



The Lab Notebook



Meet Keri Knowles, New Friends Trustee

Keri Knowles is the newest Trustee elected to the Board of the Friends of Thomas Edison NHP at its meeting on December 8, 2010. Keri has been volunteering with the Friends since their Strategic Planning Session held in Spring 2010. She also serves on the Communications Committee which established the Friends' Facebook page in May 2010.

The Friends are especially enthusiastic about Keri's background in dance, music, and visual art as well as experience in web and graphic design. Her perspective as an artist and skill

with video exhibit installations brings to the board not only youthful energy and enthusiasm for the Edison legacy but also an informed grasp of the Park's vital cultural and historical context.

Keri is a West Orange native who, after finishing an MA in New Media from the University of Art & Design in Helsinki, Finland, returned to New Jersey and has been engaged in turning her family's Dome nightclub at the Manor into an even livelier nightspot.

Visitor Center Has New Look

The Visitor Center has a new desk that will improve visitor flow throughout the space. The counters in place since our Grand Re-Opening sometimes proved difficult for visitors to negotiate, especially on days when large numbers turned up, eager to make purchases, get Glenmont tickets, and pick up or return audio tour headsets. The new installation was made possible by John Keegan, President of the Edison Innovation Foundation.



Volunteer B.J. Johnson is ready to welcome the public at the new VC desk. Visitors should find it easier to move throughout the Museum Shop.

Follow Us on Twitter!

Edison is on Twitter. Beginning February 11, get short, timely messages from Thomas Edison NHP on park news, programs, and special events.

Starting on that same date, follow a year in the life of Edison, his family and his businesses a century ago. The Park will tweet news of Edison day-by-day, from his 64th birthday on February 11, 1911 to his 65th the following year. You will be able to track Edison as he experiments in the lab, handles the affairs of his phonograph and motion picture companies, deals with family problems, answers fan mail, talks to reporters, and travels to Europe with his family.

Documents, photographs, and advertisements from the Park's rich museum collections will be available on the Park's website. They will expand and enrich the tweets. selected.

Twitter is a rich source of instantly updated information that allows you to stay in touch with a wide variety of topics. Join today and follow us at ["twitter.com/thomasedisonnhp."](https://twitter.com/thomasedisonnhp)



Message from the Assistant Superintendent

Most of our conversations throughout this past year were about what we did, what worked or didn't work, or what to do to achieve new levels of excellence at the Park: new things, new programs, concerts, exhibits, signage, plans. . .

But we also learned that "The Park" is an organization comprised of people, not things. In his Tenets of Leadership Greg Marshall emphasized that *"We must all understand that the park's "Human Assets" – our employees, partners and volunteers – are our most important asset. Without our employees, partners and volunteers, we cannot fulfill our mission or stewardship responsibilities."*

So I wanted to take a moment here to recognize those people, the "human assets" that made all the "things" possible.

Just the numbers. . .

Within the last two years, we filled over 10 permanent positions at the Park, some which had been vacant since 2002! Many were new positions that were established to support our new Park, while some resulted from more recent retirements or transfers. We hired two new division chiefs as well as front-line employees in the maintenance, administration, interpretation and protection divisions. We now have 30 permanent employees working at Thomas Edison NHP (although we do share a few of those with Morristown NHP).

About 25 temporary and seasonal employees joined the NPS staff, some for a few weeks, some for a few months. They have been working in every division in the Park as museum or archives technicians, laborers, a computer technician, park rangers, park guides or visitor use assistants.

Over 80 VIPs (Volunteer-In-Parks) contributed almost 8,200 work hours in 2010!

The summer of 2010 marked the 15th year of the intern program with Seton Hall Prep in West Orange, supported by our partner, the Charles Edison Fund. Since the program started, 13 different students have come back to work for the National Park Service after their graduation, for a total of over 30 seasonal appointments!

Our list of park partners continues to grow; the Edison Innovation Foundation, the Charles Edison Fund, the Friends of Thomas Edison NHP, Eastern National, the Garden Club of the Oranges, Master Gardeners of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Essex County, the Thomas Edison Papers, the Edison Memorial Tower Corporation.

Who are the people behind those numbers? Our Edison family of new staff and volunteers includes high school students, high school teachers, a guidance counselor, a retired teacher, college students, graduate students, a retired police officer, probation officer, R&D Technician, cookbook editor, physical therapist, freelance writer, engineers, authors and a safety officer! Some people have over 25 years experience in the National Park Service, some are brand new. Some have worked at more than ten NPS sites around the country, some only at Thomas Edison NHP.

We have members of all generations - Traditionalists, Baby boomers, Generation X and Millennials!

Find out more about us by taking the Quiz on the next page.



Terri Jung

An Edison Quiz

See if you can figure out who we are...

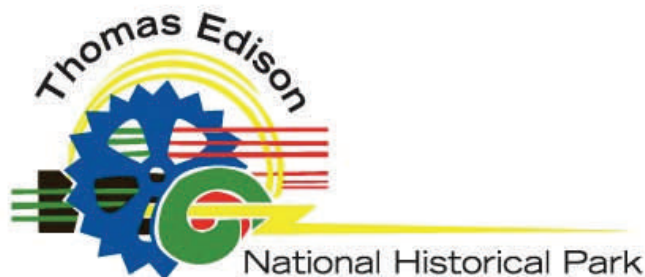
The answer could be anyone at the Park – an NPS employee (permanent/ temporary/ seasonal/intermittent), a Volunteer-In-Parks (VIP), or a park partner. In many cases there is more than one correct answer!

Who's been at Thomas Edison NHP the longest?
Who used to work in Llewellyn Park?
Who won an Emmy in 1994?
Who was an international flight attendant?
Who worked at Morristown NHP before working at Thomas Edison NHP?
Who was the attorney who oversaw Charles Edison's estate?
How many VIPs live in Llewellyn Park? Can you name two?
Who has been both a VIP and an NPS ranger?
Who won the Inventor of the Year award in 2005 from the New Jersey Inventor's Hall of Fame?
Which VIPs are also paid employees of one of our park partners?
Who drives farthest to come to work each day?
Who graduated from Rutgers University?
Who started as an intern in the Seton Hall Prep program?
Who worked at a NJ state park?
Who worked on oil rigs in the Rocky Mountains?
Who graduated from the US Military Academy at West Point?
Who plays guitar?
Who drives a Porsche?
Who currently serves in the Reserves or National Guard?
Who worked at "Ft. Caroline National Memorial and Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve"?

BONUS QUESTION: Where is Ft. Caroline National Memorial & Timucuan Ecological & Historic Preserve?

Stay tuned to the next edition of The Lab Notebook for answers!

Thanks to all our employees, volunteers and partners!
Together we look forward to a bright future at Thomas Edison National Historical Park!



What Kept the Insomnia Squad Awake at Night?

Thomas Jeffrey, Senior Editor of the *Thomas Edison Papers* and a historian at Thomas Edison NHP, was curious about one of the best-known photographs in our collection: the "Insomnia Squad," from 1912. He has published his findings in *New Jersey History*.

Edison was trying to solve a set of manufacturing problems plaguing his new disk recording. The pressure to get the job done was great, since Edison had promised reporters (prematurely, as usual) that he would soon have his new phonograph and disks in shops. So he assembled a team that worked pretty much around the clock for several weeks. Even family concerns had an impact on the project. Edison's mother-in-law was in failing health in Akron, and Mina Edison's absence from West Orange simultaneously permitted Edison to put in the late nights, but also threatened to demand his hasty departure for Ohio.

Jeffrey uses patent applications and other documents to trace how the team conquered the problem, coming up at last with not only a new product, but a new process for lamination with diverse industrial applications. He also identifies each member of the Squad, sketching in their backgrounds, their work with Edison, and their later careers.

The full article can be found in the latest issue of *New Jersey History*, the venerable publication recently revived online by the Rutgers University Libraries. You can find it at: <http://njh.libraries.rutgers.edu/index.php/njh/article/viewFile/1056/2480>



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Thomas Edison National Historical Park
211 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

Volunteers-In-Parks Coordinator Thomas Edison National Historical Park

Michelle Ortwein
973-736-0550 x31 phone
michelle_ortwein@nps.gov

www.nps.gov/edis Click on "Support the National Park Service"

"The Lab Notebook" is a quarterly publication of Thomas Edison National Historical Park.

Printed on recycled paper.



Editor

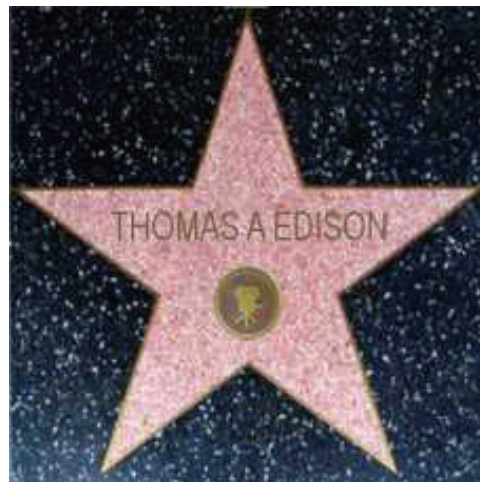
Edward Wirth

Contributors

Leonard DeGraaf
Tom Jeffrey
Terri Jung
John O'Reilly
Carmen Pantaleo
Karen Sloat-Olsen
Edward Wirth

Comments? Write to:

Greg Marshall, Superintendent
Thomas Edison National Historical Park
211 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052



Thomas Edison has his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The star, fashioned from terrazzo and brass, is located at 6700 Hollywood Boulevard between McCadden and Las Palmas.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Thomas Edison National Historical Park was established to preserve and protect Thomas Alva Edison's West Orange Laboratory, home, and collections for the education and inspiration of people worldwide.

Thomas Edison National Historical Park

211 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052
Web site: www.nps.gov/edis
Email: edis_superintendent@nps.gov

Visitor Information

973-324-9973
Fax: 973-736-8496

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.