

- **Notes For SLCC Zoom Meeting 5-20-2025**

- Hosted by Kevin

- In Attendance, Robbie, Don, Scott, and Bob

- **Quick recap**

- The meeting covered a range of technical topics, including computer troubleshooting, network setup, and solar power systems. Participants discussed various hardware issues, shared updates on personal projects, and exchanged information about upcoming events and technology news. The group also touched on broader subjects such as space exploration, theft of valuable car parts, and the rising costs of electrical components.

- **Next steps**

- • Bob to continue working on his solar power plant setup and potentially add more panels to improve charging time.
- • Scott to research where to sell his spare catalytic converter in Houston.
- • Kevin to decide whether to showcase Atari XL computers or ST computers at the upcoming Vintage Computer Festival.
- • Robbie to bring his Zenith portable laptop and Atari 800 to the next computer meeting for potential raffle.
- • Kevin to attend the Micro Center soft opening in Cupertino on May 28th.

- **Summary**

- **Zenith Computer Display Troubleshooting**

- Robbie discussed his Zenith portable computer, which is experiencing display issues due to a dim screen. The group attempted to troubleshoot the problem, with Scott suggesting the need for more electrons and Don mentioning settings adjustments. Robbie plans to bring the computer to the next computer meeting for further examination and potential repair.

- **Atari Raffle and Micro Center**

- Robbie discussed bringing an Atari 800 and 800XL to the next library meeting, where they might be raffled off, and asked for input on which to keep. Kevin shared news about Micro Center's upcoming store opening in Cupertino, while Robbie humorously requested a loan for his kitchen remodel, which the group playfully responded to.

- **BART Fire and Service Disruptions**

- The group discussed a major fire at the San Leandro BART station that caused significant damage to fiber and data cables, resulting in BART service disruptions south of Oakland and a temporary closure of VTA due to a bomb scare involving a shredder. The fire, which occurred under the tracks, was described as "spectacular" with melted metal dripping onto the street, and the cause remains under investigation. Robbie mentioned that some meeting attendees had stopped coming due to concerns about AI recording of "top secret meetings," though he defended the AI's note-taking capabilities as helpful for him given his difficulty with writing.

- **Shop Wi-Fi Upgrade Planning**

- The group discussed the installation of a new Ethernet cable and router in Scott's shop to improve Wi-Fi connectivity. They explored options for running the cable, including using a switch or router at the end of the line, and considered the limitations of Cat 6 cable length. Scott planned to test the setup to determine if additional repeaters or signal boosters would be needed for optimal performance.

- **Starship Launch and Excel Exhibits**

- Robbie, Scott, and Kevin discussed the launch of a starship, which is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, pending approval. They also talked about the possibility of astronauts landing on Mars in their lifetimes. Kevin mentioned planning to exhibit a line of XL computers from 600 to 1450 at a computer festival, but was unsure whether to focus on STs or XLs, due to the 40th anniversary of the ST release. Robbie confirmed that the club is an 8-bit club and jokingly encouraged Kevin to focus on XLs..

- **Technical Troubles and Project Updates**

- Robbie experienced technical difficulties with his camera and microphone during the meeting, which were eventually resolved. Don shared that he had not been working on Train Z and showed a computer model, while Bob mentioned working on a solar power plant project. The group discussed the need to select the correct microphone in the software for audio input.

- **Solar Power System Testing Update**

- Bob is testing a solar power system and has found that it charges a battery from 10% to 44% over a couple of days. He plans to buy another panel to increase charging speed and will test using a heat gun as a load to determine power capacity. Kevin suggests adding more panels in parallel as needed and notes that the system allows for flexible panel arrangement.
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- **Home Improvement and Solar Costs**
- Bob discusses his experience with home improvement projects, mentioning that he gave away his electrical supplies when he moved, which he now regrets due to the high cost of new materials. He is currently working on installing switches and lighting in his new space. The conversation then shifts to solar panels, with Kevin sharing that he recently had one replaced on his roof for \$500 under a lease agreement. Scott brings up concerns about Chinese-made inverters having potential security vulnerabilities. The group also discusses the rising cost of copper wire, with Scott noting a 65% increase in price over four years. Don and Kevin share anecdotes about the value of scrap wire, and the conversation concludes with mentions of wire theft from construction sites and parking lots.
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- **Catalytic Converter Theft Discussion**
- The group discussed the theft and sale of catalytic converters, with Scott sharing his experience of having one stolen and Don recounting a daylight theft from a colleague's car. They discussed how thieves can quickly remove converters using battery-powered tools, with Kevin mentioning a video showing the process taking about 30 seconds. Scott mentioned having multiple converters on his 1988 Mustang for California emissions compliance, and the conversation concluded with Kevin suggesting Scott contact car recycling places to sell his unused converter.
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- **Electrical Wiring and Safety Setup**
- Scott discussed his electrical wiring setup, including using triple aught wire that costs \$9 per foot, with a 500-foot spool costing \$4,500. He explained his decision to future-proof by installing a 200-amp panel with 6-gauge bare copper wire, running it in 3/4-inch conduit and EMT for safety. The group also briefly discussed table saw safety features, with Scott noting he doesn't use blade guards or anti-kickback devices when doing dados and rabbits.
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