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 To the tune of *Out of the Clear Blue Sky* by Dr. J. Robinson

<p>Am G Once in a darkened office cube F E A hacker peered into his tube Am G And saw a vision of despair F G Of bugs and crashes everywhere C G Followed by chaos and woe F E Am From arithmetic overflow. Am C The hacker put a message on the Net Dm E That said "you folks had better not forget: That soon"</p> <p>Am The century is ending at last Am And when it does your systems will crash G When date fields overflow it will be long ago Am No way to be a hero G Em E7 Am And only printed paper will survive Year Zero</p> <p>The CIO of one large bank Said "customers have me to thank For noticing that EBCDIC In two-byte fields has 16 bits. We'll update all our files in place And not use up a bit more space." The hacker said "I'm not completely sold— I think I'll take my balance out in gold. Because..."</p> <p>A unix wizard said, "You know</p>	<p>We solved that problem long ago Our date and time are binary Seconds since 1970, We'll recompile in time enough Don't bother me with mainframe stuff." The hacker said "I don't think you should wait— You only have till 2038. Meanwhile..."</p> <p>A tycoon with huge market share Said "Trust me, I control software And I can say just what all fields Contain and what a function yields; So you can just sit back and wait— It's fixed in Windows 98." The hacker said "I'm sure you'll have it done In time for Christmas in 2001."</p> <p>At last the year changed, on the dot From 99 to double-ought. Just as the hacker had expected For clocks cannot be write-protected. On New Years' morning people woke to groan, "Oh dreadful day—if only we had known But now</p> <p>The century has ended at last And when it did our systems all crashed Our date fields overflow; now our programs won't go. No way to be a hero And only printed paper has survived Year Zero."</p> <p><i>Yes calendars on paper have survived... the pro- grammers and hackers have survived... VMS and Unix have survived... the beta release of Windows Zero is expected on January 1st, 1970...</i></p>
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Those fortunate people who have not encountered the Extended Binary Coded Decimal Interchange Code will want to know that "EBCDIC" is pronounced "EBB-suh-dick."

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 HyperSpace Express 19970525 from Steve Savitzky's songbook