

In The Beginning

by John Farrow

Terry Bisbee was the only editor of *ARR News* that I had ever known. When he gave notice that he was leaving for a few years and that a replacement was needed, I hardly paid any attention.

Why should I? I wasn't a journalist. I hadn't been an English major in college. I had no clue about graphic design, page layout or even page numbering. I had never even printed a page with multiple columns. In fact, for something that seemed to require clear, interesting prose, I had perhaps the worst training possible: I was a lawyer.

That Fall I heard that Terry still hadn't found anyone to take over. I told him that I would be glad to give it a try if he didn't get a better offer.

Then at the Thanksgiving Day Turkey Run, he told me that I was it. *No better offers, huh?* He just laughed.

A few days later at his house, he showed me how he put the newsletter together and gave me a few tips. Then he gave me all his files on several computer disks and wished me luck. I hardly understood a word he had said.

Later when I was ready to do my first issue, I clicked on the file for the first page and nothing happened. Unsupported File Format it said. This was true of all Terry's files.

Try the program's Help button, you say? While well intended, I have never yet found any technical assistance in any computer program that was in the least bit helpful. They usually talk about checking your BIOS options for metafile specificity while maintaining a static mother-board environment, or some such gibberish. Only a nerd raised in Silicon Valley could possibly understand any of that stuff. So I called Terry. He had one question: *You have a Mac, don't you?*

No, I have an IBM-compatible PC. Why?

Because PCs can't read Mac files, and vice versa. Oh.

I was so clueless back then I didn't even know the very basic fact that the operating system of an Apple Macintosh computer (which Terry used) was completely incompatible with that of my Windows-based machine. In other words, I could use nothing that Terry had given me.

So here it was less than two weeks before I had to get my first issue in the mail, and I was already on Plan B. This is generally not a good sign.

Of course, that first issue did go out, with a lot of help from Ron Parks. Since then, I've had so much help and encouragement and positive feedback from so many of you, and that makes it all worthwhile.

I've always looked at the newsletter as the club's newsletter and never as "my" newsletter. To me, it's a reflection not only on our club, but Albuquerque and the local running community, since it's often the first thing others see. Consequently, I've wanted it to be the best that I can make it. But like most any other work in progress, goals are necessarily transient. Once achieved, it's time to raise the bar.

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