

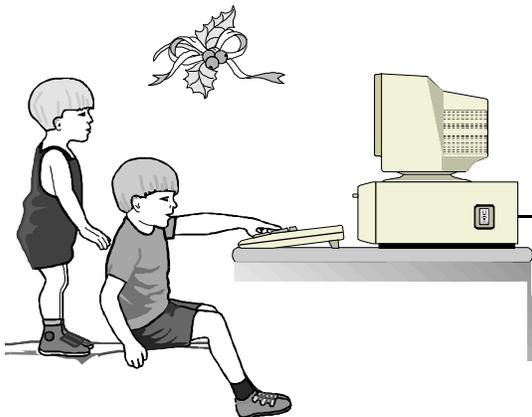
## Product review

# LapLink for Windows

by Chris Taylor, Sysop

“This is not your father’s Oldsmobile!” That commercial ditty was my first thought when I installed Traveling Software’s LapLink for Windows version 6.0. If the only thing that comes to mind when you think of LapLink is a cable connecting two computers to transfer files between them, you’ll be surprised at the depth of this latest version of the product.

While LapLink still supports file transfers via a parallel or serial cable (both included in the box), it now has the ability to control a computer remotely via modem, over a LAN, or over a wireless connection using AirShare radio devices. It also includes a chat module so you can exchange messages between the connected computers. You can have multiple connections at the same time. For



instance, you could have a remote control connection over a modem to a home computer, a chat window open with someone on the LAN, and a file transfer window open with a laptop connected by parallel cable.

LapLink for Windows requires Windows 3.1 or better (in 386 Enhanced mode), 4MB RAM (8MB recommended), and 5MB disk space for a full install. The optional DOS host TSRs require 60-70K memory depending on connection type. For modem links 9600 bps or higher is recommended. COM1 through COM4 and LPT1 through LPT3 are supported. For LAN connections, Novell Netware or a Windows for Workgroups IPX network is required. LapLink’s installation replaces your Windows video driver with it’s own. This driver then hooks to your own driver. Changes to SYSTEM.INI are commented.

All remote testing was done between my home computer and my work computer—both 486/33 machines with 16MB RAM. Modems were a US-Robotics Sportster 14.4 and an Intel 9600EX. LAN connections were tested between

**INSIDE**

**Product review**  
*LapLink for Windows*..... 1

**Coming up**  
*SchoolNet - part 2* ..... 3

**Internet**  
*Christmas specials*..... 4

**Understanding your system**  
*Finding help and other information using your modem: using Freenet: Usenet continued*..... 7

486/33 and 486/66 machines on a Novell 3.11 LAN.

Loading the main program took just 789K of memory and 2% system resources, a welcome change from resource hungry applications. However,

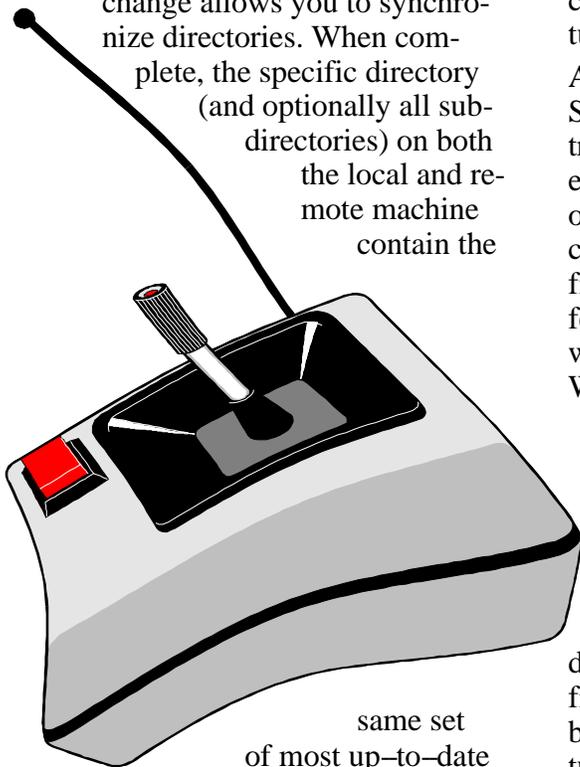
*Continued on page 2*

as you open different services, more memory and system resources do get used.

### File transfer

The file transfer module looks very similar to the Windows File Manager. Two panes are normally displayed, one being the local machine and the other being the machine you are connected to. Drag and drop is supported for copying and moving files. Options include copying files only if they are newer than the ones that exist on the target, transferring files only if are already on the target, verifications of overwrites, and inclusion of subdirectories.

An option called SmartX-change allows you to synchronize directories. When complete, the specific directory (and optionally all subdirectories) on both the local and remote machine contain the



same set of most up-to-date files. SmartXchange can also be set to only update files that already exist in both directories, rather than copying all files.

Cloning a directory causes it to add, delete, and update files on the target until it

matches the source directory. Subdirectories may be included. By choosing the root directory, this provides an easy method of ensuring both entire drives match. Administrators responsible for loaning laptop computers will love this feature.

A really nifty feature is Speed-Sync. When it is enabled, file transfer times may be shortened considerably by sending only parts of the file that have changed, rather than the entire file. I seriously questioned this feature until I tried it. It really works! Transferring a 123K WordPerfect file the first time took 1 minute 9 seconds. After modifying the file both in the header (by selecting a new printer) and adding a word to the end of the file, transferring it a second time took only 9 seconds! The degree of change between the files determines the level of benefit gained by using the feature.

### Chatting

The chat module opens a dual-pane window. You type in the bottom window and the top

window shows the output from both sides, with each block of text preceded by the machine name to aid in telling who said

what. Nothing you type shows up in the top window until you hit enter. This tends to make for confused conversations over the link as both sides pursue different lines of conversation at the same time, not realizing the other person is typing. With slow typists, you might think the other person has gone for coffee or died. Also, you can end up with both ends just sitting there, thinking the other person is typing in something. But it works.

### Remote Control

This is the part that most interested me! For several years, I have been using a DOS remote control package to access the office LAN from home. Lately, I have been getting more frustrated as the number of programs accessible only through Windows has increased and the support for DOS applications has waned. Fewer and fewer of the tools I use daily are available to me remotely. I always thought that running Windows remotely on any-

*Continued on page 5*

# SchoolNet - part 2

by Julie Dustin

**M**r. McLuhan is proven right again. "The medium is the message". As a graduating student of McLuhan theory, I continually question the uses of technology for communications. SchoolNet is an interesting study. Why is it so popular? Why are so many companies investing in the project? What's in it for the student, the teacher, the providing companies, and dare we say it, the taxpayer?

Tyler Burns, Director Services Division of Ingenia Communications, will be our guest speaker at the next OPCUG meeting on Tuesday, December 20. Ingenia, a two-year old Ottawa-based company, is contracted by Industry Canada to provide much of the SchoolNet services. They conduct installations, configurations, and training sessions for school sites and also maintain the SchoolNet server. He may provide some of the answers. Burns says, "The goal of the government for SchoolNet is to network 16,000 schools in the country and to provide key areas with Canadian resources and Canadian information in official and native languages." Note the word

## Calendar *(subject to change)*

**General Meeting Location:** Sir Robert Borden HS  
131 Greenbank Road

**General Meeting Time:** 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Date	Topic
Tuesday, 20 December	See this page
Tuesday, 31 January	IBM
Tuesday, 28 February	To be announced

**OPCUG meeting:** Wednesday, 4 January, at 7:00 pm. INLY Systems, 1221A Cyrville Road, Gloucester.

**Internet SIG meeting:** Second Thursday in the month, at 7:30 pm. Regional Municipality headquarters, 111 Lisgar, Ottawa

"Canadian" as a key adjective—maybe the CBC has reappeared in a new form.

### For the student

Electronic innovators are professionals around the world who volunteer to monitor over 30 subject-specific newsgroups. They answer questions and act as discussion leaders. These "innovators", located in Russia, Australia, Germany,

and Japan for example, cover the science, technology, and engineering subjects and act valuable role models for students. Burns explains, "A grade 12 student may want more information on unbalanced forces and her source could be a professor at MIT."

### For the teacher

As part of SchoolNet, school advisors are assigned as volunteers who act as resources for teachers. As the SchoolNet information papers explain, these advisors would be used for help in curriculum development and project support.



*Continued on page 6*

# Christmas specials

by Jerry Gault  
(jgault@fox.nstn.ca)

**T**his month I present a mixture of Internet goodies, news, tips, and best of all, Santa's e-mail and WWW address. I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

## Santa world wide

Santa goes high-tech with his own e-mail address and World Wide Web site. Children from all over the globe can e-mail their wish list to Santa or visit his WWW site. The web site features pictures of Santa's Elves and reindeer as well as short notes to the children from the North Pole. This site will also give you an updated weather report for the North Pole. Did you know they have several feet of snow already?



E-Mail: [santa@northpole.net](mailto:santa@northpole.net)  
Web Site: <http://northpole.net>

## A Christmas carol

Interested in reading the complete text of A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens? FTP to: [nic.funet.fi](ftp://nic.funet.fi) Path: [/pub/doc/etext/carol.txt](ftp://pub/doc/etext/carol.txt)

## NSTN Inc.

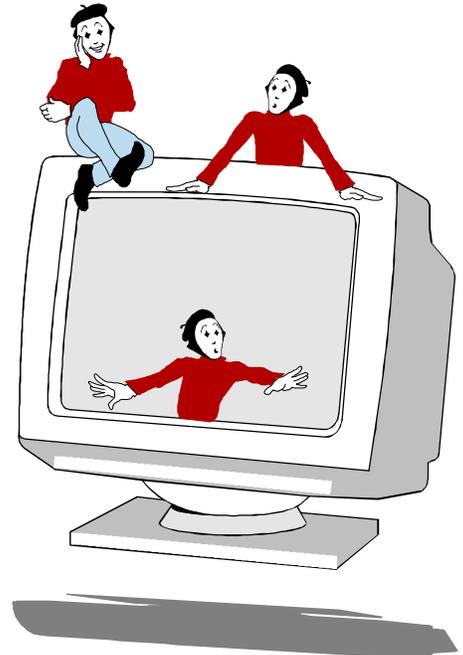
Nova Scotia Technology Network has opened a point of presence in Toronto. If you do lots of travelling to the Toronto area and have an NSTN account you can now access your account without long distance charges to your home account. Change the phone number in your `login.cmd` file to 224-9154.

## Winsock applications

Wondering what the latest version of `ws_ftp` is, and where to find it on the Net? Take a look at a file called `winter06.zip` on the OPCUG BBS. This file contains a comprehensive list of most, if not all Internet related software, latest versions, ftp sites to download the program from, and some information on the programs. A file all serious Internauts should have on their desk.

## Windows MIME and UUENCODE program

Have you ever received a file that was uuencoded or in mime format and needed to make it readable? Check out Xfer Pro (strange name but



who cares if it does the job). Xfer Pro is a windows program that is very easy to use, and minimal configuration is required to get it up and running. Download a file called `xferp100.zip` from the OPCUG BBS and have fun.

## The Internet SIG

The Internet SIG has had a very good year, with anywhere from 20-60 people attending the meetings. We are still short on organization and volunteers to help organize and demonstrate aspects of the Net to the group as a whole. We meet every second Thursday at 111 Lisgar Street, Ottawa, Regional Headquarters at 7:30 PM. If you would like to help out with the SIG in any way, contact Paul Mahood on the Pub.

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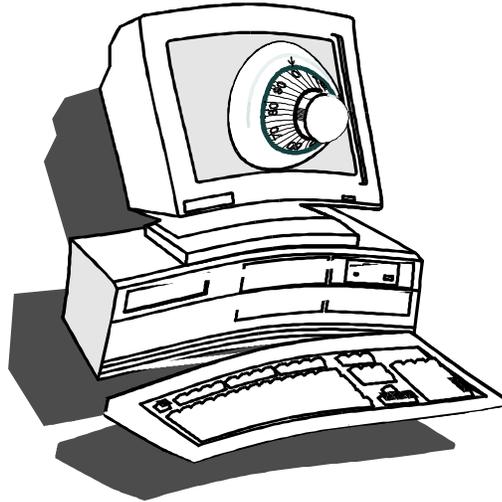
thing less than a v.34 28.8Kbps link would be intolerable. Boy was I surprised. Over a 9600bps link, it was not too bad. I was running Windows for Workgroups 3.11 on both sides, both in 1024x768x256 colour mode.

There is a set of DOS TSRs that may be used for DOS remote control. This allowed me to set up my office computer so that it was ready to log onto the LAN. Without the TSRs, I would have had to leave my office machine logged onto the LAN, since you have to log onto a Novell LAN before going into Windows.

The remote control module allows you to run the remote session in a Window (where you can see and use your own desktop as well as the remote machine) or full screen.

The potential problem of differing resolutions is handled quite well by LapLink for Windows. First, you can put the remote session into a scrollable window. That way, you see the remote session in exactly the same pixel-by-pixel resolution as if you were sitting in front of that machine. If the resolution of that remote machine is set higher than your local machine, you have to scroll around in order to see all of the screen. If scrolling around doesn't tickle your fancy, you can have LapLink automatically scale the remote session so it fits whatever size window you want to use. I tried setting the remote session (a 1024x768 screen) in a window that was approximately one quarter of the local screen (also set to 1024x768). I was surprised to read anything at all, although with WordPerfect 6.0a for Windows loaded, I

could not make out the tiny Powerbar buttons, I could just read the menu bar, and text set at 14 point was barely readable. Screen updates were reasonably quick. Not using wallpaper can help a lot here. Mouse move-



ment within a remote window is extremely fluid. I did find there were a few instances where a single click got translated to multiple clicks (I was using version 9 of the Microsoft mouse driver on both machines), but overall I would rate mouse action as excellent.

Both ends can have control over the mouse and keyboard. If the host machine is set to allow it, the guest can lock the keyboard and mouse as well as blank the screen to prevent someone at the host machine from interrupting what they are doing.

I did not do much testing with it, but remote control over a LAN connection seemed swift and quite useable. I could see this feature being used in a help desk set up. If we could afford all those licenses, that feature could save me a lot of shoe leather.

## Security

Allowing remote access to your computer can be a scary sort of proposition. Once you allow someone to connect to your machine for either remote control or file transfer, you are basically giving them the same access to your disk they would have if they were sitting at your keyboard. They can change or delete anything they want to. Fortunately, Traveling Software has included a wide range of security features in LapLink for Windows.

You can leave your machine wide open, close it up so nobody can connect, or create a log-in list and allow only those in the list to connect. In the log-in list you create user names and passwords. For each log-in name you specify what services are available to that person—file transfer, remote control, and chat. You also specify what locking options they may use—mouse/keyboard locking and screen blanking.

For added security, you may enable callback, which makes the remote machine cut off the connection and call you back at the specified number before allowing access. Callbacks may be set to optional or required. With optional callback, callers are asked if they want to use the callback, either to any number or a specified number. This would be useful for long distance calling, where you get the remote machine to make the call. Required callbacks force the callback, again at either any number specified by the caller or to a specific number. All remote connections are logged.

*Continued on page 6*

## For the fun of it

I'm still asking myself: why couldn't these students and teachers write letters or phone these experts? Because the SchoolNet is "way cooler" to use than pen and paper. Because the names of these advisors have never been so easily and freely accessible. Because the Net gives anonymity, timeliness, and fast (usually 24-hour) responses; what a way to do your research papers at the last minute! And, because it's there.

"The key element in ensuring SchoolNet's success is training for the teachers and students. Of course, kids figure out Internet and what it can do for them pretty quickly. After all, some of these students have been using bulletin board systems for awhile."

Industry Canada has committed \$1.6 million to the School-

Net project beginning in 1994. Stentor, on behalf of Canadian telephone companies, has invested \$100,000. Apple Canada Inc., Sun Microsystems, and Southam News have been contributors as well. Most companies do not want to be left behind parked in the driveway while their competitors are out cruising the highway and these benefactors are no exception. Canada's information network(s) need as many information and services providers as they can get. The question is, who pays for it all? In the first phase of research and development, it looks like the money is mostly government-sourced. Hopefully, that will change soon—of course, that means we, as the Internet user, will probably have to pay more as we go. Don't cancel your newspaper subscription yet!

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LapLink for Windows may be set to automatically reboot when the caller disconnects. This can help prevent things like disconnects while logged onto the LAN, allowing others who call in access to things they shouldn't have.

## Problems in Paradise

LapLink for Windows is not without its problems. The biggest problem I ran into was the remote connection not resetting things properly to allow a new call to come in. Once, when I got to work the next day, I saw SmartDrive's message asking to press Ctrl-Alt-Del to restart the computer. Turning off write caching seems to have solved that.

On several other occasions, LapLink did not reset the remote modem correctly. Once, I tried to connect to my office computer with a file transfer window as the only service. I got a message indicating that the service was not available and was disconnected. The remote modem was left off-hook, preventing another call to it until I manually reset the modem.

Overall, I really like LapLink for Windows. With the exception of the problems I had with remote modems not resetting properly, I ran into no major problems with the package.

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# Finding help and other information using your modem: using Freenet: *Usenet continued*

by Eric Clyde

**U**senet has been described as an incredible source of useful information, but also as a source of much misinformation; as a saver of time and effort and, by others, as a complete waste of time. How is this possible?

First of all, Usenet is probably the most democratic information exchange available—anyone with a modem (and a connection to Usenet, e.g., through Freenet) can ask questions and post answers, comments, or opinions. And many do—to the tune of about 90 megabytes per day in the 6,000 different discussion groups! It would be very misleading to claim that all of these contributions are worthy of attention. In fact, there are so many that finding the gems of information can be like panning for gold: finding the nuggets can be time consuming, but rewarding. With a little planning and care, it is possible to minimize the time spent.

## news.lists

The first problem is selection of the appropriate news group(s) to check. The overall organization was outlined last month, but the subcategories are not always obvious. One method is to look in the group 'news.lists'; the entries 'List of active news groups' and 'Alternative news groups hierarchies' appear regularly. Find

the latest versions (record numbers 3265-3268 at the time of writing). These can be downloaded, but be warned that they take up over 500K of disk space. On line, you can start to read each, quitting after the first screen. You can then search for particular words in that record, as explained last month. (Use the command, '/', then the desired text, e.g., 'music'). If there are any groups with the word 'music' in the title or description, the name of the group will appear. Repeat the procedure until you get the message that no records have that title word. Keep a note of any groups that seem relevant.

## news.answers

Another way is to look in the group 'news.answers' for FAQs, (Frequently Asked Questions) which are issued by many groups to try to avoid repetition. These summaries are often excellent expositions of the subjects concerned. Use the same procedure as in the preceding section.

```
*****
Strathspey
Contact: strathspey-request@math.uni-frankfurt.de

Purpose: A forum for the discussion of all aspects of Scottish Country
Dancing, e.g., dance descriptions, dancing technique, the history of dances
and dancing, learning or teaching how to dance. We also welcome
descriptions of new dances, announcements of events like courses or balls,
or anything the subscribers might find interesting.

The mailing list is unmoderated, i.e., everything that is submitted is
forwarded directly to the subscribers of the list. We hope to be able to
offer an archive of past traffic if the demand should arise.

Subscription/info requests should be directed to
strathspey-request@math.uni-frankfurt.de
Just send a message with the word 'subscribe' in the 'Subject:' header to
subscribe to the list.

To reach a human for special requests or problems, send mail to
owner-strathspey@math.uni-frankfurt.de.
*****
```

Example mailing list

*Continued on back page*

## Ottawa PC News

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in June and July. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

### Deadline

Deadline for submissions is the last day of the month prior to publication.

### Mailing Address

3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ontario, K2G 1S6  
Telephone answering machine 723-1329

### Bulletin board—the PUB (BBS)

Up to 14.4 kbps v.32bis 228-0665 (6 lines)

### Chairman

Harald Freise 828-3411

### Past Chairman

Doug Poulter 745-8768

### Treasurer

Tony Frith 995-4727

### Secretary

David Reeves 723-9658

### Membership Chairman

Mark Cayer 224-8031

### Convenor

Jack Stekelenburg 838-5985

### Software Librarian

Jorgen Rasmussen 821-3040  
Judy Tomlin (assistant) 821-3040

### BBS Sysop

Chris Taylor 723-1329

### Hardware/Software Broker

No appointment

### Newsletter Editor

Chris Seal 831-0280  
Julie Dustin (assistant) 823-1552  
Mary Seal (graphics) 831-0280

### Beginners' Corner

Eric Clyde 749-2387

### Fox SIG coordinator

Andrew Ross MacNeill (voice/fax) 596-3313

### Internet SIG coordinator

Paul Mahood 820-8266

### Paradox SIG coordinator

Larry Chop 236-8761 (days)

### Windows SIG coordinator

Philip Baker 247-9555

### Group Meetings

OPCUG meets monthly except in July. Check the answering machine, the PUB, and the newsletter for the date and place. Meeting times are 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

### Membership fees

\$25 per year

### Disk-of-the-Month

\$25 for 5.25 in. diskettes and \$35 per year for 3.5 in. (for 10 diskettes)



Freenet *continued from page 7*

## news.groups.questions

If these don't help, a group 'news.groups.questions' is specifically designed to help—simply post the message 'Where can I find information on [whatever]?' and, by the next day, you will probably have a number of suggestions.

When you have found a news group of interest, if you find a contribution of interest, you can follow the thread (find articles in response) by using the 's' key. Or you can search directly among the article titles by using the '/' key as above, e.g. '/' followed by the keyword of interest.

## Subscribe

Another way to keep up to date is to 'subscribe' (usually free of charge) to one or more mailing lists (list servers). All of the messages are

then emailed to you automatically. In the news group 'news.lists', look for the entries 'Publicly available mailing lists' (records 3265- 3268 at the time of writing), which can be searched similarly to above. Most mailing lists are open to all and are free, but some have restricted membership.

Each mailing list entry describes the purpose of the list, and how to subscribe. These instructions should be carefully followed, remembering the capitalization is important. As an example, the listing for one mailing list (on Scottish dancing) is shown on page 7.

Further discussion will occur at the Beginner's SIG meeting. In the meantime, if you have any questions on this, or on any other topic, phone me at 749-2387.

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