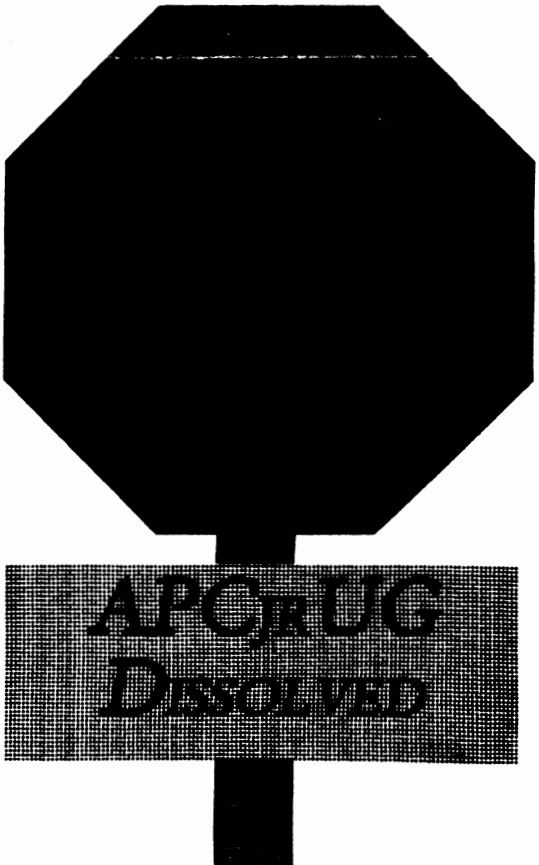
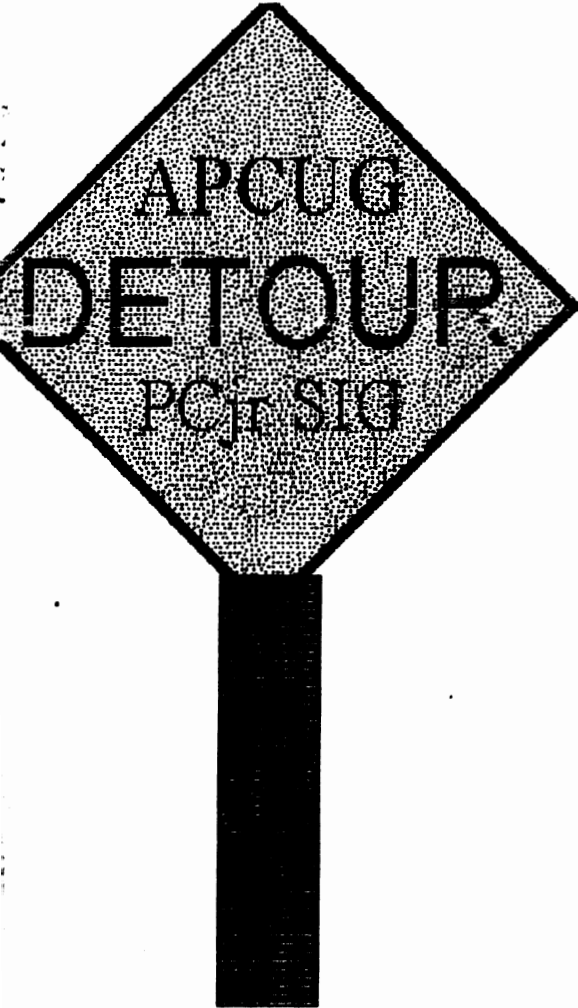
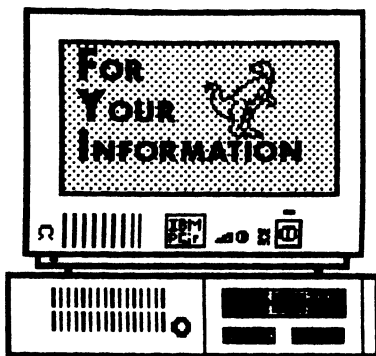


The Orphan Peanut

THE CHRONICLE OF THE ATLANTA PCjr USERS GROUP
Volume 2, Number 2 Price: \$1.50 November, 1992





The Orphan Peanut

is the official newsletter of the *Atlanta PCjr Users Group*, a distressingly non-profit organization dedicated to the health and well-being of the first Orphan and first "clone" from IBM - the "Peanut". The Group's single purpose is as stated in Article 2 of our Constitution:

"... to provide a forum for members to share information, experiences, and techniques of use that will help other members derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their PCjr."

The ORPHAN PEANUT is designed, laid out, and entirely created on a PCjr with 736 KB of RAM or 8 MHz of clock speed (but not both together), a Microsoft Mouse, a second floppy drive (3.5") from PC Enterprises, and two 20-megabyte hard disks from RIM via Paul Rau Consulting. There's other stuff as well, but we forget.

Software used includes *TEXTRA* word processing (ver. 6.0) and QEdit (2.1) text editor, Power Up! Software's *EXPRESS PUBLISHER* 2.0 desktop publishing, and sundry other programs of varying usefulness.

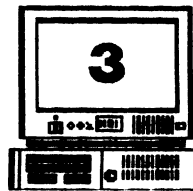
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~ OFFICERS, 1991-1992 ~



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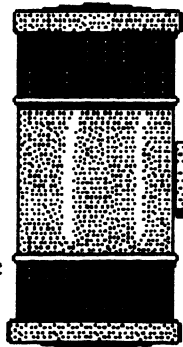


A > DIR _

by David Blagg, President, APCjrUG

As I sit down to write this column, I am feeling sad. For a small, but interesting part of my life is coming to a close. At the October meeting the APCjrUG membership voted to dissolve the group effective December 31, 1992.

My sadness, I think, comes largely from having the privilege of becoming part of the group early on. I have written here before about the kitchen table where Mr. PCjr was the guest of honor. I have written about our growth and the common experiences which held us together.



learned about computer hardware and software in general. I also gained an appreciation for compatibility issues and how they are resolved. More than anything else, I have had the opportunity to meet some of the world's finest people.

It will soon come to an end. By unanimous votes, there is an official date to dissolve, and there is an instruction that the officers dispose of our assets in a manner consistent with our constitution. We shall do that.

In the meantime, we are already taking steps to develop a closer relationship with the Atlanta PC User Group. We have always had an affiliation with APCUG, and it may now breathe new life into APCjrUG. They have completed early action required to allow us to become an active Special Interest Group (SIG). There are other details to be worked out, but at the moment they do not seem to be overwhelming.

For myself, I am thankful for the years that I have been involved with the APCjrUG. I have learned a lot about our lovable little orphan peanut. I have

Next month we will report here as to how we are winding down the group's business affairs.



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SCREEN COLORS

From the Questions & Answers section of JrNewsletter, September, 1992.

Q. I really hate the default white-on-black screen on bootup. The world in which the rest of my software lives is color, and I'd like to see my DOS screen the same. Ansi.sys is a disaster because it comes and goes and only operates on the printed characters' background and foreground, making even more of a visual mess. Can you help me?

A. Yes, if you're willing to invoke 'CLR' instead of 'CLS' to clear the screen. Actually, you could name the following program almost anything. To do this, be sure DEBUG.COM is available [Ed. Note - That is, on the floppy you are using to create the program, on a floppy in a second floppy drive, on a RAMdisk, or on your hard disk in the PATH]. Type in the data and press <ENTER> at the end of each line indicated.

[Ed. Note - Please remember that the ' ' shown at the beginning of many of the following lines is the DEBUG prompt. You don't have to enter it yourself. We're also using lower-case letters to help distinguish the zeros from the capitol O's but you can type it in using caps if you prefer to.]

Type: DEBUG
<ENTER>
-n clr.com
<ENTER>
-e 100 2b c0 le 50 b8 03 00 cd
<ENTER>
-e 108 10 b8 00 06 b9 00 00 ba
<ENTER>
-e 110 50 20 b7 ## cd 10 b4 02

```
<ENTER>  
-e 118 ba 00 00 b7 00 cd 10 b0  
<ENTER>  
-e 120 ** ba d9 03 ee cd 20  
<ENTER>  
-rcx  
<ENTER>
```

The computer returns: 'CX 0000'
Type:

```
:27  
<ENTER>  
-W  
<ENTER>
```

The computer returns: 'Writing 0027 bytes'
-q
<ENTER>

Where the ## and the ** are you are to put in the numbers of the colors you would like to have. The ## are background and foreground in that order. For example, WHITE background and BLUE foreground is 71, just like in BASIC. BLUE background and YELLOW foreground is 1E because you must use Hex numbers. Replace the ** with the color you want for the border, using zero and the color number, such as 04 for red or 03 for green, etc.

Now at the DOS prompt, whenever you type 'CLR <ENTER>' or if you have CLR in a batch file, the screen will clear to the colors you've chosen. Be sure your new CLEAR.COM file is available by having it in your PATH, root [directory], or on your active disk.



AN OPEN LETTER...

...TO OL' "TECHNOBUDDY"
BILL HUSTED AND MEMBERS
OF THE ATLANTA PCjr USERS
GROUP

WHEN ARE COMPUTERS REALLY OBSOLETE AND
WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH FORMING
AN EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP?

By: J. Wesley Mercer, Sr. Secretary and Editor of the
Atlanta PCjr User Group Novice Member of the Atlanta
PCUG

Every Sunday in the Business Section of the
Atlanta Journal and the Constitution Bill Husted
and Jack Warner write timely and helpful ar-
ticles about PC hardware and software. Both of
these gentlemen are on Access Atlanta, the
Journal-Constitution's electronic information ser-
vice to answer on-line questions subscribers may
have about their PC's. Usually their articles are
printed next to three-quarter page advertisements
by Micro Center and Computerland Express or
other mass merchandisers of computer hardware
and software.

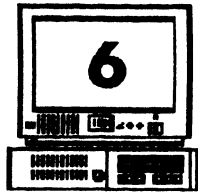
Every Sunday I rush to the paper to find these
pages. The first thing I do is read the advertise-
ments for the latest best buys offered by the
mass merchandisers. The prices are unbelievably
low as compared with what most of us paid for
our less powerful and slow PCjr's. If we are to
accept "TechnoBuddy's" message in the August
23rd Sunday paper our equipment is not only
less powerful and slow; BUT, our equipment is
in the category of "OBSCOLESCENCE."

Just reading the advertisements about the good
deals for "hot" hardware and software makes me
feel inadequate as a PC user. Now my ol'

"TechnoBuddy" who I've enjoyed reading every
unday tells the whole world in two articles in the
same paper that my PCjr 8088, 4.8MHz CPU is
"...an antique..." and is in the
"OBSCOLESCENCE" category. How will I face
my friends? Now they all know! "TechnoBuddy"
said so in his article "A brief history of the com-
puter chip--by the numbers" and especially in his
article "Frustration over old chips justified".
Jack Warner does not talk about the issue of ob-
solescence directly in his products review article
entitled "From Snoopy to gnomes, PC games for
children combine fun, learning"; but, as you
read his article it can be seen that his terms like
"mouse friendly", "unobtrusive audio", "sound
cards", and "charming graphics" seems to as-
sume the latest in equipment and software, lots
of memory, and a fair number of bells and
whistles.

Having read the advertisements reinforced by
Bill's and Jack's articles, I am left with but one
solution to solve my dilemma! I must go out,
hock the house, and buy the most powerful and
fastest CPU available with all the bells and
whistles that can be attached and driven by the
latest versions of Windows and/or OS/2, or
maybe just plain old DOS 5.0!! Now, what was
the name of that "DOS does it all and you don't
need Windows" article in a recent LPT1:Atlanta
newsletter?

I told my wife Jimmie what I had to do. She
smiled as she always does before she speaks to
me. Then she stopped, looked up from her job
of paying the bills, steadily locked in on my
eyes, and calmly asked me, "What are you going
to do with all that computer stuff you now



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AN OPEN LETTER...

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have?" She was still smiling. For a fleeting moment it looked as if she may have been baring her teeth? No, no, not my wife Jimmie! Suddenly, I realized she was still speaking to me as she supported her question with a statement. She said, "You ask weekly questions of David Wilson and you openly admit that you haven't yet learned how to fully use your hardware or software" I thought to myself, "She's been reading my BBS mail. I don't call David. I write David and a half dozen other people six or seven times a week on the BBS." Then, as I was preparing to answer Jimmie's fully documented question, which was like a blow to the solar plexus; she asked, "How much faster in seconds of saved working time are 10, 30, or 50mhz as compared to 4.8mhz?"

I had not completely formulated my answers to either of those questions when she tried to knock me to my feet by asking, "What else do you really need to be able to do with the new PC equipment you propose to buy that you couldn't accomplish with the old PCjr "stuff", given that you are retired, you certainly have a few spare minutes on your hands, and, as usual, you haven't learned to fully use what you already have?" I was exasperated! Jimmie had fed back to me some of my very own words but of course out of context. She had misquoted "Husband/Wife Privileged Information" which was spoken in confidence. She had violated the rules!

In a cleverly planned stratagem, I made no attempt to answer her questions. Instead I skillfully and emphatically told her "YOU just didn't UNDERSTAND!" Then to add masculine emphasis to my stratagem, I slinked away in a

"devil may care" gait to the comfort of my old, slow and obsolescent PCjr. I left Jimmie to suffer in the stinging rebuff I had just handed her! After all, it is a "Wife's Duty" to "Understand" and especially it was a "Wife's Duty" not to repeat "Husband/Wife Privileged Information". Jimmie had failed in her primary "Duty" of "Understanding" and "Not quoting", so how could she understand? I left her so maybe she could at least get back to her secondary duty of paying the bills on time!!

As I stared at my PCjr, I remembered that my grandsons wanted a new version of a baseball game called "Hardball III." I could not get the program to work on my PCjr computer because it required 2MB or RAM which I do not have. Hey, maybe I could get Jimmie to spring for a 1024K PCE Megaboard for \$325.00. This would give me 736K of conventional memory and 928K of extended memory.-- Why didn't someone initial set RAM at 4MB expandable to 64MB instead of just 640KB?--

I then recalled that "Hardball II" works well on my computer with just 640KB, so why do I have to buy a whole new rig just to install one new game which my grandsons will probable play for several hours and then move on to something more interesting? I remembered that "Hardball II" has features that none of my grandsons had used. They liked to play the game by simply pitching the ball, hitting and running the bases. They were not really interested in the full simulation of a league's tournament and the associated statistics. They certainly were not interested in down loading actual baseball statistics to a simulated league tournament which seemed to be one of the "Hardball III" requirements for huge amounts of memory. I began to fell some-



AN OPEN LETTER...

what better, if still inadequate, slow, old, and obsolescent just like "Technobuddy" described my 8088 PCjr's.

Further contemplation caused me to reflect upon my experiences as a school volunteer for the last three years. Just like me, most of the school faculty I had met were frustrated by the realization that most of their hardware and software was "obsolescent."

The administrators were particularly frustrated by the knowledge that many of the faculty as well as themselves were not computer literate. How did they know that? Every visiting vendor told them that they needed the latest in hardware to be "net work compatible" and to use the latest in "multimedia" hardware and software. What are "net work compatible" and "multimedia"? Most of the administrators and faculty had just learned to speak "PC."

Additional frustration was heaped upon faculty when the vendors didn't want to hear the teachers tell that they had never seen the realization of all the great things promised when the first computers were purchased, particularly since they were being told that their present computers were now obsolescent. As far as I could tell, none of the vendors made any effort to suggest that the schools take their twenty five to thirty 128K Apple and PCjr computers purchased over a period of the last seven or more years, install memory and network cards, and connect them to a purchased net work to construct a computer lab that could be used by all classes and thus all students, not just a few students now and then.

Most schools using Apple equipment could af-

ford to purchase one new Mac LC 40/80 to use as a file server. Likewise, in those schools using PCjr's the school could expand one PCjr to include 640KB of Ram and a 20 or 40MB hard drive. Then with either Apple or IBM compatible net work licensed software they could construct a computer lab to be used by the whole school on a scheduled basis.

True, such utilization of older PC equipment would not provide the latest in speed and graphics; but, the utility of the existing equipment could be raised to a level where all teachers and students could productively use the hardware to teach and to perform personal productivity skills of word processing, spread sheet, and flat field data base applications to school work. Careful planning could make the Mac LC and expanded PCjr file servers and licensed net work software useful beyond use in one computer lab. In discussions with vendor representatives, it became very clear to me that the Apple vendors had no intentions of encouraging expanded use of the Apple II series equipment used extensively in schools. We all know the "Big Blue" long ago orphaned the PCjr. It was clear that the Apple vendors' mission was to sell new Macintosh equipment; although, unlike "Big Blue", they have been taught to avoid directly making such statements!

Sitting before my old, slow, obsolescent, PCjr I somehow felt better. Then, I felt excited! I knew what I had to do. I had to learn how to maximize the use of my existing PCjr equipment before I think about committing more bucks on new equipment. I think that's what my wife Jimmie smilingly said I had to do? Not only that, I

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AN OPEN LETTER...

(From Page 7)

needed to get busy on the proposal I made to form an Educational Support Group. I hope you read my earlier article in the September Orphan Peanut in which I made that proposal. In keeping with that proposal, the Atlanta PCjr User Group needs to get busy constructing an exhibit to use at Georgia State's "Microcomputers in Education '93" conference." Teachers from all over the state will meet next March to attend this two day conference at Georgia State University in beautiful downtown Atlanta.

To construct an effective exhibit, we first must evaluate with school personnel the trade offs and utility of making maximum use of existing equipment at the schools versus the schools buying costly new equipment for limited use by a few students.

Why limited use by a few students? Simple! Annual school budgets do not permit purchasing enough computer equipment at one time to completely equip a whole school. Accordingly and with limited budgets a few pieces of PC equipment are purchases each year. Without a computer lab or a dedicated computer instructor, individual classroom teachers must find time to learn enough about how to use a single piece of new equipment to show a few students who are ahead in their school work to engage in "enrichment" activities. There is a not so funny thing about this process. Many of the students who are ahead in their school work have computers at home and know more about the use of computers than many of their teachers. Under the circumstance of limited hardware and software, the rest of the students get little or no exposure to the use of computers at home or at school. The teachers just do not have the time to individually

instruct in the use of computers.

My personal problem of PC utilization is simple compared with that of the schools, but the dilemma is similar. How can I, and should I, use my existing PC equipment to its fullest potential before purchasing the latest in the PC market? Is it cost effective to keep expanding present equipment? Jimmie thinks I should stay with the equipment I now have until my real needs vs mass merchandisers induced needs exceed my equipment's capability with cost effective expansion. Where does she come up with these crazy ideas? Doesn't she realize that I want to have the same kind of toys as the "Big Boys?"

Similarly, should the schools bring both PC equipment and teachers up to full use of existing PC equipment before embarking on another round of progressive purchases of advanced PC's over a period of the next few years?

Importantly, how can we as members of the Atlanta PCjr User Group best use our collective skills to help the school systems maximize their existing equipment to teach personal productivity skills in support of educational objectives while at the same time helping the schools systems plan for a high tech teaching environment?

Is it possible that PC hardware is not ever obsolescent, if it is still in working order and can be used to satisfy a real need such as personal productivity skills? Is it possible that mastering the use of older equipment is a logical educational stepping stone to students being taught to better understand the applied evolution of the computer technology? Is it possible that such mastery is a practical preparation for transition into a high tech instructional environment? Does un-



AN OPEN LETTER...

(From Page 8)

Understanding the stepping stones to the current applied technological advances in hardware and software help or hinder the process?

Back in the early days of my life time career in manufacturing largely as a Human Resources Manager, I was impressed by a book entitled "Manage or be Managed". That is the situation we have with PC hardware and software both in our personal lives as well in the schools that serve our children and grandchildren. To use any computer system effectively we must individually manage the personal use of our computers to develop basic personal productivity skills applicable to all computer systems. We must collectively manage the use of computers in our schools so that our children early learn basic personal productivity skills. These skills can be taught using existing older computer equipment. If we do not instill in ourselves the habit of fully utilizing existing equipment to master basic productivity skills, the mass merchandisers and manufacturers will constantly "manage" us into buying the next round of the hottest PC hardware and software with associated bells and whistles before we ever make full utility of the PC's we now have. Under the circumstances of restricted school budgets, this has the effect of limiting the numbers of students who have access to the few pieces of new computer equipment the schools can afford to buy while at the same time not making productive use of older computer equipment just because its old.

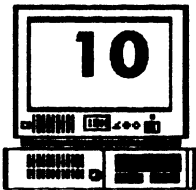
Is it fun to have the latest, the biggest, and the hottest PC equipment? You bet it is, if you are independently wealthy and have deep pockets. However, being in the situation we are in with our schools and their limited resources; and, also being faced with an overwhelming demand to

bring education in line with the country's employments skills needs, a way must be found to maximize the use of existing equipment. We must learn to manage acquisition of new equipment based upon a well developed plan of transition from older but useful PC's to a high tech multimedia PC teaching environment. Acquiring a few pieces of the latest and the fastest PC equipment on an ad hoc basis driven by budget restraints only creates again the educational nightmare we now face of too little too late.

Consider what lessons we teach our children by not fully utilizing existing equipment for all students, just a few. Consider what we teach our children when we engage in another endless round of ad hoc, conspicuous consumption of what later becomes limited use of show pieces of PC equipment until they become obsolescent?

I continue to solicit members to support the establishment of an Educational Support Group as discussed in my earlier article. We need your help to make a significant contribution to the quality of education in our communities. Your comments and questions are requested. You may reach me on the Atlanta PCjr User Group BBS (404)-418-9363 or at my home as follows:

J. Wesley and Jimmie L. Mercer, Sr.
Crabapple Community
12450 Charlotte Drive
Alpharetta, Georgia 30210-1408
(404)-442-0569



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Virus Alert

[Swiped from The Central Iowa Computer User (Des Moines) and reprinted in the Eugene, OR, PCjr Club Newsletter, then stolen by us].

BEWARE THESE VIRUSES KNOWN TO BE FLOATING AROUND THIS FALL:

George Bush Virus:
Doesn't do anything,
but you can't get rid of
it till November

Dan Quayle Virus:
Destroys your spell checker by
changing spelling of words such as "potatoe"
and "lousecy".

Bill Clinton Virus: This virus mutates from
region to region; no one is sure exactly what it
does.

Al Gore Virus: Takes up all the
environmental space in your memory.

Ted Kennedy Virus: Crashes your hard
disk, then denies it ever happened.

Warren Commission Virus: Won't let
you open your files for 75 years.

Jerry Brown Virus: Blanks your screen
and flashes an 800 number

David Dukes Virus: Makes your screen go
completely white.

Congressional Virus: Overdraws your
disk space, but always shows a positive balance.

Pat Buchanan Virus: Shifts all output to
the extreme right of the screen.

Richard Nixon [Tricky Dick] Virus:
You can delete it, but it always comes back.

H. Ross Perot Virus: A combination of
the Jerry Brown and
Tricky Dick
Viruses,
but with
fancier fonts
and faster
interleaving; keeps appearing and disappearing -
just when you think it's gone, it pops up again.

Song of the Spelling Checker

(Quoted by Penny Harper in Readers Digest and
stolen by Louie Levy for The Eugene, OR, PCjr Club
Newsletter)

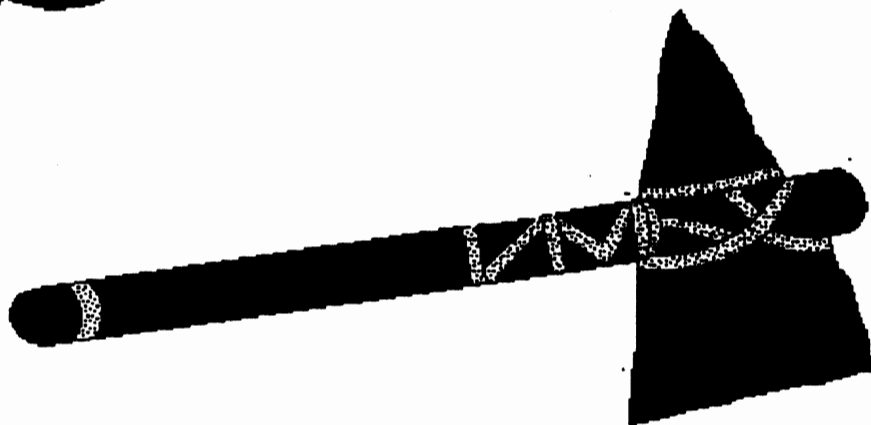
I have a spelling checker,
It came with my PC;
It plainly marks four my revue
Mistakes I cannot see.

I've run this poem threw it,
I'm sure your please too no,
Its letter perfect in its weigh
My checker tolled me sew..

For what it's worth, our tribute to a tough, courageous, group of guys who provided us with some of the most memorable moments of the year, but who came up just a little short at the end. We don't know about the rest of you, but *The Catch* by Otis Nixon, *The Homer* by Francisco Cabrera, and *The Slide* by Sid Bream struck us as the epitome of competitive sports: What It's All About.

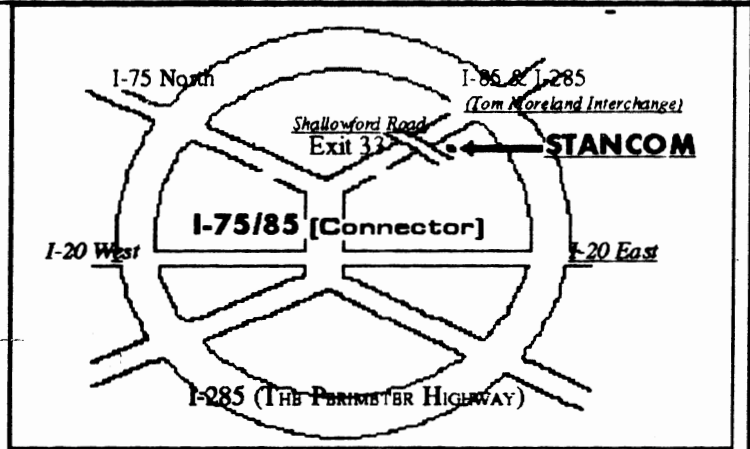
Accordingly, here's to you, and wait 'til next year!

Braves



GETTING THERE

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, (Exit 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.

The Orphan Peanut

The Chronicle of the Atlanta PCjr Users Group
12450 Charlotte Drive
Crasapple, GA 30201-1408

