- **Notes For SLCC-Atari Zoom Meeting 2/17/26**
- Hosted by Kevin
- In Attendance, Kevin, Robbie, Don, Scott, Harry, and Bob
- **Meeting summary**
- **Quick recap**
- The meeting focused on troubleshooting and discussing various vintage computer issues among the participants. Scott reported on his efforts to diagnose RAM problems in his 800XL, which showed inconsistent results with the XRAM02 memory test. Harry shared his experience with a Super Archiver drive and its capabilities for handling copy-protected disks. The group also discussed the challenges of maintaining and repairing older technology, including issues with power supplies and socket connections. Kevin mentioned finding a set of Atari ST accessories at a recent computer show. Throughout the meeting, participants exchanged tips on troubleshooting techniques, such as using Deoxit to clean sockets and testing memory with specialized tools. The conversation concluded with participants expressing appreciation for the shared knowledge and agreeing to continue the discussion in the next meeting.
- **Next steps**
- [Harry: Look through garage PCs for 486 or 386 motherboards and, if found, consider providing one to Kevin for Robbie's computer.](#)
- [Bob: Look for 386 system/boards and, if easily found, send to Kevin for Robbie's computer.](#)
- [Scott: Continue troubleshooting the 800XL with RAM issues, including reseating chips, checking for bent pins, and running further RAM tests as discussed.](#)
- [Harry: Test the dead 1050 drive for power supply issues (e.g., check for 5V on chips, inspect capacitors, and test with cold spray/thermal shock as suggested).](#)
- [Robbie: Bring 1050 drive to next meeting for group assistance with reassembling the screw/nut issue.](#)
- [Scott: Run XRAM02 RAM test from DOS (not joystick-controlled) on the problematic 800XL to further diagnose RAM issues.](#)
- [Harry: Send the XRAM02 RAM test file to Scott (already started, but follow up to ensure Scott receives and can use it).](#)
- [Kevin: Continue to monitor for suitable 386/486 boards for Robbie and coordinate with Harry/Bob if boards are located.](#)
- **Summary**
- **Regional Weather and Beekeeping Updates**
- Don and Kevin discussed the weather in Florida and California, noting the recent rain and snow in their respective areas. Robbie shared information about an avalanche incident in Tahoe that trapped several people. Scott provided updates on his beekeeping activities and mechanical repairs, including fixing a tiller and addressing issues with a tractor's carburetor and oil system.
- **Atari 65XE Memory Testing Discussion**
- Scott and Kevin discussed troubleshooting a memory issue on a 65XE system. They identified that the first 64K of RAM passed the test, but the second bank was not tested. Kevin suggested downloading diagnostic ROMs from Atari Mania and using a Pico cart to test the memory further. The conversation briefly shifted to Don and Harry experimenting with a whiteboard application before returning to the memory testing discussion.
- **Sparta DOS X Memory Troubleshooting**
- The group discussed troubleshooting memory issues on a Sparta DOS X system, with Scott and Kevin examining potential problems with high memory and bad memory chips. Harry suggested using an extended memory tester program, which he would share via chat, and mentioned that it could identify failing memory chips and test up to 512K of RAM. The team agreed to try running the XRAM02 program from a Pico card or SD card, though there were some technical difficulties accessing the correct file link.
- **COCO2 Troubleshooting and History**
- Kevin described troubleshooting a Tandy Color Computer 2 (COCO2) issue where the screen wouldn't work until he cleaned and adjusted a loose connection on the RF can using Deoxit. Harry shared a link to the Wayback Machine containing an XRAM0220.XEX file for the COCO2, which Kevin found helpful. The group discussed the history and specifications of the COCO2, with Scott mentioning its pre-microprocessor design and basic programming capabilities. Harry also briefly showcased an EXO system with various games, including Disney-related titles and Scum.
- **Classic PC Game Collection**
- Harry discussed a large collection of classic PC games, including a library of DOS and Windows 9X games, which occupies around 3-4 terabytes of storage. Don mentioned he only downloaded the games he wanted, while the collection itself is nearly complete with only minor updates planned. The group also discussed hardware issues, with Kevin seeking a 386 or 486 motherboard for Robbie, who needs it for an old 386 system with a corrupted chipset. Harry offered to check his garage for spare 486 motherboards to donate to Kevin.
- **Faulty 1050 Device Thermal Testing**
- Harry discussed a non-functioning 1050 device that shorts even without power, despite thorough testing of SIO cables, chips, and board components. Kevin suggested using thermal testing methods, including both cold spray (using compressed air) and heat testing, to locate the faulty area on the board. Don recommended checking the power supply pins for 5 volts to determine if the issue is related to power circuitry.
- **Capacitors, Washers, and Vintage Tech**
- The group discussed technical issues with capacitors and washers in computer components, with Kevin providing advice on capacitor replacement. Robbie mentioned bringing his 1050 to the next meeting for help with a screw/nut issue. Kevin shared insights from a recent vintage computer show, noting that while many exhibits were unattended, the FujiNet developer was present and discussed ongoing projects including RS232 and future support for Atari 2600 and Intellivision platforms.
- **Repo Sprawl and Vintage Tech**

- Kevin discussed the issue of repo sprawl, where GitHub repositories are duplicated and not consolidated, which Harry referred to as "Repo Sprawl." Kevin also shared his acquisition of a set of Atari ST accessories, including a modem, XP80, and laser printer, for a relatively low price. Additionally, they mentioned a Commodore 64 cartridge called the "Desk Dead test cartridge" and a new version called the "DES test," which helps diagnose issues with the computer.
- **Power Testing and Solar Updates**
- The group discussed various topics including a Power 64 testing device, solar panels, and a 386 computer. Kevin mentioned buying a testing device for $10 and discussed improvements to Super Salt test units that fit inside 850 cases. Bob shared that he was getting 90 watts of power from his solar panels at 5 PM and 130 watts at noon, with the battery lasting 3 hours when all lights are turned on. Kevin requested that Bob look for his 386 computer if it was easily accessible.
- **RAM Issues on 800XL Computers**
- Scott reported issues with two 800XL computers, finding that one had flaky RAM causing bit flips in a consistent pattern, while the other required multiple attempts to boot and showed no extended RAM detection. Kevin suggested using a more thorough RAM testing tool and recommended de-oxiting the sockets, while also offering extra memory chips for Robbie's needs.
- **Vintage Technology Maintenance Challenges**
- The group discussed issues with vintage technology, particularly focusing on mechanical and electrical problems with 1050 drives. Harry shared his experience replacing a felt piece on his drive, which eliminated a humming noise and improved its performance. They also discussed how dust and humidity could affect the functionality of older equipment.
- **Computer Upgrade and Copying Techniques**
- Harry discussed his experience with a specialized disk copying program that can read and copy protected tracks, revealing details about its advanced features and capabilities. The group also addressed issues with a write-protected thumb drive, concluding that the device was likely faulty and should be replaced. Scott reported on testing an XRAM upgrade for a computer, noting inconsistent results in memory banking and potential issues with the PIA chip or socket connections. The conversation ended with a brief discussion about vintage computer upgrades and collections.