

The Gopher Peanut

The Chronicle of the Atlanta PCjr Users Group



SWAP IT!

by David Wilson

The September meeting this year will be what we like to call, for lack of a better term, our annual "Swap Meet". Basically, it's a flea market or garage sale for items of interest to members of the PCjr community.



Many of us have software or expansion products for our Juniors which have been replaced by newer components or

programs, but which are still useful and workable. The Swap Meet is the chance to get these articles out of the closet or attic where they've been languishing and into the hands of someone who can use them - and to make a little money in the process.

There aren't any real rules to this clambake, other than to deal as honestly as possible with your friends and fellow APCjrUG members by not knowingly selling or trading a defective article without informing the prospective owner of the problem. Other than that, we invite you to deal as creatively and as freely as you can manage - the purpose of all this is to redistribute some things that can be of benefit to our fellow Junior users, and we don't really care if you sell, lease, trade, or otherwise bargain with others in the process. We're not asking for a percentage of the

transaction, and we don't impose any kind of fee for our part in hosting the proceedings; we do ask that you respect the premises of STANCOM, but we've never experienced any problem with that and don't anticipate any on September 10.

(Continued on Page 4)

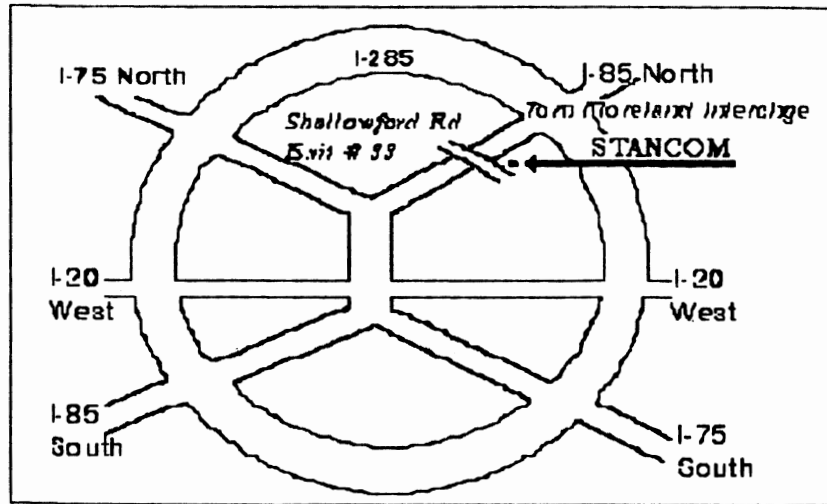
Inside the
Peanut
Shell
for September

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HOW TO GET TO THE MEETINGS



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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.



Target Diskette May Be What?

(from Jr Newsletter)

Although it should happen very infrequently, when using the **DISKCOPY** procedure to copy diskettes, you may get beeps from your PCjr and messages saying "**Unrecoverable read (or write, or verify) error**" and finally, when **DISKCOPY** stops you will read:

"Target diskette may be unusable."

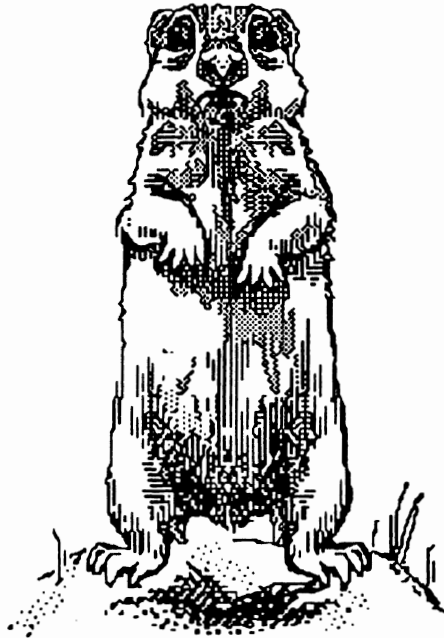
In our experience, it may also be usable. But to be sure it is better to try again with another target diskette if the messages you got during the **DISKCOPY** procedure were "write errors".

If the messages were "read errors", then simply try again with the same diskettes just in case it was a quirk -- you know, one of those unexplainable things that might not have really happened. Sometimes, the copy will be made without a hitch on the second try.

If you continue to get read errors you might have a problem on your source diskette. Or it could be your drive. Sometimes drives that need lubricating will produce read errors. So if your drive is particularly noisy (which means noisier than the usually noisy PCjr drive), you should try lubricating the drive. (This is a simple procedure which we have explained in a past issue.)

Another possible solution to read errors is to format a new diskette and then use the **COPY *.*** command to copy the files from your source diskette to the new diskette. This may work flawlessly. At the very least, it should copy most of the files from your source so you don't lose everything on that diskette.

Here's another option: Just wait until tomorrow and try again. More than one problem we've encountered has disappeared into the night.

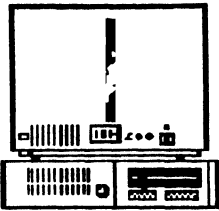


The PCjr WORKSHOP

The Official BBS of
The Atlanta PCjrUG
(404) 740-1916

300/1200/2400 at N'8,1





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SWAP IT!

(Continued From Page 1)

upgraded your Junior's memory from its original 128 KB to 512 or 640 - or even 736; you probably have a word processor, spreadsheet, and/or database program that ran perfectly on your "old" PCjr, but which you have replaced with one having many of the latest bells and whistles. Set a fair price on the old software and bring it in. Maybe you have a game that fascinated your children when they and Junior were young, but which doesn't have the old allure for them any more. Someone else's kids may start the whole cycle over again if the price is right.

How about this - you upgraded a year ago to a second floppy drive, but then discovered that you really wanted a 3-1/2 inch drive as your B: drive so you could bring work home from the office AT clone and still use your PCjr. That means you have a probably still-workable 5-1/4 inch drive sitting on a shelf gathering dust and slowly petrifying; bring it in and swap it for a couple of those games in the preceding paragraph. You get the idea.

This powwow last year was probably our best attended meeting of the year. Besides being a good opportunity to meet your fellow Junior cultists, it's a chance to pick up a bargain, and it's also the meeting when we'll start talking seriously about next year's officers. This promises to be a pivotal year in the life of the Atlanta PCjr Users Group, so come on out and give us the benefit of your thoughts.

The Orphan Peanut

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE MEMBER?

(From the April '90 Sooner Swing Club News)

Courtesy of Gloria Mrowka



Are you an active member?
The kind that would be missed.
Or are you just content that
Your name is on the list?

Do you attend the meetings
And mingle with the crowd?
Or would you rather stay at home
And complain both long and loud?

Do you give a little time
And help to make things tick?
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about the "Cliques"?

There's quite a program scheduled
That means success if done,
And it can only be accomplished
With the help of **EVERYONE**.

So come to **ALL** the meetings
And help with hand and heart.
Don't be just another member,
But take an active part.



Stuff !

by John King

At our house, when we pick up sliced roast beef, turkey, ham, potato salad, olives, pickles, and bread from the delicatessen, we call it stuff. Stuff is simply a collection of things for an informal meal.

This month's column is a collection of thoughts and things to try, computer stuff.

If you can't use the first item, keep looking. There's a broad selection.

- USING REDIRECTION -

How do you know what's on a floppy disk without putting it in your computer and running DIR? Why not keep a printed list of the files in the sleeve with the disk. SD.COM is one of many directory programs which lists files by name and date in two columns. I send the listing to my printer with this command.

SD A: > PRN

You could do this with DIR, but I prefer the two column output. I put the printer in compressed mode (17 characters per inch) and cut the printout to 5.25 inches square to fit in the sleeve with the disk.

The command with the ">" character is an example of redirection. The SD program normally sends its output to the monitor. The ">" symbol redirects the output to the printer, PRN.

Imagine this situation. You just printed out that directory listing or the documentation for a new shareware program. Suppose you want to add a few comments to the bottom of the page. Of course, you could

write them by hand on the print out, but you could also give this command.

COPY CON PRN

Now, type your comments. They will appear on the monitor, and you can edit each line before you hit the Enter key at the end of the line. When you are done, add the End Of File marker with Fn 6 or Ctrl-Z and press Enter.

Everything you typed will be printed. If you change your mind or want to start over, type Fn Break or Ctrl-C and press Enter. Nothing will be printed.

You can also redirect output from the monitor to a disk file. If you want to use your word processor to add comments to a directory listing, try this.

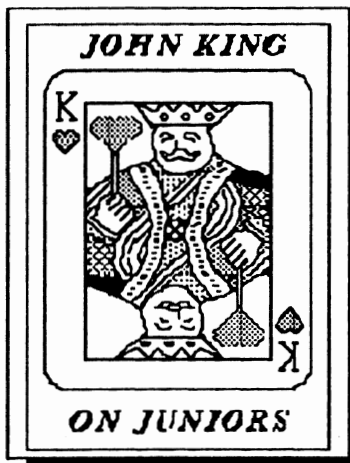
DIR A: > FILES-1

The directory listing will now be in an ASCII text file with the name FILES-1. You can edit it as you choose before printing it out.

- WORD PROCESSING -

I recently tried my first style checker, RightWriter, from RightSoft. This is not a grammar checker. It assumes you know not to write "we is writers," or "them are the facts." What RightWriter does is point out phrases and word usage which you may want to avoid in American business or technical writing. RightWriter only suggests changes. The final decision is always yours:

(Please turn to





More STUFF !

(continued from Page 5)
RightWriter constantly reminds me that I write long,

complex sentences. It has pointed out my tendency to use repetitious sentence constructions. My sentences frequently begin with a pronoun: I like, it has, you can, etc. Sometimes it flags weak or wordy constructions such as "it may appear" when "it is" might be better. I don't always make the suggested changes, but most of the suggestions are worth considering.

RightWriter won't help with poetry, but it should be useful to anyone writing business letters, reports, or term papers. RightWriter runs fine with one disk drive and 256K total RAM and is compatible with many word processor file formats. I have seen it advertised for under \$75.

- HARDWARE -

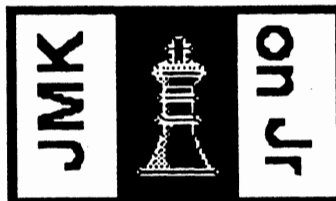
A new user recently called me with a problem. All her monitor would do was display wiggly diagonal lines. None of the control knobs had any effect. Does it sound like it's time to call the repair shop? I discovered that the monitor's signal cord was plugged in upside down. IBM keyed most of the PCjr accessory plugs to prevent this, but the display is an exception. The plug should be inserted with the D on top. Fortunately, no harm was done, and everything worked fine when the plug was inserted correctly.

Once we got the monitor working, the PCjr's disk drive began reporting errors. This was due to radio frequency interference from the monitor sitting on top of the computer. Although this sometimes works, it can be the source of "Sector not found" errors. Moving the monitor six inches away solved the problem.

- MOUSE(S)-

The Logitech serial mouse is a nice piece of hardware which works well on the PCjr. However, sometimes when installing the mouse

with the MOUSE.COM 2 command, the installation fails with the message "The mouse is not responding!" Repeating the installation command results in the same error message. One of two actions must be taken. Turn off the PCjr for at least ten



seconds before rebooting, or unplug the mouse for at least ten seconds before plugging it

back in. The mouse will then install successfully. Note, a Ctrl-Alt-Del warm reboot will not clear the problem.

One mouse that doesn't work on the PCjr is the Genius mouse. I have read that this is because the Genius needs more power from the RS-232, S port, than the PCjr can supply.

- DISKS -

Here's a simple technique to remove the gummy adhesive left behind when you remove disk labels. Run down to a drug store and buy an eight ounce can of Energine cleaning fluid. Put a little Energine on a paper towel or rag, and you can wipe the adhesive right off.

Floppy disks formatted under DOS 3.0 and above will not work properly under DOS 2.1. The file allocation table (FAT) entry was changed from twelve to sixteen bits in DOS 3.0 to allow smaller file clusters on hard disks. One consequence is that DOS 2.1 cannot read the new FAT although every version can read disks formatted under an earlier version.

The DIR command will work because only the directory is read. However, an attempt to copy a file will fail when DOS 2.1



Still More STUFF !

cannot read the DOS 3.1 FAT to find the proper sectors to copy. The only practical solution is to boot up under a version of DOS 3 and copy the files to a disk formatted under DOS 2.1.

- MEMORY -

When you turn on your PCjr, RAM memory is checked. The count is displayed in a box in the lower right hand corner of the screen below the IBM logo. If the proper total is not shown, check the installation of your memory board. Even though the memory is counted, if you have more than 128K, you must still run a memory management program before DOS can use the additional RAM. Common memory management programs are PCJRMEM.COM from IBM, CONPCJR.EXE from Tecmar, and JRCONFIG, a shareware program.

You can use CHKDSK.COM to test whether your expansion RAM and memory management software are installed properly. Give the command CHKDSK. CHKDSK reports on the floppy disk in the

drive, then on system memory with two lines.

xxxxxx bytes total memory

xxxxxx bytes free

If you have 128K of RAM, the total memory will be $128 \times 1024 = 131073$ bytes. The total memory reported by CHKDSK should agree with the boot up screen count. If it doesn't, you need to check your memory management software.

The bytes free tells you how much memory is available for programs after DOS, memory management, ramdisks, and other configuration files are loaded. Without a ramdisk, 48-52 Kbytes are used by the system under DOS 2.1.

Finally, JRCONFIG is an excellent memory management program by Larry Newcomb. There are many options available for setting the video mode, screen color, keyboard click, size of a ramdisk, etc.. You can replace a number of other utilities in your CONFIG. SYS and AUTOEXEC. BAT files with just this one. .

And that's enough stuff for one article!

It's In The Book--

WHAT DO THEY MEAN BY THAT?

(As defined in *Webster's New World Dictionary of Computer Terms*)



STRING: A connected sequence of characters or bits treated as a single data item. PCjr is a 4-character string

SYNTAX ERROR: The breaking of a rule governing the structure of the programming language being used.

Example: Typing LUST MADONNA.DOC instead of LIST MADONNA.DOC may be accurate, but it's also a syntax error (and a Bad Command or Filename as well.)



Horizontal Help

Detailed Instructions For Fixing Horizontal Sync

by George Malko, New York, NY
(From jr Newsletter, July, 1988)

The PCjr color display horizontal sync problem so many of us have experienced is due to a simple manufacturing decision made

when IBM instructed the Japanese manufacturers of the monitor to install a volume



control. The manufacturer did this by replacing the horizontal hold, i.e., replacing a visible, easily accessible horizontal hold. Where did they put it? Inside, to the left of the picture tube's yoke. It is important to **NOTE** that before anyone does **ANYTHING** inside the monitor casing, the monitor **MUST BE UNPLUGGED** and **UNHOOKED** from the CPU. You could get electrocuted if you don't.

Six screws - three pairs of two - must be unscrewed to free the monitor casing. Two are up top, two on the bottom, and two on either side of the cord outlets at the back. The horizontal hold pot will be marked either H. Hold, or H. Freq. Using a long thin Phillips screwdriver, the pot should be turned between a 1/16th and an 1/8th of an inch left (it seems most loss of horizontal hold throws

everything off to the right.

My STRONG ADVICE is to put the cover BACK ON before testing anything.

Getting the monitor back on can seem difficult, until you realize the inside of the cover has, on either side, a slotted kind of flange. Putting the monitor face down on a towel, you clearly see that it has a shiny metal sheet, then a greenish "card" about the same size as the metal sheet, and then a larger tannish "card" or "board." Fit the cover back so this largest of "boards," the tan one, slides up into the flanges (or "guides"). Put the screws back. **ONLY THEN** test the monitor. You may have to turn that horizontal hold a little more, or try the other direction, and again ... I strongly urge that no power be restored each time until you have the cover securely back on. So what if it takes a couple of minutes longer; we're few of us technicians. We just want our PCjrs to work as well as possible.

[Editor's Note - We can't emphasize too strongly the need for the safety measures specified above. There are very large electrical charges stored in your monitor, so PLEASE BE CAREFUL!]



A > DIR

by David Blagg, President, APCjrUG

September is a transition month. By now the days are becoming noticeably shorter and generally are not quite as hot. If there are any major outdoor projects to be done, it might be well to get them



President

under way. And perhaps it is not too soon to begin thinking about "to do" items coming in the Fall.

There is an important "to do" coming up for our User Group. Our new Constitution requires the President to appoint a Nominating Committee in October. This committee is responsible for producing a slate of officers for the regular election in December. Of course, nominations are accepted from the floor at election time, but the APCjrUG has a responsibility to itself to put some effort into identifying members who are both able and willing to serve. It usually takes a little time for that search.

I mention this here -- and now -- because the meeting we designate as the

Annual Swap Meet will be September 10th.

Historically this meeting will produce our largest turnout of members and guests. It provides an opportunity to chat with folks you may not have seen for a while. I would like to suggest that your conversations include our User Group, its purpose and general progress, and who you might like to see in its various offices. Talk it up, for it is

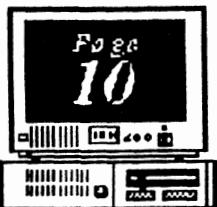
your group and you may not get a better chance to influence its overall direction.

And then tell someone the results of your deliberations. If you would like to serve on the Nominating Committee, please let me know, either in person at the Swap Meet, by phone, or by E-mail on the JrWorkshop BBS. Better yet, if you have an interest in one office or another, let me know that, too. I will relay your interest to the committee.

In the meantime, what have you got to swap?

NEED PARTS OR EXPANSION PRODUCTS?

The Metro PCjr Users Group of the Washington, D.C. area, the largest we know of anywhere, operates a User Group "Store" that is available to members of other Groups. Many used and discounted items are available at some very nice prices. Write the *Metro PCjrUG*, 11732 Cherry Grove Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20878 for prices and details; or call JrBBS at (301) 468-0984. Don't forget to mention you're a member of APCjrUG.



EASY DOS IT

I've talked to several people in the last couple of weeks who have remarked that DOS is intimidating to them. Well, this isn't exactly news - DOS has been intimidating neophyte users for years, and its arcane impenetrability is credited with creating a demand for a Graphical User Interface (such as that used by the Macintosh, DOS 4.x, and WINDOWS). These GUI's are all the rage among the manufacturers and publishers of computers and their various components, but I can't help having a few reservations about them. (I mean, if a user can't memorize the letters DEL for use in DELEting a file, how on earth is he or she going to remember that that little icon thingy represents a trash can, which means to delete a file?)

It does seem to me that the basic functions of DOS aren't really that obscure, but that !@#% ^ & * () IBM Manual certainly is! What most of us need to establish a friendly relationship with DOS is not expensive new software and an expensive new mouse to go with the expensive memory (in excess of two megabytes just to get some of them off the ground) and expensive 286/386 processor, and so forth - what we need is simply to learn some of what we already have. For most of us, this is DOS 2.1.

If you have even a minimum computer such as a "plain vanilla" single-floppy, 128KB of RAM, PCjr you need to learn certain things. If you don't know what a "system format", a wild card search, or the difference between DISKCOPY and COPY is, you're not beginning to approach full usage of that computer and you're probably blaming it on

poor Junior. It's not the little guy's fault if you don't know how to use him; it's yours, and you owe it to yourself and your computer to learn some of the things you can do all by yourselves with a little thought. There are only a handful of commands and procedures that you have to learn, and most are simple and uncomplicated. You just have to take a little while to learn them.



I happen to have a PCjr available for use that can be transported from my home to another place with a minimum of fuss, and I have an idea for a possible meeting place. I'll be happy to begin planning for a basic DOS class if I can get two things: (1) Interest from members in taking the class; and (2) interest by a few experienced members in helping me with it. If you'll call me at 255-2731, I'll be happy to talk with you about my ideas, and there won't be any commitments made by either of us for a while. I need to gauge the interest in this project before I get involved in it. If you're interested, give me a call. I'll let you know next month how it turns out.

**DON'T FORGET
THE SWAP MEET-
SEPTEMBER 10
(Not September 3)**

The Orphan Peanut

Volume 3, Number 3
September, 1990



APC jrUG 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 at (404) 322-0113 for a catalog of disks

The Atlanta PCjr Users Group

DISK LIBRARY ORDER FORM

NUMBER	DISK NAME	PRICE

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

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

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

TOTAL 

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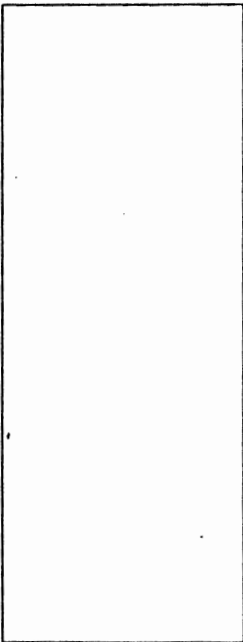
Note: Disks will be mailed to the address listed on the label on the reverse side of this form unless another address is specifically requested.

The Orphan Peanut

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

Volume 3, Number 3
September, 1990

To:



WE'RE MOVING

this month's meeting date from
September 3 to September 10

