

## March Meetings

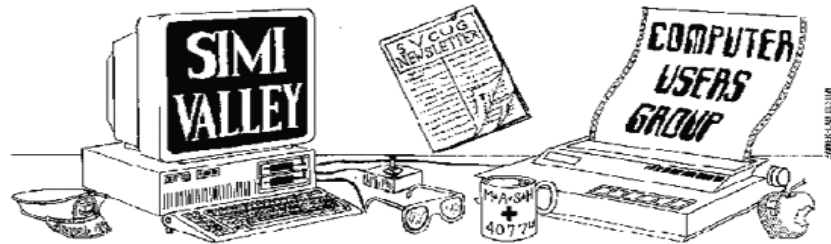
**Thurs. March. 12<sup>th</sup> - Microsoft Corp.**

**Wed., March 25<sup>th</sup> - Word & Xtreme video**

## Where To Find SVCUG:

• **BBS: 805-526-6196 & 805-522-9127**

• **www.svcug.org**



*March, 1998*

### The "All Types of Computers" Club

## Microsoft to Preview Windows 98 and FrontPage 98 at the March 12<sup>th</sup> SVCUG Meeting

**March 9, 1998, Infoworld Magazine Product Review** *By Jeff Symoens*

### New features solidify Memphis

WINDOWS 98 represents the next evolution of Microsoft's core windows OS platform. With Windows 98 moving closer to its expected ship date, I found this latest beta release offers quite a few benefits compared to Windows 95 and to a greater extent Windows 3.x. Microsoft still has a few bugs to hammer out, and the company is not quite finished adding features to the product, but my testing showed this latest beta appears to be in fairly stable shape.

Although many corporate sites have migrated to 32-bit Windows platforms, Windows 3.x remains the most widely deployed operating system in these environment leaving plenty of room for upgrade options. If you are still on the fence, deciding which 32-bit platform to move to, Windows 98 will extend the role of Windows 95 as a decent corporate desktop citizen.

However, Windows 98 still does not come close to the platform stability and security offered in Microsoft's Windows NT Workstation 4.0 or Windows alternatives,

such as Unix.

In the short-term, however, Windows 98 will offer some benefits compared to Windows NT.

Specifically, Windows 98 will offer better support for the latest generation of PC hardware, and it will remain a better OS candidate for portable computers that do not need the added security and fault tolerance of Windows NT. In addition, Windows 98 will continue to offer better support for legacy hardware, DOS, and Windows 3.x-based applications, particularly through its continued support for real-mode drivers. Compared to the differences between Windows 3.x and Windows 95, Windows 98 is not a huge departure from what users already experience with Windows 95.

There are three major areas in which Windows 98 offers improvements compared to Windows 95 for corporate users.

One, Windows 98 includes all of the packaged enhancements that have been released since Windows 95 as integrated components of the new OS. Two, the product will offer a number of performance improvements and OS infrastructure enhancements that will help corporations take advantage of some of the latest advances in desktop hardware. And three, there are several new utilities that help make the OS easier to manage and maintain.

### What's old is new

Among the post-shipping enhancements to Windows 95 that come with Windows 98 are Microsoft's Internet Explorer 4.01; Microsoft Plus; a battery of features included in the OEM Service Release 2 (OSR-2) version of Windows 95; and the Dial-Up Networking 1.2

upgrade.

Internet Explorer 4.01 adds Microsoft's browser and related utilities, such as the Outlook Express Internet mail client, to the OS and brings the browser into the Windows interface. These take the place of Windows Explorer as the navigational shell for Windows.

Of the Microsoft Plus enhancements, some are cosmetic and others actually translate to better desktop manageability. On the cosmetic side are features, such as Desktop Themes, that offer a number of packaged color schemes, sounds, desktop backgrounds and screen savers. Microsoft adds a few more themes to Windows 98, but the basic idea is the same. More importantly, Plus gives Windows 98 better management utilities, including the DriveSpace disk compression tool and the Task Scheduler. Task Scheduler lets you schedule and run unattended routine events, such as ScanDisk or Disk Defragmenter.

The most controversial component in the OSR-2 release of Windows 95 is the new FAT32 file system.

FAT32 adds support for file systems in excess of 2GB and uses a smaller cluster size, resulting in more efficient use of disk space. Windows 98 also will include a utility that allows users to convert existing FAT 16 partitions to FAT32. However, Windows 98 does not address any of the compatibility issues that result when converting to the new file system. The most common of these is incompatibility with other operating systems or with disk compression utilities.

When I used the conversion utility, I was warned of potential compatibility problems that might result when converting to FAT32. I found the performance and stability the tool to be much more reliable than in previous Windows 98 beta releases.

## Shaking the foundation

There are several noteworthy infrastructure improvements in Windows 98. These include integrated support for DirectX 5 Universal Serial Bus, IEEE 1394, the Win32 Driver Model (WDM), and Advanced Configuration and Power Interface (ACPI).

The two most important of these enhancements is support for WDM and ACPI. WDM provides a common hardware-driver model for both Windows 98 and Windows NT 5.0. Windows 98 supports this feature by emulating Windows NT kernel services. However, currently WDM support in both Windows 98 and the current beta of Windows NT 5.0 is limited to a handful of driver types. Noticeably absent from the list of supported driver types. Noticeably absent from the list of supported driver types are printers, displays, and

network interface cards.

ACPI support will provide improved power management. ACPI's key benefit is that it lets you schedule system events that can actually wake up a hibernating system.

Windows 98 will also provide integrated support for reversible digital video disc (DVD) and multiple monitors. Microsoft intends to provide support for as many as eight display cards on a single system. However, I found the practical limit, due to processor requirements and average PCI slot availability to be about three monitors. In addition, I had trouble getting more than two monitors working when using a mix of video cards from different vendors.

## Life made simple

Some of the most exciting and useful elements of Windows 98's utilities are aimed at corporate administrators. For example, with the Windows Scripting Host I was able to write custom macro scripts to automate routine tasks that need to be run frequently or on a number of desktops.

An update to the Disk Defragmenter utility reorganizes application files to reduce disk-seek time and speed the load time of your most frequently used applications. This tool provides similar capabilities to the Speed Disk utility included in Symantec's Norton Utilities suite.

Three other tools that ranked among my favorites were the Disk Cleanup utility, the Maintenance Wizard, and the System Configuration Utility. Disk Cleanup automates the task of freeing up disk space by deleting unnecessary files from your hard drive. For example, Disk Cleanup let me delete Windows temporary files, the Internet Explorer disk cache, and empty the Recycle Bin in a single action.

Windows 98's Maintenance Wizard bundles the tasks of configuring Disk Cleanup, Scan Disk, and Disk Defragmenter to run as scheduled events in the Windows Task Scheduler.

This unattended approach to system maintenance will ensure routine maintenance tasks are run more frequently without users having to take extra initiative.

Finally, the System Configuration Utility gave me point-and-click access to enabling or disabling lines in my AUTOEXEC.BAT, CONFIG .SYS, and Windows system files. In addition, I was able to selectively disable programs that get automatically loaded from the Windows registry. It is amazing how much memory you can save by disabling System Tray elements or other services that you don't really use.

Despite all of these worthy enhancements, Windows NT is still a better corporate desktop than Windows 98. However, in light of the fact that the current version of Windows NT lacks support for plug and-play and power management, and that the ship date for Windows NT 5.0 is somewhat uncertain, Windows 98 could be a solid stop gap measure. Overall, this latest beta release offers a fair number of improvements and gives every indication that the final product will be a stable one.

*Senior Analyst Jeff Symoens reviews operating systems and enterprise platforms at the InfoWorld Center. He can be reached at [jeff.symoens@infoworld.com](mailto:jeff.symoens@infoworld.com).*

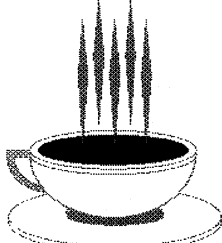
## SVCUG OFFICERS

President	Barbara Cott	<a href="mailto:bobbie@wgn.net">bobbie@wgn.net</a>
Vice President	Gaylord Trubey	<a href="mailto:gaylordt@ez2.net">gaylordt@ez2.net</a>
Secretary	Gerry Scott	<a href="mailto:gerry@wgn.net">gerry@wgn.net</a>
Treasurer	Howard Engel	<a href="mailto:engel@ez2.net">engel@ez2.net</a>
Master of Ceremonies	Dennis Atherton	<a href="mailto:dennis_atherton@diodes.com">dennis_atherton@diodes.com</a>
Warp Zone BBS	1 <sup>st</sup> Line	805-526-6196
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Line	805-522-1927
SYSOP	Lee Barton	<a href="mailto:leeb@rain.org">leeb@rain.org</a>
Editor	Barbara Cott	<a href="mailto:bobbie@wgn.net">bobbie@wgn.net</a>

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**Simi Valley Computer User Group** is a non-profit special interest group for the benefit of anyone interested in learning more about computers and how to use them. Meetings are held twice a month. The General Meeting meets at 7:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month, the Hardware / Software Meeting is held at the same time on the fourth Wednesday of each month. The meetings are held at the Simi Valley Public Library, in the Community Room.

If you need further information about the meetings, call Barbara Cott at 805-581-2495 or Gerry Scott at 818-341-7107. Further information can be found at [www.svcug.org](http://www.svcug.org) or send email to [info@svcug.org](mailto:info@svcug.org).

Visitors are welcome to come and see what our group is all about without obligation to join. However, if you find our meetings to be beneficial to you, we hope you will join and support our group. Dues are \$24 per year or \$13 for 6 months.

**It has to say this:** Simi Valley Computer User Group (SVCUG), consisting of its officers and membership, is not affiliated with any computer hardware or software manufacturers. Articles contained in this publication may not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of SVCUG. SVCUG makes no warranty of the suitability or inability to use any product or service described herein.

# FrontPage 98 The Biggest Upgrade Yet!

- Give your backgrounds, banners, hyperlinks and navigation bars a professional and consistent look-without hiring a graphic designer.
- Create and edit frames pages in a snap with the new WYSIWYG frameset editing.
- Draw and edit tables of any size and shape directly on your Web page- without manually coding HTML.
- Add universal navigation links to your Web site-saving you time and keeping your links current.
- Turn your Web site into a "channel" that users can "subscribe to" for automatic delivery of information with new Push technology.
- Bring your site to life with new Hover Buttons that change colors, change shape or animate when a user "hovers" over or clicks on them.
- Create extensive and dramatic layouts for your site using new Cascading Style Sheets.
- Crop, flip, wash, shrink and bevel images with Improved Image Editing Tools.
- Create professional-quality graphics and images using the new GIF Animator in Image Composer 1.5.

## MANAGE YOUR SITE WITH EASE

- Manage the content and structure of your site quickly and easily with a complete set of comprehensive management tools.
- Visually map your entire site within seconds-making it easier to connect new pages and move pages around. FrontPage combines five different views that let you quickly plan, manage and update your site.
- Publish your site with the push of a button. FrontPage only publishes files that have changed since you last published-saving you time in file transfer.
- Free yourself from the worries of broken hyperlinks. When you rename and move files, FrontPage updates your hyperlinks automatically!
- Take advantage of the redesigned look of FrontPage 98-featuring an entirely new set of navigation bars and tools.

## IT ALL FITS TOGETHER PERFECTLY

- Integrate easily on all popular UNIX, Windows 95 and Windows NT Web servers-as well as most popular Web browsers.
- Easily find your site a host. All major Internet

Service Providers (ISPs) are registered FrontPage Web Presence Providers.

## President's Corner *by Barbara Cott*

So instead of complaining about needing help, let me tell you what we need help *with...*

Newsletter stories in ascii and illustrations. Would you like to see your articles published? Would you want to review software. *Thanks to Jay, for assembling the newsletter the last three months!*

Your web pages can be part of the Simi Valley Computer Group web site.

The "Need Help" list should be updated since we've all learned a lot of big and little things. See Gerry Scott or send him a message: [gerry@wgn.net](mailto:gerry@wgn.net). Or fill out a form at the meeting.

Do you know that you are entitled to a free ad in the newsletter? Any member can place a classified ad or a business card size ad for free. Monthly rates for non members and larger ads are only \$15 (1/4 page), \$25 (1/2 page) and \$50 for a full page.

There are a few stores here in Simi Valley who help support our club. Ernie's is one of them. We appreciate them making a spot on their counter for our flyers announcing our meeting subject each month.

If you were wondering about the Extensis folders which were available at the last meeting, inside is an expensive, fully working copy of all of their products. It's not just another press kit with spec sheets in it.

The programs on the CD will work for 30 days. The Windows/Mac programs are PhotoTools 2.0, PageTools 2.0, Portfolio 3.0, PhotoFrame 1.0, Intellihance 3.0, MaskPro 1.0 and the Mac only programs are Preflight Pro 1.0, Vector Tools 2.0, QX-Effects 3.0, Preflight Designer 1.0, CyberPress 1.0, QX-Tools 2.0. If you are seriously interested in trying their products, pick one up at the March 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. You can find more information on these tools used with graphics programs, at their web site: [www.extensis.com](http://www.extensis.com). Extensis' Corporate Accounts Manager, Renee Rajol, said she would be able to offer special prices to any user group member who calls her directly when they are ready to place an order. You'll find her card in the folder.

Our new Microsoft Rep, Susie Briscoe, covers the Santa Clarita Valley, through Thousand Oaks. She'll be at our meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>. They are going to try to show us Windows 98, but if it doesn't work out, then we'll see how to use FrontPage98 instead. She's a good presenter.

I recently received this email you should know about: "WINDOWS 98, COMING SOON TO A THEATRE NEAR YOU

<http://www.microsoft.com/magazine/extreme/>. Register now for Microsoft Extreme, a free, firsthand look at new products from Microsoft including Windows 98, to be broadcast live to 38 movie theatres on April 4."

*Or you'll be able to see this video at our club meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup>.*

Howard Engel will continue his Microsoft Word demonstrations at the same meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup>, right before the video.

We are continuing to give away tickets for the members only raffle. We'll try to put a computer in the next one. So stop by the meetings, say hello, and pick up your raffle tickets.

The Simi Valley Star wants to do an article on our club and I think it might be fun. One of the questions they have asked is, "is this club just for nerds?" and some other interesting questions. It should be a good way to let the public know what our meetings are about and what the benefits can be. They might even ask you a few questions.

The Simi Library has computers linked to the Internet now. The public can use them so if you don't have a computer yet, you can still get mail and surf the web for material while you are checking out your books.

If you want to know what the next meeting is going to cover, you can check our web page close to the meeting date, or go to Ernie's and pick up a flyer and a donut.

*See you at the meeting, Barbara*

## News from Xara

Xara has released a new product - which means there is also a new trial version to download. Xara Webster 2 is

a powerful tool for creating, composing and optimizing vector and bitmap graphics for use on the web.

Full details of Xara Webster 2 can be found at: <http://www.xara.com/webster/> and the trial version can be downloaded at: <http://www.xara.com/webster/download.html>

Xara Webster is a vector based tool, so your graphics can be scaled and rotated or re-colored with no loss of quality. It also offers powerful anti-aliasing technology, along with flexible dithering and color reduction systems so you can produce the best possible quality GIF and JPEG images, at the smallest file size. Webster includes many of the tools and features from the latest CorelXARA program (its big brother mainstream illustration program) but also has a new animated GIF creation ability and a dynamic GIF quality preview.

The program includes access to hundreds of template web graphics images such as buttons, bullets, backgrounds etc. Unlike normal GIF collections Webster allows you to personalize these graphics so they can be any size, any angle, any color, and with the exact text you want. The easy-to-use coloring system means you can alter the color of complex shaded graphics with just one click, while retaining all the correct shading and highlighting.

Other features include;

- a font gallery enabling easy install and de-install of fonts.
- A clip-art gallery allowing access to clip-art from your hard disc or direct from the Xara web site.
- Full transparency control for effects like soft shadows.

Everyone who purchases Webster is also sent a CD with a copy of Webster plus our web clip-art collection and tutorial movies.--

*Kate Moir*

## **KIDS SAY THE "DARNDEST" THINGS** *From a friend, good stuff*

Questions concerning love and wisdom were posed to a group of children aged 5 to 10. Their responses were amazingly astute and very enlightening, thus proving that all we need to know, we probably learned in kindergarten!

## **WHAT IS THE PROPER AGE TO GET MARRIED?**

“Eighty-four. Because at that age, you don’t have to work anymore, and you can spend all your time loving each other.” Judy,

“Once I’m done with kindergarten, I’m going to find me a wife.” (Tommy, 5)

### **WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE DO ON A DATE?**

“On the first date, they just tell each other lies, and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date.” (Mike, 10)

### **WHEN IS IT OKAY TO KISS SOMEONE?**

“You should never kiss a girl unless you have enough bucks to buy her a big ring and her own VCR, ‘cause she’ll want to have videos of the wedding.” (Jim, 10)

“Never kiss in front of other people. It’s a big embarrassing thing if anybody sees you. But if nobody sees you, I might be willing to try it with a handsome boy, but just for a few hours.” (Kally, 9)

### **THE GREAT DEBATE**

“It’s better for girls to be single, but not for boys. Boys need somebody to clean up after them.” (Lynette, 9)

“It gives me a headache to think about that stuff. I’m just a kid. I don’t need that kind of trouble.” (Kenny, 7)

### **CONCERNING WHY LOVE HAPPENS BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE**

“No one is sure why it happens, but I heard it has something to do with how you smell. That’s why perfume and deodorant are so popular.” (Jan, 9)

“I think you’re supposed to get hot with an arrow or something, but the rest of it isn’t supposed to be so painful.” (Harlen, 8)

### **ON WHAT FALLING IN LOVE IS LIKE**

“Like an avalanche where you have to run for your life.” (Roger, 9)

“If falling in love is anything like learning to spell, I don’t want to do it. It takes too long to learn.” (Leo, 7)

### **ON THE ROLE OF GOOD LOOKS IN LOVE AND ROMANCE**

“If you want to be loved by somebody who isn’t already in your family, it doesn’t hurt to be beautiful.” (Jeanne, 8)

“It isn’t always just how you look. Look at me. I’m handsome like anything and I haven’t got anybody to

marry me yet.” (Gary, 7)

“Beauty is skin deep. But how rich you are can last a long time.” (Christine, 9)

### **CONCERNING WHY LOVERS OFTEN HOLD HANDS**

“They want to make sure their rings don’t fall off, because they paid good money for them.” (David, 8)

### **CONFIDENTIAL OPINIONS ABOUT LOVE**

“I’m in favor of love as long as it doesn’t happen when “The Simpsons” are on TV.” (Anita, 6)

“Love will find you, even if you are trying to hide from it. I’ve been trying to hide from it since I was five, but the girls keep finding me.” (Bobby, 8)

“I’m not rushing into being in love. I’m finding fourth grade hard enough.” (Regina, 10)

### **PERSONAL QUALITIES NECESSARY TO BE A GOOD LOVER**

“One of you should know how to write a check.

Because, even if you have tons of love, there is still going to be a lot of bills.” (Ava, 8)

### **SOME SUREFIRE WAYS TO MAKE A PERSON FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU**

“Tell them that you own a whole bunch of candy stores.” (Del, 6)

“Don’t do things like have smelly, green sneakers. You might get attention, but attention ain’t the same things as love.” (Alonzo, 9)

“One way is to take the girl out to eat. Make sure it’s something she likes to eat. French fries usually works for me.” (Bart, 9)

### **HOW CAN YOU TELL IF TWO ADULTS EATING DINNER AT A RESTAURANT ARE IN LOVE**

“Just see if the man picks up the check. That’s how you can tell if he’s in love.” (John, 9)

“Lovers will just be staring at each other and their food will get cold. Other people care more about the food.” (Brad, 8)

“It’s love if they order one of those desserts that are on fire. They like to order those because it’s just like their hearts are on fire.” (Christine, 9)

## **WHAT MOST PEOPLE ARE THINKING WHEN THEY SAY, "I LOVE YOU"**

"The person is thinking: Yeah, I really do love him, but I hope he showers at least once a day." (Michelle, 9)

## **HOW A PERSON LEARNS TO KISS**

"You learn it right on the spot, when the "goosy" feelings get the best of you." (Doug, 7)

"It might help if you watched soap operas all day." (Carin, 9)

## **WHEN IS IT OKAY TO KISS SOMEONE**

"It's never okay to kiss a boy. They always slobber all over you. That's why I stopped doing it." (Jean, 10)

## **HOW TO MAKE LOVE ENDURE**

"Spend most of your time loving instead of going to work." (Tom, 7)

"Don't forget your wife's name...that will mess up the love." (Roger, 8)

"Be a good kisser. It might make your wife forget that you never take the trash out." (Randy, 8)

## **Time transforms role of user groups**

For years, user groups have lured computer geeks, offering a forum for networking and sharing information about the latest high-tech gadgets and operating systems. But as computer prices plunge and technology becomes more mainstream, user groups are taking on a more mainstream role.

User groups are organizations that bring computer enthusiasts together to learn more about technology and share their experiences. One of the basic premises of user groups is that members help one another master technology.

But times are changing, says Sam Gardner, a member of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, an organization that works to facilitate communication and education among user groups.

Years ago, user groups consisted mostly of diehard techheads who seemed more willing to spend endless time helping each other. Today, people come to user groups to hear a one-hour lecture, and "basically want to be entertained."

Not only is the culture changing, but also the reasons people are turning to user groups. While traditionally a

source for high-tech answers, many user groups are now expected to provide the type of guidance that was once the exclusive domain of manufacturers' support lines.

"The relative lack of customer support that many software companies are providing today" is driving many people to turn to user groups, says Chris Sypolt of Harrison Township, Mich. Sypolt says he joins user groups because there's no other way for advanced computer users to get their questions answered.

But despite the changes in user group demographics, the groups themselves tend to be receptive to tech newcomers, says Gabriel Goldberg, a member of the Capital PC User Group in Washington, D.C. Part of the reason, he says, is because people in user groups have different levels of technical knowledge. One can always find someone who knows more and someone who knows less.

While most user groups are thrilled to attract new members and the membership fees they bring in, some members worry that an increase in size will lead to a decrease in the sense of community and intimacy.

Such concerns have sparked the popularity of special interest groups, or SIGs, which are subdivisions within user groups that are dedicated to specific topics.

"Special interest groups help people focus on their interests... since no one is interested in all topics," says Goldberg, who also chairs the group's Internet SIG.

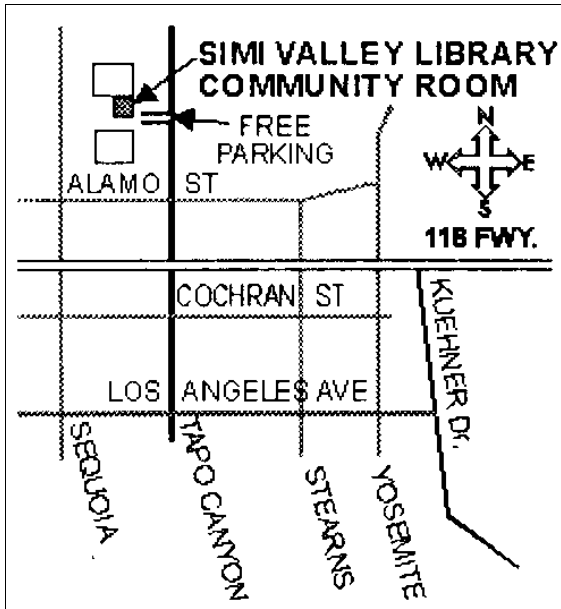
Because they are specialized, SIGs tend to be small groups, often creating a stronger bond among members. Computer novices may, in fact, be more comfortable in SIG gatherings than in the more formal setting of general meetings.

It's almost impossible to pin down exactly how many user groups there are since new ones are always forming. The topics they cover range from the Internet to the COBOL programming language, offering something for everybody.

A good place to look for one is on the Web site of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups ([www.apcug.org](http://www.apcug.org)).

"I advocate user groups whether you're a hobbyist or a serious professional...(They) can accommodate people of diverse interests," Goldberg says.

*By Tamara E. Holmes, USA TODAY*



Simi Valley Computer User Group  
Internet Site provided by:



[www.svcug.org](http://www.svcug.org)

### Warp Zone BBS

*1<sup>st</sup> line*      805-526-6196

*2<sup>nd</sup> line*      805-522-1927

*(for members)*

*SYSOP*      805-527-0181

*(Lee Barton)*

**SVGUG**  
**P.O. Box 3498**  
**Simi Valley, CA 93063**



### **SVGUG Meetings**

**March 12th, Thursday**

**Microsoft Corporation**

**March 25th, Wednesday**

**Word for Windows, Xtreme Video**