

The Orphan Peanut

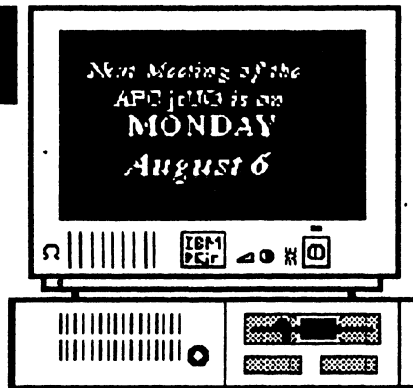
The Chronicle of the Atlanta PCjr Users Group

The New PS/1- Is It a PS/2 jr?

Some Thoughts About The New IBM PS/1
by David Blagg, President, APCjrUG

IBM announced the new PS/1 Computer on June 26th. The news releases were barely in the hands of the press when the comparisons with the PCjr began. Some folks called the little orphan "ill-conceived," while others simply reported that the PCjr was once IBM's "much ridiculed and unsuccessful attempt to crack the home market in the mid-1980s."

Ok. Here are some facts. The new PS/1 looks a lot like a PS/2 Model 25, at least in its picture. The box is crisp and clean with a full 101 key keyboard and a two button mouse in front of it. On top, take your choice: black and white is standard, but there is a VGA color display available. One 3-1/2 inch drive is standard, but others can be added (and one could be a 5-1/4 inch 360K or 1.2M). The processor is an 80286 running at 10 MHz; the basic memory is 512K, but that can go to a megabyte with the optional 30M hard drive. Other standard goodies include a built in clock and a 2400 bps modem. Software includes DOS 4.01, Microsoft Works 2.0, BASIC, and more. IBM will even have a special PS/1 Users' Club available through the optional Prodigy Service. There's more, much more. But you get the idea, and you can get a look at the machine at your IBM dealer's (including Sears)



sometime this fall, probably around September.

I almost forgot to mention a couple other things. IBM says the PS/1 is powerful enough to do real work from the office, but easy enough for the whole family to use at home. The basic
(Continued on Page 3)

Inside The PEANUT'S SHELL

PS/1 - a PS/2jr? 2
A> DIR4
Practical Telecom -
municatons, Pt 2 ... 5
Goober Peas 10





Volume 3, Number 2
August, 1990

The Orphan Peanut

HOW TO GET TO THE MEETINGS

OFFICERS 1989-1990

President

David Blagg
928-0695

Vice-President:

Beth Geiger
*872-0242

Secretary:

Carol Burns
396-5675

Treasurer:

Hunter Medney
263-6815

Disk Librarian:

Leonard Brown
822-0113

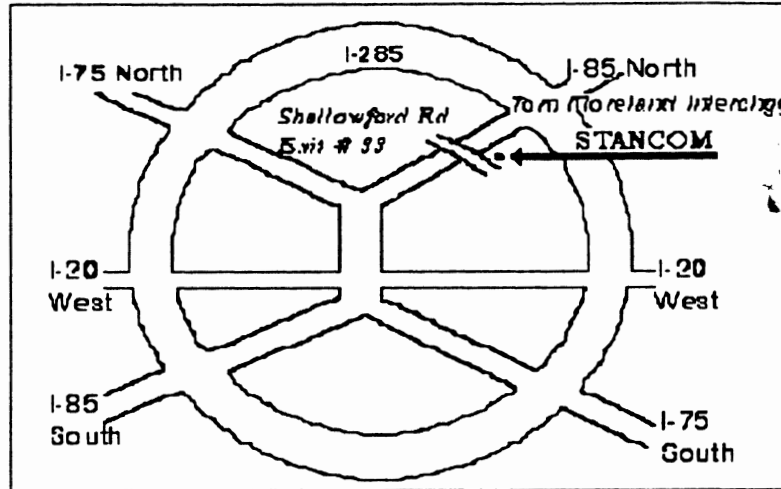
Sys Op:

Terry Markert
664-5056

Newsletter Editor:

David Wilson
*255-2731

*Designates Membership
Committee Contact
Person



If you're outside the Perimeter (I-285):

Just follow I-285 around Atlanta until you reach the Tom Moreland Interchange (I-285 and I-85 North). Go South on I-85 toward Atlanta until you reach Exit 33, Shallowford Road. Exit onto Shallowford Road and turn left to cross over I-85. Immediately past the traffic signal on the East side of the overpass you will see a building on the left with STANCOM in large letters on the front of it.

If you're inside the Perimeter (I-285):

Get on I-85 heading North from the city. Watch for the Shallowford Road exit, Number 33, and leave the Interstate highway there. Turn right on Shallowford Road, get in the left lane and prepare to immediately turn left into the STANCOM parking lot.



PS/2 - de ja vu All Over Again?

(Continued from Page 1)

machine will list for \$999, while the expanded model will cost about \$1999. And some observers opine that the "clones" already out there could produce some very interesting comparisons with the PS/1 based upon price and performance. We'll see.

In the meantime, all the excitement and mention of the PCjr drove me to my history file. There I have assembled a few copies of *PCjr WORLD*, which was part of

summarize the letters he received in response to the question, "Why did you go out over Christmas and buy a PCjr?" (Do you remember that sale?) Here is what he found: (1) A lot of folks used the PCjr at home to do the same things they did at work; (2) Those same folks used the PCjr at home to have fun, especially with *Flight Simulator* and *King's Quest*; And (3), most folks enjoyed the idea of getting 90 percent



PC WORLD Magazine for a few short months. Dedicated to features about the PCjr, it never really got off the ground before Big Blue lost interest. I also have some ads for the PCjr. One shows a stack of software for the standard PC which would also run on the PCjr. The copy claims that with all these programs you can fly through a *Lotus 1-2-3* spreadsheet, or fly through the air around Chicago with Microsoft *Flight Simulator*. And you could do this for less than \$1000, not including a monitor. Yes, indeed. Does it sound familiar?

But one of my favorites from the history file is an article that Bill Machrone did in *PC Magazine* (*PCjr Revisited*, June 11, 1985). He announced that "the day of new hardware and software specifically for the Junior is over." He went on to

of the PC's function at very nearly half the price.

Well. We all know what happened. The software that used to run still does. And as expertise about the Junior began to spread (for example, memory expansion and software patches), more software was added to the list of what would run. New hardware products for the Junior are still announced from time to time. New software specifically for the Junior is not, but the programmers know the Junior is still out there.

And as for being a bargain, the PCjr is still one of the best computing values around. In fact, I'm going to watch the PS/1 developments for a while. Maybe history will repeat.



Volume 3, Number 2
August, 1990

The Orphan Peanut

A > DIR

by David Blagg,
President, APCjrUG

One of the more challenging parts of the president's role in a computer user group is to develop the agenda for meetings.

For the APCjrUG there are actually two meetings each month. The officers get together before each regular meeting and discuss the ongoing business affairs of the group. There is an agenda for that meeting. There is also an agenda for the regular member meeting, which follows.

Without a doubt the toughest item for the agenda every month is the main discussion topic or guest speaker. There are dozens of possible topics, but which few of these can we address in a year? If a speaker is available, what arrangements must be made and how far in advance? And, of course, we want to please the membership, so what do you want to hear about? Those who attend the meetings are always asked to offer suggestions. One of those suggestions resulted in this month's topic.

More to the point, our Sysop, Terry Markert, gives us a presentation of the JrWorkshop BBS about once each year. But Terry rarely has time during his presentation to get into much detail about the file compression programs which are in common use on Bulletin Board Systems. By popular suggestion, he will present the use of the PKZIP and PKUNZIP programs at the meeting.

This is your chance to follow a file "from start to finish" in the ZIP file compression format. Terry will demonstrate how to use PKUNZIP to decompress a ZIP file (usually one downloaded from a BBS). His demo will include many of the more useful options available. He will also show us how to use PKZIP to prepare a file to be uploaded to a BBS or simply stored efficiently.

There's more. Many of us do not use the ZIP programs often enough to develop much expertise. Each use requires a review of the basics. However, there are programs available which present the user with a simple menu of ZIP options. Our presentation will include a look at some of these programs (which, we note, are available in our user group library). Shucks--some of us use these programs just because it's easier! In any event, Co-Sysop (and *Orphan Peanut* Editor) David Wilson collects these "front end menu shell" programs. And he has promised to share his expertise as to which one is likely to work best with one PCjr configuration or another.

So don't let those "dog days" of August keep you away. Come see what happens when you stroke a ZIP file. See you there!

President

Need Hardware?

**APCjrUG member Jerry
Hamby (941-4058) may
be able to help**

Practical Telecommunications

(Second of Two Parts) readable.



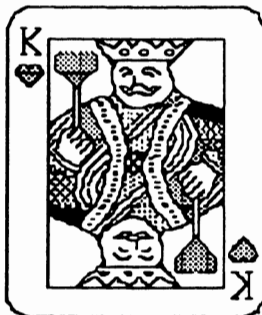
Telecommunication Hints

Do you have a modem installed and connected to the phone line? Do you have communications software? Have you tried calling an electronic Bulletin Board System (BBS)? Did you have any problems?

Last month, we covered installing a modem and software for electronic communications. I'll assume you've done that and made your first call to a BBS. If you were successful, you'll find some hints here to make your communications more efficient. If you had problems, I think you'll find the solutions you need.

When you called a BBS, did you see lots of weird symbols and Greek letters mixed randomly with normal letters, instead of readable messages? If so, you probably had the parameters set wrong in your communications program.

In many programs, including my favorites, JRTELE and PROCOMM, Alt-P brings up the parameter menu screen. The common choices are 8-N-1 for most BBSs and 7-E-1 for banks, libraries and other BBSs. The best thing to do when you start with the wrong parameters is hang up, change the parameters, and call back. If you have the PCjr internal modem, make the software change, reboot your computer, then call back. The messages from the other computer should now be



Here's another problem.

You call a BBS or other computer and see everything you type double as in "YYoouurr NNNaammee." There is a simple explanation for this. Keyboard input for communications software goes to the modem rather than directly to the screen.

The modem can be set to echo this to the screen or not. Why would you want the modem to echo to the screen? Well, if you were doing some testing before calling another computer, you might want the modem to echo what you typed so you could see it.

When you are connected to another computer, what you type is echoed back by the distant computer to your computer and displayed as it is received. If your modem is also echoing everything, you will see double. If this is the case, you need to change the Echo or Duplex setting to stop your modem from echoing. In JRTELE or PROCOMM, press the Alt-E key combination, and the duplicate letters will stop.

A related, minor problem can occur with line feeds. If everything is double spaced, you are getting an extra linefeed. If lines print right over previous lines on the screen, you are missing a line feed. The problem can be corrected in the program setup menus. To correct it during a call, use Alt-N in JRTELE or Alt-Fn 3 in PROCOMM.

Have you seen unexpected characters, symbols, or Greek letters appear while



Practical Telecommunications, Part 2 (Continued)

(From Page 5)

connected to a BBS? These may be due to noise on the telephone line. Loose phone connectors in your house can cause noise. Check them by wiggling the lines while watching the screen. A spectacular source of noise is someone picking up a receiver on the line you are using and trying to dial or talk. You will see lots of garbage on the screen until they hang up.

If you use **PROCOMM**, here is a problem you'll want to avoid. **PROCOMM** uses overlay

files which is gets from the disk. If the disk is replaced during a session, the files on the new disk will

be wiped out when **PROCOMM** tries to find its overlays. The solution is not to change the disk. If you have one disk drive, copy the **PROCOMM** program files to a ramdisk if you have enough memory. As an alternative, use a ramdisk for files which you want to download or upload if they will not fit on the disk with **PROCOMM**.

JRTELE is much more polite about disk swaps. It won't clobber a disk that replaces the program disk during a session, so you can change disks to download files to different disks. However, if you update the dialing directory or default parameters, the new data will be written to the disk in the drive. If that's not the **JRTELE** program disk, the updates won't be available the next time you start the program.

That's enough about problems. Once you have

a little success calling BBSs, you will be able to learn rapidly through practice and by reading the help files on the BBS.

Now let's see what can be done to improve the efficiency of electronic communications.

The first thing to do is to use the keyboard macro feature of your communications program. **JRTELE** lets you assign up to 25 characters to each function key. You can make Fn 1 print out your name and Fn 2 your

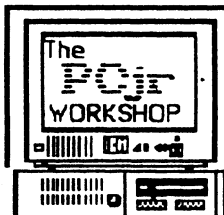
password to speed up logging onto a BBS. The Alt-Key macros in **PROCOMM** are capable of more

complex strings, but the idea is the same.

Let one key combination do the work of many that you use regularly.

Large communications programs such as **PROCOMM**, **QMODEM**, **Boyer**, and others go far beyond simple keyboard macros to increase your efficiency. They have their own programming languages, or scripts, which allow large parts of a communications session to be automated. A script can not only send desired characters, but it can wait for specific messages from the other computer before proceeding. If you are going to use a large communications system, such as CompuServe, a script file will save you lots of time, effort, and money by moving you through the layers of menus efficiently.

(More on Page 7)



The PCjr WORKSHOP

The Official BBS of
The Atlanta PCjrUG
(404) 740-1916
300/1200/2400 at N,8,1



**Practical Telecommunications, Part 2 (Continued)***(From Page 6)*

Another way to be more efficient when using a BBS, is to scroll through messages without pausing and capture the screen information to disk to read after you have hung up. When the call is long distance, this can save a lot of time and money.

JRTELE and **PROCOMM** both have this feature.

If you use **PROCOMM**, here's a way to save even more time. Write your BBS messages in your wordprocessor and save them in ASCII format before placing a call. After logging on, give the commands to start writing a message. These are typically an E to "Enter a message" followed your responses to several prompts. When you would normally begin typing the body of the message, give **PROCOMM** the Fn PgUp command to do an upload. Select ASCII from the upload protocol menu which pops up, and then enter the name of the ASCII file with the message. The message will

appear on the screen just as if you were typing it rapidly. Magic!

Even a low speed, 300 baud modem can upload messages from disk much faster than anyone can type. Unfortunately, **JRTELE** doesn't handle ASCII uploads in the same way as **PROCOMM**, but many other programs do.

An ASCII message upload is just one example of a file transfer. Let's look at file transfers in more detail since a good part of the fun of calling a BBS is to share program files.

Programs (files with .COM and .EXE extensions) cannot be sent by an ASCII transfer because they contain non-ASCII characters. Furthermore, ASCII transfers provide no error checking. If there is noise on the line some of the characters received may not be part of the original file, or some characters may be lost.

*(Continued on Page 8)***It's In The Book--****WHAT DO THEY MEAN BY THAT?***(As defined in Webster's New World Dictionary of Computer Terms)*

MOTHER BOARD: An interconnecting assembly into which printed circuit cards, boards, or modules are connected. The main circuit board of a microcomputer. Also called **System Board**.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE: Software not protected by copyright laws and is therefore free for all to reproduce and trade without fear of legal prosecution. Any computer program that is donated to the public by its creator.



Practical Telecommunications, Part 2 (Continued)

(Continued from Page 7)

For text, this is only a nuisance. In a program file, incorrect or missing characters could lock up your computer when the program is run. We need a way to transfer files, so that there are no errors when we are done. In computer language, we need a file transfer protocol that's better than ASCII.

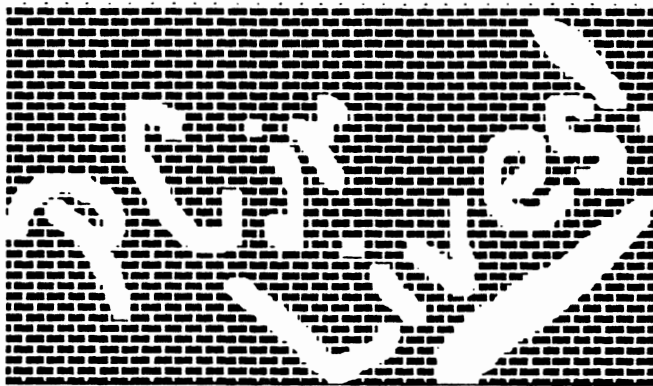
The most common of these is XMODEM. XMODEM incorporates error checking to

ensure that every byte is transferred correctly. The file is sent in 128 byte blocks, and a check made after each block is sent to ensure that it was received correctly. If there was an error, the block is discarded and resent automatically until it is correct. Even if your communications program reports a few errors during a transfer, you don't need to worry. The bad blocks will be discarded, and the file you receive will be fine.

There are a few peculiarities in file transfers by XMODEM that you should be aware of. Because 128 byte blocks are sent, the received file size will be a multiple of 128. If the original file was 400 bytes, the received file will be 512 bytes (4 x 128). The last 112 bytes will be zeros. These fill the block and have no effect on the program.

The date on the file will be the date it was

received, not the date shown on the original file. That's because the date is the "file creation date", and this copy was created on your computer.



With XMODEM, which both JRTELE and PROCOMM offer, we can be sure that all the programs we download from bulletin boards near and far will work exactly as they were written. Now, let's look at how the

program files are stored on a typical BBS, so we can go get them.

In the files section a BBS, you will see files with the familiar .COM and .EXE extensions of executable programs. You will also see files with .DOC and .TXT extensions which are ASCII text files. What may be new to you will be the files with .ARC and .ZIP extensions. These are compressed files. BBS operators store files in ARCDed or ZIPped form to conserve disk space and minimize downloading time.

Compressed files are ordinary program, data, and text files which have been operated on by a file compression utility.

(Continued on Page 9)



Practical Telecommunications, Part 2 (Continued)

(Continued from Page 8)

These programs can squeeze text files down to less than half their original size and reduce program files by 10 to 30 percent. They can also combine several files, perhaps a program and its documentation, into a single file so everything stays together. The same utility or a related one can open up the compressed file into its original files. The sizes and dates of files extracted from a compressed file are the same as the original files.

The most common compression programs are ARC.EXE from System Enhancement Associates in Wayne, NJ and PKZIP.EXE by Phil Katz of PKware in Glendale, WI. ARC both compresses and expands files, and PKZIP has a companion program, PKUNZIP, to restore the original files. These utilities work similarly, but they are not compatible.

If you download a compressed file with the .ARC extension (FILENAME.ARC), you will need ARC.EXE to uncompress it. Similarly, if the compressed file has the .ZIP extension, you will have to use PKUNZIP to open it.

Fortunately, most BBSs have the necessary compression utilities available for downloading. Look for a name like ARC51.EXE for version 5.1 of ARC.EXE or PKZ090.EXE for version 0.90 of PKZIP.EXE and PKUNZIP.EXE.

With your modem, communications program, ARC and PKZIP/PKUNZIP, you can obtain new software and communicate with people all over the

country. All it will cost you is your time and the phone charges.

A last item, Allen Ueckert, the author of *JRTELE*, is not planning any further updates to his program. As a result, he is no longer accepting registration fees. He says, use it and have fun.

MARY'S LITTLE PROBLEM

Mary had a Junior
And diskettes by the score,
But she never seemed to have enough
For all her files to store

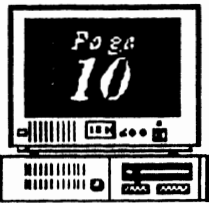
One day she thought to make some room
By DEleting surplus files;
She knew her wildcard symbol (*)
Would save her many trials.

She booted Junior from Drive A:
Placed her target in Drive B:
She type in DEL *.*
And pressed her ENTER key.

"Are you sure (Y/N)" DOS promptly asked,
And Mary typed in "Y";
Now all the files on her Boot Diskette
Are in the archives in the sky.

Mary loved her Junior -
About the keys she'd frisk.
But wasn't Mary foolish
With her little * ?

(Suggested by an article in the Palmetto
PC Chronicles and happily plagiarized from
the EUGENE, OR *PCjr Users Club*
Newsletter, Louie Levy, Editor)



GOOBER PEAS
EDITOR'S PAGE

The following

tasks are part of the operation of the APCjrUG's Member services. We need people to give a few hours a month to help relieve the burden on the Officers. Hours and tasks are flexible. You can do as much or as little as you like, but please do something if you can.

Not only will you have a sense of participation, you'll also find that you learn something in the process. This really is an opportunity to expand your own horizons as well as help us spread the load, so don't delay any longer - you'll benefit while you help.

What needs doing? We're glad you asked. Here are a few examples of the jobs we'd like some help with. (If you don't see something you'd like to do, make a suggestion.)

DISK LIBRARY: (*Len Brown*)

- (1) Reviewing Programs for PCjr compatibility, memory requirements, BASIC needed, system configuration, and what category it belong in.
- (2) Generating brief but complete descriptions of each program, with comments on special features or requirements.
- (3) Loading similar programs onto disks or packaging like programs based on memory requirements and use.

BBS: (*Terry Markert*)

- (1) Reviewing and cataloging programs to determine if they should be retained or deleted from the file areas.
- (2) Assisting with maintenance and upkeep functions as needed.

NEWSLETTER: (*David Wilson*)

- (1) Author articles on any area of interest. We are particularly interested in articles about personal experiences with your Junior. If you've had a "learning experience" with your Junior, share it with the Group in a short piece. Call for more details.
- (2) Along that same line, we'd love to present reviews of software, hardware, magazines, services, or any other facet of PCjr'ing. As long as the review isn't designed to needlessly insult or offend anyone, we'll probably publish it. We

would love to see someone lock into programming for children

and let the rest of us know how things are progressing - or how they aren't.

- (3) We need help assembling and mailing *The PEANUT*.

OTHER AREAS:

- (1) Membership - identifying, contacting, and whenever possible, recruiting new members. (*Beth Geiger*)
- (2) Activities - we need people to select and organize Group activities, such as meeting topics and demonstrations. Just a suggestion or two would be appreciated. (*David Blagg*)
- (3) Publicity - Help spread the word of who we are and what we do. (*David Blagg*)
- (4) Assistant Secretary - someone who can take notes of what happens at meetings and write up the minutes for inclusion in *The PEANUT*. (*Carol Burns*)

The Atlanta PCjr Users Group's

BEGINNERS KIT

is now available to members
for the astonishingly low price of

 **\$10.00** 

(or to nonmembers for only \$15)
Consisting of printed articles and
two disks jammed with information
that will help you make the most

of your PCjr.

CALL 255-2731 NOW!

The Orphan Peanut

Volume 3, Number 2
August, 1990



APCjrUG DISK LIBRARY

Please Send your orders to:

Leonard Brown, 2139 Crystal Lake Drive, Lawrenceville, GA 30244

Members cost: \$2.00 a disk (\$5.00 for custom Disk); Nonmembers \$5.00 each (No Custom)

LIBRARIAN'S CHOICE: Disk of the Month

Call Len Brown for Disk Selection

The Atlanta PCjr Users Group

DISK LIBRARY ORDER FORM

NUMBER	DISK NAME	PRICE

Blank Disks - (5 disks: \$3.00; 10 disks: \$5.00) Quantity _____

APCjrUG Beginners' Kit-(\$10 Members, \$15 NonMembers)

Postage & Handling (\$1.00 for each 5 disks ordered)

TOTAL 

--	--

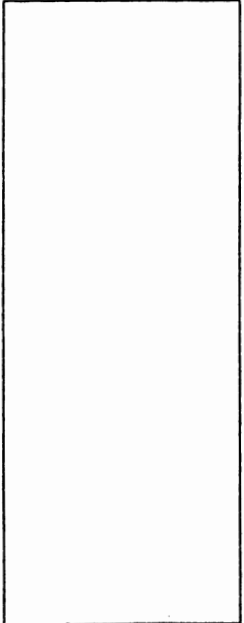
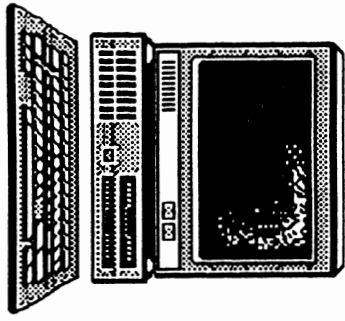
Note: Disks will be mailed to the address listed on the label on the reverse side of this form unless another address is specifically requested.

FOXTDT
loops

The Orphan Peanut

The Chronicle of the Atlanta PCjr Users Group:
6575 Amblerglades Lane
Atlanta, GA 30328

Volume 3, Number 2
August, 1990



Sign form
at home

562
843
0289