

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Quake The Next Big One

Inside Chernobyl 32 Nuclear Comeback 54 Glen Canyon Revealed 64
The New Venezuela 82 Dragonflies 104 ZIP USA: It's a Dog's Life 148

TECHNOLOGY



The relocated oak stands five stories tall and weighs nearly as much as a Boeing 747.

Tree Transplant When a big chain store wanted to build on a certain lot in Auburndale, Florida, a 120-year-old oak stood in the way. Rather than cutting it down, the retailer paid more than \$100,000 to have the tree transplanted—a practice that's become more common as municipalities require developers to preserve tree canopy, says Dan Joy of the Davey Tree Expert Company, the firm that moved the oak. Saving trees creates positive publicity and attracts crowds who come to watch the process. "It's like the circus coming to town," says Joy. The Auburndale oak's move took six weeks of preparation. After uncovering and trimming its 42-foot-wide root-ball, the movers slid steel rods underneath (above), and the 353-ton tree was lifted onto a trailer for transport to its new home—just 500 yards away, in a wetland preservation area. So far the old tree is doing just fine. —Peter Gwin

What's New?

Imagine flexible robot "skin" that can detect contact, or sensors for prosthetic limbs that can be integrated into human tissue. Stretchable silicon chips developed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign may make such things possible. The malleable, wavy silicon ribbons resemble accordion bellows

and are a thousandth the width of a human hair.

Wasps can detect explosives and drugs. Scientists have trained tiny parasitic wasps from the species *Microplitis croceipes* to associate certain smells with food rewards. To earn their rewards, the wasps are put into a cartridge

inside what the scientists call the "wasp hound," a length of PVC pipe equipped with a tiny camera and alarm. When the wasps detect a target odor, they move toward its source, triggering the alarm. Training the insects takes only five minutes, but there's high turnover: The wasps live only 12 to 22 days.