



SoFlacs



Vol. 24, No. 4

South Florida Section ACS

May 2014

You are invited

to join us as the ACS recognizes Thomas Edison's Botanical Research Laboratory
in Fort Myers as a National Historic Chemical Landmark

2:00 – 4:00 P.M., Sunday, May 25, 2014

**Edison & Ford Winter Estates
2530 McGregor Blvd. Fort Myers**

The celebration will include dedication of the plaque by Edison Ford and dignitaries from the ACS designating the site as a National Historic Chemical Landmark. There will be continuous "inside the lab" tours of the newly restored lab led by curators and scientists, and lots of family-friendly chemistry demonstrations led by the "Edison Ford Wild Wizard". The event is free and open to the public. RSVP at 239-334-7419 or ccramsey@edisonfordwinterestates.org.

Following World War I, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and Harvey Firestone became concerned about America's dependence on foreign sources of rubber for its industrial enterprises. As a result, the three men formed the Edison Botanic Research Corporation in Fort Myers in 1927 to investigate a source of rubber that could be domestically produced. The following year, Edison built this botanical laboratory where more than 17,000 plant samples from the United States and the world were analyzed for their latex content. One group of plants—*Solidago*, commonly known as goldenrod—was selected as the most promising. Edison's team crossbred species to increase their rubber content and tested industrial production. Additional celebrations of Edison's work in chemistry will be held by the ACS at the present-day locations of his laboratories. Edison's West Orange laboratory complex will be commemorated at the Thomas Edison National Historical Park in West Orange, N.J., on June 6, 2014, in partnership with the North Jersey Section of ACS. Edison's Menlo Park laboratory will be recognized at The Henry Ford, Greenfield Village, in Dearborn Mich., on September 20, 2014, in partnership with the ACS Detroit Local Section. The Menlo Park buildings were moved from their original site in New Jersey to Dearborn in 1928 when it was reconstructed by Edison's friend Henry Ford.

The ACS established the National Historic Chemical Landmarks program in 1992 to recognize important achievements in the history of the chemical sciences. Subjects recognized through this program have included Bakelite, the world's first synthetic plastic; the discovery and development of penicillin; and the work of historical figures such as Joseph Priestley, George Washington Carver and Rachel Carson. This will be the first National Historic Chemical Landmark recognized in Florida. More information is available online at www.acs.org/landmarks.

SoFlacs, the publication of the South Florida Section, American Chemical Society, is published periodically.
EDITOR and BUSINESS MANAGER: George Fisher, Department of Chemistry, Barry University, 11300
N.E. 2nd Ave., Miami Shores, FL 33161, (305) 899-3430, FAX (305) 899-3479; e-mail: gfisher@barry.edu.

CIRCULATION: Send post office form 3579 to Circulation Dept. SoFlacs, c/o George Fisher, Department
of Chemistry, Barry University, 11300 N.E. 2nd Ave., Miami Shores, FL 33161.
SoFL-ACS web site: <http://www.soflacs.org> National ACS web site: <http://www.acs.org>



AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY
South Florida Section
Department of Chemistry
Barry University
11300 NE 2nd Ave.
Miami Shores, FL 33161