

●Notes For SLCC Zoom Meeting 8-28-2025

●Hosted by Kevin

●In Attendance, Kevin, Robbie, Mariano, Don, Michael, Scott, Bob, and Ron

●Meeting summary

●Quick recap

●The group discussed various celestial events and weather conditions, including comet sightings and hurricane impacts on Caribbean islands, while sharing personal experiences with weather-related challenges and device restrictions. They explored technical topics around printer firmware updates, DRM limitations, and the cost implications of shipping materials for hobby projects. The conversation ended with members sharing personal anecdotes and home improvement projects, including computer upgrades and woodworking, while planning an upcoming in-person gathering at the library.

●Next steps

●Robbie: Share Bill's AI-generated podcast with the whole SLCC club/group

●Kevin: Follow up with people who requested labels on AtariAge, consider listing on eBay if no response

●Robbie: Look for comet early morning before sunrise

●Scott: Make 18-inch dolly and test fit with barrel before making remaining three dollies

●Scott: Build cutting table with integrated lightbox for wife

●Summary

● Comet Viewing and Weather Updates

●Robbie and Kevin discussed the difficulty of spotting a comet due to its low position on the horizon, with Robbie suggesting the use of binoculars. Mariano joined the conversation, sharing his positive experience at work and expressing hope for a surprise guest who did not show up for the meeting. Don mentioned staying dry despite some rain and discussed hurricane nets on AM radio, noting the organized reporting of weather conditions by participants.

● Hurricane Impact and Comet Viewing

●The group discussed the impact of a hurricane on Jamaica and Cuba, noting that these areas might face significant challenges due to power outages and limited resources. Robbie mentioned an AI-generated podcast about the Vintage Computer Festival and suggested sharing it with the

SLCC group. The conversation also touched on the visibility of a comet, with Robbie explaining that it could be seen with binoculars and certain apps, though not with the naked eye. Michael recalled a memorable comet sighting from about 20 years ago.

● Comet, Star Trek, and Weather

●The group discussed the recent comet visible in the sky, with Robbie noting it won't return for a thousand years. They shared memories of watching Star Trek, including Michael's childhood experience of receiving promotional materials from the show. Bob joined the conversation to mention he was still cutting brush to prepare for rain, while Scott mentioned the recent lifting of a burn ban due to expected high winds. Don commented on the unusual weather, noting that the air conditioning had not turned on despite the thermostat being set to 75 degrees, suggesting an upcoming cold front.

● Weather, Fires, and Market Trends

●The group discussed weather conditions, with Michael noting they had reached 80 degrees after a rainy week, while Scott mentioned that only two of their local counties had lifted burn bans despite recent rain. They discussed California's relatively calm fire season compared to other western states, with Kevin explaining that California's winter droughts lead to tall grass growth before it dies. The conversation concluded with a discussion about gold prices exceeding \$4,000 per ounce and stock market indices approaching new records, with Kevin expressing concern about an inevitable market correction while others remained optimistic about future growth.

● Subscription Magazine Discussion

●The group discussed subscription magazines, with Mariano mentioning he had been busy baking AMI for Amazon and was now working on his subscription magazine project. They discussed the subscription model, where subscribers receive the next issue rather than back issues, and Kevin mentioned that the magazine's editor had mentioned this limitation in recent issues. The conversation concluded with a nostalgic discussion about older computer magazines and their advertising formats, including the postcard system used by Byte Magazine.

● HP Printer Firmware Update Issues

●Mariano encountered issues with his HP printer after a firmware update, which blocked access to settings and rejected non-HP cartridges. Despite attempts to downgrade the firmware or modify the executable file, the update could not be reversed. Mariano plans to seek a refund from the manufacturer, while Kevin advised against updating printer firmware to avoid similar problems.

● DRM: Limiting Repair and Ownership

●Scott shared his experience with DRM on his refrigerator's water filter, explaining how he had to use a dummy filter to bypass the system and continue using an expired filter. The group discussed how DRM and restrictions on repair and replacement parts are becoming increasingly common in various devices, from printers to refrigerators, and how this limits ownership and repair options.

● WD-40 Uses and Atari Stories

●The group discussed various uses of WD-40, including as a cutting fluid, to remove duct tape residue, and to clean Atari consoles. Robbie mentioned observing a celestial event but noted

difficulty in viewing it due to elevation requirements. Michael shared his experience of printing Atari manuals through a service called Spin Print, which produced high-quality, spiral-bound copies at about \$10 each.

● Atari Custom Printing Challenges

●Kevin discussed challenges in getting custom printed materials made, including issues with the word "Atari" being trademarked and difficulties with a local print shop. Michael shared his experience of successfully printing Atari-related materials at Office Depot without any issues. Kevin mentioned ordering custom metalized plastic labels for various Atari models, which cost approximately \$18 each, and decided to list them on eBay after not receiving responses on AtariAge.

● Progress and Parts Testing Update

●Lenore is making progress with her boards and has been updating a private discussion group about her work. Michael sent her PAL Antic GTIA and Crystal parts to test on a PAL system. The group discussed challenges in obtaining parts from Brad, noting that shipping costs have become a significant issue when ordering small quantities.

● Shipping Costs and Value Insights

●The group discussed the cost and value of shipping materials, with Kevin noting that items around 4 pounds offer good value for weight. Ronald shared his experience with his mother's relentless junk mail despite her ceasing contributions, while the group also discussed Uline's expensive but high-quality shipping supplies and their reliable delivery service. Bob mentioned purchasing roll-around racks from Costco, which Michael confirmed were also available from Uline.

● Personal Stories and Photo Sharing

●The group discussed various personal stories and experiences, including Scott's repair of an old extension cord and Mariano's progress with printing for the Altair project. They also shared and admired old photographs, with Michael and Mariano showing pictures of themselves as children, and Bob sharing a family photo. The conversation included lighthearted comments about the quality of the photos and memories from early childhood.

● Personal Anecdotes and Tech Updates

●The group discussed various personal anecdotes and experiences, including Mariano's childhood memory of drinking rainwater and Kevin's story about inserting hairpins into electrical outlets. Bob shared updates about his computer upgrade project, mentioning that he had successfully installed a 1200XL system and was working on electrical wiring in his barn, though he faced challenges due to the building's construction. The conversation concluded with Scott mentioning his activities, including melting wax for beekeeping and preparing for Halloween.

● DIY Projects and Tech Discussion

●Scott discussed his home improvement projects, including building plant stands from scrap wood and creating a cutting table with LED lighting for his wife. He explained how he acquires free wood from Home Depot and Lowe's by strategically adding it to his shopping cart. The group also talked about AMD's early microprocessor development and the high profit margins achieved in the military

market. The conversation ended with plans for an in-person meeting at the library the following week.