room of an assisted living community.

About a month ago I was talking about my enjoyment of my computer with a woman in my exercise class who is physically disabled. She said that she wished she could afford to have a computer so she could fill some of her idle time and keep her mind active. She was overjoyed to learn that our club could furnish her with one so she could have her wish.

With the help of Louie Levy, our club's newsletter editor, and Phil Janz, the club treasurer, a 640K "Jr," complete with printer, was delivered along with a disk tub of software games and *Writing Assistant*, for placement and use at the Lone Oak Assisted Living Community in Eugene. Because the social director at the facility was willing to learn to teach others how to use "Jr", not only will my friend be able to enjoy using the Peanut, so will her "house mates."

The club plans to support this machine by keeping it running and answering any "calls for help". We have provided instruction to the Social Director at Lone Oak. She in turn will assist interested tenants with word processing and games. A wonderful partnership with Junior again in the place of honor!

Rosie



Are you sure there's no meeting this month?

DOS*Ooooo. He said a bad word!**Louie Levy*

If you are taking any computer classes in college or most anywhere and want to stump the professor, ask "what's DOS?" It's sure to bring up wrinkled foreheads and scrunched up noses. You may even get an answer, "DOS is what *Windows* isn't." Or, "DOS is what we had before *Windows*."

Everyone who owns a Junior knows DOS is an abbreviation, or acronym, for "Disk Operating System." All of us are using either MS-DOS or PC-DOS. Of course, these added letters stand for Microsoft DOS or Personal Computer DOS. IBM needed an operating system and licensed MS-DOS from Microsoft and put their "PC" label on it. PC-DOS 2.1 is the same as MS-DOS 2.1 although some file-names and utility programs may differ.

Nearly all versions of DOS will make Junior function. Some Junior users feel the 3.x versions work better while most feel 2.1 is the preferred version of DOS for those using only 360K disk drives and/or who have 640K or less memory.

DOS oversees computer operations such as disk drive input and output, video support, keyboard control and many other internal functions related to program execution and file maintenance. DOS is a single-tasking, single-user operating system with a command-line interface.



"I guess you're too young to remember DOS 2.1 . . ."

With our Juniors, DOS is loaded from a floppy disk in the A > drive. If we forget to put a disk in the A > drive, Junior's Read-Only Memory/Basic In-Put/Out-Put system will sense this, and the ROM/BIOS will load BASIC for us.

In order to control the movement of information on our Junior, DOS uses three files: IBMBIO.COM, IBMDOS.COM and COMMAND.COM. If you are using an MS-DOS boot disk instead of IBM's PC-DOS, these files are IO.SYS, MSDOS.COM and COMMAND.COM. All of these files except COMMAND.COM are "hidden" files in that they do not shown on your screen when you do a normal directory listing.

The keyboard is a standard input device and the monitor is a standard output device. DOS gives us control over these devices and allows us to redirect inputs and outputs to other than standard devices. Modems, printers and disk drives are some of the devices we may use with our Juniors.

As a quick "for instance" of this, I am using the keyboard to key in this article that is appearing on the screen as I type (standard input device to a standard output device). Later I will call up this article that has been saved to a file on a floppy disk and then print the article with the printer. DOS will handle all of this directing of chores (called "mapping").

In fact, we don't even need programs to do things sometimes. Say I wanted to print a letter that I have saved onto a floppy. While I could start the program I used to create the letter and then "direct" the output to the printer, instead, I could just put the disk that contains the file LETTER.DOC in the A > drive and key in LETTER.DOC > PRN and the letter would be directed to the printer by DOS. Most of us are fast losing most of the DOS that we may have

known. Using the Graphical User Interface (GUI) of our modern Windows operating systems, we no longer have the need to remember those DOS commands.

We now click "file", on "new" and then "file folder" instead of using the MD, or Make Directory command. Instead of keying in DIR to see what's on that disk in the A > drive, we now use several keystrokes, or mouse clicks, by starting on

START, going up to Accessories and then over and down to Windows Explorer. Then we locate the A drive in the "tree" and click on it. The drive light comes on and we get a DIR listing of what's on the disk.

DOS isn't really being done away with, only we are letting the programmers create batch files for us to use in their place. Life is getting easier and easier as it becomes more and more complex!

Louie Levy

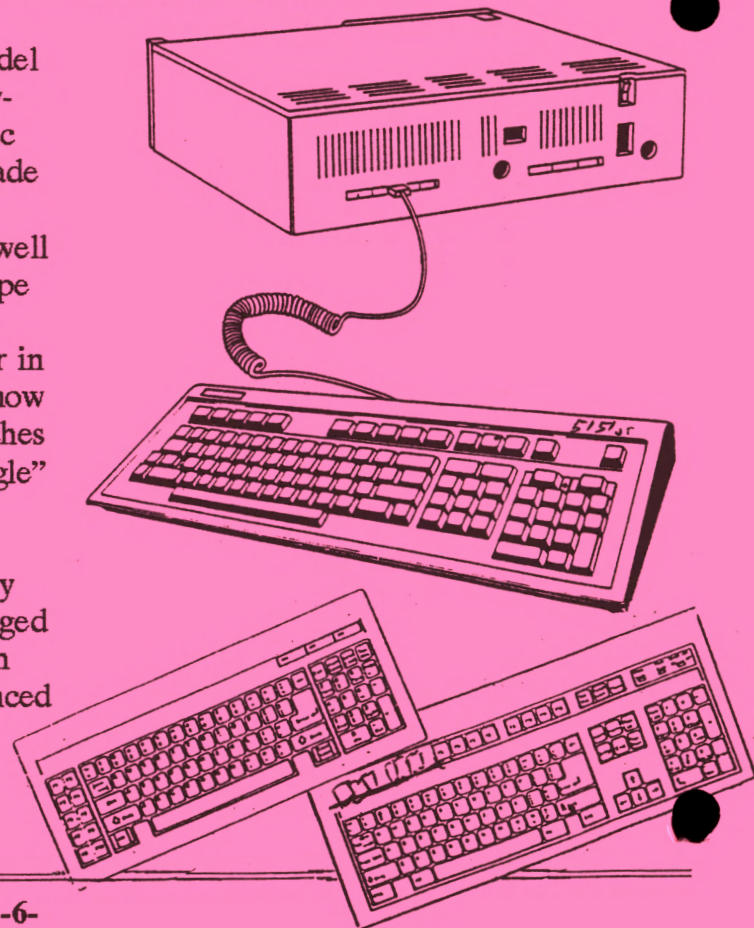
Q I am interested in replacing my keyboard with a larger, more "standard" keyboard. I know that Keytronic made a keyboard that would plug directly into the Junior, but I haven't been able to find one. I did find a Keytronic keyboard at a local thrift store, but the plug doesn't fit Junior.

A The PCjr Enhanced Keyboard is sure a sturdy keyboard, but the feel is mushy and if you do a lot of keying, leaves much to be desired. Keytronic made the model 5151jr keyboard many years ago and there are a lot of them still in use. Originally selling for over \$200 when new, these keyboards can still be found from time to time.

As the Keytronic keyboard you have has a standard 5-pin DIN connector, it is probably a model 5151. This is a heavy duty, industrial strength, keyboard and can be used with your Junior. Keytronic still makes keyboards, but their newer ones are made of plastic.

Most any of the older keyboards will work well with your Junior. They do have to be the "old" type that were made for XT-type computers. AT keyboards won't work. Also, you will need an adapter in order to use the keyboard with your Junior. We know of two types. One was made by Synetics and attaches internally to your Junior. This adapter had a "dongle" sticking out under Junior's lid with the keyboard connector.

The other one we are aware of was made by RACORE. The RACORE keyboard adapter plugged into the K and L slots on the back of Junior. With this adapter, you could use both your PCJR Enhanced keyboard and most any XT-type keyboard. This adapter can be purchased from the Club Store.



The Eugene PCjr Club Membership Survey

The Eugene PCjr Club was founded back in 1984, seventeen years ago. Of the original members, only three families are still active members. Currently, there are 34 member-families on the mailing list. 18 of these families live in Lane County, Oregon. Of these 18 local members, only half have attended club functions this year.

Presently, the club provides the following services to members and those interested in the IBM PCjr computer:

- ◆ Quarterly newsletters devoted exclusively to articles about the IBM PCjr computer, associated software and hardware and member activities.
- ◆ Maintenance of a WEB site that allows anyone interested in Junior and/or who does an Internet search for "PCJR", to be directed to our URL (www.efn.org/~pcjrclub) whereby questions may be answered.
- ◆ A Club Store is maintained so members may purchase hardware, commercial software and Shareware. These items are listed in the two extensive catalogs produced by the Club Store and items may be ordered via email, snail mail or by phone.
- ◆ Club meetings and socials are held for local family members.
- ◆ The Club Outreach Program continues to place a few PCjr computers into single parent and financially disadvantaged homes in the local area.

Computer technology continues to advance with breath taking speed. As the last active group exclusively supporting the PCjr, we are finding the "tides of change" effecting our Club by the fact that more people (including our club members) move up in their needs for more powerful and/or versatile platforms. The little *Peanut* is still appreciated and valued by some, but the number is dwindling. In order to determine the future of our support group, the club officers need to have input from members concerning the future of the Eugene PCjr Club.

The survey that has been included with this newsletter has been developed to solicit feedback from members in order to provide information that will assist the Board of Directors as they make important decisions concerning our club's future. Please complete the survey and return it in the stamped self-addressed envelope by April 10, 2001. The results of the survey will appear in the Summer newsletter.

PCjr Lives!

HOW TO REACH THE EUGENE PCjr CLUB

FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Membership is available for \$12 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 become a member, send payment to The Eugene PCjr Club, P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405-0966.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

To change your address please inform the Club by mail to the Eugene PCjr Club, P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405-0966, by phone (541.343.7592) or by e-mail (pcjrclub@efn.org).

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:

Submission of articles for the Newsletter is vigorously solicited and copy may be sent to the Eugene PCjr Club, P.O. Box 50024, Eugene, OR 97405, or via e-mail (pcjrclub@efn.org). Permission to reprint is freely given.

QUESTIONS and/or INQUIRIES:

Requests for catalogs from the Club Store and/or Disk Library, and questions or inquires about the availability of parts or supplies may be sent to the Eugene PCjr Club, P.O. Box 50024, 97405-0966, or via e-mail (rp_janz@efn.org). Questions about software, operation or repair of your Junior, may be sent to the Club's PO Box or via e-mail (pcjrclub@efn.org).

NEED HELP?

Contact These Club Members:

BASIC or WordStar:

Paul Bonney - Pbo314159@aol.com

PC-FILE III or WordPerfect:

Louie Levy - pcjrclub@efn.org

Writing Assistant or Name Pal:

Phil Janz - rp_janz@efn.org

Lynn Miles - kathrynm@efn.org

Games:

Bob Young - rlya@choice.net

E-Mail:

Lynn Miles - kathrynm@efn.org

Judy Young - judy_y@efn.org

Rosy Janz - rp_janz@efn.org

Communications Programs:

Mike Ruiz - ruizmj@juno.com

Gordon LeManquais -
oreauctioner@juno.com

Hardware Problems:

Louie Levy - pcjrclub@efn.org

Mike Ruiz - ruizmj@juno.com

Spreadsheets or WordPerfect:

Mike Ruiz - ruizmj@juno.com

The Disk Library, Parts and Supplies:

All in The Club Store

Phil Janz - rp_janz@efn.org

*"Whoever said good help is hard to
find has never called the Help-Line
of their local computer club!"*



FIRST CLASS MAIL

