

Notes For SLCC Zoom Meeting 3-11-2025

Hosted by Kevin

In Attendance, Kevin, Robbie, Don, Bob, Ron, Mariano, Michael, and Garrett

- **Quick recap**

- The group discussed various topics including recent Atari meetings, weather in Florida, space-related events, computer build issues, and data recovery methods. They also shared personal updates such as car purchases, skiing plans, and recent projects involving computer repairs and upgrades. Lastly, they discussed the upcoming Blood Moon eclipse, the recent Starship explosion, and the GTIA chip's preference for sine wave input on its clock.

- **Next steps**

- • Kevin: Order new car with preferred specifications, expecting 2-month wait time
- • Kevin: Continue test driving Audi and BMW models to decide on next car purchase
- • Kevin: Get quotes for new car lease options as an alternative to purchase
- • Kevin: Test drive Audi A6 model once dealership has one available
- • Garrett: Prepare and deliver presentation on "STPA for Program Management: Boon or Burden" at MIT in 2 weeks
- • Mariano65XE: Demo the VCN setup with Chimera OS and Steam games at the next meeting
- • Robbie: Get a new Dallas Chip battery with exact same model number for the 386 computer
- • Robbie: Clean the floppy disk drive heads using the head cleaner to resolve disk reading issues
- • Robbie: Test if car engine revving affects radio static on KCBS 740 AM and report findings at next meeting
- • Robbie: Try tuning to 1480 AM to check if similar static issues occur at higher frequencies
- • Robbie: Listen to KCBS on FM instead of AM as an alternative solution
- • Michael: Drive around Robbie's house area to help investigate the radio interference issue

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- **Summary**

- **Atari Meeting and Tech Updates**

- The group discusses various topics, including a recent Atari meeting at a library and restrictions on food at their gatherings. They touch on weather in Florida and recent space-related events, such as the Starship crash and lunar lander missions. Mariano shares an update on his VCN system upgrade and its gaming capabilities. Kevin mentions issues with his latest computer build, while Robbie talks about reviving a 386 computer with a hard drive problem. The conversation concludes with advice on cleaning floppy disk drive heads to improve disk reading capabilities.

- **Data Recovery and Skiing Plans**

- The group discusses methods for recovering data from potentially damaged disks, including using specialized software like IMG to read difficult sectors. They then shift to casual

conversation about skiing, with Robbie planning a trip and discussing various ski resorts. Michael mentions being close to Sierra, but states he'll be heading home to Santa Rosa the next day. Robbie expresses concern about recent safety issues in Santa Rosa schools.

- **Michael's New Tesla Car Experience**

- Michael shares that he and his wife recently purchased new cars, revealing that they both got Teslas on the same day. Michael got a Model 3, which is rear-wheel drive, while his wife got a Model Y with all-wheel drive. He mentions experiencing some negative reactions from other drivers, including receiving a thumbs down at a stoplight. Michael expresses satisfaction with his new car, showing it to the group via video, and mentions that he's still learning about its computer features.

- **Electric Vehicle vs. Traditional Car Issues**

- Michael discusses his recent switch from a Lexus to an electric vehicle, citing concerns about the Lexus's CVT transmission reliability and highway noise. He received a good trade-in value and benefited from EV credits and referral discounts, resulting in a lower monthly payment. Kevin shares that his BMW needs a new main computer unit, which costs \$5,000 to replace and reprogram. This issue, along with other minor problems, has prompted him to look for a new car. He is considering leasing either a BMW or an Audi for his next vehicle.

- **Amiga 4000 Repair and Floppy Maintenance**

- Kevin discusses his latest project, recapping an Amiga 4000 motherboard with leaking capacitors and battery damage. He describes the cleaning and repair process, including using vinegar and a recap kit from amigakit.com. Robbie then brings up issues with his 386 computer's CMOS battery, leading to a discussion about battery types and potential problems with old or new-old-stock batteries. The conversation shifts to floppy drive maintenance, with Kevin recommending a head cleaner for Robbie's disk reading issues. Finally, Garrett joins the meeting and shares that he will be giving a talk at MIT in two weeks about STPA for Program Management.

- **Blood Moon Eclipse and Starship Explosion**

- The group discusses the upcoming Blood Moon eclipse and Michael's observation of an orange-colored moon the previous night. Garrett explains that the orange color is likely due to dust in the atmosphere and shares a physics demonstration he used to do to illustrate this effect. The conversation then shifts to the recent Starship explosion, with members comparing it to early rocket development challenges in the 1960s. Garrett notes that SpaceX's private status limits public access to safety investigation reports, unlike NASA's approach. The group also briefly touches on Terrie's 1450 XL build project, with Michael expressing some concerns about her recent circuit changes but continuing to offer assistance.

- **GTIA Chip's Sine Wave Preference**

- Michael and Garrett discuss the GTIA chip's preference for sine wave input on its clock. Michael explains that early Atari computers like the 400 and 800 used a sine wave oscillator, which produced better color quality than the square wave used in later models. The sine wave input helps reduce fringing effects between colors. Garrett expresses interest in how the sine wave travels through the GTIA's internal circuitry. The conversation then shifts to a discussion about radio circuits and amplifier designs, with Garrett describing a complex shortwave radio configuration he was analyzing.

- **Volvo AM Radio Signal Issues**

- In the meeting, Robbie discussed his issues with the AM radio on his old Volvo, which was experiencing static on KCBS. The team suggested checking the radio's tuning and the car's proximity to the KCBS transmitter. They also discussed the potential impact of solar inverters on radio signals. Garrett offered to help Robbie with signal finding and suggested that the problem might be related to the car's electronic ignition. The team agreed to further investigate the issue and report back next week.