EUGENE PCjr CLUB

NEWSLETTER

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Vice President . .
Elleen Levy
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Christine Brown
Disk Librarian . .
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Lindsey Hoffman
Modem Captain . .
Mike Luttio
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Jack Hart
Social Director . .
Juanita Hampton
Newsletter Editor . .
Louie Levy
Newsletter Co-Editor.
Dick Page
Founders and First
President . .
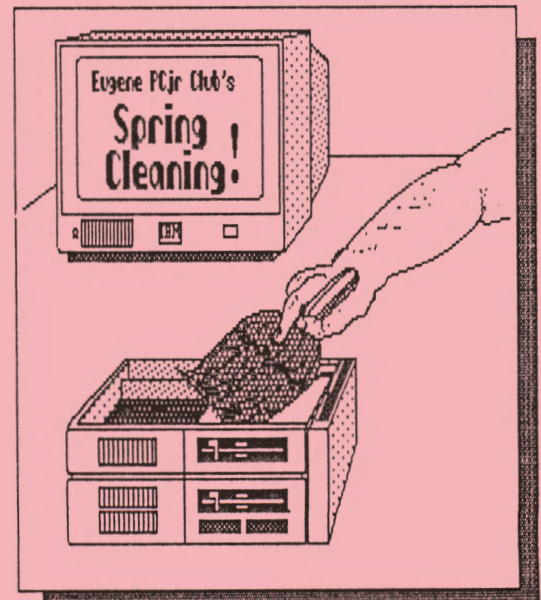Dick Page, Bill Roy
Ginny Dobson

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

"Off with its lid!" will be the hue and cry at our April meeting. . .Keeping "jr" clean and healthy is our goal, and of course if we do that on a regular basis, we can assure trouble free performance from our faithful friend.

Now I know that each of you are comfortable and content to pound away on "jr" and secretly admire your good fortune to be working on a machine that says IBM PCjr on its lid, to relish and cherish the visual beauty of this sensual machine. Someone looks over your shoulder and you hear, "Off with its lid!", and you hear yourself gasping, "Who me? I could never do that."

Lucky, lucky you!!! Come and learn that it is not intimidating to remove the lid from "jr" and perform an annual spring cleaning now rather than an autopsy at a later date. You too can learn how to work with the "inside" of your "jr" as well as the "outside" . . .Help and careful guidance will be available at our Spring Clean-In during the April meeting.

On April 12 carefully pack up "jr", its keyboard (with fresh batteries in it, or your keyboard cord) and your power cord (the "brick"). A word of caution however, be sure to place either the cardboard insert or an old diskette in the drive(s) before moving the set. Put everything in your car and drive very carefully to Ida Patterson School library and don't forget to use your seatbelt... On "jr"! I am not worried about you!

The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. (Disk library sales are available before the meeting) and actually what you will have the opportunity to do is:

* Take "jr" apart
* Lube the drive and clean the read/write heads
* Get all dust, dog and cat hairs, dead spiders and other such trivia out of the CPU and your keyboard (You don't know what CPU means? An excellent reason to come to the meeting! Whisper in Elleen's ear, "What does it mean?" and you will find out -- something)
* Put everything back together
* Check to make sure everything works by using a POST check

My words are tongue-in-cheek, but my meaning is clear. . .Join us for this "hands on" approach in helping you to become more knowledgeable and familiar with your personal computer. To maintain your high energy level for this exciting task, Christine Brown will provide treats for our break and you are welcome to sample, munch and interact with others. . .As long as you don't dribble crumbs into my "motherboard!"

Phil - And thanks to Dick Page for the great graphics!

action packed POLITICS

About this time each year, many PCjr Clubs begin the painful process of finding new officers. All of our clubs, no matter what our size may be, have much in common. First, we are groups who have our visions somewhat limited in that we feel much partiality to a computer that is no longer manufactured; indeed, some of our rank have felt it to be obsolete and have moved away from us and to other brands and types of machines. Second, none of our clubs have been able to convince the attorney general of our respected states to give us a "tax exempt" status as a religious group, as they feel that even though many of us "worship" our Juniors, we seem more like a cult. . .and a dying one at that. Third, none of our members seem to "take charge." We attend meetings, when they are on days we are free, but when the time comes to actually come forward and take on a position as a club officer we all seem to say, "let John, or Phil, or Carl, or Dave, anyone but me, do it."

When you become an officer in a PCjr Club you normally hold the job until you threaten suicide or purchase a Mac (is there a difference?). Once we get an officer or board position filled we all breathe a sigh of relief as most of us feel these positions are for the

life of the volunteer. We all know deep in our hearts that this just isn't being realistic.

John King, the president of one of the largest and most active PCjr Clubs in the country, The San Francisco PCjr Users' Group, had a very frightening editorial in the past issue of their newsletter. Many Eugene PCjr Club members will remember John's visit to one of our meetings last year. This extremely dedicated Junior user writes that no one has come forward to help run their great group for 1990. Any Junior user who lives in the sticks away from other Junior owners, who waits with anticipation for his newsletters to come in the mail each month, must really wonder just why it is so hard to get people to volunteer for these jobs. All of our clubs have subscribers who live in small towns who would give up going to Wednesday night prayer meetings if they could just get two or three other Junior owners to begin a club. I'm sure they would jump at the chance to be a viable part of the largest PCjr group west of the Mississippi. If only they could.

The frightening part of John's editorial is the choices that are facing the club. They can become a Special Interest Group (SIG) under the umbrella of the San Francisco Personal Computer Users Group (SFPCUG), reorganize the club, or they can choose not to continue (disband). This is the same problem that each of us must face along with the SFPCjrUG.

In a way, we are no different from the computer we have chosen to support. As Junior gets older there are more breakdowns. As newer processors come on line, Junior seems to be slower and slower. One question in our recent survey was what our members would do if their Junior broke and the cost of fixing it was more than it was worth. By far, most said they would either fix it anyway or purchase another Junior. Junior will survive as long as we feel this way. Our clubs will survive too, when we think of the club as a family. Most of us would do anything we could to help members of our family. One of the best things IBM did when they manufactured this fine piece of equipment was to name it "Junior." It instantly became a member of the family.

Whatever the group in San Francisco does, as family members, we'll always be behind them. And by the way, this month is April. The Annual General meeting takes place and it will be time to elect those who will take the Eugene PCjr Club into its seventh year. Thanks to those of us who came forward and said "what the heck, I'll do it" and to Frank Ratti and Elleen Levy who acted as nominating committee this year, it looks like we have at least one person ready to fill each slot. If you would like to run in the primary, call either Frank or Elleen or come to the April meeting ready to stand up and be counted.

REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Many thanks to those members who were asked to serve as officers for the coming year. No one who was asked refused, and I think this is indicative of the spirit of cooperation evident in the club this year. Any of you who were not asked to hold an office who have an interest in a certain position, please let us know. It would be exciting to have more than one person running for each office--for a change.

The following persons have agreed to run:

President--Phil Janz
V.P.--Cindy Hoffman
Treasurer--Christine Brown
Disk Librarian--Paul Bonney
   Assistants--Lindsay Hoffman
               Cindy Page
               Simon Ratti
Modem Captain--Louie Levy
Commercial Contact--Mike Luttio
Social Director--Elleen Levy
Newsletter Editor--Louie Levy
Newsletter Contributor--Dick Page
Documents Librarian--Dick Page

We will also be asking some of the junior members to be "test pilots." This will be the important job of checking out some of the game disks considered for the library to make sure they work well and are interesting.

I think we have a great list of potential officers for next year. See you at the meeting.

Elleen Levy

INTENSE EXCITEMENT!

What's Happening at the April Meeting

What are we going to have for you at the April meeting? Well, for starters, Cindy will bring the Disk Library so you can pick out some new programs. She and Lindsey will also have some disk tubs and Memorex blank diskettes for sale. Dick will have the "lending library" of other Junior Club newsletters for you to peruse, and Louie will have back issues of our newsletter available for sale. If you read the first page you already know that Phil has a great program on slate for all of us. . .but especially for our Juniors. Our resident guru will be there to answer your hardware questions but, please, no dental questions, and Christine will provide us with goodies for those who partake. We are really looking forward to seeing the WHOLE family. . .especially JUNIOR!

GOOD ADVICE

John Waite, the BBS editor of the SFPCjrUG, has some sage advice about selling Juniors. John said, "We get a lot of inquiries about selling PCjr's, and frequently people have an inflated idea of how much their PCjr is worth." John feels that with the bargains that are out there at the present time in new computers that ". . .a 128K PCjr with single disk drive, is not worth very much. Even with the color monitor, the maximum honest value can't be over $250, and even that is probably high." As much as we hate to believe this, we know that John is right.

While we didn't pay the $2000+ in 1963 for a 64K PC with green-screen, many of us have a lot of bucks invested in our Juniors. But, as John says, this is no cause to take advantage of people who don't know about computers and who are looking for an entry-level machine. We should be honest with them and ourselves and realize that even at $250, the new owner will have to spend another $250 to $300 or more for memory expansion, second drives or larger keyboards, and this will put them in the same price range of some XT clones. Even the big retail stores are selling Turbo XT clones with hard drives for just a few hundred dollars more.

All of us know how we feel about our Juniors; some of us have spent a couple of hundred dollars on its care and feeding just in the last couple of months. But, as John says, "Give a new user a break, and don't rip them off. . ." if you are selling your Junior. And if you do sell Junior, be sure and tell them about the fine PCjr Club that is willing and able to help them along with their newly adopted orphan!

MORE GOOD ADVICE

A recent article in an Eastern newsletter suggested that a sudden "black out" of your jr monitor with the green light above the on/off switch still indicating that the monitor is on may be caused by a faulty capacitor, C-402. The cure is to take the monitor to a qualified repair person because of the dangerous HIGH VOLTAGE circuits in this component.

Unless you are skilled in making electronic repairs, the above advice can be applied universally. It is not difficult to keep jr clean or to change some "plug-in" components, but you'll generally benefit by letting experts do the repair work.

MORAL: IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT
       IT DOES, DON'T MESS WITH IT.
(Old expression frequently used by Chief Boatswains, slightly paraphrased for a family newsletter)

Bob Denning
(Summary of article in the Metro PCjr Journal, Washington, DC, January, 1989 entitled, Coping With jrMonitor "Black Out")

MAKING JUNIOR FASTER

by JOHN KING

Everyone knows that a PCjr is slower than its big brother, the PC. Well, that's true, but not entirely true. Disk accesses will always be a bit slower on Junior because it doesn't have DMA, direct memory access, which lets the PC read or write to a disk while you are typing. Junior just beeps to say "let me finish with the disk operation first."

Aside from disk operations, Junior is still slower than the PC when programs run in the first 128K of memory. The Norton Utilities report that it is only 70% as fast as the PC. However, above the first 128K, in expansion memory, Junior is just as fast as any PC.

How do you get programs to run in expansion memory? There are several ways, but first you have to buy someone's expansion board. After that, you must check the software that comes with your board to learn how to reposition video memory, so that the extra memory can be used by DOS.

The software with every board offers an option to expand video memory to fill up the first 128K. This will force all programs to run in the expansion memory, but it is very wasteful of ram in most cases. The video buffer will be 96K while most programs need only 16K, or at most 32K, for video memory.

What are the alternatives? Well, the first 128K must be filled, but let's use something other than unnecessary video. BIOS data and the DOS files, IBMBIO.COM and IBMDOS.COM occupy most of the first 32K of ram. Video must start on a 16K boundary, so the first location for video is between 32K and 28K, for a 16K buffer, or up to 64K for a 32K buffer. We have 80K or 64K left to fill up the first 128K. This is an ideal place to put a ramdisk or a memory resident utility of the right size.

A ramdisk can be just 64K or 80K or bigger with the same speed-up effect. IBM, Racore, Quadram and Impulse memory expansions come with ramdisks which fill this space. Also, our PCjr Users Group library has ramdisk software of this type. The Tecmar ramdisk loads into high memory, so it won't do the job here; but it works with PCjr Basic.
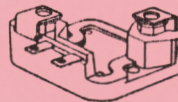
PC-Deskmates is a memory resident program like Sidkick which will use 64K and provide clock, calculator, notepad, printer control, and typewriter features.

A keyboard macro program like Prokey or Newkey is another possibility. Any combination of files which fills the space, or more, will have the speed-up effect.

Now that you have the idea, I'm sure you'll come up with your own favorite use for this space and speed up your Junior as well.

If you need to use Basic, you'll discover that the command BASIC will produce an "Out of memory" message and lock up your machine. If you rename BASICA.COM on your disk to something else (i.e. PCBASICA.COM), the command PCBASICA will run ordinary PC Basic rather than PCjr Basic, but it will run much faster.

The DOS Dir Command— Do You Know The Switches?

By David Wilson...mostly

One of the first things most of us learn is to do is to use the DOS dir command to display the directory of files on a diskette. There are a number of "switches" you can use with the dir command which are handy, but often overlooked.
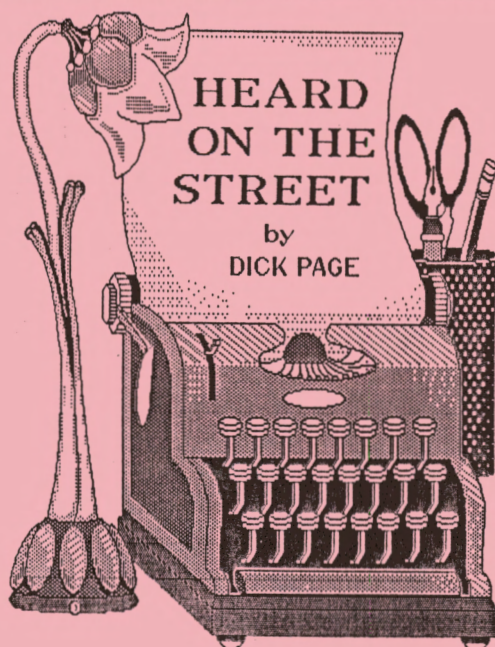
For example, if you have a lot of files on a disk, you can use dir/p to pause at the end of each screen full of file names, rather than scrolling through to the end of the list.

You can use dir/w to print the list of files in five columns across your screen. This also makes it easier to read a long list of files on a disk. The /w switch eliminates the file size and date on your screen listing while the /p does not.

You can also combine the switches by typing dir/w/p, which will give you five columns across the screen and pause when the screen is full.

Wildcards can also be used with the dir command. For instance, if you want to display only the files with .txt extensions, you would type dir *.txt. If you fail to list either the filename or the extension, the wildcard character * is assumed. Therefore, if you type dir .txt you will get a directory listing of all files on your disk that have the .txt extension. But you must type in the period (.). If you do not, DOS does not assume the wildcard. If you have a file on a disk named README.TXT and one named README with no extension, and you typed in dir readme with no period, the only file listed would be README. If you typed in dir readme. you would get a listing of both files.

(Ed's note: Can you imagine trying to carry on a normal conversation with one of the folks who wrote the programing for the internal (infernal?) DIR command?)

HEARD ON THE STREET

by
DICK PAGE

LUBRICATION IN COMPUTERS

J. Keith Phipps, from the Palm Beach User's Group, wrote an in depth article reprinted in the March '90 issue of *Fox Tales* on the proper use of various lubricants as it pertains to computer parts. I will try to summarize what he had to say.

1) **Plastic parts** (such as nylon or Styrene):
   only powdered graphite

2) **Seals & Gaskets:**
   a) **White Rubber** –
      Refrigerant Oil – 20 weight is best (purchased from air conditioning supply stores)
   b) **Black Rubber** –
      Silicone (*not* in spray cans)

3) **Metal Parts & Bearing Surfaces:**
   a) **Bronze & Chromium & Steel** –
      J.K. Phipps' Special Formula –
      * Twp parts refrigerant oil
      * Two parts silicone
      * One part powdered graphite
   b) **Aluminum & Pot Metals**
      Refrigerant Oil *only*

4) **Electric Motors with oiling holes:**
   Use J.K. Phipps' Special Formula for these, too.

THOSE MYSTERIOUS ACRONYMS

Comnputerese is a hard enough language to master without all the use of acronyms. They are fine to use if you are a seasoned hacker, but they just add to the confusion when you are first trying to get a handle on the world of computers.

Here are just a few of the acronyms you probably have come across. Check the listings elsewhere in this newsletter to see how many of the expanded phrases you really know.

1) ASCII	11) FAT
2) BASIC	12) LPT1
3) BASICA	13) MODEM
4) BIOS	14) MTBF
5) BIT	15) PRN
6) CON	16) RAM
7) CPU	17) ROM
8) CRC	18) SCSI
9) DMA	19) UPS
10) DOS	

EXPLAINING THOSE MYSTERIOUS ACRONYMS

Here are the expanded names for those sometimes exasperating acroynyms:

1) *ASCII* – **A**merican **S**tandard **C**ode for **I**nformation **I**nterchange. The code used to assign specific byte combinations for 128 alphabetic, numeric, punctuation, and control characters used by many personal computers (including the PCjr).

2) *BASIC* – **B**eginner's **A**ll-Purpose **S**ymbolic **I**nstruction **C**ode. A programming language included on a ROM chip (see #17) in your PCjr and on your D.O.S. disk (see #10).

3) *BASICA* – *B.A.S.I.C.* **A**dvanced. An improved and expanded version of BASIC. It is also included on your D.O.S. disk. (A special enhanced, PCjr-specific version is on a chip in your "cartridge BASIC" cartridge.)

4) *BIOS* – **B**asic **I**nput-**O**utput **S**ystem. It is the code built into your CPU (see #7) that effects the transfer of data to and from disks, printers, keyboards, mice, the screen, and other devices.

5) *BIT* - *B*inary *Dig*its. Computers only work with binary numbers; that is, numbers made up of zeros and ones (Ø's and 1's). These binary digits are called bits, for short.

6) *CON* - *Con*sole. This is the name by which D.O.S. refers to the keyboard (input) and the display (output).

7) *CPU* - *C*entral *P*rocessing *U*nit. This refers to the part of your computer which contains the circuitry required to do the calculations for the computer. Specific to the PCjr, it is the Intel 8088 chip found under the floppy disk drive on the main horizontal circuit board (known as Junior's "motherboard").

8) *CRC* - *C*yclic *R*edundancy *C*heck. When data are written to disk, the coded values for each character are multiplied according to a standard formula and the rsulting number is stored at the end of each sector. Subsequent readings of the sector recalculate that number. If the two numbers do not match, an "error reading data" message is displayed. (I have only seen it when having trouble de-arcing compressed files.)

9) *DMA* - *D*irect *M*emory *A*ccess. Hardware found in most computers which allows moving of data to and from memory without interupting the CPU. (Most PCjrs don't have this and therefore, occassionally have trouble running some programs which rely on DMA.

10) *DOS* - *D*isk *O*perating *S*ystem. Three programs which load, execute and mediate between your computer and most of the programs you use. (Some supplemental programs sold with DOS are also often considered part of DOS - DOS's "External Commands".) DOS version 2.1 is the earliest version to run on a PCjr. Version 2.0 and earlier won't work with PCjr's half-height disk drive.

11) *FAT* - *F*ile *A*llocation *T*able. A "Table of Contents" for you disks. A portion of each formatted disk is set aside for the FAT file which holds a listing of the used and unused space on the disk and information on where each file on the disk can be found.

12) *LPT1* - *L*ine *P*rinter *#1*. DOS supports three line, commonly called parallel, printers. The first one is LPT1. (DOS also supports up to two serial printers using the COM1 and COM2 serial ports.)

13) *MODEM* - *M*odulator-*D*emodulator. A device that permits transmission of computer data over telephone lines.

14) *MTBF* - *M*ean *T*ime *B*etween *F*ailures. This represents a statistical estimation of the number of hours at which half of all drives of a certain type will have failed. The bigger the number the more chance your drive will last a long time.

15) *PRN* - *Pr*inter. DOS's acronym for the parallel port that it usually sends signals to. It is the equivalent of LPT1 (if you have a parallel printer).

16) *RAM* - *R*andom *A*ccess *M*emory. That portion of memory which can be written to or read from anytime the computer is running but is lost if the computer is shut off.

17) *ROM* - *R*ead *O*nly *M*emory. Chips which contain information which can only be read. Nothing can be written to these chips. (They are "write-protected".)

18) *SCSI* - *S*mall *C*omputer *S*ystems *I*nterface [or "scuzzy"]. A standard for computers which defines how data are trnsferred to and from a computer, usually to a hard drive ("fixed disk").

19) *UPS* - *U*ninterruptable *P*ower *S*upply (*not* United Parcel Service - unless you place a lot of catalog/mail orders!). Hardware that provides electricity to your computer if the normal source of electricity is stopped. Or software that can restore the machine to a previous state in the event of a power outage or computer freeze-up.

(Do you have other acronyms you want to share. Write a column about them!)

ANOTHER PCjr SUPPLIER?

Metro PCjr Journal's February '90 "Supplier of the Month" was *JAM MICRO*. They indicated they aren't yet familiar with this new PCjr supplier [neither am I]. Their address is:

JAM MICRO, P.O. Box 4655,
Lafayette, IN 47903
(317) 474-9300

[JAM MICRO bills themselves as "Your IBM PCjr Specialists". I hope that's true as it is always nice to see more businesses out there supporting PCjrs.]

PC-WRITE NOW AVAILABLE

We have just received our club copies of Quicksoft's latest program, *PC-WRITE LITE.* It is a simplified version of the very popular word processing program *PC-WRITE.*

PC-Write Lite is targetted at users with one disk drive (it only needs 150K to 340K of diskette space) or limited memory (it needs 384K of memory with spell checker or 256K without the spell checker).

It should have a quicker learning curve as it has less "bells & whistles". That does not mean, however, that PC-Write has been stripped down to bare bones. PC-Write Lite has lots of good features. And some are improvements on PC-Write.

Shareware copies of PC-Write Lite are now availble in our Disk Library.

Please note [sad to say]: Quick soft has also announced a substantial price increase. The cost to be a registered user of Quicksoft products has gone up $20 to $30, as of April 2, 1990.

Time for our

Swap Meet

MAY SWAP MEET ISSUES
(MORAL & OTHERWISE)
A TOPIC FOR THE APRIL MEETING

One of the issues which will be discussed at our next club meeting is the topic of software copyright protection. We would like to air this issue before the swap meet in May so that we all have a good understanding of what can be swapped and what can be sold.

Here are some of the possible ("impossible"?) questions to discuss:

* Can you give away or sell the commercial software program that you have purchased? (The understanding with most software companies is that you don't actually own their software. They are only leasing it to you for use on one specific machine - that is, it is non-transferable to another computer.)

* Can software copyright principles be interpreted more loosely? (Compare software to xeroxing printed matter. Or contrast it with owning or borrowing a book from the public library.)

* How closely do we, as a club, want to adhere to the letter-of-the-law with regard to software ownership "protection"?

I'm sure we can generate a lively discussion. And, while I don't think this issue can ever be "resolved", I am hopeful the club can come to some consensus with which we all can live.

As always - Be there or be square!

APRIL is a month to celebrate! No matter what your religious faith, April is the month for YOU! There is Palm Sunday and Good Friday, Passover and Easter. . .and Spring Cleaning at the Junior Club! Be sure to attend the service of your choice.
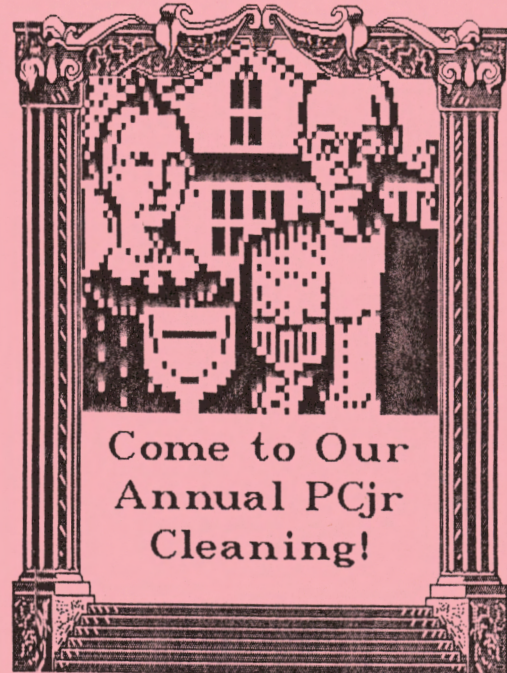
A PERFECT GIFT

R

I formatted my Writing Assistant disk.
My drive squeals.
WordPerfect just won't run.
Isn't there a program that will help me
    with my taxes?
Everything was going fine and then it
    just quit.
My printer won't print italics.
My printer prints, but all on one line!
I pay 8.95 for my printer ribbons
What is Zip and Zap?
With DIP, DEF, DIR, DEL and DIM, I
    feel DUM about DOS. . .MODEM.
All I get is "Bad Command."
All I get is "Abort, Retry or Ignore."
Just where IS Carmen Sandiego?
Why won't DEBUG get rid of Viruses?
I got a GREAT deal on LOTUS!   Only
    $300!
Doggone, it just won't run!

If any of the above concerns apply to
you, join your local PCjr Club! If there
is no club near you, subscribe to the JR
NEWSLETTER and the newsletter of one
of the many Junior Clubs.

Come to Our Annual PCjr Cleaning!

Many thanks to Dick Page for making these graphics. . .on his JUNIOR!!

EUGENE PCjr CLUB

PCjrLIVES!

FIRST CLASS MAIL