



Vol. III • No. V

Imprint

For the Decorative Concrete Professional

You asked for it, you got it.

Factory-blended mixes coming soon

BY DOUG BANNISTER
THE STAMP STORE®

Contractors tell us the convenience and quality control found in factory-blended bagged mixes are increasingly important. *We hear you.*

This fall the Stamp Store will add factory-blended bagged countertop and overlay mixes to our product line. Most of you are familiar with SLICK'EM®, our micro topping for floors and countertops and our first factory-blended product. Like SLICK'EM®, our overlay and countertop mixes originate from our installation days and have improved over time with admixtures and standardization. For overlays, we'll offer 50 pound bags of Stamp Store (SS) Base/Spray Mix and a Stamp Mix in

white and gray, plus pre-measured liquid colors for tinting. We will also supply 50 pound bags of SS Countertop Mix.

If you've never worked with a factory-blended mix, let me emphasize: Time saved equals money earned. Most contractors tell us that by the time sand and cement are rounded up and weighed, there is little difference in cost between on-site blending and factory-bagged products.

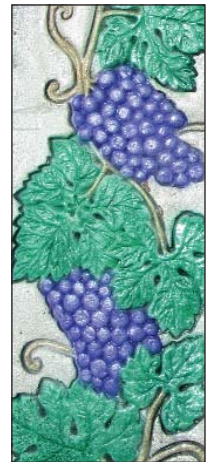
Equally important is the issue of quality control. We blend our mixes 5,000 pounds at a time. This removes guesswork from the equation by ensuring greater consistency and enhanced quality control from batch to batch.

Cont'd on page 2

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHT

GRAPEVINE BORDER TOOL PACKS **PUNCH**

The new grapevine border tool from the Stamp Store is the perfect accent for countertops, or use it to frame garden paths, pool decks or drives. Provides crisp, clean detail and bends to follow any free form design. (We think it looks especially great when colored using the new SS Rainbow Stain System.)



To order, call 888-848-0059 or visit thestampstore.com.



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Think Frank Lloyd Wright and you'll understand the architectural aesthetic of Brian Camblin, Studio Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM. Camblin arrived at the Stamp Store seeking decorative concrete applications that would accent his homes without overwhelming them. "We're going for designs that punch through the noise of everything else, but also sell well. This definitely punches," he said.



Link Cowen, owner of Cowen Construction in Shawnee, OK, builds homes throughout central Oklahoma. Cowen and his interior designer, Lynn Allen, attended the May Deminar to find techniques that will distinguish their homes. "There's a lot of people who build good homes, but stained floors and countertops will give ours that extra touch," Cowen said.



Father and son team Javier and Pablo Gonzalez own JP Concrete in Manassas, VA. They enrolled in a Deminar to improve their stamping skills,

but ended up with more knowledge than they bargained for. "We were interested in learning more about stamping, but we really like what we've learned about countertops and overlays—especially when we discovered the going price!," said Pablo.



Affluent retirees building large homes in Redmond, OR, point to a promising market for Brandon Loy of Lance Loy Construction. "Other contractors in our area aren't doing decorative concrete to this extent or being this creative" Loy said. "We decided to attend the Deminar so we can

position ourselves to take a larger share of our market."

Ryan Schleis owner of Cast Stone Studios, Greenville, WI, enrolled in the March Deminar to familiarize himself with the cast-in-place countertop process. "We currently do a lot of pre-cast countertops, but we run into problems from time to time," he said. Impressed with the artistic effects of SLICK'EM®, Schleis said he's eager to incorporate it into his countertop designs.



Cont'd from pg. 1

To underscore the importance of quality control, let me share a "call back" story from our contracting days. It involves a pool deck remodel we did years ago mixing 50 pounds of sand, cement and polymer on site. The host concrete was badly deteriorated. I thought we did a good job removing the loose concrete, but the remaining concrete was not as hard or dense as I would have liked. The following spring we got the phone call, the one every contractor hates to get... "You need to come out here."

Sure enough, our knock-down overlay had delaminated in some areas. To this day I don't know if the problem resulted from too much hydrostatic pressure coming through the original porous concrete or if we hadn't measured correctly. The moral of this story—consistent mixes result in happier customers and the factory usually does it better than "Bubba."

Regarding the quality control issue, some manufacturers add a dry polymer to their overlay mixes, but we encourage you to use a wet polymer with our mix for two reasons: First, most overlay applications require a primed substrate which means you'll usually keep wet polymer on the job site anyway. Second, the jury is still out on the performance of dry polymers. I like the dry polymer concept because it's more convenient, but until conclusive favorable third party testing is available we'll stay with the wet system.

Also coming this fall, look for the release of another new factory-blended

bagged product, SS Countertop Mix. SS Countertop Mix is a blend of 3/8-inch rock and several sand sizes with either white or gray cement. The advantage of using SS Countertop Mix lies in its well-graded blend of aggregates. This requires less cement—therefore less water—for a workable slump and a 5500 psi rating. Less water results in higher countertop substrate strengths with less shrinkage.

In my opinion reducing the amount of water in your mix, providing proper reinforcement and allowing for effective curing are the secrets to preventing countertop curling and cracking. Admixes such as plasticizer and fiber also play a key role. With plasticizer you gain even higher concrete strengths and experience less shrinkage than with water alone. I also recommend using fiber reinforcement for long sections of countertop, particularly those with corners. (In these instances, remember to use reentrant corner steel in addition to fiber.)

Keep in mind that if you add the fiber and then apply acid stain, the fibers—even our "stealth" type—will be visible. Don't worry. These fibers are easily torched off before applying the first sealer coat. My opinion: the benefits of fiber are worth the torching.

We know you will appreciate the SS Countertop Mix and our SS Base/Spray and Stamp Mix for overlays. They're more workable, they finish easier and they offer the performance characteristics that guarantee consistent, quality decorative concrete. In short, they're rock solid. Enjoy!

new: solid colors

If you appreciate our SS Rainbow water-based stain system, be sure to check out our new SS Rainbow solid stains. Sixteen solid premium performance colors your customers will love.



See our stain chart inside this issue!

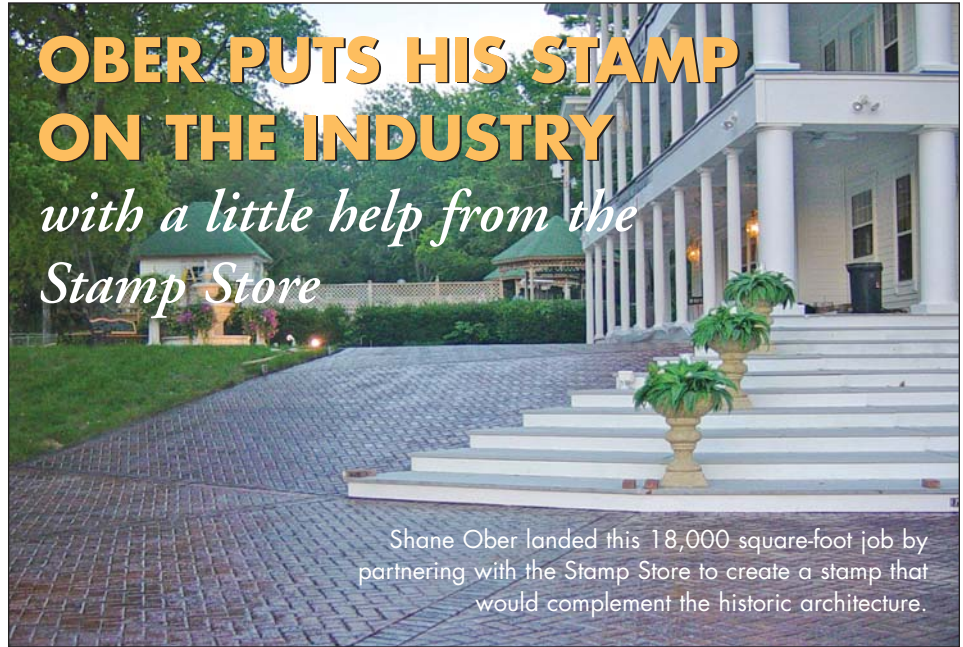
Great news. Your customer wants 18,000 square feet of stamped concrete. Here's the catch: The pattern they want—the one they'll pay an arm and a leg for—doesn't exist.

Faced with this dilemma, Shane Ober, owner of Solid Rock Concrete in Rogers, AR, said "no problem." Then he called the Stamp Store. Ober's challenge: Create a custom stamp that would complement his customer's historic bed and breakfast inn. "The owner wanted to mimic the brick that was there in the 1800s," Ober said. "What he said was 'I want it to look like a carriage has been riding over it for hundreds of years.'"

To visualize the pattern, Ober and the inn owner studied photos of historic plantations and discussed existing stamp patterns at length. "We needed a stamp that would take the herringbone texture and turn it into a Pennsylvania cobble that looks like its been 'tumbled,'" he said.

To get the look Ober measured an actual brick, calculated the widest spot in the mortar joints, determined the depth of the joints and "rolled off" the tops to create a worn look—then he drew it on a napkin. Not the ideal rendering material, Ober admits, but it worked. "I showed the design to the Stamp Store and they loved it," he said.

Ober and Troy Schweinberg, Stamp Store general manager, discussed the



Shane Ober landed this 18,000 square-foot job by partnering with the Stamp Store to create a stamp that would complement the historic architecture.

pattern via several lengthy cell phone calls. Two weeks from the initial phone call Ober received a perfect stamp prototype. "The Stamp Store got it right the first time and I was impressed," he said. "Throughout the whole process I thought the wheels could fall off this job at any moment, but they didn't."

The successful collaboration netted Ober the 18,000-square-foot inn job and turned his idea into a marketable stamp pattern that's currently sold through the Stamp Store. The inn owner is elated, and Ober has used his new Herringbone Old Cobble pattern to pull in ten other jobs in his area. "We have a lot of historic architecture so this pattern is going over well here," he said.

Looking back, Ober said the process of creating a custom stamp wasn't as complicated as he'd imagined but it still involved risk, namely due to the expense. The charge to create a custom stamp prototype ranges from \$2,000 to \$5,000 depending upon the intricacy of the pattern.

"It's not a difficult process, but it does require some careful thought," Schweinberg said. "The more clearly we understand a contractor's needs, the less risk is involved."

"Fortunately, that's where the Stamp Store shines," he added. "We take the time to listen, plus we understand the contractor's strengths and time constraints," he said.

The teamwork certainly paid off for Shane Ober. But is he interested in designing more custom stamps? "Yes and no," he said. "If it separates me from the competition, you can bet I'll do it."

For more details on creating custom stamps or to order the new Herringbone Old Cobble pattern, contact Troy Schweinberg at 888-848-0059, or send e-mail to troy@thestampstore.com.

Shane Ober, owner of Arkansas-based Solid Rock Concrete, partnered with the Stamp Store to create a new stamp pattern that mimics aged brick. Order Herringbone Old Cobble online at thestampstore.com, or call 888-848-0059.



DO'S AND DON'TS

Chilly temperatures shouldn't put the freeze on quality concrete work. Try these proven tips for handling tricky cool weather concrete conditions:

👎 DON'T: Place concrete on frozen ground—the concrete will settle as the subgrade thaws. Likewise, placing and compacting fill material on a frozen subgrade still leaves you with expandable soil underneath. Always ensure the base is thawed before compacting, fine grading and placing.

👍 DO: Cover the subgrade before the pour to raise the ground temperature. Use insulated blankets, straw or fiberglass insulation sandwiched between two layers of 6-mil poly. The poly alone works fine if temperatures don't drop below the mid-20s overnight. If temperatures read in the teens or lower, use additional insulation to prevent frost penetration. Another tip: Sprinkle calcium chloride flakes and

pellets on a frozen subgrade to generate more heat under the blankets. In severe climates, contractors often erect heated enclosures to get the frost out. Make sure the exhaust is vented to the outside—fumes can blister the top layer of fresh concrete, not to mention gassing your employees.

👍 DO: Make adjustments to your mix design to compensate for cold weather conditions. *Some suggestions:*

- Ask your ready mix producer to use hot water; increase the cement content by half a bag or more; use a non-chloride accelerator; or place the concrete at a lower slump. Always keep a few disposable bags of non-chloride accelerator on hand so you can accelerate at the job site if necessary.

- Ask if high early Type III cement is available to use in place of regular Type I. Make sure your air content is acceptable, and remember, your concrete should read 55°F. or warmer at

COLD WEATHER KIT: STOCK UP NOW!

FRITZ-PAK MINI DELAYED SET:

Box of 60 (8 oz. bags).....\$151²⁰ (Add one bag per cubic yard per hour at a cost of \$2⁵⁰/cubic yard.)

FRITZ-PAK NON-CHLORIDE ACCELERATOR:

5 lb. bag (8 per box).....\$68⁶⁴

FRITZ-PAK CONTROL FINISH:

Box of 30 (8 oz. pkgs.).....\$187⁸⁰

placement. If possible, aim for at least 50°F. for two days prior to placement.

👎 DON'T: Use calcium chloride as an accelerator. It tends to discolor concrete and produces more efflorescence.

👍 DO: Protect your finished work. Cover it with blankets or place the unbatted (fuzzy) side of fiberglass insulation down and cover with 6-mil poly as soon as you can walk on it. Placing the fiberglass fuzzy side down on fresh concrete prevents the poly from staining the fresh surface. Remember, the fiberglass insulation doesn't have to cover 100 percent, just enough to keep the blankets or poly off the concrete surface. And remember to pay special attention to the edges where the curing concrete generates less heat. (You can remove the protection to saw cut if you're confident your concrete is at least 500 psi. One way to tell is to notice your saw blade: When the blade cuts without fraying the edges, you're probably safe.)

👎 DON'T: Rely on the heat generated by the hydrating concrete to further the curing process. Hydration slows dramatically when the concrete temperature drops below 50°F. Remember, concrete must reach at least 500 psi before being subjected to freezing temperatures. Heat coming off the fresh pour may ward off freezing temperatures the first night, but why take the risk?

BREAK UP THE BOREDOM

Vast expanses of concrete get boring fast. On large areas of concrete, try the following techniques, or a combination of two or three, to break up the visual monotony.

- Score concrete by using tooling joints or saw cutting patterns or experiment with textured insets and borders using a near endless array of available stamp patterns.
- Lay templates over previously poured concrete and sandblast designs into the concrete. By creating a different texture in the uncovered areas, the design will appear to have two colors.
- Inset granite, tile, or marble that matches some of the surrounding structure into the concrete surface.
- Use multiple colors side by side to create striking designs and patterns.



FLOOR BY TOM ADKINS, ADVANCED CONCRETE DESIGNS, OKC



GREAT VERTICAL LOOKS, LESS TIME.

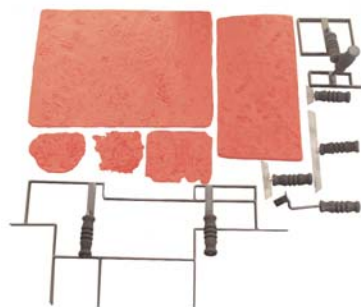
New template tools for walls

The new vertical concrete template system from FossilCrete is perfect for texturing large vertical surfaces. You'll appreciate the time and labor saved—without sacrificing great looks. Assorted template tools allow you to place near perfect grout lines in a short amount of time, while the accompanying seamless skins offer the deep texture you expect.

Three template patterns available: Coral; Random Stone; and Brick. Each set includes a variety of template tools, plus texture skins.

For info, call 888-848-0059.

The Stamp Store display at the Oklahoma City Home & Garden Show showed off the vertical concrete advantage. We textured this structure using the Coral and Random Stone template tools.



On a business trip to China, FossilCrete's Stan Pace took a moment to mold the popular native rock, Shanghai stone. A common building material in China, Shanghai stone is chiseled by hand to create the definitive angular rise from the center of each stone. Here in the USA, you can get this look using FossilCrete Vertical Mix and the new Shanghai Stone vertical tools. **Call us for more details: 888-848-0059.**



NEW AT THE ZOO

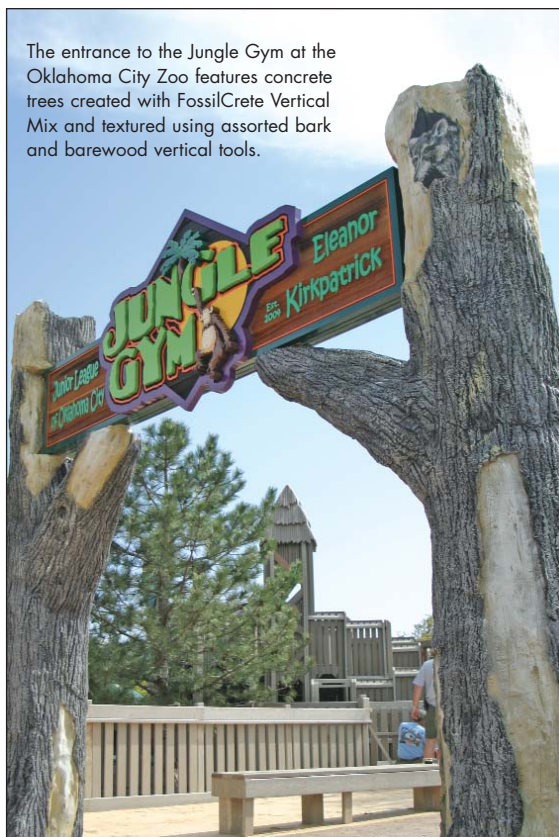
CONCRETE TREES & OTHER WILD STUFF

The new Jungle Gym at the Oklahoma City Zoo gave local contractors a chance to get a little wild—all for a good cause.

Contractors volunteered their time and skills to the project by stamping and texturing the Jungle Gym area using assorted FossilCrete tools. Imagine elephant, cape buffalo, giraffe, armadillo and other animal tracks imprinted in stained concrete, add one life-size Florida alligator and two towering concrete trees. Zoo patrons are going ape over it...You can see why.

Contractors involved in the project include Lawson Edwards; Josh Cunningham; Tony Clanton; Buzz Wondrasek; Wade Chickering; Tom Adkins; Jason Richmond; Mark Douglas; Tim Housley; Ross Klimo; and Stan and Shana Pace.

The entrance to the Jungle Gym at the Oklahoma City Zoo features concrete trees created with FossilCrete Vertical Mix and textured using assorted bark and barewood vertical tools.



COLOR-WISE

Contractors comment on new stain systems

Curious about using the Stamp Store's new SS Rainbow Stain System or our new Solomon integral coloring system? Don't take our word for it—see what contractors in the field have to say.

SS RAINBOW STAIN SYSTEM:

"I used all Rainbow colors on a casino floor and my customer is turning back flips over it. I love the vivid colors and variety; plus, it was easy to use. I also use Rainbow to touch up acid stain jobs."

—Lawson Edwards, Concrete Creations

"I find the SS Rainbow stains blend with regular acid stains much better. I'm using it in place of die stains. I also appreciate the fact that I can buy individual colors and do my own mixing on site."

—James Schwartz, Concreteworks

SOLOMON INTEGRAL COLOR

"It's ten times better than the old way. It's much cleaner, I don't have to weigh things out and the color is right on. In my opinion, Solomon has done for integral color what bubblegum did for release. It's accurate, awesome, I love it."

—Tom Adkins, Advanced Concrete Designs.

"It's cleaner, neater and you get truer color from load to load. I wouldn't use powder for anything anymore."

—Buzz Wondrasek, Buzz Wondrasek Concrete.

"The overall system is top quality and much simpler. I've used quite a few colors and liked the mix ratio and consistency, and the ability to match color is very good. By working with the Stamp Store, I've been able to match existing jobs where I used powdered integral color and the Solomon worked perfectly. But I don't know if I could call just any company with the Solomon system and get the same results. The Stamp Store really takes the guesswork out of it."

—Rick Ogden, Ogden Concrete.

Get the details on our new stain systems:
888-848-0059 • thestampstore.com

DCC to host more demo sessions in 2005

Thanks to the efforts of the Decorative Concrete Council (DCC), contractors across the country will enjoy more DCC-sponsored training opportunities in the coming year. At the DCC Spring Event, the DCC board of directors appointed an ad-hoc committee to look at the feasibility of hosting more successful regional events within the DCC's current format.

"The definition of successful was not based on whether an event makes money or gains membership for the ASCC, but rather does it help us fulfill the DCC mission?," said Doug Bannister, DCC president. The DCC mission statement is "to advance the quality and use of decorative concrete systems."

The committee included Allan Thompson, secretary/treasurer of the DCC; Frank Lewis, past DCC board member; Ken Heitzmann, decorative concrete distributor and promoter of two successful events in the state of Washington; and Doug Bannister, DCC president and owner of the Stamp Store. In discussing regional training opportunities, the committee focused on the following questions:

What's the best method for attracting contractors; how can the DCC entice local distribution sponsors; and how should the programs be structured to ensure a level playing field that supports the DCC position of neutrality and non-endorsement of particular brands?

"The DCC board agreed that the answer to at least two of these questions lies in more training events held in more locations around the country," said Bannister.

With the approval of the DCC board, the group scheduled the following training events:

March 10-11: Walla Walla, WA

March 24-25: Oklahoma City, OK

April 28-29: Columbia, SC

Bannister additional programs will take place in the fall. Prospective sites include Chicago, Atlanta and possibly Phoenix.

To keep abreast of DCC events, visit thestampstore.com. For details on joining the DCC, visit the ASCC Web site at asconline.org.

CONCRETE CALENDAR

JANUARY 18-21, 2005

WORLD OF CONCRETE, LAS VEGAS, NV
worldofconcrete.com

MARCH 10-11, 2005

DCC DEMO, WALLA WALLA, WA
asconline.org

MARCH 15-19, 2005

CONEXPO, LAS VEGAS, NV
conexpoconagg.com

MARCH 24-25, 2005

DCC DEMO, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK
asconline.org

APRIL 28-29, 2005

DCC DEMO, COLUMBIA, SC
asconline.org



DEMINAR SNAP SHOTS



MARCH 2004: **Front row:** Doug Bannister; Don Merk; Josh Merk; Ozzie Aguilar; and Ross Klimo. **Back row:** Frank Lewis; Kevin Payne; Gabriel Palma; Dalton Mason; Doug Carlson; Tom Wieseman; Ken Jungermann; Toxie Dearman; Marcus Lovelady; Denise Weiseman; and Rudy Apodaca.



APRIL 2004: **Front row:** Doug Bannister; Francisco Reyes; Chris Hurt; Kerry Johnson; and Kyle Hodges. **Back row:** Ryan Rodriguez; Lee Rodriguez; Rob Specht; Aaron Ross; Ryan Schleis; and Scott Sutherland.



MAY 2004: **Front row:** Link Cowen; Lynn Allen; Doug Bannister; and Gerard Harrigan. **Back row:** Sonny Simpson; Brandon Loy; Javier Gonzalez; Troy Smith; Pablo Gonzalez; Mike Dalrymple; and Dan Ferraro.



JUNE 2004: **Front row:** Sergio Flores; Shane Ober; Doug Bannister; Ricardo Avila; and Shellie Rigsby. **Back row:** Joseph Mamou; Kenny Turnipseed; Mark Montgomery; Andy Pruitt; Simon Soriano; Skip Gaston; Hillary McBroom; Ardis Merle; Pete Ford; and Michael Walker.

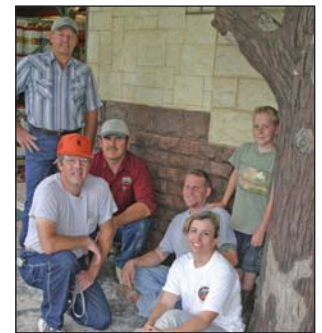


JULY 2004: **Front row:** Doug Bannister; Chris Dutoit; Cindy Brock; Rene Ruiz; Tyler Stilson; and Tim Pace. **Back row:** Daniel Gibson; Robert Jensen; Scott Christoferson; Don Macejko; Rick Brown; Brian Camblin; Kim Weaver; Clynie Mayle; Al Curtis; and Scott Knight.

VERTICAL CONCRETE DEMINARS...



JANUARY 2004: Coby Nicoletti; Dustin Marco; Wes Voorhees; Britt Grimsley; Stan Pace; and David Karnes.



JUNE, 2004: Ray Jones; Gus Rener; Ozzie Aguilar; Stan Pace; Stacey Zinke; and Shane Pace.



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Deminar Calendar

*The Hands-On Training You Expect, Plus New
Deminars That Zero In On Exciting New Techniques!*

Expert training in concrete countertop forming and design; vertical concrete applications and texturing; stamping, stenciling, scoring and engraving; overlays; staining techniques; step retardation; mix design; and more.

All attendees receive a complimentary binder loaded with helpful information including application techniques and mix designs for future reference. Deminar attendees also enjoy ongoing, qualified tech support that is the Stamp Store trademark, and a five percent discount on all Stamp Store products, forever.

2004 CLASSES

October	21-23
November	4-6
December	16-18

2005 CLASSES

January	6-8
February	24-25
April	21-23

*Our classes fill quickly, so
please enroll soon.*