

Notes For SLCC Zoom Meeting 4-14-2026

Hosted by Kevin

In Attendance, Kevin, Robbie, Bob, Scott, and Ron

Overview

This meeting on April 14, 2026 was primarily an informal club discussion about vintage computer hardware swaps and repair plans, Atari/retro-computing projects, and related personal updates. Participants agreed on logistics for exchanging parts and preparing items for the next club meeting.

Hardware swaps and repair plans

- Robbie requested parts to restore a sentimental machine; Kevin and Bob discussed sourcing and testing suitable motherboards and IO cards. Bob reported having loose motherboards and many IO cards; Kevin volunteered to identify the best-fit board for Robbie's case and to test IO cards to troubleshoot Robbie's board I/O issues. Robbie asked for one motherboard to be sent; Kevin offered to return or keep extras.
- Meeting logistics: Bob proposed a meet in Lodi to transfer parts and test equipment. Kevin and Bob discussed shipping and bringing a truckload of parts; Kevin noted he has enough monitors and mentioned he recently obtained an ST monitor (SC125 variant) from a seller in Canada.
- Drives and floppies: Robbie plans to bring two boxes of floppies from his storage unit to the next meeting and considered bringing a "happy drive" for raffle/show-and-tell. Kevin and Scott and others discussed drive availability and compatibility (5.25" floppy needs a 386 or older PC to read certain disks).

Retro monitors and disposal

- Kevin described a local facility that responsibly repurposes CRT tubes and disposes plastics and PCBs properly; offered to take old VGA/CGA tube monitors for proper disposal. He also described a CGA/MDA-to-VGA converter box (received from Richard in San Leandro) useful for testing old IBM PC/XT/AT/Tandy 1000 hardware with modern VGA monitors; noted it does not support Atari ST 15 kHz signals.

Atari/retro projects and devices

- Kevin reported getting one unit of a "Mega Speedy!" device to run. He has two units and successfully got one working; it provides a front-panel display and knob with multiple ROM banks (4 banks × 8 slots, support for numerous ATR/ROMs) and can load

ATRs/ROMs for Atari disk copying/fast-loading. He will transplant components from a non-working drive to a functional drive to repair the second unit.

- Discussion of Happy Drive and similar disk copying hardware; Kevin noted functionality requires a real Atari (not just PC without an emulator) and supports many built-in utilities (US Doubler, Super Archiver, etc.). Robbie teased bringing additional Happy Drive or floppy collections to the next meeting.
- Scott and others discussed Atari games: David's Midnight Magic (cartridge version, XE title), Pinball Construction Set, and differences between Broderbund (1982) and Atari (1987) releases of Pinball Mania/Magic; control differences (paddles vs joystick vs keyboard) and how high scores are saved on disks.
- Infocom/PC-era games: Kevin showed a PC-only Infocom-era boxed set (Leather Goddesses of Phobos 2) and discussed large multi-disk PC titles; noted challenges with multi-disk collections and potential disk failure due to age.

Club logistics and outreach

- Kevin mentioned outreach attempts (emails/contacts) about the club; Robbie reported he had not heard from anyone yet but understands people are busy. Kevin and others agreed to continue promoting meetings; Robbie will try to bring floppies and drive hardware next meeting to attract attendees.

Miscellaneous technical notes

- Monitors: Kevin's CGA-to-VGA converter is only a format converter (no upscaling). ST uses a 15 kHz signal not supported by that converter.
- Drive/ROM devices: The Mega Speedy supports many ATR/ROM slots, has a menu similar to Ultimate 1MB, and can be reprogrammed via ATR layout; uses wiring across the PCB and sometimes component removal.
- Disk high score saving: Discussion that some Broderbund disk versions saved high scores to disk sectors (not necessarily a standard file) and might require a pre-existing disk or special notch to permit writing.

Other topics (brief)

- Artemis lunar mission discussion: Participants discussed the Artemis mission recovery procedures, including Atlantic water splashdown, use of a helicopter retrieval and inflatable collar/well-deck ship recovery options; comments compared land vs water landings and recovery risks (helicopter retrieval perceived by some as risky).
- Personal updates: Ron visited the Pacific Pinball Museum; Scott updated on beekeeping (swarm splits, waiting for queens to start laying) and fence/sewer issues and yard fence plans; Scott also reported lawnmower and tool maintenance. Bob mentioned lightning storms; Kevin, Scott, and others shared nostalgia about Infocom and pinball.

Decisions, action items, and next steps

- Bob to send (or bring) loose motherboards and IO cards; Kevin to test and identify the best-fit motherboard for Robbie's 386 PC and test IO cards to isolate potential I/O failures.
- Plan an in-person meet in Lodi for parts exchange and testing (Bob suggested). Participants to coordinate timing offline.
- Robbie to bring two boxes of floppies to the next meeting and possibly a Happy Drive for show-and-tell/raffle.
- Kevin to continue working on the second Mega Speedy unit (transplanting components to a functional drive) and report back when repaired.
- Kevin to follow up on the AI/messaging confusion about which Richard (San Leandro vs San Jose) was referenced and to check notes passed to Bill vs Jordan.

Items for follow-up/consideration

- Confirm date/time and logistics for the Lodi meetup and parts transfer; determine whether attendees need to bring monitors, power strips, and cameras (Ronald suggested bringing a power strip and camera).
- Verify floppy disk formats present in Robbie's boxes and identify machines required to read them (5.25" vs 3.5"), including availability of a 386 or appropriate PC to read older formats.
- Share Mega Speedy usage notes and wiring/installation tips with club members once the second unit is functional.