



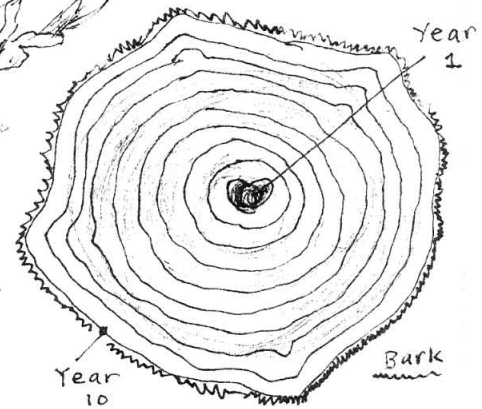
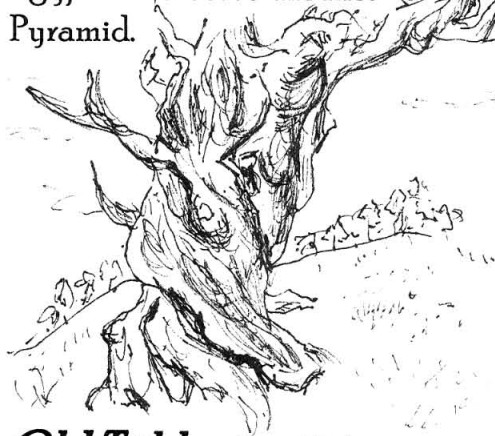
Forest of the Ancients

Scribe: Galen

Artist: Linda

old and had already been growing for a century when the Egyptians erected the first Pyramid.

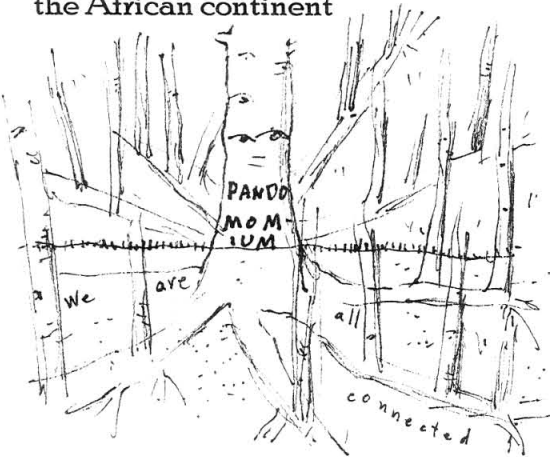
have a pretty good idea of how old the tree is.



JANUARY 2011

Trees are the oldest living organisms on Planet Earth.

The oldest living tree on the planet is actually a tree colony. It's called **Pando** and it's at least 80,000 years old. Pando is a 105-acre colony made of Quaking Aspen "clones," trees that all grew from the same root system. Located at Fish Lake, Utah, this systems of trees began while all of our human ancestors were still living on the African continent



Pando is interesting not only because it's a clone colony but it's also a deciduous group of trees. Most other really ancient trees are coniferous trees. That means they have needles instead of leaves and they are evergreen.

The world's oldest individual tree is called **Methuselah** and it's a bristle cone pine tree. It's 4,765 years

Old Tjikko (Jee-Ko) is ancient but comparatively tiny. This 16 foot Norway Spruce lives in Sweden and it's 9,550 years old. The reason it's so small is that it was born around the end of the last ice age. For thousands of years the climate was freezing and the tree was stunted but as temperatures gradually warmed Tjikko grew from shrub form into a full fledged little tree!



Dendrochronology is the science of figuring out the age of trees. Dendrologists (tree scientists) do this by counting tree rings. Most trees form rings annually. So, if you count the number of tree rings on a tree from the center of its trunk out to it's bark, you'll

(your growing gardener gift is a magnet made from a fir tree fresh cut—we sawed them off of peoples' Christmas trees last month. See if you can figure out how old the tree^{was} when it got chopped down).

Do you have to cut the tree down to figure out how old it is? The answer is "no." Dendrologists use a special tool called an "increment borer" which is a hollow drill that carves out a long core from a healthy full grown tree. The scientists are trained to see the rings represented from this long thin sample of the tree's insides. If they do it right, it doesn't hurt the tree.

Sources for this issue of the Growing Gardeners' Newsletter include:

-How Old is That Tree <http://www.conifers.org/topics/oldest.htm>

-The Oldest Trees on the Planet <http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2010/03/old-tree-gallery/all/1>

Growing Gardeners Club is for all young people ages 4-12 who have an interest in gardening. Membership is FREE. Growing Gardeners receive a free gardening gift each month along with the Growing Gardeners Newsletter. The Growing Gardeners Newsletter is created by West Seattle Nursery staffers: Linda Hornberg and Galen Guffy.

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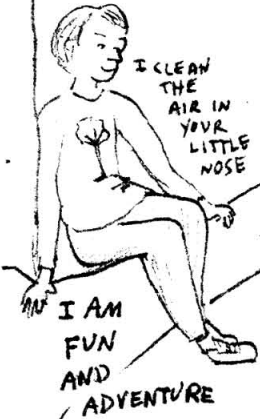
Tree to Be You and Me

by L.R. HORNBERG 1-11

I wear my crown down near the ground.
My head is in the sky.

I have no eyes, ears,
nose or lips;
My kids are borne
on my fingertips.

Tell me, who am I?



I CLEAN THE AIR IN YOUR LITTLE NOSE

I AM FUN AND ADVENTURE

I AM YOUR FAVORITE CHAIR



I AM THINKING ABOUT BRANCHING OUT

I AM HOME SWEET HOME



I AM THE PAGES IN YOUR BOOKS

I AM THE FUEL IN YOUR FIREPLACE



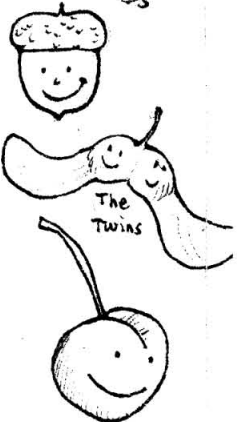
HOME, TOO!

I keep you fed.
I keep you warm
I keep you safe and dry.

I eat with my hands
and drink with my feet;
I can keep your car cool
when you park on the street.

Tell me, who am I?

SAY HELLO TO SOME OF MY KIDS



A SAMPLING OF THE WIDE RANGE OF MY SEASONAL WARDROBE



I may live for one
or one hundred years
before I say, Goodbye.

My age is a secret
encircling my heart;
You can only find out
if you take me apart.
Tell me, who am I?

MY BARK IS BETTER THAN MY BITE

MY ROOTS RUN DEEP
AND MY HISTORY
IS LONG!

