The Orphan Peanut

The Chronicle of the Atlanta PCjr Users Group

UnZIP IT!
(How Do I Do That?)

by David Wilson

The caller was a trifle irate.

"What th' !@#$%^&*() is this ZIP stuff? I finally managed to make my modem work and got on your BBS. Then I finally managed to figure out how to get to the Files area and locate the file I've been wanting for months, ARACFARM (it has the latest techniques in tarantula husbandry, you know). Then I finally managed to figure out the mysteries of what you computer nerds call 'downloading' and got the file sent from the BBS to me. And, you know, it wasn't all that difficult after all, once I got started.

"But now, I have ARACFARM.ZIP on a disk sitting right next to my computer and I CAN'T MAKE IT WORK! Whenever I try to run it by typing its name and hitting <ENTER> I get the old DOS rejection notice: 'Bad Command or Filename' and nothing happens. A friend of mine said it was because it's squeezed or compressed into a much smaller form than it normally is and therefore has to be decompressed before it'll run properly. She said it takes a special program called PKUNZIP to do this, but she had no idea how to go about doing it on a 128-KB PCjr. I thought you said that this Junior was a real computer! HELP!"

After about ten minutes of this, he ran down enough for me

HOW TO GET TO THE MEETINGS
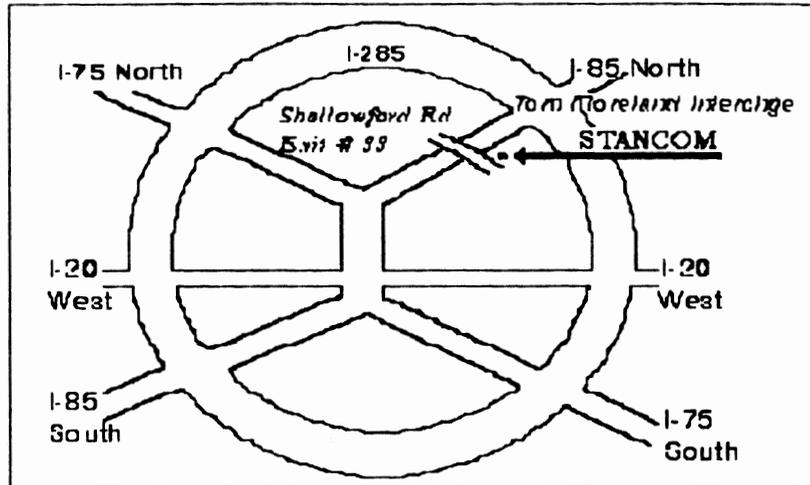
If you're outside the Perimeter (I-285):

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 buildiing on the left with STANCOM in latrge 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.

UnZIP It!

(From Page 2)

His limited RAM capacity and single-floppy configuration are, in general, merely inconvenient and not permanently disabling. What he'll have to do is substitute guile and trickery for large RAM storage and a second floppy drive, but most programs that fit on a small-memory Junior will decompress very nicely with a little patience and understanding. I'll tell you one way to do it, and you may figure out others for yourself. There are limits to what can be done, however, with a "plain vanilla" PCjr - some compressed files just won't be decompressed on your computer because they're too big. In these cases, bring or send your file to a friend with plenty of RAM and ask him or her to do the decompression for you. [Apropos of this, you can request that all orders from the APCjrUG Disk Library be in decompressed form. It may cost a little more because it takes more disks to fit on, but you can save yourself some wear and tear this way.]

(I won't try to explain what's happening as I go through this quick explanation; if you're curious about it, read through the PKUNZIP documentation, then ask a veteran any remaining questions you may have.)

First, you have to have the PKUNZIP program. This is a program written by a man named Phil Katz to decompress files compressed using the companion PKZIP program, and it's the only one we'll discuss here. There are a number of compression programs in general use around the country, but in the Atlanta area the PKZIP routine is overwhelmingly dominant. Just look for files with an extension of .ZIP.

You may download PKUNZIP from the WORKSHOP or get it in any number of other ways, but you'll notice that it comes in a file named PKZ110.EXE; this is a "self-extracting" ZIP file, and what happens when you run it by typing its filename and hitting <ENTER> is that it unfolds itself into several component files. This would be terrific, except that there's a little problem for users with a single floppy drive: there's not enough space on a 360 KB floppy for both the compressed file and those which are extracted from it. This creates a situation in which the extraction will hum and click along perfectly until the disk fills up and then just quit extracting. Naturally, the way the files are set up within the compressed file, none of the major files are included in the ones you get, so you're left with a disk full of support files and nothing to support. Frustrating, to say the least.

Fortunately, we have a method of extracting the files that will get them all to us, even if it does take time and patience to implement fully. If you know the names of the files contained within the compressed file, you can decompress them individually, move them to another disk to make room, then go back for another batch. You can continue this process until the original file is completely decompressed and voila' - you have an unabridged set of files ready to go. (The original self-extracting file remains on the disk just as it was when you started this.)

"But" (you say), "I don't know the names of the dadratted files, you blockhead!"
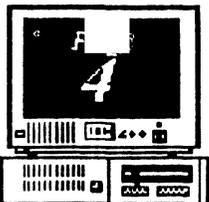
UnZIP IT!

(From Page 3)

"Ah" (I say soothingly), "but I'm providing same in that little box right there!. ——→ So there!"

Muttering darkly, you consult the box and, sure enough, there's a list of filenames. You're now just about ready to extract, like the busy little oral surgeon you never wanted to be. Here's a step-by-step procedure:

(1) Have two formatted disks available - one with PKZ110.EXE on it (disk A) and one left blank (disk B).

(2) Boot Junior and type
      MODE CO80 <ENTER>

(3) Remove your DOS disk and replace it with
disk A. Type the following:
      PKZ110 *.EXE   <ENTER>
and watch as the process of self extraction produces four files with the extension .EXE

(4) When the munching stops, copy the files to disk B; delete them from disk A after you're satisfied that they've been transferred.

(5) Repeat the process in (3) and (4), using the command:
      PKZ110 *.DOC   <ENTER>
to extract several more files. These are text files with various messages and instructions. The most important of these is MANUAL.DOC; it's the instructions for future use of any of the programs on the disk. Print it out if you have time, paper, and are planning to get into this ZIPfile thing on a regular basis. You can do a lot of stuff with these programs if you know how.

(6) Finally, do each of the remaining

CONTENTS OF PKZ110.EXE

whatsnew.110	2916
ombudsmn.asp	595
addendum.doc	21473
dedicate.doc	720
license.doc	9366
manual.doc	140355
order.doc	4701
readme.doc	800
pkunzip.exe	23528
pkzip.exe	34296
pkzipfix.exe	9224
putav.exe	4479
zip2exe.exe	22188
authveri.frm	1744
appnote.txt	25811

To Extract:

PKZ110 NAME.EXT d:

(Where d: is the drive where you want the component file to be placed)

programs on the list individually, substituting its filename for *.DOC or *.EXE above. That's it!

That's how you do it if you have only one floppy disk drive. It's a lot simpler if you have two - you just put disk A in drive A: and disk B in drive B: and issue the following command:
      PKZ110 B:
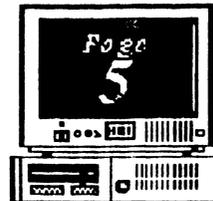
jrExpert!

What a PCjr User Must Know!
Part I

In two articles, I'll outline the minimum knowledge which you, the PCjr user, must have in order to get your computer ready to run an application such as a word processor or game. My intent is to identify the essential information and where to find it rather than to provide it all here. Although you'll have to do some outside reading, I'll keep the references very specific to minimize the amount of extraneous material.

If there are several people who share a PCjr, only one person really needs to have all this information. The others can have less knowledge and run their applications with the help of the local expert. Most offices run this way. After all, the ultimate in user friendliness is having someone do it for you.

JOHN KING

ON JUNIORS

When you have absorbed this information, you will be ready to start any program which can be run on your system. You will still have to learn how to use each new application, but you can be confident that your PCjr is set up correctly.

All right, what do you, the local expert, need to know? You have to know how to put your system together, so you can turn it on. That's HARDWARE information. You have to be able to make up a BOOT DISK, so you can operate the computer. That requires some knowledge of DOS, the Disk Operating System, and what belongs on a boot disk. You need to do various operations with floppy disks which requires some additional knowledge of DOS COMMANDS. If you have more than 128K of memory, you need to know about "MEMORY MANAGEMENT" software. All experts should know what the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS files are and how to create them. Finally, a little knowledge of RAMDISKS and other UTILITIES is very valuable.

Now, how about that. The words in upper case letters make good section headings to subdivide these two articles for the new PCjr expert. If you are already the local expert, you can use these articles to review what you know.

HARDWARE

Let's start from ground zero. Your PCjr computer system consists of several parts: monitor, keyboard, power transformer, CPU, and possibly a printer, modem, and mouse. Basic information about the system is in the owner's manual, the red Guide to Operations. Starting on page 6-5 are instructions for what plugs in where and how to test all the components.

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ou have to understand the keyboard because that's how you tell your computer what to do. Be sure to read chapter 4 in the Guide. The PCjr keyboard is different from other PCs, and the chart on page 4-9 shows the equivalent key strokes for the PC and PCjr.

There is a warning on page 1-5 of the Guide that disk drive errors may occur if your monitor is within 6 inches of your PCjr. Messages such as "Sector not found", "Seek error", and "Disk error reading..." indicate a drive problem. They occur most often if you place your monitor on top of your PCjr. If you see these, move the monitor away from the PCjr.
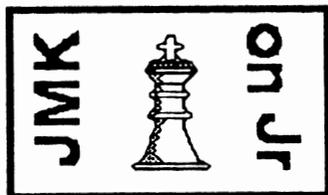
When you get everything plugged in, you will need a boot disk. The type of floppy disks which the PCjr uses are called 5.25 inch Double Density disks. They hold 360 kilobytes of data. Do not use Quad Density disks. They are for IBM PC AT computers with 1.2 megabyte drives and will not work in your PCjr. Just ask for 360K disks and you'll get what you need. Whether they are labeled single or double sided doesn't matter, they are all double sided.

BOOT DISK

You cannot use your PCjr's disk drive until DOS, the Disk Operating System, has been loaded into memory from a "boot disk." This is a disk which contains the DOS system files. The program disk which comes with DOS is a boot disk. You can use version 2.1 or higher of any IBM PC DOS or Microsoft MS DOS. Most PCjr users have IBM PC DOS 2.1, and there are very few advantages to using a later version unless you have a hard disk.

The following boot disk suggestions are for IBM PC DOS 2.1. However, they will be essentially the same for other DOS versions. The page number references are for the DOS 2.1 manual.

To prepare a boot disk, put the DOS disk in the drive and turn on the computer. You will be asked to provide the current DATE and TIME. If it isn't clear how to do this read Section 2 of the DOS manual under the DATE and TIME commands, pages 63 and 135.

Your first job is to make a copy of the DOS disk, so you can put the original away in a safe place. Don't use DISKCOPY. The DOS 2.1 disk is a 180K disk, and your copy will only hold 180K. Later version of DOS came on 360K disks, but you will be copying lots of unnecessary files with DISKCOPY.

We will use the DOS FORMAT.COM program to create a bootable disk. Issue the command FORMAT B: /S and put a new disk in the drive when you are prompted to do so. The /S switch, or option, tells DOS to format the disk and copy the system files to it. For ordinary data disks, you don't need to use the /S switch.

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(From Page 6)

The system files are COMMAND.COM and two "hidden" files. That means they are not listed by the DIR command. If you are not sure whether a disk has the hidden files, you can use the DOS CHKDSK.COM program to find out more about it. With the DOS disk in the drive, issue the command CHKDSK B:. Swap disks when prompted, and CHKDSK will report the size of the disk, number of files, and the amount of RAM memory. CHKDSK B: /V will list all the files by name including the hidden files IBMBIO.COM and IBMDOS.COM. Later, read your DOS manual under CHKDSK in Section 2 for other uses of CHKDSK.

After formatting the new boot disk, use the COPY command to copy files from the DOS disk to this disk. The command is

COPY A:filename.ext B:

where "filename.ext" is the name of the file to be copied. You don't need all the files. Here's my recommendation on which files to copy.

Definitely copy CHKDSK.COM, DISKCOPY.COM, FORMAT.COM, and MODE.COM.

Optionally copy ANSI.SYS,

COMP.COM, DISKCOMP.COM, GRAPHICS.COM, and SYS.COM.

Don't copy the ASSIGN, BASIC, BASICA, BACKUP, FIND, FDISK, MORE, PRINT, RECOVER, RESTORE, SORT, or TREE programs unless you know you will use them.

This will leave a lot of room on your boot disk for program files or utilities instead of having the space devoted to useless, extra DOS files. We'll cover several utilities which you'll want on your boot disk in Part II.

If you have files which came with a second disk drive, a mouse, or a memory expansion unit, copy these to the boot disk now. In Part II, we'll cover JRCONFIG, a fine memory management program to recognize expansion RAM above 128K.

If you are using IBM PC DOS 2.1 and have more than 128K of memory, you need to patch one of the DOS hidden files to avoid having your system lock up unexpectedly. We have the patch files and instructions from IBM in our disk library. This is not necessary with higher versions of DOS.

When you are satisfied with your boot disk, you can use DISKCOPY to make another copy of it. Since your new boot disk is a 360K disk, the copy will also be a 360K disk, and it's a lot faster to use DISKCOPY than to go through copying the files one at a time again. Also, the hidden file which you patched on the first disk will already be patched on the copy.

JMK on Jr

Election Day Is Coming

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(From Page 7)

If you have to use the FORMAT /S command to make a different boot disk, be sure to start from one of these disks. When the system files are transferred, the patched version will be on the new disk.

DOS COMMANDS

Since we are dealing with DOS at this point, let's cover the DOS commands which all PCjr users must know. Read Section 1 pages 13 through 25 in your DOS 2.1 manual for command notation and the difference between internal and external DOS commands. This will make the rest of the manual much more understandable.

All the DOS commands are listed alphabetically in Section 2 of your manual. For now, the only ones you need to learn are the eleven which follow. Read about these, especially the pages listed. I've placed the most useful form of each command in parentheses to help you get going. Of course, commands can be typed in upper or lower case.

CHKDSK (chkdsk b:, chkdsk b: /v) CLS COPY (a:filename.ext b:)
  See Section 2, p. 51 - 54 only DATE (date, date mm-dd-yy) DELete or ERASE (del filename.ext) DIR (dir /P) DISKCOPY (diskcopy a: b:) FORMAT (format b:) MODE (mode co80)
  See Section 2, p. 102 - 103 only REName (ren file1.ex1 file2.ex2) TIME (time, time hh:mm:ss)

Be sure to review legal file names and the Global filename characters, or wildcard, ? *, in Section 1 pages 17 through 22 for use with the COPY, DEL, and REN commands.
OK! You're on your way to being an expert.

(Stay tuned for Part II in next month's ORPHAN PEANUT)

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

Parameter: An arbitrary constant. A variable...that temporarily assumes the properties of a constant.
Dumping: Copying all or part of the contents of a storage unit, usually from the computer's internal storage, into an auxiliary storage unit or onto a line printer.
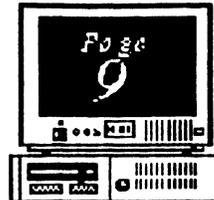
UnZIP IT!

or, if you want a particular file out of the
ZIPfile:

PKZ110 WHATEVER.FIL B:

and the process goes on automatic pilot.

There's just room to place the entire
extracted contents of PKZ110.EXE on a
system-formatted, or "self- booting", disk
if that's your pleasure. Personally, I
always preferred to have several disks
designated as "download" disks,
formatted without the hidden files but
with COMMAND.COM and
PKUNZIP.EXE on them. Then I could
just download to this disk and without a
great deal of disk shuffling I could
UNZIP to my second drive. If you have
expanded memory but no second floppy,
you can create a RAMdisk and use it in
the same way as a B: drive...just don't
forget to transfer the new files to a floppy
before you turn off the computer. Better
yet, create two RAMdisks - a small one
containing PKUNZIP.EXE (call it C:)
and a larger one with the ZIPfile copied
to it (D:). Then put a blank disk in A:,
go into C:, and command,

C>PKUNZIP -e D:WHATEVER.FIL A:

and reap the benefits of the speed you
gain by operating in a RAMdisk.

A couple of other pieces of
ZIPinformation will close out this
session. First, there's a built-in HELP
screen in both PKZIP and PKUNZIP. If
you have a working knowledge of the
programs - not expertise, just familiarity -
you can get a list of the parameters and
syntax needed to make the programs

work. Just type PKZIP
or PKUNZIP without
anything else and there it is. (If you don't
know anything about the programs, you
may be a trifle confused by the choices, but
you *COULD* read the .DOC file, right?
Nahhhhh, just a flight of fancy.) The
second tip is that you can get a list of the
component files in a ZIPfile by typing

PKUNZIP -v WHATEVER.FIL

this can help in unZIPping large
compressed files a little at a time. If you
use Buerg's marvelous LIST program, you
won't have to use up all that paper to read
the various .DOC, .TXT, READ.ME, and
other informational files included with most
shareware programs.

Now that you're well on the path to
ZIPguru status, how about taking a few of
those indignant calls for me? And don't ask
me to come admire your tarantula farm.
Arachnids are not my thing.

Beginning DOS Classes

Last month, we asked if anyone
was interested in the possibility of
setting up classes in basic DOS
usage. We weren't exactly deluged
with responses, but we did get a
couple - enough, at least, to continue
the invitation for another month or so.

If you don't already know all you
want to about DOS's capabilities, call
me at 255-2731 and we'll try to work
something out.   --David Wilson

A>DIR_

by David Blagg, President, APCjrUG

Not long ago I wrote a short column about the new IBM PS/1 computer, the one some people have dubbed the PS/2jr. I mentioned the new member of the IBM family should be available in the early Fall. Well, it's here.

I was in a local computer store looking for a book when I noticed a large stack of boxes with "PS/1" prominently displayed on them. My curiosity grabbed control of my legs and directed me toward a demo machine. I was impressed. The PS/1 is every bit as handsome as it's picture makes it appear. I could not resist the opportunity to put my hands on the keyboard. I began to explore this latest offering for the home environment from Big Blue.

The VGA color screen did a very good job of putting up four choices for the product demonstration. I grabbed the mouse and moved to one that presented general information, then clicked the button. My PCjr does not even have an add-on mouse; this one was built into the system. In almost no time at all I was looking at the first of several screens describing the PS/1 and its capabilities. My mind wandered as I looked them over. For a moment I allowed myself to think that my PCjr would do all these things, too.

Think about it. With a little extra effort a PCjr will still run most of the software that is worth having in a home environment. And our little orphan has always had a few abilities that many other machines could not match. Sure, it has its peculiarities. But these are usually not a problem as long as you accept that you have a PCjr and not a 286 or 386 machine. In fact, if money and value are NOT an issue for you, perhaps an upgrade to a faster and more versatile computer would be appropriate. After all, the technology has changed a lot
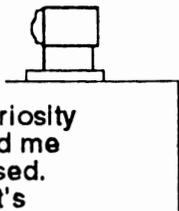
Well, the reality of the moment came back to me. My PCjr does not much resemble the 386-based machine that I use at the office. It's more like an old friend, the sort you get to know over several years. It is comfortable, and I am loyal.

In a flash I decided to exercise an APCjrUG presidential prerogative. I grabbed the PS/1 keyboard again and began a search for the ROM-based DOS 4.1 operating system. I quickly found the "C>" prompt on that featured machine in the middle of the show room. Then I changed it just a little bit. This is the prompt I left on the PS/1 for all who came behind me:

C:\ Welcome to The Store...
from the Atlanta PCjr User Group

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

PKZIP/UNZIP the file compression utilities already decompressed
and placed on a floppy disk for immediate use.

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.*

The Orphan Peanut

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