



Q&A BY EDIE TOLCHIN

The Garden State: Where Ideas Grow

"New Jersey companies and residents have received 115,000 patents since that date (1977). Only California, Texas and New York have more, and those states have much larger populations," boasts lifelong Garden State resident, former fourth grade elementary school teacher and current historian, Linda J. Barth.

While teaching her young students, Barth tried to emphasize New Jersey's outstanding features such as its diverse geography, agriculture, industry, as well as "famous firsts" and inventions.

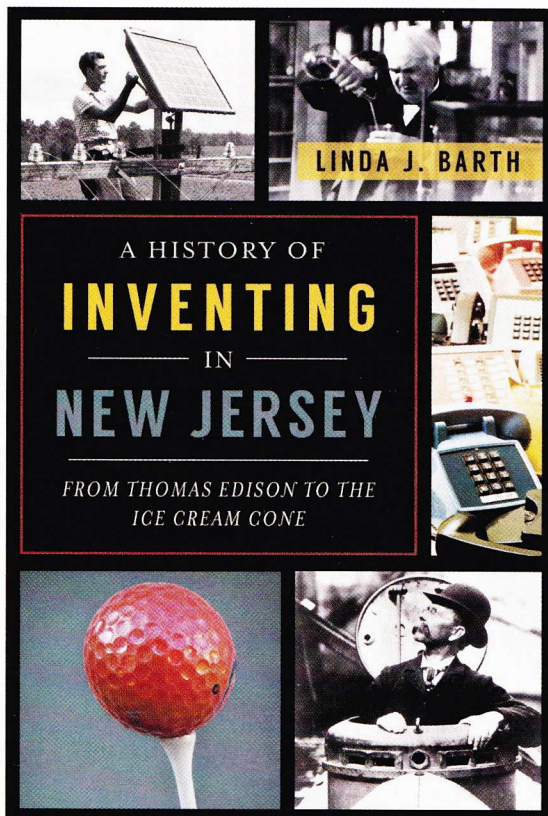
No stranger to book writing, Barth has written several books since her retirement in 1995, including *Hidden New Jersey*, *Bridgetender's Boy*, and *The Delaware and Raritan Canal*. She is currently active in the Delaware and Raritan Canal Watch and has served on the board of Celebrate NJ!

In her wonderfully entertaining book, *A History of Inventing in New Jersey – From Thomas Edison to the Ice Cream Cone*, Linda J. Barth creates colorful vignettes of astounding inventions and the brains behind them. It is almost like a documentary film that the reader easily visualizes with every page read.

Here are some inventions we'll bet you didn't know originated in the Garden State:

- The ice cream cone: Italo Marchiony, 1903
- Play-Doh®: Kay Zufall (1950s)
- The golf tee: William Lowell, 1924
- Drive-in movie theatres: Richard Hollingshead, 1933
- The Band-Aid®: Earle Dickson, 1920
- The first canned, condensed soups: John Dorrance of the Campbell Soup Company in 1897
- M&M's®: Forest E. Mars (1904-99) and Bruce Murrie, 1941
- Prednisone: Arthur Nobile, 1950-1951
- The Bar Code: Norman Joseph Woodland, 1952

Our contributing editor, Edie G. Tolchin, recently met Mrs. Barth at a meeting of the National Society of Inventors (www.nationalinventors.com) that meets monthly in Roselle Park, NJ, where Barth enthralled a good-sized audience with her lecture and slide show presentation on her new book.



Edie G. Tolchin (EGT): So how did the idea for *A History of Inventing in New Jersey* come about?

Linda J. Barth (LJB): After writing *Hidden New Jersey*, a book of fun facts about New Jersey, I realized how many things had been invented here. By sharing some of the many New Jersey inventions, I am continuing in my quest to provide a positive view of my state. I am really tired of people making jokes about New Jersey, so I'm doing all I can to promote the state – especially during this 350th anniversary year.

EGT: So, Linda, please tell us about your research for this book.

LJB: I learned about many of the recent innovations in the newspaper and then contacted the inventor. It was great fun visiting with Harry Knowles, inventor of the hand-held scanner, at his home in South Jersey. For earlier inventions, I visited museums and searched out books and magazines. I also conferred with a patent attorney to learn more about that process.

EGT: Did you encounter any obstacles or stumbling blocks that, perhaps, you had to work around in order to gather the info you needed on any particular inventor or invention?

LJB: The most surprising obstacle was speaking to two inventors who tried but could not give me a simplified explanation of what their invention was all about. Since this started as a children's book, I needed uncomplicated descriptions. I couldn't include the invention if I couldn't understand it.

EGT: Whose would you consider to be the most helpful invention for the largest population?

LJB: Although there are many choices, I would choose the transistor and the charge-coupled device. Transistors power satellites, fiber optic networks, radios, computers, cell phones, and fax machines. The charge-coupled device was, in the words of its co-inventor, "instrumental in the creation of digital cameras, semi-conductors, capacitors, and electron transfers."

EGT: What was your favorite invention and why?

LJB: My favorite inventions are the Band-Aid® and M&M's®. The latter because they are fun to eat and the former because there's a great story behind the creation.

EGT: Of course, Thomas Alva Edison was a huge influence on the New Jersey invention scene. Did you get to meet any of his descendants in your investigations?

LJB: No, I did not meet any of his descendants. I did, however, visit Edison sites in Milan, Ohio; Fort Myers, Florida; West Orange, New Jersey; and Port Huron, Michigan.

EGT: Do you have any words of wisdom or suggestions for readers of this book, many of whom are novice inventors?

LJB: I would say, "Never give up, no matter how inconsequential you may think the idea is." Someone, somewhere may turn up to help you.

EGT: Where can our readers buy this book?

LJB: Readers may purchase the book at Barnes & Noble, Amazon, and, of course, from the author. Just visit www.lindajbarth.com to view all of my books and to order them.

Hope this whets your appetite to run out and purchase this fascinating read. Thumbs up – buy this book!

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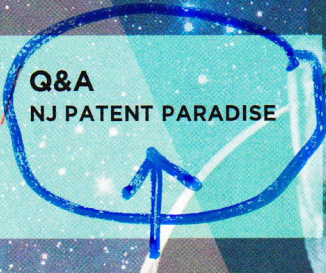
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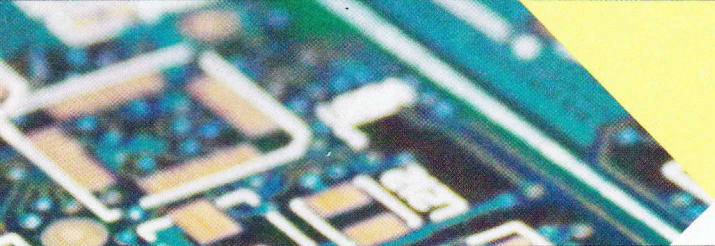
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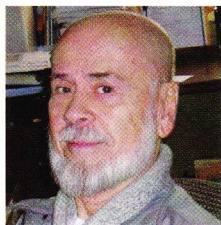


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JACK LANDER, our regular columnist on all things prototyping, licensing and inventing, explores the gap between inventor and entrepreneur. Jack, a near-legend in the inventing community, is no stranger to the written word. His latest book is *Marketing Your Invention – A Complete Guide to Licensing, Producing and Selling Your Invention*. You can reach him at Jack@Inventor-mentor.com



DHANA COHEN Co-founder of The Women Inventorz Network and the newly created Inventorz(VIRTUAL)Network. Dhana knows a thing or two about great innovation, as an inventor herself she struggled with who to contact, and who truly had her best interest in mind. Luckily she stopped inventing after several products and took her background in marketing and partnered with Melinda Knight, together they have developed the right connections, education and marketing for the inventor community. The new (VIRTUAL) InventorzNetwork.com is the only platform out there in the inventor industry, think Match.com meets Angie's List for the inventor industry.



EDIE TOLCHIN, known as "The Sourcing Lady" (SM), "invented" EGT Global Trading in 1997, with a goal to link U.S. inventors with Asian manufacturers, to provide an exclusive import service for sourcing, quality control, production testing and safety issues, manufacturing, international financing, air/ocean shipping, customs clearance arrangements, and dock-to-door delivery. Website: www.egtglobbaltrading.com



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