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Hours Bill Owen worked last week

> 933:56 252:59

Placement Total hours: Pouring

254:19

Total hours: Finishing

Total hours: Forming/Rebar

1441:14

Total hours to date: Crestview Project

TOTAL HOURS: 4/5

#### WEEKLY TIMECARD

	STA	START		NCH	END	JOB CODES		JOBSITE/PROJECT		HOURS
Mon.	7:00		1/2		3:30	Ser Just		Brentypod		8
Tues.		I	100	-	3:30	1	-1	L.	100	8
Wed.				N	4:00			800, 1	Y	85
Thurs.	10%				4:00	ASTA.	100	Cresi	tview	85
Fri.	4	7	7	7	4:00	- 6		V	1.400	83

#### Owen, Bill

#### **Employee Report**

38:53 hours

Date	Range:	2/11/2008	through	2/15/2008

Total

Day	Date	Jobsite	Start	Stop	Cost Code	Hours	Total
Mon	2/11	Brentwood	7:08 AM	12:05 PM	Placing	4:57	
			12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Placing	2:41	7:38 hours
Tue	2/12	Brentwood	7:12 AM 12:43 PM	12:07 PM 3:23 PM	Placing Finishing	4:55 2:40	7:35 hours
Wed	2/13	Brentwood	7:12 AM 12:46 PM	12:02 PM 3:49 PM	Finishing Finishing	4:50 3:03	7:53 hours
Thu	2/14	Crestview	7:17 AM 12:50 PM	12:19 PM 3:46 PM	Placing Placing	5:02 2:56	7:58 hours
Fri	2/15	Crestview	7:13 AM 12:44 PM	12:07 PM 3:39 PM	Finshing Finishing	4:54 2:55	7:49 hours

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## Publisher's Letter



#### Dear Readers,

Getting older, I'm realizing more and more how often my actions and attitude influence people around me. It's not often that I recognize the positive impressions I make on others — rather, it's the awkward mistakes that always seem to get noticed. As I'm sure some will agree, part of having a loving wife and children around is that they wait patiently for opportunities to point out my shortcomings and humor themselves at my expense.

And so it is with decorative concrete! While some customers graciously give credit where credit is due, many customers wait patiently for opportunities to point out your shortcomings. Fear not, however — we are here to give you a pat on the back and say, "Great work!" As I've said before, your efforts in the field make this magazine what it is today.

When I first saw the photo that appears on the cover of this issue, I told our staff, "That's it." As publisher and editors we are always looking for a cover photo that will draw you into these pages. However, this image, in my opinion, does more than that. Yes, it highlights the work of Gregory Mata, a talented artisan you can read more about in this issue, and yes, it focuses on an adorable young lady who's fascinated with a playful picture on the ground. However, what this cover also reveals is how decorative concrete is changing future generations' perspectives toward concrete.

As a child, I rarely noticed concrete, except for moments when I skinned my knee on its surface or when I left behind a nice skid mark with my bicycle. Today, our children have a heightened sense of why concrete is used. In fact, I'm speculating that they have an eye out for the really cool-looking stuff! Add to this the conversations they've overheard of adults expressing satisfaction with those incrediblelooking countertops or the patterned concrete job at the office, and we can see that our children's future will most certainly involve decorative concrete.

More than ever, your work has the extraordinary ability to influence people's lives in a positive way. In fact, if you look at page 22 of this issue, you'll discover an exciting new service Concrete Decor provides that will help you make an even greater impression on this generation and the next.

In the spirit of giving this holiday season, it's our hope that this issue of Concrete Decor will make a positive impression on you. Enjoy it. And remember to stop by and say "Hi" to us at booth #S11447 if you're planning to attend the World of Concrete show in Las Vegas.

Happy New Year!

ent Mikkelsen, Publisher

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Concrete Decor now features the industry's ultimate online 'search' tool for finding just about anything related to decorative concrete. Start by logging on to www.concretedecor.net. At the top of the page simply enter a keyword such as "stencil," "integral color," "admixture" or "rock features." In less than a second we'll search more than five years of articles and information from the pages of Concrete Decor and provide you with an extensive list of results.



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# **Features**



11 Concrete Restoration Contest 2007

They hail from North Carolina, South Dakota, Arizona and California. They brought new life to an elementary school, an amphitheatre, a museum and a front porch. Meet this year's winners of our second annual Concrete Restoration Contest.

42 Project Profile:
Timberlake Condominiums Pool Deck,
Modesto, Calif

Condo owners in a gated community dreaded getting their pool up to snuff. Decorative concrete contractor Julio Hallack showed them they had nothing to worry about.

by Loretta Hall

53 Artisan in Concrete:
Gregory Mata, Cutting Edge
Decorative Concrete, Richfield, Ohio

From fiber optics to fire hydrants, this Ohio craftsman is expanding the boundaries of what can be included in a decorative concrete project. *by Stacey Enesey Klemenc* 

**58** Stamping in Cold Weather

This stamping won't warm your feet, but it will fill your bank account in the winter months. Here are some tips to get you going. *by Chris Camara* 

**62** Geo-illusions: Synthetic Rock Features

Glass-fiber reinforced concrete and other materials can be molded to make rock structures so natural-looking, even Mother Nature will be fooled.

by Amy Johnson

72 Curved Joint Placement

Just because a slab requires control joints doesn't mean the joints have to be straight. Here's how to bend them to your will. *by Jack Innis* 

84 Project Profile:Concrete Home, Chehalis, Wash.

In this house, concrete is everywhere, from the floors to the walls to the tabletops.

by Chris Camara

On the Cover: Incorporating fiber optics, radiant heating, stains, stamps and dyes, this tribute to a family's Dalmatians was crafted by Gregory Mata of Cutting Edge Decorative Concrete in Richfield, Ohio. Mata's five-year-old daughter Alena Grace shows off her father's work. To read more about Gregory Mata, this issue's Artisan in Concrete, turn to page 53.



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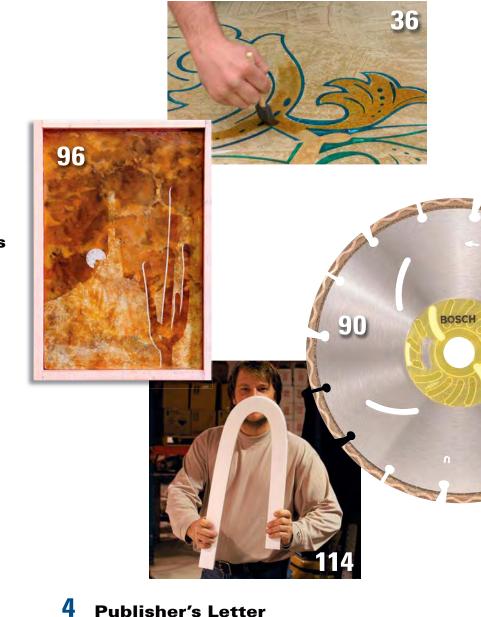
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Main Photo:

Ashler Stone Random Interlocking Pattern,
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# **CONCRETE RESTORATION CONTEST**



First Place Exterior

Royal Coat, Morehead City, N.C.

Black Hills Hardscapes, Hot Springs, S.D.



Second Place Exterior

Architectural Polishing, Tempe, Ariz., and Simi Valley, Calif.

Surface Design, Walnut Creek, Calif.

Once again, Concrete Decor's Concrete Restoration Contest attracted quality submissions from all over the country. The winning entries run the gamut from a small residential job to a large public works project spread across several buildings.

When Concrete Decor reviewed projects, we judged them using three criteria:

- 1. The challenges the contractor faced in rehabbing the project, taking into consideration the state of the original concrete and obstacles that threatened to derail the work along the way.
- The level of creativity that went into the final look of the project.
   The ways in which the look of the restored piece compliments or contrasts with its surroundings, an important element to consider when rehabbing any preexisting concrete feature.

We are pleased to announce the winners.



More pictures of these projects, plus a list of runners-up, are available online at ConcreteDecor.net

# **INTERIOR: FIRST PLACE**



Royal Coat Inc., based in Morehead City, N.C., for restoration of the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort, N.C.

IN THE WORDS OF: Barry Kreager, president, Royal Coat Inc.

The museum contacted us after they had a water leak that severely damaged their beautiful hardwood floor in the lobby area of their maritime facility. This was a project with many obstacles — we were working in a museum and had to keep dust to a minimum. We created a bubble to insure no dust would enter the rest of the facility, which was difficult because the room had a three-story ceiling.

We removed all of the damaged hardwood and adhesive, then ground the entire floor with diamond grinders. Then we had to apply fill material to ramp up to all the doorways and entries.

We applied a concrete overlay in a wood-grain pattern using tape and hard bristle brooms for texture. We sprayed two shades of color and sealed with a urethane for durability.

www.royalcoat.com













## INTERIOR: SECOND PLACE

# Architectural Polishing Inc., Tempe, Ariz., and Simi Valley, Calif., for www.concretedecor.net restoration of the Hays Consolidated Independent School District in Buda and Kyle, Texas.

IN THE WORDS OF: Jeff Abrahamson, general manager, Architectural Polishing Inc.

Hays Consolidated Independent School District, just outside of Austin, Texas, was looking to replace the flooring in three schools totaling about 70,000 square feet. This work was to be completed over the summer break of 2007. The existing floors were vinyl composition tile that had developed several issues over the years. Due to a moisture/vapor emission problem, the tile was blistering and adhesive was wicking up through the tile joints creating an unattractive floor — along with making maintenance very difficult and costly. The goal was to remove the tile and replace with a floor that would reduce maintenance costs and enhance the overall appearance of the campuses.

The moisture/vapor emission problem in the slabs eliminated the option of just reinstalling resilient flooring unless a vapor barrier was installed. After researching many options, it was decided that polished concrete was the best solution.

The vinyl composition tile was removed, revealing several layers of adhesive along with varying thicknesses of patching materials. All of this was removed using HTC diamond grinders. We now had a clean palette to work with and began scoring patterns and the "flying W" into the floor using the Engrave-A-Crete Mongoose saw. The floor was then polished and dyes were applied. Each campus had its own color scheme and in order to match the decor of each school, three different brands of dyes were used — DCI Ruby Red and Royal Blue, Brickform Deep Walnut and Mission Brown, and AmeriPolish Patriot Blue and

Black – to create the 3-D effect of the "flying W." The colors were then locked into the concrete by applying DCI Polish Guard.

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Two of the campuses had large ramps separating different wings of the schools. Originally rubber tile was specified for these areas to reduce the slip risk on a sloped surface. We ground the ramps along with the rest of the floors to remove old adhesive. The principals of each school loved the beautiful aggregate exposed and liked the look of the decorative concrete so much that they wanted to eliminate the rubber flooring and continue the flow of the decorative concrete into these areas. The issue we had to overcome was the slip-resistance factor. We originally considered adding some type of abrasive to the sealer but feared creating a difficult floor to maintain. Luckily we were very close to a Decorative Concrete Supply branch in Buda, Texas, and they had a ground PVC product that we added to their premium sealer and created a floor that was slip resistant, fairly easy to maintain and looked great while keeping our aesthetic theme through the campuses.

After several conversations with the school district facilities and maintenance departments, we have found that they are extremely pleased with the polished concrete floors. We have not only created beautiful floors, but have created a floor that has reduced their maintenance costs along with (offering) the ecological advantage of eliminating stripping and waxing of resilient flooring.

www.architecturalpolishinginc.com







## **EXTERIOR: FIRST PLACE:**



# Black Hills Hardscapes Inc., based in Hot Springs, S.D., for restoration of an outdoor amphitheater in Hot Springs, S.D.

IN THE WORDS OF: Kelvin Lorenz, Black Hills Hardscapes Inc.

The project involved a facelift for an amphitheater originally carved into the rocky canyon walls of Fall River in 1936 by the band director at Hot Springs High School. As the picture (lower left) indicates, 71 years of Mother Nature and neglect had taken their toll.

As a lifelong resident of Hot Springs and alum of HSHS, when the Hot Springs High School Alumni Association approached me about restoring this historic site, I agreed with the need, accepted the challenge, and offered to donate the decorative portion of the work.

Since most of the cracked and crumbling surface had succumbed to the elements over the years, we began the project by removing roots, weeds and accumulated debris and then proceeded to expose underlying sound concrete by jackhammering, scarifying and bush-hammering every square inch of the old structure. All cracks were then routed and ground out, filled with epoxy, and sealed with fiberglass mesh.

Since parts of the structure had settled, its drainage was poor, resulting in trapped and retained water. This problem was resolved by sloping all horizontal surfaces with a polymer-modified cement to establish proper drainage. The entire surface was then covered again with fiberglass mesh embedded in a polymer-modified cementitious base coat, with double coverage on all corners.

The original sandstone sign positioned at the top of the bandstand was historically inaccurate and in a state of disrepair, so it was replaced with a cut limestone slab bearing the correct history of the era. The exposed rock face of the canyon wall that cradles the structure was sealed with a pneumatically applied mix of polymer-modified, fiber-reinforced cement that was integrally colored using pigments from Davis Colors to match the surrounding rock and historic sandstone buildings in the area.

This was then further blended and antiqued using three colors of Semco stain, providing a seamless transition from the sealed rock to the surrounding features and vegetation.

The vertical surfaces of the bandstand were then base-coated with a trowel-applied mix utilizing white and gray portland cement, metakaolin, polymer, silica sand, fused silica and Davis pigments, followed by two pneumatically applied topcoats of the same color. Semco stains were also used sparingly here to add movement and depth.

Given the historic nature of the town, one of our biggest challenges on this project was to restore the structure and its old warmth and charm without making it look too modern, pristine and new. This was accomplished in part with a product made by ArcusStone that we used for the seating areas. We tinted the ArcusStone with pigments from B&J Colorants and trowel-applied the material to the surface after priming with the recommended bonding agent. We wrapped the ArcusStone 4 inches over the edges and inserted mortar joints about every 3 feet, simulating large, thick pieces of cut limestone. We intentionally distressed the fresh surface to help achieve the warm, well-used look that we were after. Upon initial curing, the horizontal surfaces were polished using a DS-301 polisher, imparting a shine that resembles 71 years of surface patina where cut limestone meets backside denim. To guard against the elements and graffiti. the entire surface was sealed with a silicone rubber sealer from Professional Products of Kansas.

The restoration of the amphitheater benefited not only its looks, but also its acoustics. We noticed that during the restoration process, the acoustics also steadily improved to a point where, upon completion, a "sweet spot" developed at a location dead center in the structure, where, if one speaks even softly toward the back wall, it reverberates back to the speaker as though in stereo, filling both ears with one's own words.

www.blackhillshardscapes.com





## **EXTERIOR: SECOND PLACE:**

#### Surface Design, based in Walnut Creek, Calif., for restoration of front house steps in Oakland, Calif.

IN THE WORDS OF: Dan Koloski, Surface Design

This is troweled texture with a scored-in flagstone pattern. I used a picture of a Brickform Flagstone stamp from the catalog as a guide as I chalked out the pattern. As it shows in the before photos, there is a two-inch drop from the top of the last step down onto the patio. We had to install 37 50-pound batches of "build-

up" material to blend out the drop-off and create good drainage for the patio. The customer was very particular about the design elements of pattern, texture and color, and we had to make 10 or so sample boards in the course of choosing the design.

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# Industry News

#### **Cheng Concrete opens training** facility in Atlanta

The Cheng Concrete Training Academy has announced a nationwide expansion, starting with a facility located in Atlanta, Ga., called the Cheng Center of Excellence – Atlanta.

This new training facility will offer the curriculum developed by author and designer Fu-Tung Cheng and his team of concrete professionals, starting with the Essentials Workshop, a oneday seminar imparting the basics of concrete countertop design and education. The Essentials Workshop is offered on a convenient, monthly basis at the Cheng Center of Excellence - Atlanta as of Jan. 5, 2008. According to a Cheng news release, the professional concrete countertop industry is growing at a particularly rapid pace in the Southeast, second only to the California market, which is considered the birthplace of the concrete countertop industry.

The Cheng Center of Excellence – Atlanta is headed by David Akers, a Cheng-certified designer and fabricator of custom concrete products. After

starting his career as a designer and builder of high-end cabinets, he designed and fabricated his first concrete countertop in 1972. He continued working with concrete while spending years in bridge design, engineering and construction. More recently, he owned and managed a successful firm in the Atlanta area specializing in the design and development of medical facilities. His newest endeavor, Amelia Concrete Fusion, which provides design, fabrication, and installation of custom concrete products for residential and commercial use, will serve as the southeastern headquarters for the Cheng Center.

The Cheng Center in Atlanta is the first of many Cheng training facilities expected to open across the United States over the course of the next year. By attending any of the Cheng Concrete Training Academy classes (Essentials Training, Advanced Training Seminar, and Concrete Countertop Fabricator Training) individuals can start becoming fully schooled in the Cheng design

www.concreteexchange.com



#### Mix equipment company debuts franchises

Cart-Away Concrete Systems Inc., a supplier of concrete mixing equipment, is rolling out Cart-Away Supply store franchises.

Cart-Away has relationships with rental and landscape yards around the country that are being leveraged to benefit new Cart-Away Supply franchisees.

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# Concrete Countertop Education developed by Fu-Tung Cheng

The Cheng Concrete Training Academy is the premier source for concrete countertop and decorative concrete education. Headquartered in Berkeley, California the Academy caters to a nationwide audience and has a class for everyone. From concrete 101 broken-down in the Essentials Workshop (perfect for the do-it-yourselfer!) to the intense, hands-on, professional nature of the Advanced Seminar and Fabricator Training, the Academy is your place for concrete success.

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Cheng Concrete Training Academy Expands Nationwide

This new addition of soon-to-be-launched Cheng training facilities are strategically located in geographic hubs across the U.S. Developed to accommodate the rapidly growing concrete countertop industry and the many followers of the Cheng design aesthetic, the first Cheng Center of Excellence will be located in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Essentials Workshop taught at each of the Cheng Centers of Excellence will provide the same, quality education offered at the Berkeley, CA headquarters, but with convenient, regional access.

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#### **Bobcat bought by Doosan**

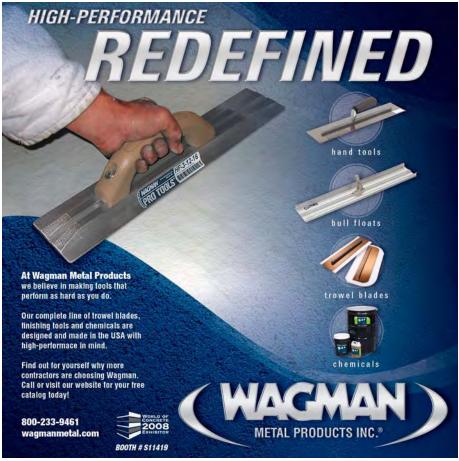
Doosan Infracore Co. has completed the acquisition of the Bobcat, Utility Equipment and Attachments businesses from Ingersoll Rand Co. Ltd.

The three entities will operate as individual businesses of Doosan Infracore International, a U.S.-based subsidiary of Doosan Infracore, and will be known as Bobcat, Doosan Infracore Portable Power (formerly Ingersoll Rand Utility Equipment), and DII Attachments (formerly Ingersoll Rand Attachments). With the completion of this transaction, Doosan Infracore becomes one of the top ten global manufacturers of construction and utility equipment and related attachments in terms of proforma sales. The South Korean company will now have a combined network of more than 3.500 dealers worldwide and 20 manufacturing plants in the U.S., Europe and China.

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#### Florida company takes on Reward **ICF** production

Reward Wall Systems Inc. has added a new production location for its iForm insulated concrete forms: Cellofoam, in Orlando, Fla.

The addition of this plant comes in response to an increased demand for insulating concrete forms in the Gulf Coast region. This partnership means timelier service to Florida as well as much of the Gulf Coast, including Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. As ICFs bring benefits to buildings in this area of the country through wind, moisture and hurricane resistance. builders and owners now have a more reliable regional option for safe building practices. Cellofoam had previously been producing Reward's eForm.

**(**0 (800) 468-6344

www.rewardwalls.com

#### Lafarge commended for environmental excellence

Lafarge received several of the

National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association's 2007 Awards for Environmental and Safety Excellence.

The awards recognized a number of Lafarge's aggregates and concrete sites across the United States and Canada for their commitment to sustainability initiatives in North America. A total of 37 Lafarge sites received Safety Excellence Awards, and 16 sites received Environmental Excellence Awards. Lafarge's Douglasville Quarry (Douglasville, Ga.), the Presque Isle Quarry (Presque Isle, Mich.) and the Placitas Aggregates Facility (Bernalillo, N.M.) also received the Gold Award for Environmental Excellence.

In addition, Joyceann Lee, Environmental Manager, Lafarge Aggregrates Southeast Inc., was selected to receive the NSSGA's Environmental Leadership Award, which recognizes any individual in the aggregates industry who has made superior and substantial contributions to his or her company's, or the industry's, efforts to achieve

environmentally sound operating practices.

www.lafarge.com

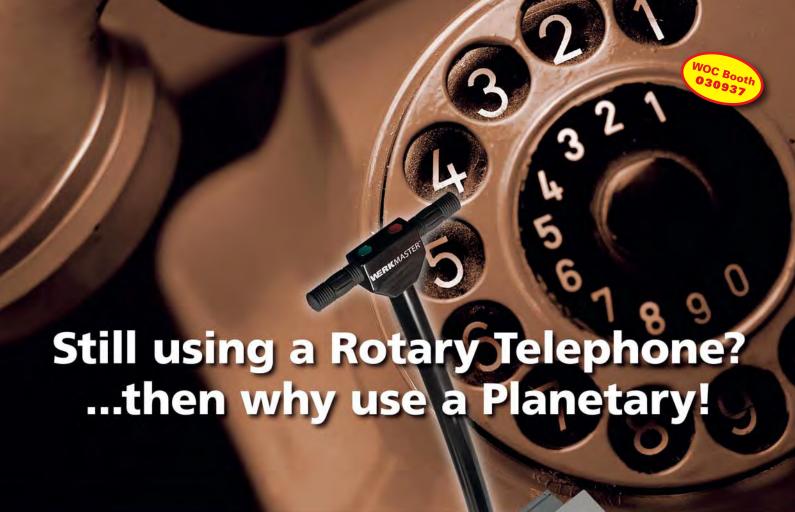
#### **ASTM International news**

Responding to an increasing level of interest from engineers, regulators and communities, ASTM International Committee C27 on Precast Concrete Products has formed Subcommittee C27.70 on Precast Concrete Products for Stormwater Management.

"New environmental regulations, as well as vastly improved methods of meeting these, have created many new products and practices for stormwater management and treatment," said subcommittee chair Michael R. Miller in a news release. "The growth of this industry has created a need for some means of standardization and ASTM is the most recognizable group to offer this leadership."

Subcommittee C27.70 covers precast concrete products that can be used for stormwater management applications.





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To start, C27.70 is working on two proposed standards, for measuring treatment efficiency and for measuring hydraulic capacity of hydrodynamic separators. The subcommittee has also formed a task group on terminology.

For membership or meeting information, contact Joe Hugo, technical committee operations, ASTM International, at (610) 832-9740.

Also, ASTM International Committee C09 on Concrete and Concrete Aggregates has honored Bruce J. Christensen, operations and development head at BASF Construction Chemicals Asia Pacific Business Unit, Shanghai, China, with the Sanford E. Thompson Award. The committee honored Christensen, an ASTM International member, for his outstanding research paper in the area of concrete and concrete aggregates.

www.astm.org

#### Countertop conference judged a success

The Concrete Countertop Industry Conference, October 25-27, 2007, at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte, N.C., drew more than 400 people from throughout the United States, Canada and as far away as Australia.

Conference highlights included 11 in-depth seminars, including a design seminar by Fu-Tung Cheng, a mix design seminar by Jeff Girard and a panel discussion featuring Buddy Rhodes. Crowds gathered around hands-on demos by enCOUNTER, Buddy Rhodes Concrete Products, LifeTime Floors "Quicktops," PreiTech Form Systems and Concrete

Countertop Specialties. Show-and-tell sessions by attendees featured 15-minute presentations on specific projects such as a fiber-optic bar, a shower and a fireplace. A 40,000-square-foot exhibit hall showcased concrete countertop mixes, pigments, admixtures, forming systems, diamond grinding tools, sealers and more. Networking opportunities included networking lunch roundtables and speed networking sessions.

The third annual Concrete Countertop Industry Conference is planned for Aug. 21-23, 2008, at the Sacramento Convention Center in Sacramento, Calif.

**(**0 (866) 844-0999

www.concretecountertopconference.com

#### **Design studio announces GFRC** workshops

Gore Design Co. has scheduled four glass-fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC) training workshops for 2008, each with a capacity of 16.

Participants will learn how to handcraft concrete countertops and sinks that weigh 30 percent to 75 percent less than comparable wet-cast pieces, require no





# **Industry News**

rebar, vibration, slurry-coating or waterpolishing and can be demolded in as little as 24 hours.

Two other training programs are currently offered. The first, and most popular, is the four-day Advanced GFRC Workshop, which covers mold construction, GFRC mixing and application, and eco-friendly sealing methods. The second class is the two-day Express Workshop, aimed at busy concrete artisans who are only interested in learning about the mixing and application of GFRC.

www.GFRCworkshop.com

#### Tindall expands in Virginia

Precast concrete system manufacturer Tindall Corp. announces a major expansion at its Virginia Division manufacturing facility in Dinwiddie County, Va.

Once completed, the operational capability of the expanded facility will nearly double its current output of precast, prestressed concrete building system components. A new office building, expanded support facilities,

additional storage capabilities and infrastructure improvements are included in the expansion, along with significant additions to equipment. The expanded facility is scheduled for completion by the summer of 2008.

www.tindallcorp.com

#### A LEED guide to Sto products

Sto Corp., a leader in cladding, coating, and restoration systems, has released a guide to qualifying for LEED points using Sto products and qualifications.

Sto offers a wide selection of coating and cladding systems (such as EIFS) that fulfill green building criteria. The brochure features an easy-to-use chart showing Sto products that can contribute to earning LEED credits and points. It includes StoTherm NExT EIFS Systems, StoPowerwall NExT Stucco Systems, StoGuard Waterproofing/Air Barrier, and Sto specialty systems and coatings.

- **(**0 (800) 221-2397
- www.stocorp.com

#### **LEED points via L&M**

L&M Construction Chemicals, supplier of FGS/PermaShine, has released a paper that details the sustainable attributes and potential LEED points available with an FGS/ PermaShine Polished Concrete Floor System.

The Polished Concrete and LEED Certification paper can serve as a reference tool for architects, contractors, owners and facility managers who want to build green.

The thermal mass of concrete in an FGS/PermaShine floor helps save energy, especially during periods of peak energy usage. The FGS process also minimizes exposure to VOCs and particulate matter. And the process utilizes a patented "dry-grind" installation method that conserves water and eliminates messy slurry disposal at landfills.

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#### **PPG** report looks at liquid vs. powder

PPG Industries' industrial coatings business has published a new paper comparing the environmental, economical and performance advantages associated with the application of liquid and powder coatings on architectural aluminum.

The eight-page technical document reviews historical factors that have made liquid coatings the prevailing choice of North American architects and powder coatings the preferred option in Europe. It also examines environmental advantages associated with powder coatings and the design and customcolor benefits of liquid coatings. The paper notes that differences between the two types of coatings may be narrowing, offering architects and building owners a wider range of design and technology choices.

**(**0 (888) 774-4332

www.ppgideascapes.com

#### Bonsal announces several marketing hires

Bonsal American Inc. has hired Art Henson as marketing



Art Henson

coordinator. Henson will handle graphic design for all of Bonsal American's brands including Sakrete, ProSpec and Amguard. With more than 14 years of marketing and advertising experience, Henson previously ran his own design firm, Henson Advertising.

Also, Bonsal American has expanded its sales and product management team for Sakrete, North America's original dry-bagged cement mix brand.

Bob Schmidt will serve as product manager for Sakrete. He has been with Bonsal American for more than 26 years, serving most recently as manufacturing manager.

Wes Murphy has been named Midwest territory sales manager for Sakrete, covering Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia. Shea Anstine has joined Bonsal American as a territory sales manager responsible for growing the Sakrete brand in Michigan and northwestern Ohio. Dean Greene has been named territory sales manager responsible for driving Sakrete sales in Georgia, southern Alabama and the Florida panhandle.

- **(**0 (800) 738-1621
- www.bonsalamerican.com
- www.sakrete.com

#### **IronPlanet names business** development executive

IronPlanet, an online auction house for used heavy equipment and trucks, appointed Jeff Jeter to the position of senior vice president of international and new business development.

Jeter is responsible for identifying and pursuing new business initiatives. He will lead international business planning activities.

www.ironplanet.com



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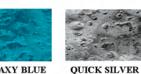
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#### Minnesota supplier hands out decorative concrete awards

Cemstone, a supplier of readymixed, engineered and decorative concrete in the upper Midwest, has announced the winners of its 2007 Decorative Concrete Awards, which recognize excellence in the design and use of decorative concrete in residential and commercial construction. The winners were selected from nearly 70 contractor entries that featured Cemstone-supplied colored, stamped or stained concrete. The contest was judged by a panel of Twin Cities landscape architects.

#### Residential Exteriors Grand

Prize: King Architectural Concrete and Construction of River Falls, Wis. This decorative concrete walking path, in the shape and form of a snake, amazed the judges. Read more about this project in this issue's Final Pour.

Residential Exteriors First Prize: Solid Concrete Studios of St. Paul, Minn. This fountain was recognized for its great creativity and use of color and texture.

Residential Interiors Grand



Prize: Foley Construction of Le Sueur, Minn. This project featured kitchen countertops made with recycled crushed glass that created interesting color patterns. (above)

Residential Interiors First Prize: Allstate Decorative Concrete of Cokato. Minn. This colored basement floor features a highly detailed coat of arms.

**Commercial Exteriors Grand** 

Prize: Bulach Custom Rock of Inver Grove Heights, Minn. This highly visible World War II Veteran's Memorial was built at the Minnesota state capital grounds.

**Commercial Exteriors First Prize:** Solid Concrete Studios of St. Paul. Minn. Situated on the grounds of St. Francis Regional Hospital, this complicated design won over the judges. Commercial Interiors Grand

**Prize:** Becker Architectural Concrete of South St. Paul, Minn. This vision and eye-care retail project was an easy grand-prize choice for the judges. (*left*)

Commercial Interiors First Prize: Kuha Concrete of Forest Lake, Minn. This project featured the remodeling of a recreation products retailer.

www.cemstone.com/decorativeawards



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# On the Road... and At Sea

Concrete Decor publisher Bent Mikkelsen recently spent some time taking in two highprofile industry events. Here is what he found.

# The first annual Decorative Concrete Cruise

When Michael Bulnes of California Decorative Concrete called and asked if *Concrete Decor* would help him promote the first annual Decorative Concrete Cruise, I immediately started thinking that this would be a great excuse to escape the office for some "business" travel. As I thought about it further, I started to realize that such an event could actually turn into a valuable networking opportunity. And sure enough, it did.

As the Decorative Concrete Cruise set sail from Miami on Monday, Nov. 12, nearly 70 industry professionals were aboard. Having never been on a cruise before, I was a bit nervous. I was one of four speakers, along with Bob Harris of Decorative Concrete Institute, Wayne

Sellon of Tajmawall and Jeff Girard of the Concrete Countertop Institute, and we each shared some thought-provoking words on the subject of decorative concrete. However, the scene of that unlucky associate from "The Godfather" being thrown overboard late one night with a brand new pair of cast-in-place concrete shoes haunted me. Needless to say, I was glad that the ship hosted lots of evening entertainment to keep everyone from ideas such as "sink the publisher."

Among numerous choices for evening entertainment were appearances by unexpected vocal talents — Wayne Sellon and Larry Freeman, marketing director for Proline Concrete Tools. Each would certainly have made guys like Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings proud. They also gave new meaning to

karaoke and raised the standards for future performers.

After some snorkeling and exploring in Cozumel, Mexico, by jeep, a late-night departure that Wednesday evening set the stage for a series of informative seminars the following day at sea. The afternoon was capped off with some relaxation



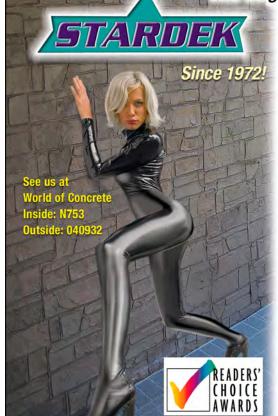
on deck with family and friends and a private cocktail party where numerous prize giveaways were presented by event sponsors. A fabulous dinner with everyone was the perfect finish to a perfect day of rest.

Asked if I would take the Decorative Concrete Cruise again ... absolutely! In fact, the second annual Decorative Concrete Cruise is already planned for November 2008. This time, a seven-day cruise departing from Long Beach, Calif., has been scheduled. Rumor has it that a "decorative sand competition" and beach party are in the works.

To learn more about next year's Decorative Concrete Cruise, call Michael Bulnes.

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#### The second annual Concrete **Countertop Industry Conference**

This year's second annual Concrete Countertop Industry Conference was located in beautiful Charlotte, N.C. Talk about friendly people! Charlotte was truly the icing on the cake for an event that is growing larger, more informative and more artfully focused on the emerging concrete countertop market.



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If asked what the concrete countertop industry and Charlotte have in common, it would have to be their rapid rates of growth.

The countertop conference is an event every builder of concrete countertops, young and old, should attend. Not only does it offer important learning opportunities, it also represents the growing need for education and the industry's commitment to quality standards.

The event provided industry professionals with inspiring and informative how-to seminars by top manufacturers such as Fu-Tung Cheng, Buddy Rhodes and Doug Bannister. The show floor provided an intimate platform for contractors, suppliers and manufacturers to share their successes and challenges in using concrete for this kind of artful building application.

If you are currently building castin-place or precast concrete countertops, this is one annual event you should be attending. Plan now to attend the 2008 Concrete Countertop Industry Conference in Sacramento, Calif., on Aug. 21-23.

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www.ccic2008.com





# Carlton's Corner

# Making the Phone Ring

by Doug Carlton

Recently, I was listening to a talk radio station in my local area and heard the host become silent in the middle of his show. As you are aware, dead air on radio is uncommon. You could hear the excitement in his voice when, after the pause, he said they were breaking in with a live call from Donald Trump.

See, Trump had been trying to purchase a failed real estate venture from a local businessman in our area. The radio host started the conversation by asking why Trump was calling the show. Trump's response was nothing short of brilliant. He simply said his phone had stopped ringing, and he had not heard from the potential seller of the property.

What Trump said next impressed me even more. He went on to mention how the good people in our area would benefit from a name like his entering our market. From the coffee house to the lumberyard, the restaurants to the landscapers, everyone within 50 miles of this development would benefit from this venture. The reason he knew this was because he had witnessed this ripple effect from dozens of other developments in the past. Trump had heard nothing from the seller, so he was making his phone ring using outside influence. Before the close of that business day, the city's mayor was beating the drum for continued talks. Very smart.

It all starts with a call. I don't care how talented or artistic or expensive or cheap you are, all new business starts with a call. New work is the lifeblood of your business. If your company is busy now, please save this article, because I assure you, there will be a time when your phone activity will slow. If your business phone is quiet right now, then grab your highlighter pen, because we will be running through ways to increase your phone bill.

Now let's face it, we are not trying

to close million-dollar sales, but we do need new business. The thing I have noticed is most of us are good at decorative concrete but scratch our heads when it comes to options that will increase leads. Someone has to constantly be out promoting new work for our companies to prosper. All the creativity, training and talent will do little good without those things being implemented in a paying project.

Let's take a look at a few ways to generate leads.

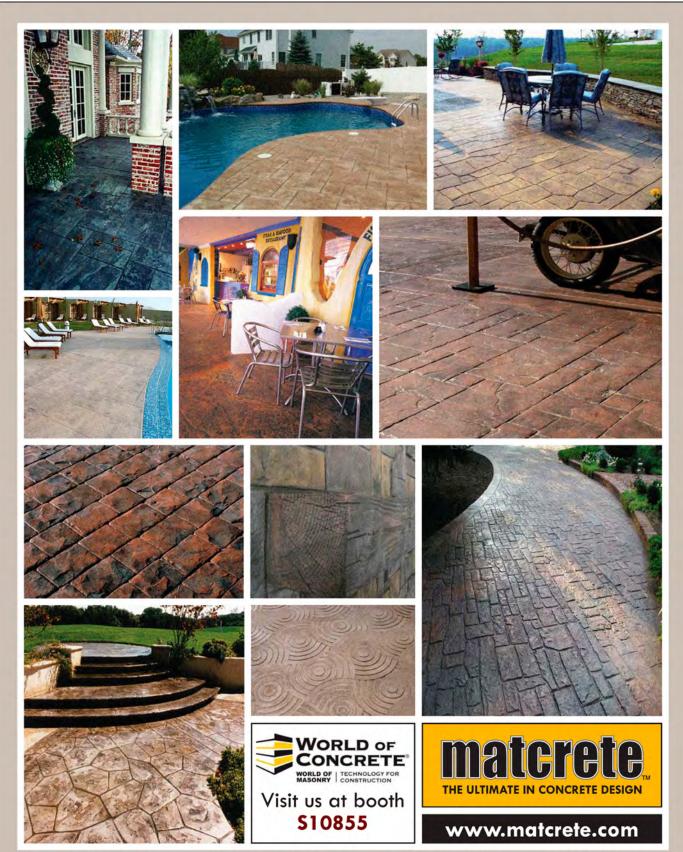
#### Answer the phone

Does this sound kind of basic? Then when was the last time someone live answered a call on your business line? Let me ask you this. If you are looking for new work right now, why would you let an automated machine be the first impression of your top-notch decorative business? Our "now society" wants to talk to someone when they want to talk to someone. You are losing jobs by not answering the phone. This doesn't mean you have to hire someone to just sit there and wait to answer calls. The technology is available to have your business line forward calls to your cell phone. This is something that can be switched on in your slow times and forwarded back to your machine when you're busy. Yes, you will be interrupted by calls, and yes, you will get sales calls from people who can hold their breath longer than Mark Spitz. But the upside is worth it — live calls from real buyers. You may have to screen some calls or let voice mail pick up others, but be sure to return the call immediately.

#### Take a look at all jobs

I have lost count of how many natural gray sales calls have upgraded to decorative concrete in the last few years. Most buyers said the same thing in that they were unaware of the options





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with concrete. Take a look at jobs you feel will be a waste of time. Educate your potential clients about some options available, and let them make up their own minds. We sometimes assume that everyone knows about overlays or coloring concrete. The decorative market has grown, but many folks are still simply unaware of what is available or what it will cost. The goal is to make something positive happen when your business needs it most.

Put colorful pictures into the front pages of your portfolio book. Sometimes this is all it will take to open a conversation about the possibilities of concrete. Again, people only know what they know, so educate them.

#### **Get out there**

It is so easy for us as contractors to accept slowdowns or weather seasons as an excuse to not promote new business. Don't accept this with your business. Of course this market is harder to squeeze buyers from, but getting into a comfort zone will not help. Get out in front

of people, and talk about the exciting things your business is doing. Don't talk about how slow work is but how you are looking for fill-in work until your next scheduled project. Write down leads and possibilities, next spring and this fall, and follow up with them. If someone is interested in doing a project next spring, educate the person about the savings if you do the work this fall. You need the work, and who doesn't like to save money? Creating opportunity, like Trump, keeps us motivated and lands new projects.

Years ago I was giving my uncle a bad time about his two-hour lunches at a cafe not far from where I grew up. He was in the rock and sand business and had been for years. He laughed and told me how, when his business was slow, he would spend a couple of hours at the cafe with one of his dump trucks parked outside. This would usually lead to several customers approaching him with "I have been meaning to call," or "Can vou deliver a load or two?" Sometimes exposure is as easy as being seen.

#### New projects!

Up to this point the only cost invested to promote new work has been your time. You may be willing to spend a few dollars, so try signing up with one or two of the many publications that compile new projects or new permits. They often provide contractor contacts. Organizations such as your local Builders Exchange will have information on public works projects, engineering jobs, sub-bid requests and so on that will include contacts for new work.

Another option is the Construction Monitor. This publication shows commercial and residential permits in your area, along with contact names and phone numbers.

Builders Exchange and Construction Monitor data can be accessed online and will provide loads of information with little cost to you. Keep things moving forward, and let me know how it goes.

Doug Carlton operates Carlton Concrete Inc. in Visalia, Calif. He can be reached at carltondoug@sbcglobal.net.



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# Technique



# **Stenciling and Logos**

by Shellie Rigsby

ecause their artistry is computer-generated, Stencils empower every contractor to create stunning works of art regardless of artistic talent. It is amazingly simple to produce logos, images, and artistic effects with exact detail. The concrete industry has an arsenal of magnificent images ready to order. Send a customer to user-friendly sites such as Modello Designs, Engrave-A-Crete, Royal Design Studio, Legacy Decorative Concrete Systems, or many others where they can find artwork for approval. Confirm the dimensions, and the stencils are a few mouse clicks away. You may offer them corporate logos or custom pieces of laser-cut, computer-generated stencils. Any vector image can be turned into a custom stencil. This means that you can order words, images and more.

If your designs allow creativity but do not require specific images or logos, off-the-shelf

stencils from craft stores or specialty sites such as Royaldesignstudio.com or Engraveacrete.com offer quick solutions. By purchasing a variety of popular reusable stencils, you enable yourself to create artistic designs without the production time of ordering project-specific templates.

Reusable plastic templates — off-the-shelf or custom — available from craft stores or online are well-suited for use with buildable products such as microtoppings, gel resists, metal suspensions, acrylics, or with temporary markings for hand engraving.

Use the stencils with rapid-dry dyes or water-based stains and an HVLP sprayer, and the work will be complete as quickly as you can spray. When using slow-drying products such as reactive stains with stencils, the concern is bleeding or wicking under the stencil design. To minimize the risk of wicking, purchase quality stencils, use very light





stain applications, mix the stain with a gel to hold the stain in place, or apply a resist that dams the stains to block bleed.

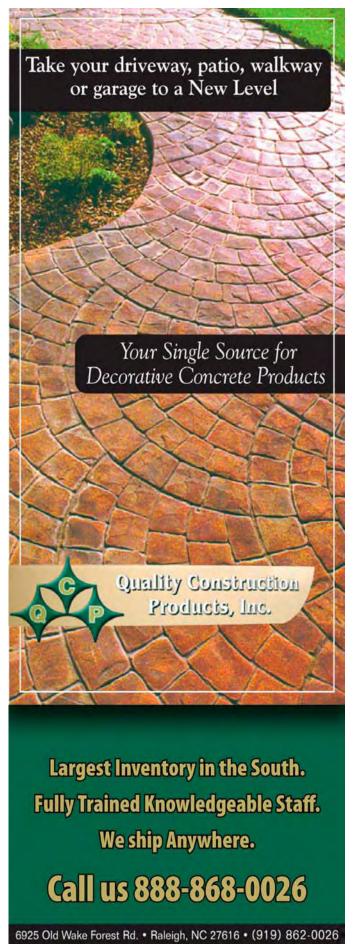
Stencils for production engraving or sandblasting may be ordered from specialty producers such as Engrave-A-Crete. The gel resist, LesCoat, offers a blastable medium.

#### Fleur de lis

To accomplish the design shown in the photo, stain the concrete with an amber acid stain. Place the reusable stencil and apply the gel resist over the stencil. Lift the stencil



immediately and allow the resist to dry. After the resist is dry, stain the concrete a dark brown/ black. Clean the residue. Remove the resist to reveal the original color beneath the stenciled resist. Ta-dah! It doesn't get any easier than that.







### **Microtoppings**

When stenciling designs with microtopping, remember that the color of the microtopping factors in. You may simply apply a pigmented microtopping or play the microtopping color to factor into the final outcome. To create the first design (above left), a dark microtopping was applied over a lightcolored floor.

In the second image, a combination of white and dark grey microtoppings were applied before the stain application. Where white microtopping was applied, the color is "rusty." Where the applied microtopping was dark grey (for the actual design), the final color is a deep "rusty black." Same stencil, different colors.



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### **Foliage**

In the foliage image, we stained the floor a light amber color. Then we applied the gel resist through a reusable stencil. After the resist dried, we stained the floor again with a slightly darker color. We allowed the color to develop and removed some of the gel resist, but not all of it. We stained the floor again. Then we removed all the gel, and the resulting pattern was a layered multitonal effect. It is really quite simple. Just think the process through before you begin.

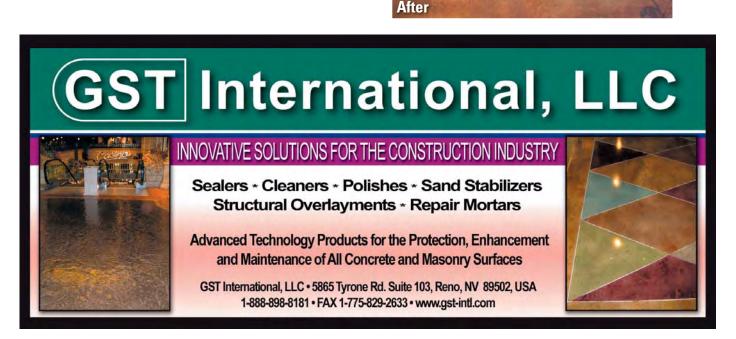


At right, we stained the concrete using reactive stains in various medium-to-dark tones. Then we placed the stencil and stained using lighter reactive stains like greens and ambers. As this image is the word "Organic," we chose to scatter enhancing fertilizers to give the outcome a more organic look.

Concrete artisan Shellie Rigsby teaches Advanced Techniques of Decorative Concrete and Designing Decorative Concrete at the World of Concrete show in Las Vegas with Randy Klassen. She also offers hands-on advanced training classes in the spring.









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# Project Profile



Photos courtesy of Concrete by Hallack

# Timberlake Condominiums Pool Deck, Modesto, Calif.



Cracks like this one in the existing pool deck were repaired and old brick-patterned concrete filled in and leveled to provide a new bonding profile for the overlay.

by Loretta Hall

he swimming-pool courtyard should have been an aesthetic focal point for the upscale gated condo community. But the old pool deck was scarred with cracks, and when decorative planters leaked and overflowed from rain, mud ran across the deck and sullied the pool.

Still, more than 200 condo owners at the Timberlake Condominiums in Modesto, Calif., dreaded the expense and disruption of ripping out the 6,500square-foot deck and rebuilding it.

Then they talked to Julio A. Hallack.

Hallack, president and CEO of Concrete by Hallack in Turlock, Calif., proposed repairing and resurfacing

the existing deck with a stamped and stained concrete overlay. For all but one week of the four-month project, he agreed to have his staff of eight professionals work only from 6 o'clock in the morning until noon so the residents could use the pool during the afternoons and evenings. And, Hallack says, "I think we saved them about \$70,000 or more by not jackhammering the whole thing."

Resurfacing the 6,500-squarefoot pool deck with a stamped overlay saved time and money — and did it beautifully.

Before even starting to work on the concrete itself, Hallack did some preparatory work. "We installed a couple



Innovative equipment was used to quickly apply several colors of stain for an attractive finish.

hundred feet of drains to take water far away from the pool," he says. His crew linked air-conditioning units to the underground drainage system to keep water from dripping on the new concrete surface and staining it. Then they got rid of the mud problem by removing the planters and pouring 1,500 square feet of regular concrete to fill the voids.

Hallack took several steps to prepare the surface so the overlay installation would be successful. "Microcoatings are very temperamental," he says. "People really have to know how to prep the subgrade, how to deal with concrete movement and cracks. Otherwise, microcoatings can become a nightmare — they can delaminate."

Repairing the many cracks in the existing deck was an essential first step. Each crack was opened up with a crack chaser and then filled with Roadware 10 Minute Concrete Mender. The cracks resulted from an insufficient number of expansion joints in the original installation, Hallack says. To better handle the stresses, his crew cut a new system of 1-inch expansion joints throughout the deck, as needed, 8 feet on center.

Filling in numerous birdbaths with

Miracote Repair Mortar I produced an even, smooth surface for the upcoming overlay. The condo owners wanted the new deck to be a coherent expanse, so Hallack's crew also used Repair Mortar I to fill the impressions in 1,100 square feet of existing concrete that had been stamped in a cobblestone pattern years before.

"Prep is the success of any microcoating," Hallack says. "The profile not only has to be clean, but it has to be open in order for it to take a primer for the microcoating." The final preparation step in this project was scrubbing the entire deck using a nylon grit brush to remove surface contamination.

It took about 500 bags of Miracote Mirastamp to place a half-inch-thick overlay on the deck. Mirastamp liquid release agent, part of the Mirastamp system, was used on seamless stonetexture skins from Proline Concrete Tools of Oceanside, Calif. After removing the skins, the crew reopened all of the expansion joints, which had been marked with concrete nails.

Applying several different colors of Mirastain II in random, overlapping patterns created an attractive effect. "We started by staining some darkened spots



The polymer-modified cementitious overlay installs and dries quickly, so residents were able to continue using the pool each afternoon and evening.

of green as a base scattered around," says Hallack. "Then we used about four different colors, primarily in the earth tones like adobe, and we used a gray color as well." Spraying the color was a several-person job, with one handling an electric pump and 25-gallon tank system designed by Hallack, another using the spray nozzle, and others brushing in the stain with very smooth brooms. "A lot of my work is major staining," Hallack



A hand-finished dark border serves as a decorative flourish as well as a safety feature.

says. "We do about 30,000 to 40,000 square feet at a time. I had to come up with a system that would allow me to spray that much in about four or five hours."

As a decorative accent as well as a visual warning device, Hallack created a border around the edges of the pool that was similar to the deck in tone but darker. "We beefed up the formula, making the percentage of coloring per gallon much, much higher than normal. We used Mirastain II and brushed it in by hand. It took a lot of time, because I wanted to make sure that we got deep penetration and color reaction." Two coats of Miracote HD W Gloss Sealer finished off the staining process for the entire deck. The week devoted to staining and sealing was the only time the pool area was completely closed to residents.

Finally, the crew caulked all of the expansion joints with Sonneborn NP1 Polyurethane Sealant. "We filled in about 1,000 linear feet of expansion



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Old and new expansion joints had to be reopened after the Mirastamp overlay was placed.

joints," Hallack says. "Anytime you do any kind of microcoating outdoors, you need to make sure you don't leave anything open for water to start going under. Otherwise, you will have delamination."

Hallack reports that the condo owners and investors were thrilled with the finished deck. "Nobody had any idea how beautiful this was going to be," he says. Because of all the careful planning, thorough preparation and skillful workmanship, Hallack felt confident when a drainage test was conducted prior to owner acceptance of the project. As he expected, water flows away from the pool, and none is left standing.

"I've been doing decorative concrete work for many years, but this is one of the most fascinating projects that I've been involved with," Hallack comments, "because all throughout the nation, we have so many hotels and condominiums and other places that have the same problem: how to deal with some of these add-ons and repairs."

He is convinced that overlays can be an important solution, especially in places that must remain open for activity during the project. He stresses, however, that success depends on knowing how to prep existing surfaces and apply the overlays correctly.

"There are a lot of rewards when you plan, when you do your homework, and are willing to do it right," he concludes, "for the client and for the satisfaction "

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# Technique



# **Effects with Reactive Stains**

here are unlimited opportunities to create fabulous effects with reactive acid stains. Acid stains are most mutable from the time they are sprayed onto the concrete until the reactive color change develops. During this reactive period, the greatest opportunity for color manipulation is while the stains are wet. Whether or not the stain stays wet on the surface throughout the entire reactive stage depends on the ratio of stain volume to surface porosity, as well as ambient factors such as temperature, humidity and air movement. The stain colors may continue to develop after the concrete is surface-dry. The wetter the stain-tosurface ratio, the greater the color reaction. Volume equals depth of color. This basic premise explains why, in a finished product, we may see puddles from heavy spray or "white" spots from surface porosity.

Let's explore a few of the infinite opportunities available with stain colors.



### Layering colors

When more than one stain color or concentration is sprayed simultaneously or wet-to-wet, the various chemicals compete for dominance. This application of various colors from multiple sprayers results in areas where each stain color develops or new colors blend from the convergence. If the various colors were all poured together and sprayed from a single sprayer, the outcome would simply be one color with the typical multitonal effect.

Similarly, spraying water during the application stage changes the color concentration with a phantom effect.

Take notice of the volume of stain applied with these advanced techniques, as product management can get tricky. You do not want the stain flowing through or under the floor plate and onto flooring not intended for stain.

## Multiple colors

The stains may also be sprayed wet-to-dry. This technique produces variant color, but with somewhat less organic movement and color blending. Most applicators apply lighter colors first, then darker. However, applying lighter colors after darker creates surprisingly nice effects. Greens, tans and blues have striking impacts on black stain. (One of my favorite ways to correct a problem area such as a drip of stain or an area that's too dark is to carefully apply a tan stain on the drip. This will usually soften the spot and often eliminate the problem altogether. Of course, I test an inconspicuous area first.)



#### **Color manipulation**

Scattering dry products onto the floor prior to the application of stains creates opportunity for color or pattern play as well. We all know about the wonders of Miracle-Gro fertilizer, but I also love using coffee. Dry-ground coffee (caffeinated or not) often produces small black specks in the stain. Instant coffee

is even more interesting. The dehydrated concentration immediately begins to dissolve upon stain contact by sprouting "legs."

When working with Miracle-Gro, I apply my stain in my normal "wet short of puddles" method until I reach an accumulation or slight mound. There, I apply a greater volume of stain with

enough pressure to literally pick up the dry Miracle-Gro and suspend it in the stain just a bit. As the stain moves the dissolving product, it creates a wonderful organic effect. Staining over absorbent materials such as sawdust or cereal results in either a resist effect (where the stain color is lighter or not at all) or a concentration of color.

You can achieve the opposite outcome with the same material depending on the stain volume and the absorbent-material ratio.

If the stain is applied lightly enough that the material absorbs the stain but the concrete does not get wet, no color develops. However, saturating the material may cause the concrete color to develop further, if it remains wet on the concrete longer than the balance of the floor.

#### Resist

Resists provide amazing artistic opportunities with controlled outcomes. Various types of resist include gel resists such as LesCoat or laser-cut stencils.

During the wet stage, the stains are impacted by external factors as well. For example, anything that causes the stains to move, if stain volume allows, produces pattern. Blowing compressed air at varying pressures is interesting. Spreading thin sheets of plastic over the wet stain creates unique pressure points and temporary vapor retardation, resulting in stain pattern variance.

Concrete artisan Shellie Rigsby teaches Advanced Techniques of Decorative Concrete and Designing Decorative Concrete at the World of Concrete show in Las Vegas with Randy Klassen. She also offers hands-on advanced training classes in the spring.

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# **Gregory Mata, Cutting Edge Decorative Concrete** Richfield, Ohio



by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

Tolcanoes oozing hot lava ... tiki torches burning on the beach ... tribal tattoos ... constellations sparkling in the sky. These things aren't exactly what you'd expect to see in decorative concrete jobs in Ohio, but then again Gregory Mata's work is far from ordinary.

The Cleveland native is incorporating actual artwork into concrete surfaces with outstanding results. He's also experimenting with different materials and media — such as integrating fiber optics into flatwork and countertops — in scenes that light up almost as brightly as the faces of people seeing them for the first time.

Mata credits much of his success to his think-out-of-the-box mentality. "We're doing things not many other companies are doing," he says. "I feel very honored to be a part of many of these projects I'm involved with."

#### **Humble beginnings**

Mata's father was a cement contractor and a labor union official. Working with his dad landed Mata positions on large downtown projects during his years studying electrical engineering at Cleveland State University. "I got a huge amount of exposure that most people don't get the chance to experience," he says about those summer jobs. "I got to see firsthand what makes large projects flow and function."

When the time came for his dad to retire, Mata yearned to break free and start his own company. "I was completely burned out on regular gray flatwork," he says. He was more interested in concrete and masonry work, particularly structural repair. In 1995, he founded Cutting Edge Construction, which was soon one of the largest nonunion companies in Richfield, Ohio, that handled structural repairs for commercial buildings.



Work was steady but not very stimulating, he admits. He began to hear rumblings about something called "decorative concrete," although no one he knew was doing it. Then came the postcard. Someone was offering a two-day class in nearby Columbus. He signed up.

"I couldn't believe what I was seeing," he remembers about that fateful class. "Right then and there, my interest in concrete work was right back to what it was when I was a kid." He sought out suppliers and entered the decorative arena full throttle.

By the late 1990s, his business had largely shifted from masonry restoration to decorative concrete. In 2000, he changed the name of his company to Cutting Edge Decorative Concrete. "It's important to have the right name," he says.

#### The here and now

Today, Cutting Edge employs between five and seven employees, and the company's handiwork stretches beyond the borders of Ohio. Its services include concrete countertops, stamped concrete, illusional concrete art, water features, acid staining, resurfacing and stenciling, patios and pool decks, outdoor fireplaces, basement floors and Illumi-Crete, Mata's trademarked name

for the company's fiber-optics features.

"Outdoor entertainment areas are probably our specialty," he says. "I like to put together big components to accomplish the ultimate wow factor."

Case in point: One of his latest projects involved a family who has a timeshare in Hawaii. While there, they can see the beaches of Diamond Head. They wanted a similar view simulated at their Ohio

Alongside stamped concrete, Mata created an area that looks like a cliff overlooking the ocean at Diamond Head. There are fire dancers on the beach, juggling



their lit batons, with the ends containing fiber optics for effect. A sunset fades over the top of a mountain and blends into a starlit night sky that shines with the homeowners' zodiac constellations, Taurus and Pisces.

The homeowners also requested a water feature with fiber optics. Mata created a volcano with faux hot lava spewing out from the top and fiber-optic points of light on the sides. At the bottom of the volcano, pool lights shine through bubbling water and a fog machine creates a convincing haze. "It looks like hot things are going on," Mata explains.

#### Gone to the dogs

These homeowners also wanted something special out front: another water feature, to commemorate their beloved Dalmatians. To accomplish this, Mata first had to locate a fire hydrant — no easy feat, as it turned out — to be used as a fountain. "It seemed like such a natural. Dalmatians, fire truck, fire hydrant," he says.

After several calls to fire departments and recycling centers with no luck, he finally hit pay dirt with some fellow who was in the process of replacing old hydrants. He ended up getting a 1923 model for free.

He sandblasted and repainted the old

fireplug, which served as the centerpiece for the Dalmatian shrine, and painted a manhole cover around it. As part of the stamping job, he included a scene with a cracked and leaking pipe, with one of the dogs shaking off water and the others just hanging out, watching. "When we started the job they had three Dalmatians. About halfway through, they adopted a fourth and wanted him in there, too," Mata says. For accent, fiber-optic lights are arranged sporadically around the dogs.

But the project didn't stop there. For a signature touch, Mata cast a rubber stamp made from each of the dogs' paw prints.



Around the border of the driveway, his crew stamped a pattern that looks like a dog ran through wet cement. "The owners know which dog's footprint is whose," he says. "It made the finished product very special to them."

Adding that something special is part of what stands out about Mata's work. "We've always done that," he says. "We try to do something unique with every project by including something that's not available at the local supply store."

He says that he's created a number of custom stamps for people because there are

only so many tools readily available. "My mind is always whirling with things that could be. I like to look for things and see how I can make them do something they weren't made to do."

He also likes to surprise his customers by giving them something they didn't directly pay for, like a birdbath made out of leftover concrete or a bench that bears the same stamping pattern as a patio. "My customers appreciate that little something extra. It's always a big hit," he says.

He urges others in the business not to be afraid to try something new. "Explore the possibilities," he says. "Create things that have yet to be created. Push the envelope. Push yourselves. Push the industry. There are so many things that can and will be done. It's just a matter of trying. Ask the customer to give you a chance."

But above all, don't sell yourself short. "Give yourself the credit that's due and charge what you're worth. You deserve to get paid for what you produce. There's an incredible amount of work that goes into producing these things. You need to be fair to yourself as well as your customer." 🧢

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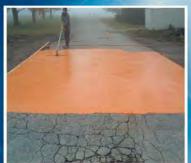
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# in Cold Weather



by Chris Camara

ontractors working in the northern United States and Canada have three words of advice when it comes to stamping concrete in cold weather: Wait until Spring.

But that's not always possible. While residential customers can often be persuaded to wait for more favorable conditions, some commercial projects must get done no matter how bad the weather gets.

Considerations for winter stamping include not only temperature and humidity, but the condition of the

subgrade, the cementitious content of the concrete, different set times, and freeze-thaw cycles after the job is complete.

Ian Paine, marketing director for Lafarge North America, says it's not unusual to do flatwork in cold temperatures as early as September in Canada. He suggests covering the subgrade with an insulated tarp, or at least a straw and tarp combination, to keep the moisture out ahead of time. A cold subgrade will pull the heat out of concrete, so one of the best things

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a snowstorm.

Above: Klassen Concrete crew members in coldweather gear.

to do is to use content that is more cementitious, which creates more internal heat and helps the setting process, he says. Use high-quality concrete such as Lafarge's Artevia for decorative work, he says. "Don't go on the cheap. Any quality issues that you have will affect the growth of the decorative concrete industry in your area and certainly your own

This walkway was stamped with a river stone pattern and colored with silver integral color and charcoal release. Different colors of stain were used on random individual stones in the pattern.

business growth."

Lafarge's Weathermix can extend the construction season, he says, because it is formulated to withstand a wide range of cold weather and some subfreezing ambient temperatures. And it speeds up set times, which are seemingly interminable during cold weather.

Paine also suggests breaking up

a big job. For example, split a 2,000square-foot pour into four smaller jobs, so if one section doesn't set properly, the entire project isn't wrecked. "Be smart about it," he says. "Don't let the customer push you into doing the whole thing at once. It's too risky."

As with any flatwork job, knowing the weather conditions of the area is critical. "Cold weather often comes with



high humidity — the Great Lakes area — or in the West, say Denver, it comes with low humidity, so you can have shrinkage cracking. Protect against that and make sure it doesn't craze on you."

Also, be aware of freeze-thaw cycles, Paine says. If the ground freezes and thaws during the 28-day curing time, that's pretty tough on the concrete. "There, the only approach is to make sure you get it done as early as you can."

Because new concrete loses heat and moisture fast in cold weather. heated insulating blankets can keep the concrete moist and the temperature

above 50 degrees for proper curing. For the concrete to keep gaining strength, it needs to stay at 50 degrees or higher. According to the American Concrete Institute, concrete must be protected against early freezing until it has attained at least 500 psi.

Customer satisfaction is critically important when you're dealing with decorative concrete and the look and quality of the finished product is weighted above the schedule, Paine says. Cold-weather conditions increase your risk. "If you do force people to wait for the correct conditions, you're much

better off in the long run," he says.

For Dale Mizer, there was no talking Cleveland State University out of a huge stamped sidewalk project planned for the 2004 winter break, where freezing rains, snowstorms, gusty winds and subzero temperatures presented a horror show for contractors.

Mizer, a representative for the project's decorative concrete supplier, Chas. E. Phipps Co., worked closely with the concrete subcontractor. Union Industrial Contractors. Because concrete cannot be placed on frozen subgrade, it had to be thawed first using a heated tubing system. Workers also needed to erect a movable shelter to stamp 300 square feet of sidewalk at a time. Shelters can be made simply with PVC piping and plastic sheeting — the key is to keep the weather off the project and the workers. Also, Mizer says to use a nonchloride accelerator so the concrete will not take forever to set. (Chlorides will leave white marks.)

Mizer recalls that the buildings created a wind tunnel. "I felt bad for the guys out there," he says, "but Cleveland State University wanted it done, so it got done." He says the workers were bundled in layers of clothes. "Morale isn't ever as high on a 15-degree day as it is on a 75-degree day, but a cup of coffee goes a long way."

It was 34 degrees and snowing when Mizer spoke with Concrete Decor magazine, and he was heading to a stamping project in downtown Cleveland that workers were rushing to finish. "Take every precaution to protect your project and protect your workers, and try to give the owners the best job you possibly can."

For more information on coldweather stamping, refer to ACI's 306.1-90, "Standard Specification for Cold Weather Concreting." The specification covers prep work, temperature, and protection after a pour. The guidelines apply when the air temperature is 50 degrees or less for at least 12 hours during any 24-hour period, and when the average daily air temperature is less than 40 degrees.

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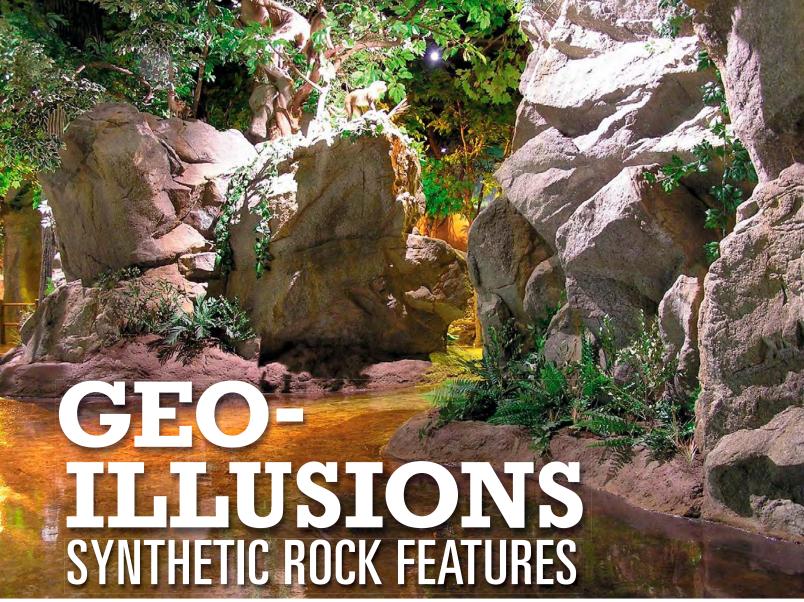
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Lakeland Co. has created several natural-looking faux rock features at Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure in Salina, Kan. Even gray rock needs several colors to look realistic and add dimension. Photo courtesy of Lakeland Co.

In replicating rock, coloring is the most obvious key to success or failure. It either rings true or it's a near miss.

> - Jim Jenkins, Synthetic Rock Solutions

by Amy Johnson

rtistry, fantasy and heavy-duty craftsmanship converge in creating natural-looking artificial environments from synthetic rock panels. Applications range from animal habitats to luxury homes, with parks, restaurants, shops and hotels in between. There seems to be no limit to the creative possibilities of this medium.

## Synthetic advantages

Synthetic rock panels have several advantages over natural stone. On a large scale they are obvious. A 40foot zoo environment or a backyard cliff would be nearly impossible to install using heavy stone, even if the materials could be found. But the weight advantage also applies on a smaller scale, say with a garden wall.

Jim Jenkins, president of Synthetic Rock Solutions and owner of training consultancy JPJ Technologies Inc. in Sheridan, Ore., has installed both. He says that stone installed on a building facade weighs in at about 21 pounds per square foot. Cultured stone installed with mortar weighs about 15 pounds per square foot.

But the fiber reinforced cement composite panels he manufactures in thicknesses from 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch weigh a mere 7 pounds per square foot. And they create a monolithic structure, as opposed to segments created by natural or cultured stone.

They may be thin, but these panels have strong relief.

And they may be light, but they are strong. Jenkins says his panels deliver 12,000 psi of compressive strength.

Another significant advantage over natural stone comes during installation. An experienced mason with a tender may be able to lay 40 to 50 square feet of stacked stone wall in a day. In contrast, a comparatively inexperienced workman can install 600 square feet to 800 square feet of synthetic rock panels in a day.

Finally, these panels offer designers and customers artistic control. David Long, president of Lakeland Co. Inc. in Rathdrum, Idaho, was able to build a residential client a custom "mountain" 26 feet high and 75 feet long with multiple waterfalls dropping into a man-made creek bed leading to more waterfalls downstream. Another project was a "man-room" where a hunter's trophies will be displayed on synthetic stone cliffs under a man-made tree.

"(I'm a) geo-illusionist trying to make the client's environment a Garden of Eden," Jenkins says.

## Fabricating with the right materials

Both Long and Jenkins advocate sharing best practices with the industry, even with potential competitors. "The better quality that people in our industry deliver, the more work we'll all get," Long explains. For example, Jenkins began training contractors in 1996 and has trained more than 10,500 people since then.

Synthetic rock panels start with a mold taken from actual rock. The panels may be fabricated in the shop or



on-site, using the mold to shape glassfiber reinforced concrete (GFRC). A key factor in the durability and longevity of the finished project is the quality of the GFRC. Long emphasizes the necessity of adhering to ASTM standards, including the requirement to use the proper amount of hardening agent, 4 percent to 5 percent alkali-resistant glass, and Type I portland cement. He describes seeing projects where contractors tried cutting

corners on materials, only to end up with panels that chipped and crumbled within a couple of years.

Ray Robinson of Robinson Earthscaping, Deadwood, Ore., describes installing the panels: "The GFRC panels are wired in place and then concreted to the rebar. Than a 70grit fine sand, lime and cement mixture is placed between the panel faces. This is padded with latex rubber pads to



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White portland cement lightly airbrushed with teal and purple adds to the arctic illusion created by these acrylic resin icicles.

match the rock texture. Then about four hours later the major cracks are carved to match rock panel cracks."

#### Color makes the difference

While the mass of the rock, and the bulk of the work, lies in the structure, it is often the color that makes or breaks the project. Long calls it the 90-10 rule. "If the last 10 percent — the color and finish — are not right, the whole job is ruined. On the other hand, you can sometimes save bad rock work with creative color." Jenkins says. "In replicating rock, coloring is the most obvious key to success or failure. It either rings true or it's a near miss."

Both agree that the secret to natural-looking synthetic stone is creating randomness and variation using multiple colors. Jenkins claims that the average rock, even one we might view as gray or red, contains at least 14 different colors. For a trade show booth, he created rock using 28 different colors.

Coloring synthetic rock is an artistic endeavor, with the panels in the place of the painter's canvas and a variety of tools for applying all kinds of media. In fact, craftspeople often modify existing coloring materials or create their own to get the effects they are after. Research, experience and a lot of trial and error — "about 3 million trials and errors," according to Long — are behind the most successful stone panel contractors.

Typical concrete coloring agents can be used to color GFRC stone panels,

including color hardeners, acrylics and reactive acid stains. A base coat or overlay applied to unfinished rock panels blends the differences in color between the GFRC and the grout. Long likes using multiple products to create different effects that mimic the variations in real rock.

Jenkins traces the history of coloring stone back to the natural sources used for dyes and paints — plants, soil and minerals were all emulsified to create coloring agents. He has colored synthetic stone to match gravel already on a site by screening fines and emulsifying them to make a stain that blended perfectly.

More typically, contractors experiment with paints and washes. Paints that stay on the surface



Photo courtesy of Lakeland Co

# Pros to Know

The "Pros To Know" section of Concrete Decor gives industry consultants a department of their own where they can promote their services. The paid listings include credentials, skill sets, contact information and a photo, so the consultant may literally put his or her best face forward.

This section provides a direct link to experts who know the business and can provide on-site consulting in areas such as project management, product installations, employee training, staging business seminars and more.



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Services: Education, Training & Consulting Nationwide and Internationally. The Decorative Concrete Institute announced their expansion of training with DCI-West and DCI-Europe. All workshops are taught by Harris, with extensive classroom and hands-on training.

Bio: Harris is the Author of Guide to Stained Concrete Interior Floors, Guide to Stamped Concrete, and Guide to Concrete Overlays & Toppings. He has also produced two DVDs: A Guide to Concrete Overlays & Toppings and A Guide to Stained Concrete and More, along with other professional DVDs for organizations such as the Portland Cement Association, AGC-Laborers and the Concrete Network. Harris holds three ACI Certifications and is affiliated with the American Society of Concrete Contractors, a member of the ASCC's Decorative Concrete Council, as well as the author of many articles for various technical publications.



# **Brian Vicari**

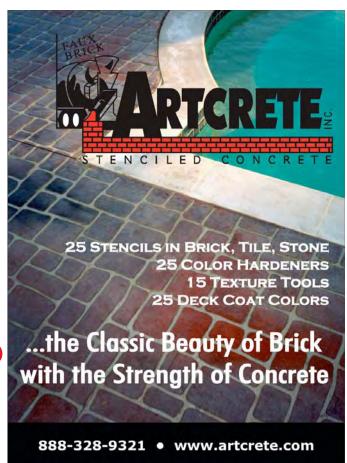
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Bio: Brian Vicari is a third generation builder. In over a decade of operations he has produced thousands of retail, commercial and residential creations as well as abstract modern art pieces being displayed across the country. His expertise is currently being used as reference in both trade publication and books. After years of refining his processes and developing new techniques in the field, he wants to pass on this wealth of knowledge to further push the field of visual concrete flooring. Vicari offers specialized workshops once a month where he teaches the arts of overlay, chemical staining, layering of dye washes and the installation of graphics. He now offers an instructional DVD.





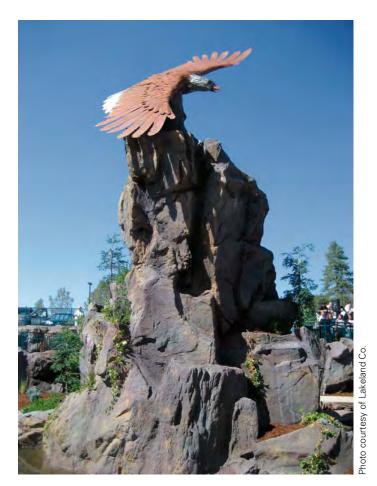
of a panel will eventually peel, but diluting paints makes them thin enough to penetrate the porous GFRC. "In the old days we diluted household paint," Jenkins says. "Now with more research we've moved to using pigment in a triple-blend polymer that matches the composition of the panel for better bonding and color-fastness."

Whatever the medium, a contractor can replicate the look of natural stone using a variety of application techniques.

First, Jenkins says, all rocks have speckles. Speckles can be created by applying color with aerosol cans that "spit," using piston pumps or airless sprayers and blowing the color











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with a fan, or even flinging color from a paint stick with the flick of the wrist. Speckles can also be created by adding mica quartz to a light wash that is applied after the top-coat begins to set.

Other techniques include skimming — using a rag, a piece of plastic or a brush to skim over the high points of the rock texture — or daubing with an old brush to add or remove color from certain areas. Color hardeners can be spotapplied with a trowel or even an old glove to add highlights.





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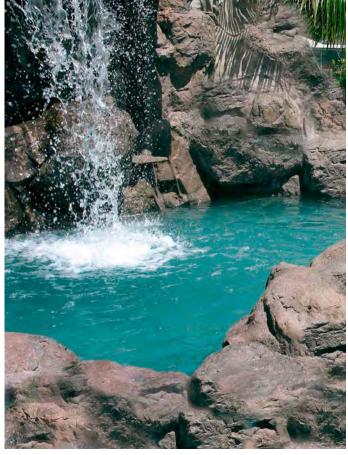
turing Company, Inc., of Tucson, Arizona. Mortex uses this trademark with a unique concrete topping, invented by the Company in 1962, for swimming pool decks, walkways, patios and other foot traffic areas.

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There are some more unusual techniques too. Glazing, a technique borrowed from faux painting, creates translucent colors and different sheens. Tinted sealers also alter the color and sheen. Using specialty aggregates in the GFRC and washing the surface about an hour after curing begins results in a rough sandstone look. Painting veins using an airbrush or paintbrush adds dark color to cracks and crevices that subsequently look like shadows when a lighter color is washed over them.

Whatever technique is used, it is as much an art as a science. Long says it boils down to "a certain amount of natural artistic ability — what looks right to the eye. When you try to overwork it, it looks contrived. Over time we've developed proven methods that can be duplicated and used to train our personnel." Jenkins emphasizes that even though coloring rock panels has an artistic angle, following tried and proven procedures can make even a beginner into an artist. And, like any other art form, there are techniques for modifying the look, even correcting mistakes; for example, washing more colors over white speckles that stand out too boldly.

It is difficult to describe an unusual synthetic rock panel creation because each one is unique and vastly different from any other, but the arctic environment created by Lakeland



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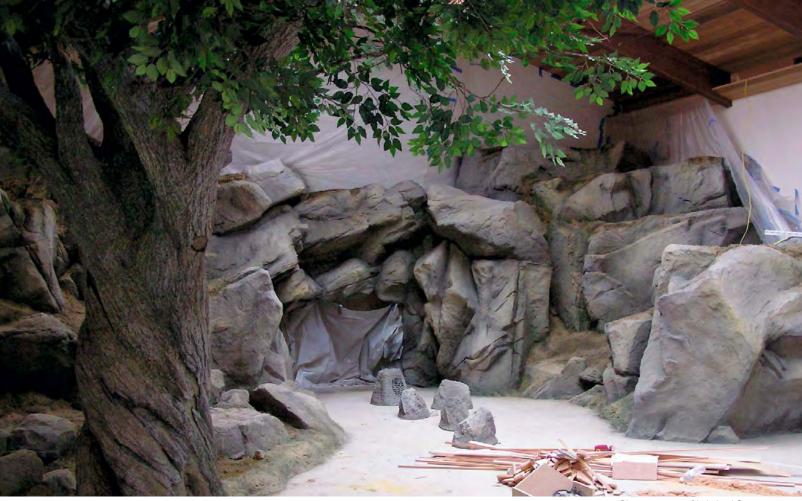




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This natural-looking setting under a GFRC tree will display hunting trophies for the homeowner.

Photo courtesy of Lakeland Co.

Co. for the museum at Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure in Salina, Kan., ably demonstrates the versatility and creativity of this industry. After the gray stone was fabricated and colored, icicles were cast from clear resin and mounted with studs. These were overlaid with "snow" created with white portland cement, which was lightly airbrushed with just enough teal and purple color to create a cold-looking tint. The result is almost impossible to distinguish from the real thing.

Robinson defines the role of the visionary artist in the whole process. "It's been my experience that when a customer calls me it's because he wants an expert to tell him what he wants," he says.

Long concurs. "We're in the excitement business. We help customers envision and create their dream environment."

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Rules of Contraction") to control cracking. Placed on the surface of concrete slabs and created by forming, tooling or sawing, these joints weaken the slab to provide attractive avenues in which cracks form. Cracks formed inside these joints are relatively easy to disguise.

Placing contraction joints in concrete is not exactly rocket science. While care must be taken in the joints' design and creation, three fundamentals come into play. First, maximum joint spacing should be 24 to 36 times the thickness of the slab, with a maximum spacing of 15 feet. Second, the minimum depth of a joint should be a fourth of the thickness of the concrete. Third, all panels created by contraction joints should be as square as possible.

#### Harder than rocket science

Those involved in decorative concrete may find themselves at odds with square or rectangular contraction joints. They may be working with circular slabs and not wish to break up the flow of the surface with straight angles. Radial shapes such as those found around fountains or graceful flowing lines around swimming pools seem to invite curved contraction joints.

Installing shallow, decorative joints may be as simple as grinding the surface with a router. But placement and installation of curved contraction joints isn't easy.

"You're usually going to see curved joints in a radius or another layout that the architect establishes to go along with whatever type of theme or architecture they're employing," says Mike Riggs, president of Phoenix-based Progressive Concrete Works Inc. "We use curved contraction joints when we're trying to tie the design of the building and the hardscape. The curving lines become part of the overall architecture of the building."

It's not always easy to control cracks in curved or radial joints, Riggs says.

"Concrete typically likes to crack in a square. A good rule of thumb when you're dealing with square or rectangular shapes is if you've got a 10foot-by-10-foot slab, you're okay. If it's a 10-foot-by-20-foot, it's going to want to crack right down the middle of the rectangle."



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#### The Rules of **Contraction**

According to the American Concrete Institute's online Cement and Concrete Terminology guide, contraction joints (also called control joints, among other names) exist to "create a weakened plane to regulate the location of cracking resulting from the dimensional change of different parts of the structure."

Contraction joints are broadly categorized by ACI according to their function.

Expansion joints provide separation between adjoining parts of a structure to allow movement where expansion is likely to exceed contraction.

Isolation joints provide a separation between adjoining concrete structure components to allow movement.

Construction joints exist between two successive placements of concrete — for instance, where work has stopped one day and continued the

An electronic search performed by ACI staff of the most current Manual of Concrete Practice and other publications turned up no reference to curved contraction joints.



Transferring that rule of thumb to curved shapes, it's easy to imagine the type of areas that would host runaway cracks. "What's tough is where you get into areas with where you start to get sharper points, for lack of a better description," Riggs says.

By way of example, imagine a pieshaped section of concrete. The narrow area will have a tendency to crack off, as though someone has taken a bite of it.

#### Crack control

Hand-tooling curves at Progressive Concrete is often done freehand with the same joiner one might use for linear control joints, according to Riggs. Progressive Concrete professionals typically mark a few points to use as guideposts.

But saw-cut joints, defined by the American Concrete Institute as those cut at less than full depth with special equipment in hardened concrete, are generally approached differently on curves than on straight lines. With the minimum recommended depth of one fourth of the thickness of the concrete, getting the saw to turn can be very tough.

'You really can't cut a tight radius control joint, because the saw blade will bind up," Riggs says. "You can do it, but only on a real wide-sweeping turn. Anything tighter, and you need a drycut saw and the joint will be more for aesthetic reasons than crack control."

Allen Roeber, president of Best Stamped Concrete Inc., based in Huntsville, Ala., combines saw cuts with hand-tooled contraction joints whenever he can.

"We like to go back the next day and saw-cut them to make sure the concrete cracks on that joint," Roeber says. "On 4-inch concrete, 80 percent of the time a 1-inch control joint is going to do the job, but for extra insurance why not saw cut it 2 inches deep? You're pretty much guaranteed it will crack in the joint."

Rather than working freehand, Roeber's Best Stamped Concrete crews work with guides, using a 2-by-4 as a guide for a straight joint, PVC pipe for a curved joint.

Especially when following tight

curves such as those found near the center of radial patterns, decorative concrete specialists are more likely to work with shallower joints.

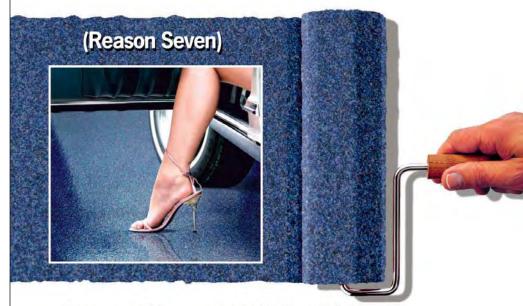
The very best joints will not only blend in, but help bring together design elements of the hardscape and nearby structures. "The trick is to make your eyes follow elements such as shapes and colors within the architectural joints and not focus in on the structural

control joints," says Riggs. "But this type of finesse doesn't always show up on blueprints. That's something you need to point out to the architects, because if they don't know what you're going to do, they might think you're going to destroy their design."

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## Polished Perspectives

#### Ten Years After: A Look Back at Polished Concrete's First Decade



Grinding with a classic MasterCraft swing machine. Note the weights that have been added for increased head pressure.

by Peter Wagner, CSI

still vividly remember my first large polished concrete job. Back in 2000, the equipment we used was somewhere between a Rube Goldberg design, a homemade go-cart and equipment adapted from the stone restoration and floor-cleaning industries. Manufacturers were just starting to visualize equipment solely for the polished concrete industry. If you want to visualize the difference between the equipment today and then, you need go no further than comparing a Ford Model T to a Lexus RX Hybrid. It's time to reminisce, not just for the sake of reminiscing, but to understand both how far we've come and how far we still have to go.

Let's set the ground rules: Polished concrete is defined here as the combination of diamond grinding and polishing in conjunction with applying densifier/hardeners, with or without color.

No one denies that, intentionally or inadvertently, concrete was ground and polished prior to the late 1990s. But it was not carried out as a separate industry as it is today. For example, RetroPlate's first formulations were in late 1997 or early 1998, but by the time labels were designed it was 1999 — hence the registered name "RetroPlate 99."

Polishing concrete has progressed from an industrial application focused on repairing dusting and spalling concrete to an industry that is not only function-oriented but also design- and sustainability-oriented. We've gone from a time of adapting equipment from other industries to having nearly 20 legitimate equipment manufacturers,

and from starting with sodium-based densifiers to having sodium, potassium and lithium-based options — some as silicates, some as siliconates and some as blends. Diamond technology is progressing so quickly that it is almost impossible to keep up with names and technologies. With dyes for polished concrete joining integral colors, dry shake hardeners and acid stains, we're not just plain vanilla any more, but can provide a rainbow of colors that rival Mother Nature.

#### **Evolution**

How has the industry changed in the past 10 years?

Polishing concrete, not unlike other new industries, begged, borrowed and stole from others in its infancy. Equipment came from the surface prep, stone restoration and cleaning industries, and as one can imagine, nothing was a perfect fit. The size of the equipment was not adequate, the head speed and head pressures were not optimum, diamonds wore out too fast or glazed over, and one had no real choice of "wet or dry." The hurdles never seemed insurmountable because we weren't smart enough to know better. My first polishing project was a 100-square-foot test area in my own warehouse, carried out with a 17inch swing machine from my stone restoration business, using marble diamonds. On my second project, fixing a dry-shake floor with dirt and footprints, I saw no reason to change my equipment. After all, we were only talking a few thousand square feet. Well, we did such a great job that the general contractor initiated a change order for the rest of the project, an additional 100,000-plus square feet of a new prison. As you can imagine, one 17-inch swing machine wasn't going to cut it, so we bought new equipment to do the job right: another 17-inch CCG swing machine, a 10-inch CCG for under the prison bunks that were bolted on the wall of the cells, two Alto 28-inch walk-behind scrubbers, and a used 50-inch Advance ride-on. Each piece of equipment was then outfitted with custom plates and diamonds. We thought that the several months



This floor was polished with autoscrubbers and swing machines. Only the cream was polished.

it took to complete the job was pretty impressive! How naive. Creativity was a necessity — in fact, it wasn't unusual for operators of swing machines to get better head pressure by placing sand bags on the machine, or better yet, to have their wife sit on the motor. You did what you had to. Nothing is the same today as it was yesterday. There is a complete industry today that did not exist in the late '90s.

In looking at equipment, first consider equipment from the surface preparation industry — designed to level the floor, it had the weight and head pressure to cut through just about anything. Then consider equipment

from the stone industry — here was equipment to polish and grind materials that were always relatively flat to begin with. And last, you had equipment from the cleaning industry — it had size and ride-on capability, but lacked torque and head pressure to grind the concrete.

VIC International first brought the HTC grinders over from Sweden in 1993 for surface preparation, with SASE Equipment following with the Diamatic in 1997. Not until 1999 or 2000 were the equipment and chemical manufacturers working toward creation of the polished concrete industry as it stands today. While these machines had the ability to produce level floors, they

did not have the ability to float with the floor and polish only the surface cream, unless the floor had been initially finished flat. With a wavy floor, you had either the choice of fully flattening the floor to produce a uniform appearance, or simply taking off the high spots, leaving a very mottled, irregular appearance. With stone-industry equipment, not only was your cutting path narrower, but the equipment was much slower and had less head pressure. Yet, if the customer did not require a totally flat floor for performance requirements, the swing machines, such as VMC's CCG lines, could "ride the waves" and produce a beautifully polished cream. The ride-on and walkbehind equipment was well suited for polishing, along with cleaning the floors or working the densifier, but not grinding. It must be noted that although industrial vacuums did exist in the early days, they were inefficient, so that most early work was performed wet. Today you not only have surface-preparation companies providing grinders and

polishers, but also established stone industry companies.

Diamond evolution has not slowed from the early days. In fact, during the past several years, diamond technology has leapfrogged equipment advancements. Not only have the matrices that hold the diamonds been improved specifically for concrete



grinding and polishing, but so have the diamonds. Today you have diamonds for wet, diamonds for dry, diamonds that can be used wet or dry. In addition, you have "pad-based" diamonds that are intended to provide a more effective and efficient polishing process, either at the end of the densifying process

or simply as an ongoing maintenance process. The Twister pad from HTC was the first product in this category when introduced two years ago, and several additional products with a different approach exist today, such as Concrete Polishing Solutions polishing pads and the Innovatech I-Shine Polish System.



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These products are generally attached to a high-speed burnisher and not only produce high production rates, but also follow every contour of the floor, flat or wavy. Most of the equipment manufacturers, in an attempt to provide their customers with the ability to polish wavy floors without grinding them flat, have developed diamond-plate holders with springs or couplings to better follow the floor contour. If your floor does have highs and lows, and your equipment is not capable of floating, you risk creating very deep scratches in the valley walls.

The "juice," as densifier is called, evolved from the earlier densifiers that were created in the mid-1950s to help eliminate the natural dusting that occurred within concrete. Through formula changes based on percentage of solids, wetting agents and proprietary adjustments, the chemical base for polished concrete was created. Each manufacturer has what they believe to be their own strengths that set them



A 22-color palette of dyes was used to color the warehouse floor of Van Mason Coatings in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

apart. Today's best-known densifiers are either sodium, potassium or lithiumbased, though new chemistries utilizing amorphous or colloidal silica are entering the market.

The polished concrete industry, though 10 years old, is still in its infancy. New opportunities for its uses arise daily. Three years ago,

"sustainability" was just entering our conversations, and now it presents us with our largest growth opportunity. It is not as simple as specifying "polished concrete," as even within our group we do not agree what constitutes the process and look. We need to open our eyes and ears as to what the customer wants, not what we think they need. For all of us to take full advantage of these new opportunities, our industry needs to come together, just as the carpet and hard surface industries have, and each individual has to be open to learning opportunities, both within and without our industry. Good luck in the second decade.

Peter Wagner, CSI, is vice president of sales and training for AmeriPolish. He has more than 20 years in the flooring industry and is in his eighth year in the polished concrete industry. He can be reached at pbwagner@ameripolish.com.

In our next issue Peter will offer Ten Years After, Part Two: Now that we've come this far, how do we reach our full potential?





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## Project Profile



A concrete countertop that looks like an old, rough-sawn log overlooks a compass-rose patterned concrete floor in the kitchen of this Chehalis, Wash., home.

#### Concrete Home, Chehalis, Wash.



by Chris Camara

Conversation at a trade show, prodding from a friend, and research into green building techniques led Kevin Winkler to create not just a home, but a showcase for concrete construction and design.

Winkler, owner of KW Specialized Construction LLC, based in Chehalis, Wash., became intrigued with the idea of using insulating concrete forms, or ICFs, during the Tacoma Home & Garden Show a couple of years ago. While displaying samples from his decorative concrete construction, stamping, staining and refinishing business, he struck up a conversation

with Bob Thompson, a manager at Miles Sand & Gravel Co., of Auburn, Wash., about concrete home construction. "It was just obvious that it was the future," he says.

Winkler had already received the building permit for a stick-built home he had planned for five acres in the Boistfort Valley, but switched directions with the urging of Justin Farley, an electrician friend and fellow concrete specialist who promised to help out.

"When you can build green and save energy at the same time and go fast — I built my house in three months and three weeks — it's going to put money

back in your pocket down the road," Winkler says.

Winkler, along with Farley and two others, finished the 2,600-squarefoot home in the summer of 2006. Not only is it an example of fine concrete building techniques, but it also highlights 67 linear feet of decorative concrete countertops and various staining techniques on the floors. They even built a concrete dining-room table and a concrete tree, complete with cup holders, for the hot tub. They used just under 250 yards of concrete in the home, sidewalks and driveway.

"My neighbors are farmers, and they think I'm the craziest son-of-a-gun this side of a turnip," Winkler says.

Maybe so, but his efforts earned him two Excellence in Concrete Awards from the Washington Aggregates & Concrete Association: first place in the residential decorative concrete category and second place in residential ICF construction.

Farley, who is now Winkler's housemate, says some of his favorite features are the Celtic knot design on the dining room floor, which involved a lot of hand work, and the checkerboard pattern on the kitchen floor, which involved math and precision. "I enjoyed creating both extreme ends — artistic and mechanical. You have so many choices with stained concrete floors. imagination is your only limit. They are super-tough, and the heated floors feel so good on your feet. Cleaning and waxing takes about 45 minutes throughout the whole house, so us men have no excuse not to keep the floors clean anymore."

The countertops are varied in color and design. In the master bathroom, the edge features exposed shells. In the kitchen, one section of countertop so closely resembles a rough-sawn log that it fooled a logger who lives nearby. He actually crawled underneath it to prove to himself that it was really concrete.

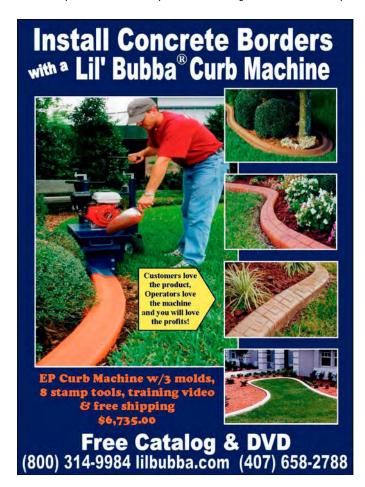
Winkler credits Ken Heitzmann of Decorative Concrete Systems, based in Milton-Freewater, Ore., with providing excellent training and advice over the







Concrete specialist Justin Farley reaches for a mag float to smooth the top of the concrete home's exterior walls.



last 10 years.

Winkler had built 12 traditional homes when he started his concrete home, and was taken by surprise by the ease and speed of using the Logix ICFs. Once the slab was complete, he set up the interlocking ICFs (adult Legos, as Farley calls them) on a Monday morning and had them filled with concrete by Friday afternoon. The thought of pouring that much concrete into foam blocks was pretty intimidating. "I literally thought I was going to lose my mind," Winkler recalls. But in the end, he says, "It was almost strangely easy."

That Monday-to-Friday pace is about the same time framing would take in a stick-built house. The difference is





that two built-in layers of foam insulation are installed at the same time. The forms, instead of being removed after the concrete hardens, remain in place and become part of the wall structure, with drywall being the next step.

Farley says the electrical work was no more difficult in the concrete home than it would be in a stick-built house. Channels or grooves are cut into the forms, and plumbing and electrical lines are inserted into those grooves. The drywall is screwed directly onto the forms.

He too, is sold on ICFs. Building costs are minimally higher, he says, but considering resale values, lower maintenance costs and energy savings, it's the material of the future, especially considering the popularity of the green building movement.







#### Project Profile

Winkler estimates that he spent about 7 percent more on building costs than he would for a stick-built home, but he thinks he'll be able to build for less the next time around. In nine months, he plans to sell his home and build with ICFs again. Farley is looking for land for his own project — a duplex made with ICFs.

Winkler says concrete construction



This concrete countertop in the master bathroom features exposed shells highlighted with paint.



will save him big dollars in energy costs. The radiant heat keeps the floors toasty, and the heat is retained so well that he runs heating and cooling systems only five months out of the year. In the summer, he opens the front and back doors before work to let cool air in, closes it up and keeps the house cool for evening.

In fact, a 1997 survey commissioned by the Portland Cement Association found that ICFs reduce energy used for heating by about 44 percent and energy for cooling by about 32 percent.

Winkler says he built with the idea that he would be able to live comfortably for six months without power, using a generator, gas range and gas-powered water heater.

Other benefits of concrete houses? Walls made of concrete help eliminate worries about mold, moisture and outside allergens. They're soundproof, airtight, cost-effective, durable (especially during hurricanes, tornadoes or earthquakes) and are similar in appearance to stick-built homes. Winkler's home is covered in HardiePlank concrete siding, but next time, he wants to try a FossilCrete exterior.

Winkler often walks potential clients through the house, explaining, "If you can think it, you can do it out of concrete." Their reaction? "They can't believe it's concrete.

"Now I can't wait to build again because I have so many new ideas."



As floodwaters in southwest Washington submerged entire Chehalis neighborhoods early December, Justin Farley and Kevin Winkler waved down a team of U.S. Coast Guard rescuers to help a family of five who had abandoned their home. Farley and Winkler, however, stayed put.

"It's almost reminiscent of Mount St. Helens," Farley says the next day. "It's just a big, brown mess." He says the mud surrounding their concrete home is about a foot thick.

However, despite some muck in the garage, the concrete house remained rock solid while his neighbors in stick-built homes did not fare so well.

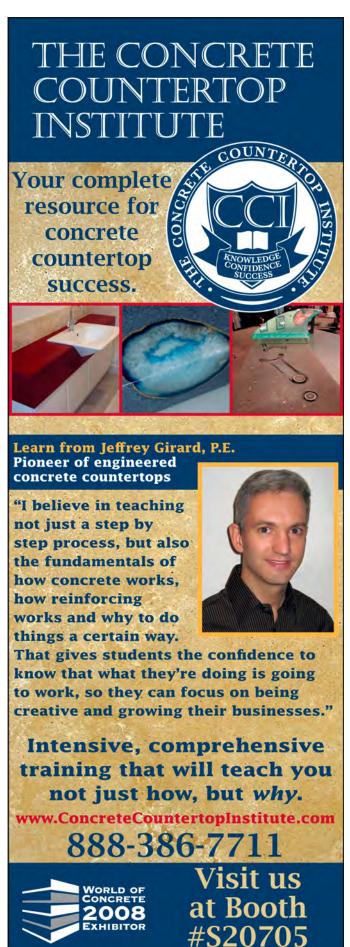
Farley estimated that 10 houses in his immediate area in the Boistfort Valley suffered severe water damage: five looked to be destroyed, and all the mobile homes were washed away. Floodwater, in some cases, reached the rooflines. One morning, the area looked like a brown ocean filled with floating debris.

The flood, which hit Dec. 3 and 4, forced hundreds of people to flee when the river crested at almost 10 feet over flood stage. Long stretches of Interstate 5 were under up to 7 feet of water, the Seattle Times reported.

"We're doing OK here for two reasons," Farley says. "One is that we built above the 100-year flood plain." The other, he says, is that the home is built on a slab, "an excellent footing and foundation for the house."

If the floodwaters had entered the house, it would have been far easier to clean up, he says, as all the flooring is concrete and could have been hosed down. The exterior walls, also made of concrete, could have withstood the water as well.

The way the house survived the flood is another testament to the durability of ICF construction, Farley says. Even when rescuers arrived, "I felt comfortable enough to stay here."





#### Saw Blades

#### **Bosch Power Tools SpeedWave Diamond Blades**

The new SpeedWave Diamond Blades from Bosch Power Tools and Accessories incorporate two new features that ensure faster, longer-lasting blades. The first is Bosch's new segment design, a wave-shaped ridge along both sides of each segment that significantly reduces blade friction and drag. The design also helps clear dust faster for better overall performance.

The second unique feature of the SpeedWave line is what is billed as the world's first vibration-dampening cooling disc. The cooling disc uses the blade's rotation to draw in air and evenly cool the blade surface. Furthermore, the cooling disc's design and position on the blade help it absorb vibration for a smoother cut.

Available in diameters of 4 1/2 inches, 5 inches, 7 inches and 9 inches, the SpeedWave Diamond Blades are suitable for cutting cured and reinforced concrete, roofing tile, brick and other masonry materials. The SpeedWave won an Attendees' Choice Most Innovative Product Award at the World of Concrete show in 2007.

**(**0 (877) 267-2499

www.boschtools.com

DeWalt's DW4744 is a diamond blade that offers versatility for decorative concrete contractors.

A member of DeWalt's segmented-rim line of diamond blades, the 14-inch DW4744 has a dense concentration of high-quality diamonds that works well on brick as well as on all types of concrete, whether it

was set recently or 20 years ago. An advanced diamond matrix ensures longer blade life and enhanced material cutting, while the large diamond segments with cobalt make the blade ideal for a wide variety of applications.

All of DeWalt's segmented rim blades are laser-welded with heat-treated steel bodies that provide increased durability and long life.

**(**0 (800) 433-9258

www.dewalt.com

#### **Makita Diamond Blades**

Makita U.S.A. Inc. has released a new line of diamond blades designed for fast, smooth cutting and long life.

The blades are suitable for applications ranging from soft materials such as green concrete and sandstone to harder substances such as cured concrete and granite. Ranging in diameter from 4 inches to 16 inches, the blades feature high-quality synthetic diamonds embedded into the bonding matrix of each saw blade. The diamond blade line includes segmented and turbo blades, and it is designed to complement





Makita's existing collection of concrete cutting and grinding power tools.

© (800) 462-5482

MK-762

www.makitatools.com

#### MK Diamond DMX Blades

MK Diamond Products offers DMX Blades, an engineered line of high-speed blades that use arrayed patterns of diamonds.

> The arrayed diamonds are effectively aligned so that they are working in unison, increasing cutting efficiency over conventional blades

by 65 percent. The use of an arrayed diamond pattern also improves cutting speed and blade longevity. The DMX line of blades uses only the highest quality synthetic diamonds, resulting in high cutting performance. They are available in 12-inch, 14-inch, 16-inch and 20-inch sizes, as well as in several widths. Segment height is 10 mm. DMX Blades are suitable for general-purpose applications in concrete and masonry.

© (800) 421-5830

www.mkdiamond.com

#### **Multiquip Side Winder Diamond Blades**

Side Winder diamond blades from Multiquip's Diamond Back Cutting Division are specifically aimed at the decorative concrete contractor.

Side Winders provide a clean cut and long-lasting service for decorative saw patterns and scoring slabs. They offer high-quality steel cores with undercut protection, proven segment bonds and superior synthetic diamonds to ensure professional results. The blades feature a ribbed core that reduces friction and heat while providing faster cutting and application versatility.

Also, the blades' T-shape diamond segment design enhances fast cutting performance, making them ideal for cured concrete, brick, block, asphalt and green concrete







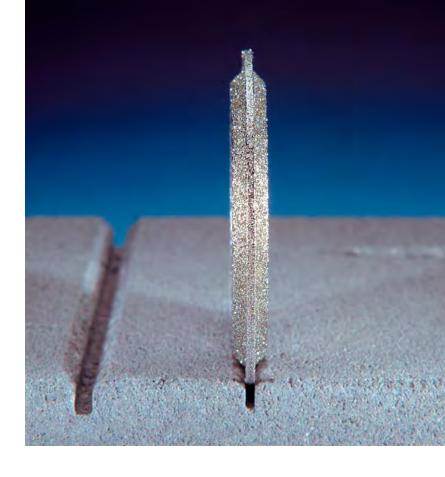
#### **Soff-Cut ProEdge Blades**

Soff-Cut International, a subsidiary of Husqvarna, offers two full lines of ProEdge beveled blades, the V-Line and Radius Line. Both ProEdge lines are specially designed for architectural scoring to replace laborintensive hand tooling.

Comprising a variety of 5-inch and 6-inch blades, the ProEdge series is suitable for many applications, including driveways, sidewalks, hardscapes, patios, pool decks, parking garages and commercial site work. Designed for use with the Soff-Cut Ultra Early Entry dry cutting system, ProEdge blades can be used to chase standard joints for a beveled look the day after control joints are cut. Using ProEdge blades versus hand tooling can allow a larger area of concrete to be placed at one time, eliminating costly multiple concrete pours. ProEdge blades also allow for versatility in the saw-joint contour.

**(**0 (800) 776-3328

www.soffcut.com



#### Vermont American Diamond Abrasive Blades

Vermont American's new Diamond Abrasive Blade series is designed to provide faster, smoother and more consistent cuts. The Diamond Abrasive line replaces the company's current diamond blade line, offering 14 different blades suitable

for a wide variety of concrete, masonry and tile-cutting applications.

> The tile blades range from 4 inches to 10 inches in diameter for use with either an angle grinder or a wet saw and last up to 85 times longer than standard abrasive blades. The general-purpose blades come with either segmented, turbo or continuous rim edge configurations in diameters ranging from 4 inches to 14 inches.

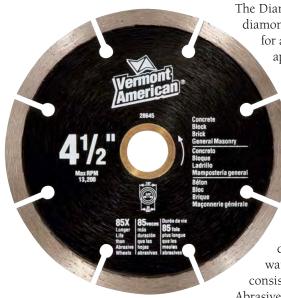
The Diamond Abrasive line features laserwelded industrial diamond and metal matrix segments to extend the overall life and

performance of the blades. They are also designed to resist heat buildup and warping, all the while maintaining consistent cutting depth. The Diamond Abrasive Blade series includes continuous

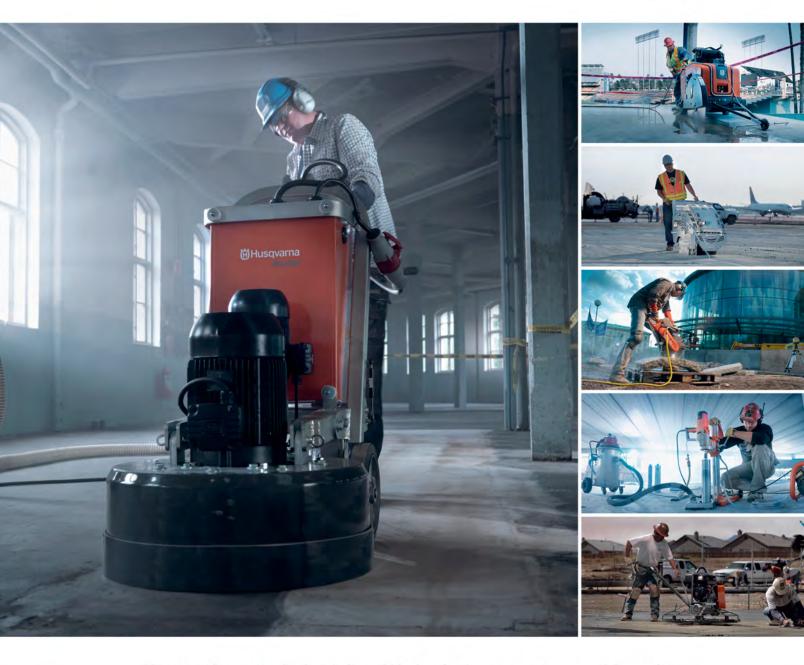
rim blades for wet or dry tile cutting, turbo rim blades for fast and clean cuts in general masonry products and segmented rim blades for fast, rough cuts. 🥗

© (800) 742-3869

👣 www.vermontamerican.com

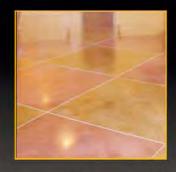


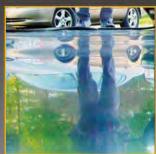




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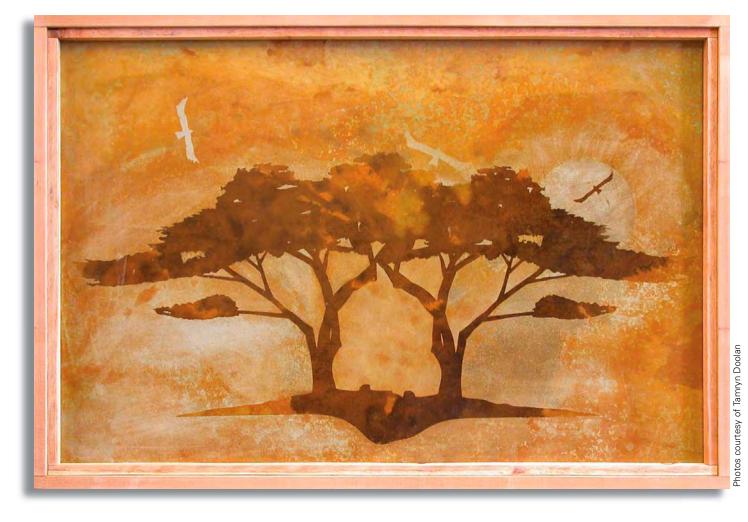


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### Product Profile







Tamryn Doolan, owner of Surface Gel Tek, has long been in the business of turning simple concrete surfaces into striking works of art. Continuing in that tradition, Doolan's new endeavor, Caribou Art Studios, brings her talents to a whole new venue — exterior walls.

Launched this past summer, Caribou Art is a line of concrete wall hangings designed to enhance outdoor seating areas, such as patios and terraces.

"Beautiful enough for the inside; durable enough for the outside" — the Caribou Art tag line highlights both the aesthetic and practical advantages of the product. Using the same technique as Surface Gel Tek's trademarked Flattoos, Doolan is able to create a limitless

variety of designs on framed concrete panels that can withstand the elements.

All Caribou Art pieces begin the same: Doolan trowels the concrete onto a slab of Hardie Backerboard. Although limited in size (the largest she's done is 3 feet by 5 feet), Caribou Art is endlessly customizable.

"I get a lot of people who say: 'I like this, but can you do it more like that?'" says Doolan. "The answer is always 'Yes, I can." Doolan says she gets inspiration from everywhere — from panoramic views of Needle Rock near her home in Mesa, Ariz., to random images from Google searches.

Of the 50 or so pieces of Caribou Art that she's done so far, Doolan's favorite was a reproduction of a Modigliani portrait. Doolan's client was



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Place an 80-pound bag of dry concrete mix onto the CreteSheet and add water in portions. With two people holding the handles you tumble the concrete back and forth while the weight remains on the ground, completely mixing in less than 2 minutes.

Placement is easy too –just pick up the CreteSheet with its perfectly mixed concrete and pour the concrete into place without spilling a drop. For clean up either rinse CreteSheet with a hose or just let the excess concrete harden then shake it off –concrete can't stick to the polyethylene sheet. It really is The World's Simplest Concrete Mixer<sup>TM</sup>.

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866-571-7749 www.CreteSheet.com



a big fan of the Italian painter and asked if Doolan could recreate it in concrete. Not only could she do it, but the result was so appealing that Doolan is certain there will be more Modigliani in her future.

Caribou Art is not just versatile in terms of style and color, but also in technique. "I'm not limited to acid stains," says Doolan, who used black acrylics and red pigments in addition to standard stains when doing the Modigliani piece. The fact that most patios are covered also means Caribou Art enjoys protection, in some measure, from direct sunlight, eliminating concerns about color bleaching or fading.

The aesthetic appeal of Caribou Art is also not limited to the piece itself. Caribou Art is designed to complement the decorative concrete in a patio floor or countertop, says Doolan. The pieces can also serve to tie an exterior living space into the overall decorative theme of a house.

Doolan anticipates developing a line of Caribou Art kits — consisting of a precast slab, graphics, stains and sealers — for the DIY crowd, but for now each piece of Caribou Art is handcrafted in her studio. In addition to being available at a few storefronts in Mesa, Caribou Art may be special-ordered through the Surface Gel Tek Web site (look for the Caribou Art Studios link).

© (888) 872-7759

www.surfacegeltek.com





### Product News

#### Logocrete gains visibility

Stampcrete International Ltd. is stepping up its marketing plan for Logocrete Systems, a patented method for installing threedimensional corporate logos onto existing concrete. The kinds of logos that can be applied are almost unlimited.

Stampcrete gave Logocrete a soft introduction in 2006. For over two decades Stampcrete has been manufacturing concrete imprinting tools and materials for the decorative concrete industry. As the demand for logos to be placed on these decorative surfaces increased, the company recognized the huge potential market for cost-effective logo placement.

Stampcrete plans to seek licensing agreements with Nascar, professional sports leagues and college teams after a network of installers is aligned throughout the country.



www.stampcrete.com







#### Proline offers antiquing wash

Proline Decorative Concrete Systems has introduced EZ Tique antiquing wash, a versatile coloring agent that can be applied easily and will hold fast to any textured concrete surface.

EZ Tique is a powder that is mixed with water and applied as a brush coat, unlike dust-on antiquing powders. The coloring agent can be used to revitalize a weathered concrete surface or add an antique color to a freshly textured surface. EZ Tique goes on quickly and can be removed for greater control of the coloring process. One 3pound bucket can color up to 3,000 square feet. EZ Tique is available in 42 standard color-hardener colors.

Proline also has two new entries to its growing line of stamps: a 6-foot Solar Flare and a Marquis oval inlay (shown at left). Also, Proline's border tools have been improved by the addition of hammered edges.

**(**800) 795-4750

www.prolinestamps.com

#### Mixing trailer helps with small jobs

The new MixKing concrete mixing trailer from Cart-Away Concrete Systems Inc. has capacity of 1.75 yards, more than the standard Cart-Away 1-yard concrete mixing trailer.

Concrete mixing trailers help finishers on many small concrete projects save short-load delivery charges. Mixing trailers give flexibility in mix design and the ability to produce manageable quantities of colored concrete. Like standard Cart-Away trailers, the MixKing uses the proven 11-horsepower Honda



engine, the GearSaver rotation knob and TandemFlex plastic fenders.

The new trailer will be available as part of the new Cart-Away Supply franchise system.

- © (888) 649-5464
- **(**0 (800) 909-9809
- www.cart-away.com

#### **Crown announces cove molding** system

Crown Polymers has introduced CrownCove, an advanced cove molding system.

CrownCove is lightweight, inexpensive to ship, easy to handle and can be installed with basic carpentry skills. It's easily cut to size and its flexibility makes installation along wall contours simple. Once in place, CrownCove forms a monolithic bond with polymer and cementitious floor products, creating a consistent seamless look from one end of a project to the other.

**(**0 (888) 732-1270

www.crownpolymers.com

#### Concrete mixing in the Bag

New from The Cement Solution Co. LLC, the Reusable Concrete Mixing Bag allows users to thoroughly mix a 40-pound, a 60-pound or even an 80pound bag of ready-mix concrete by hand in less than one minute. It mixes the concrete better and faster than the traditional wheelbarrow-shovel method without using machinery.

To use the Mixing Bag, open the top of a ready-mix bag of concrete, place Mixing Bag over the opened sack and tip the combined bags so that the ready mix pours into the mixing bag. A helpful chart is printed on the Mixing Bag to help a user add the correct amount of water for any size bag of ready-mix concrete. Close the mixing bag using the provided hook-and-loop cinch strap. Rock the mixture back and forth for 30 to 45 seconds. Finally, pour out completely mixed concrete.

The Mixing Bag eliminates the need for any mixing tools. It is also ideal for remote projects, such as



wilderness cabin and trail maintenance projects

or hard-to-reach areas of urban and suburban projects.

**(**0 (877) 251-1203

www.cementsolution.com



#### A bonding primer with nanotechnology

Convenience Products, maker of Seal-Krete products, has introduced new Lock-Down Epoxy Bonding Primer.

Lock-Down is a resin-rich, selfcross-linking epoxy bonding primer designed specifically for concrete surfaces. Ultra-fine nanoparticles in Lock-Down penetrate deeply into concrete, binding chalk and providing a clean, sound substrate for paint or decorative topcoats. Using Lock-Down before painting will increase topcoat adhesion and significantly reduce the potential for cracking, peeling and chipping. Like all Seal-Krete products, Lock-Down is water-based, low VOC, and ultra-low in odor. It complies with all California air pollution regulations



and covers up to 500 square feet per gallon on smooth concrete floors, or 250 square feet per gallon on broom finished concrete.

- **(**0 (800) 323-7357
- 👣 www.seal-krete.com
- www.convenienceproducts.com

#### One-piece drill bits for hammers

Metabo Corp. has introduced a family of one-piece core bits for rotary hammers that increase the efficiency of drilling into hard, solid materials such as concrete, block and brick.

Compared to traditional systems comprised of individual core bits, extension shanks, centering bits and threaded anchors that need to be pieced together, Metabo's one-piece core bit is a single component that's efficient at transferring the hammer's blow to material being drilled. This makes the rotary hammer's accessory faster at drilling and more effective than a modular system.

The carbide-tipped bits come in diameters from 1 1/2 inches to 6 inches and overall lengths of 12 inches and 22 inches. The one-piece shank is sold as a complete set and is available with either an SDS-Max or Spline drive shank for individual applications.

- **(**0 (800) 638-2264
- www.metabousa.com

#### Surface prep for overlays

SeamsPerfect, new from Specialty Solutions Manufacturing Inc., is a



coating that eliminates messy surface preparation for overlays.

This green, universal coating primes and waterproofs all surfaces — indoors and out — for good adhesion without odors, noise or mess. It applies directly over cut-back glue, tile, concrete, VCT, wood, metal and other surfaces, readying the surface for an acrylic, cement, or epoxy overlay system. SeamsPerfect is also the ideal waterproofing and concrete resurfacing system for customers on a tight budget.

**(**718) 736-8477

www.ssmincorporated.com

#### **Countertop company unveils** form liners, drainboards

Tsunami Countertops has released several new designer form liners and drainboards.

In the Countertop Edge Form Liners department, Tsunami has introducing three new edge form details - Round, OG, and Rope-edge, each made of polyurethane. The reusable, bendable forms are 93 inches long and 2 feet tall.

A 4-foot tall Rough (Chipped) edge is also available.

The company also introduced three new Drain Board Molds, fiberglass molds for creating concrete drainboards. The three are: Regatta (12 1/8 inches wide, 16 inches long, 3/8-inch to 3/4-inch sloped height), Eclipse (12 inches wide, 15 inches long, 1/4-inch to 1/2-inch sloped height), and Grill (13 7/8 inches to 11 7/8 inches wide, 17 15/16 inches long, 1/4-inch to 1/2inch sloped height). The Eclipse and the Grill drainboards are designed for use with stainless steel trivets, also offered by Tsunami. Custom drainboard fabrication is available.

© (801) 310-0936

www.tsunamicountertops.com

#### **Just-add-water underlayment** helps with crack repair

ProSpec has introduced Feather Edge, a trowelable, rapid-setting underlayment that is formulated for quick repair of floor gouges, cracks and ridges prior to floor-covering

installation. It requires only the addition of water. No priming is necessary.

Feather Edge is a cement-based, mildew-resistant underlayment that can be applied from feather-edge to 1/2-inch thickness without cracking. The result is a smooth, ultra-thin finish that accepts all major floor coverings. The product

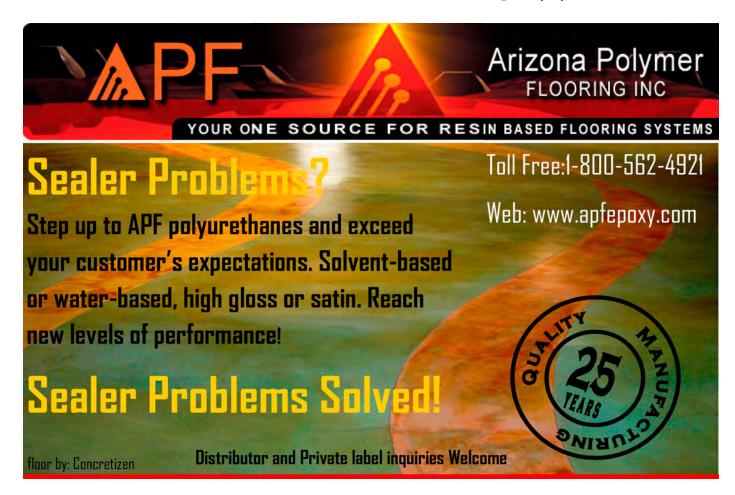


is highly polymer-modified, ensuring exceptional bonding to a wide range of properly prepared surfaces, including ceramic tile, concrete, plywood and cutback adhesives. Available in 10-pound packing to eliminate leakage, Feather Edge is ideal for large and small repair jobs.

The ProSpec brand is owned and managed by Bonsal American Inc.

**(**0 (800) 738-1621

www.prospec.com



#### Remover attacks concrete buildup

Eliminator Concrete Remover, new from Cleform Tool Corp. and Congo Products, is a chemically active liquid designed to remove built-up, hardened concrete from most surfaces. It works well on concrete and mortar mixers, concrete forms, tools, screeds, trowels, hardware, ready-mix trucks and equipment.

Eliminator is highly concentrated and should be diluted with common tap water. If possible, immersion is the best application method. A light foaming or fizzing action will occur when it is applied. Soak and respray as needed. As buildup softens, remove it with a scraper or power washer.

The remover contains no muriatic, sulfuric, phosphoric, hydrofluoric or hydrochloric acids. Because of its less corrosive nature this product can be used on most metal, painted and plastic surfaces without damage. However, it may slightly etch clean metal surfaces, so an exposure test is recommended to

insure compatibility. Environmentally friendly, it cleans up with soap and water and can be flushed down a drain.

**(**0 (800) 253-3676

www.cleform.com

#### Racatac makes chest support tool a standard feature

Racatac Products Inc. has now made both of its Racatac models available with chest support. The units will now be available as Model 01RACCS (Racatac with 2-inch casters and chest support) and Model 01RAC3CS (Racatac with 3-inch casters and chest support).

The chest support included with each model is fully adjustable and connects and disconnects in seconds. It is made of very comfortable dualdensity foam. Both the seat and chest support adjust at different angles and heights and slide on a rail front to back. Previously, the Racatac and chest support were only available purchased separately.

© (877) 722-2822

www.racatac.com

#### **Storage Monsters**

The new Monster Box Series from Knaack LLC features the Piano Box (Model 1000), Chest (Model 1010), and Cabinet (Model 1020), all durable and secure storage options for job sites.

The Monster Box features heavy-duty tubular steel framing, a four-point crane lift system, integrated drill-resistant lock, and a weatherproof Power Pass grommet that allows pass-through of electrical cords. At 30 inches wide, 66 inches long and 55 inches high, the

Piano Box has a storage capacity of 48 cubic feet, with two fixed shelves and a rack for hanging protection equipment. The Cabinet has a storage capacity of







52 cubic feet with the same dimensions as the Piano Box. An open design without a center post allows for maximum storage and accessibility, while its short, wide shape is stable. The Chest holds 31 cubic feet and has a 30inch wide, 66-inch long and 36-inch high frame. It is designed with a deep cover and features a heavy-duty single cover support.

**(**0 (800) 456.7865

www.knaack.com

#### **Faster bits from DeWalt**

DeWalt is launching a new line of industrial-grade, two-cutter Rock Carbide SDS Plus drill bits, as well as a new line of four-cutter SDS Plus drill bits.

Available in February 2008, the new Rock Carbide SDS Plus accessories will provide increased durability, bit life and speed for a variety of industrial applications, including drilling holes in concrete. The new bits offer a longerlasting and faster drilling alternative for professional end users.

The four-flute, two-cutter Rock Carbide SDS Plus bits, ranging from 5/32 inches to 1 1/8 inches, are designed for maximum durability and bit life. Each bit sports a carbide tip that is 10 percent thicker than a competitor. It has a thicker core diameter that is three times more durable than a competitor. Additionally, the elongated four-flute helix will pull debris out of the drilled hole and increase the drilling speed.

The new four-cutter, Rock Carbide SDS Plus bits, ranging from 5/8 inches to 1 1/8 inches, are designed with broader shoulders at the head of the bit for increased life. The open head design on the four-cutter allows debris to flow into the flute and out of the hole which allows the bit to drill 25 percent faster than a competitor. For increased speed the bits have also been equipped with

an elongated four-flute helix.

www.dewalt.com

#### **Radiant heating system offers** remote control switch

Orbit Radiant Heating has upgraded its entire line of snow and ice-melting systems that feature Nexans electric heating cables. The upgrade adds an optional remote control panel for operating the system's controls from inside a home or building.

About the same size as a standard light switch, the new remote control integrates into any home or business environment. It increases ease of use, since users no longer need to brave the elements to turn on the snow-melting system. The remote controls a 90minute timer and displays the system's operating status.

The new control connects directly to the exterior moisture and temperature sensor, which communicates with the system's control panel. Installers need only run one additional wire from the sensor to the control panel.

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www.orbitmfg.com



#### On the Computer

#### ProSpec catalog released on **CD-ROM**

ProSpec, Bonsal American Inc.'s brand of commercial construction products, has released an electronic version of its architectural products binder.

The CD contains product catalogs, technical data sheets and material safety data sheets covering ProSpec's three major product lines: Concrete Repair & Restoration, Floor Repair & Rehabilitation, and Tile & Stone Installation. The CDs will ship packaged in a cardboard box manufactured from recycled fibers. The CD contains an update feature that allows the user to pull current information from ProSpec.com if the user is connected to the Internet.

**(**0 (800) 738-1621

www.prospec.com

#### On the Web

#### Web site encourages green building

The U.S. Green Building Council, with support from planned-community developer Newland Communities, has launched Greenhomeguide.org, a new Web site that will give homeowners, home buyers, renters, landlords and others the tools they need to ensure their homes are as healthy and environmentally friendly as possible.

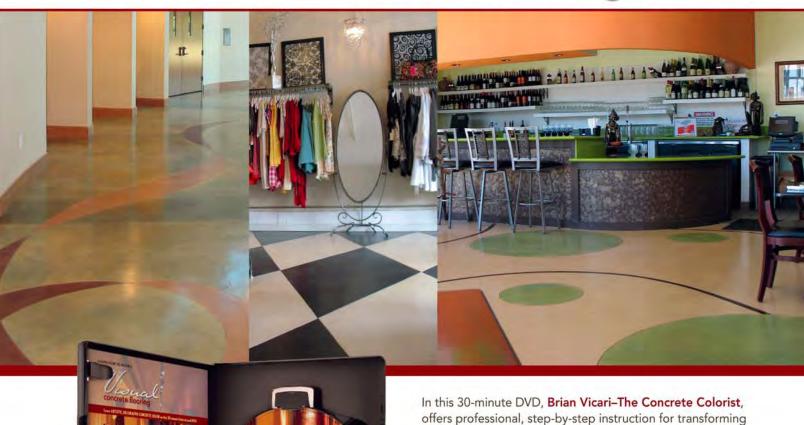
The Green Home Guide details the ways green homes can benefit health and save money, as well as reduce negative impacts on the world. Green homes use less energy and water than conventional homes. and they make use of safe materials,

such as paints and cleaning products that don't emit harmful chemicals into the air. They are built with materials that are recycled, locally produced, and created from sustainable, renewable resources.

The new site illustrates how families have gone green by offering profiles of homes that have been certified under the USGBC's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Homes rating system. It offers details on the LEED for Homes system, including help in finding LEED builders and providers. It includes checklists for new homes and renovating or retrofitting existing homes.

www.greenhomeguide.org

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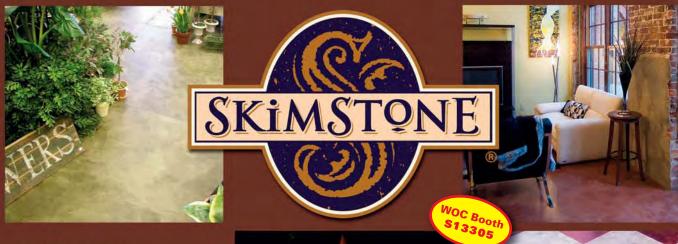
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### **American Concrete Institute** ACI releases new publications

The American Concrete Institute announces the availability of several new publications and CD-ROMs.

440R-07: Report on Fiber-Reinforced Polymer Reinforcement for Concrete Structures — In addition to the material properties of constituent materials (that is, resins and fibers) and products, this document offers up-to-date knowledge of fiber-reinforced polymer applications, such as internal reinforcement and structural systems. The document also addresses durability issues and the effects of extreme events, such as fire and blast.

548.8-07: Specification for Type EM (Epoxy Multi-Layer) Polymer Overlay for Bridge and Parking Garage Decks — This specification deals with epoxy multilayer polymer overlays, which incorporate a low-modulus epoxy binder and selected aggregate to produce a flexible, skid-resistant and waterproof overlay.

IPS-2: Seismic Rehabilitation of Concrete Structures — This publication states the results of an investigation into seismic rehabilitation methods and various evaluation processes. This publication also includes 16 research papers presented in June 2000 at a technical meeting held in Japan on the Evaluation of Seismic Rehabilitation.

SP-246CD: Structural Implications of Shrinkage and Creep of Concrete CD-ROM — This is a collection of papers prepared for a session held at the ACI Fall 2007 Convention in Puerto Rico

SP-247CD: Self-Consolidating Concrete for Precast Prestressed Applications CD-ROM — This is a collection of papers prepared for a session held at the ACI Fall 2007 Convention in Puerto Rico.

SP-248CD: Deflection and Stiffness Issues in FRC and Thin Structural Elements CD-ROM — This is a collection of papers organized for a session held at the ACI Fall 2007 Convention. They relate to material behavior and the structural implications of using fiber-reinforced concrete. They focus on the benefits of using fibers to enhance stiffness and reduce deflection of FRC members both with and without reinforcement

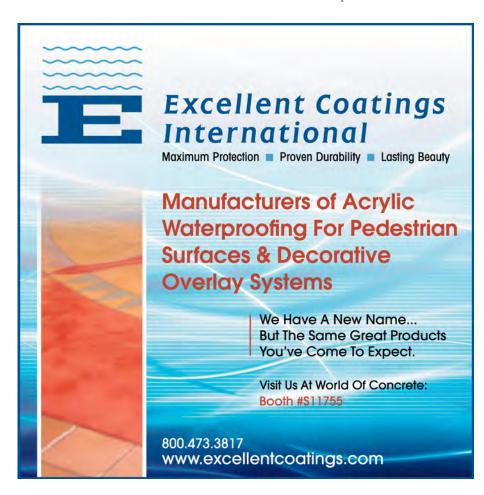
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www.concrete.org

#### Managing director honored

Ward R. Malisch, senior managing director of the American Concrete Institute, will be awarded the 2008 Richard D. Gaynor Award, presented by the National Ready-Mixed Concrete Association

The award, which will be presented to Malisch during the



NRMCA convention in March, is given annually by the group's Research, Engineering and Standards Committee to members who have demonstrated a lifetime commitment to the betterment of the ready-mix concrete industry.

In addition to being an active member of NRMCA and the senior managing director of ACI, Malisch has demonstrated his commitment to the industry as the publisher of Concrete International and former editor of Concrete Construction magazine. He serves on the board of directors of the American Society of Concrete Contractors and is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers. During his distinguished career, Malisch has also served as the director of the World of Concrete seminar program, director of construction information services for the Portland Cement Association, and the managing director of engineering for ACI.

Malisch, who is set to retire from ACI at the end of 2007, plans on assuming a part-time position as technical director for the American Society of Concrete Contractors, and will continue in a consulting role to ACI as publisher of Concrete International.

www.concrete.org

#### **Concrete Sawing and Drilling Association** Alliance produces guide for reducing silica exposure

In an attempt to educate workers and prevent silicosis, the Concrete Sawing and Drilling Association and the Occupational Safety & Health Administration have developed and released a fact sheet entitled "Reducing Silica Exposure Fact Sheet."

The new Alliance Best Practice on silica outlines the best practice for employers and employees of concrete cutting companies. Concrete cutting, coring, drilling and quarrying are among the jobs that can create airborne exposure to silica and potentially cause silicosis. Cutting wet or using engineering controls such as ventilation are the most effective methods of reducing employee exposure to silica dust. Cutting wet is the preferred method.

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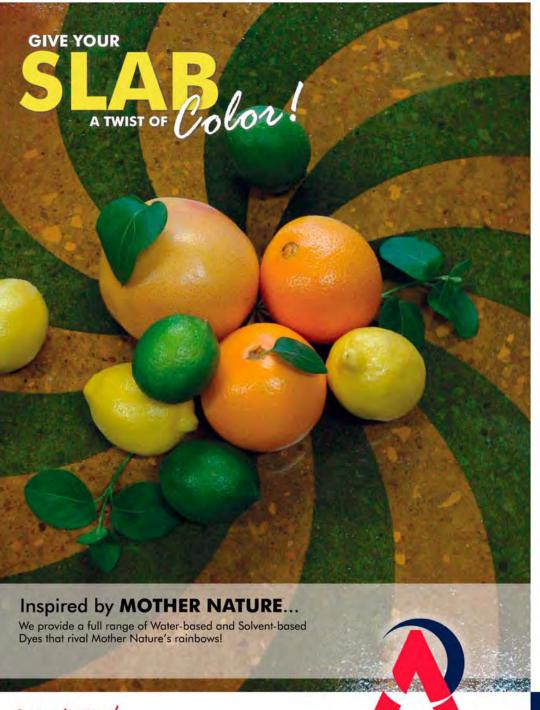
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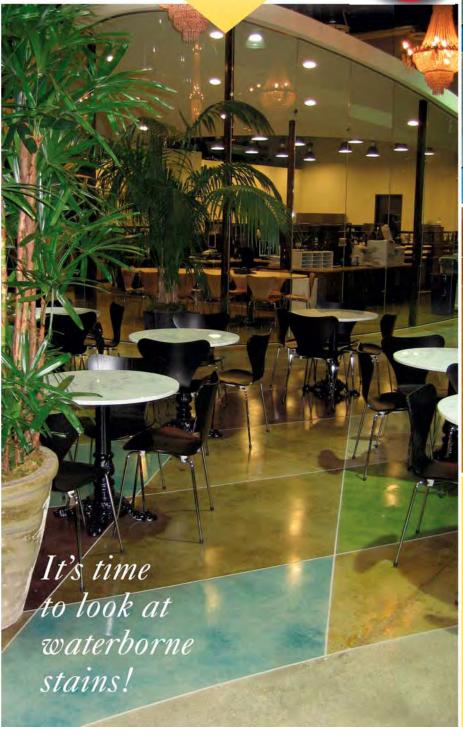




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## Product Profile



## Comprehensive Forming Systems from Preitech



The market for concrete countertops has grown dramatically in recent years, and savvy contractors are broadening their skills to address the growing demand for them. However, many have found these projects to be challenging for two main reasons. First, creating the wood forms needed to produce creative shapes and smooth finishes involves some fairly sophisticated carpentry skills that may be beyond the reach of some contractors. Second, because it's a time-intensive process, the labor costs are high, as is the cost of base materials like melamine, making it difficult to keep costs down and still make a profit.

Preitech, an Augusta, Ga., manufacturer of highquality forms for the building industry, now offers a Comprehensive Forming System designed to make concrete countertop production easier and significantly more affordable. Preitech's system uses high-density expanded polystyrene (EPS) forms, a 7-mil clear base material, and a specially designed polystyrene adhesive to allow contractors to produce countertop forms in a







fraction of the time it takes to produce comparable wood forms.

"Making wood forms, especially for highly stylized sinks and countertops, is so labor-intensive," points out Preitech owner and president Michael Eastergard, "and a lot of contractors have trouble. We're in the plastics and EPS industry, and we saw the need for developing an alternative to wood forms. Our system has some really attractive features that contribute to a huge reduction in labor costs."

Using Preitech's system, contractors begin by rolling out the base material on top of whatever smooth surface they're accustomed to using, such as melamine, lexan, or a steel or aluminum table. Eastergard recommends applying some water mixed with liquid hand soap onto the surface beforehand, using a squeegee to smooth out any bubbles or





visible imperfections, which, if not treated, would end up transferring to the concrete finish. A protective coating is then peeled away from the base to expose the smooth, glass-like working surface.

For rails, contractors can select from a variety of Preitech EPS edge forms, which are available in different lengths and thicknesses. Sink molds are available in oval, round, rectangular, half-round and other shapes. Each piece comes with base material preapplied to the edge that comes in contact with the poured concrete.

On site, contractors then apply the tape, taking care to precisely match the edge of the tape strip with





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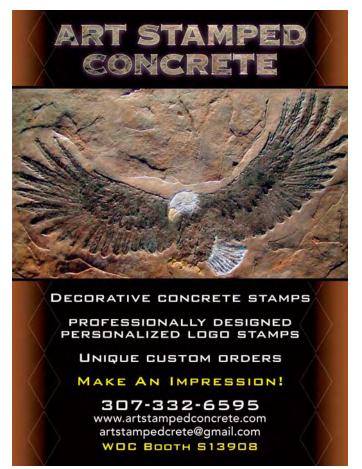




These two finished countertops were made by Bob Harris using the Preitech forming system.

the edge of a form piece. The adhesive has been designed to be strong enough to keep it held firmly in place so poured concrete doesn't leak out.

With wood forms, contractors must drill holes and use screws to securely fasten the forms to the base, a process that uses up a lot of costly melamine because a new piece is required for each form they create. With Preitech's system, the same piece of melamine can be used again and again, because the base material, EPS and adhesive eliminate the need to drill





holes in the melamine and ruin it. The result is a significant savings in material costs.

"Education is one of the most critical things in the quality production of concrete countertops," says Eastergard. "It's a relatively simple process, but there are some tricks that must be learned. Once contractors learn how to use this system correctly, they can literally double or even triple their production capacity without having to add another employee."

Preitech distributes in all 50 states, with major fulfillment centers in Pennsylvania, Washington, Oklahoma and North Carolina. Opportunities for contractors to learn Preitech's system are being scheduled at major decorative concrete training establishments over the next several months.

www.preitech.com

## Prefite Innovative Forming Systems



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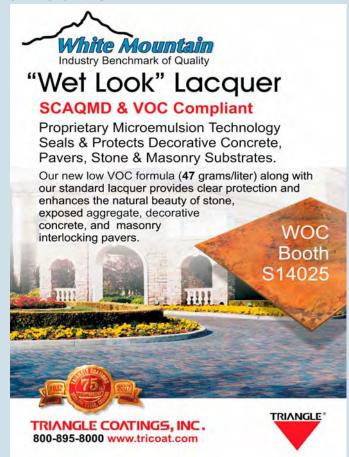
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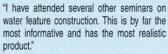


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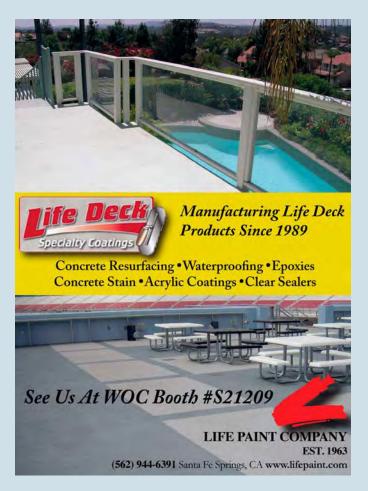


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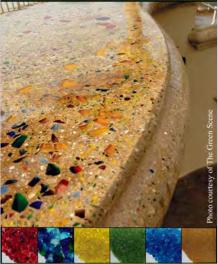






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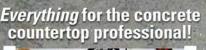
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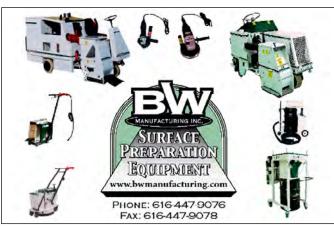


















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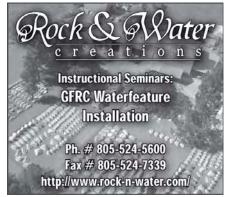
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This striking concrete garden path was inspired by the Brazilian jungles — the habitat of the world's largest snake, as well as a place where concrete is the only hope of keeping weeds at bay.

Though the concept came from the customer, it was Nolan King, owner of King Architectural Concrete and Construction in River Falls, Wis., who brought the idea — all 150 feet of it — to life.

King's first challenge was to figure out how to create the pattern and texture of a 4-foot-wide snake. Unsurprisingly, there are very few concrete stamps out there designed for making giant anacondas, so King needed to invent his own. "I had to come up with a design that would repeat itself as the path is winding through the woods, slithering like a snake, while keeping the scales centered," he says.

King used a clay mold to establish the pattern and texture of the snakeskin and, with the help of local concrete design company Milestones Inc., was able to create custom rubber stamps. In addition to the custom stamps, King





used two different concrete mixes, seven shades of Scofield's Chemstain and two coats of Diamond Glaze sealant.

The hardest part of the project, says King, was creating the snake's

head. The concrete had to be very precisely carved and stamped if it was going to flow seamlessly into the snake's body. The final touches were two hand-blown glass eyes, made at King's glass studio, Nichka Glass Works, by fellow artisan Ryan Gregory.

King's concrete snake took home

the Grand Prize for Residential Exteriors in the 2007 Cemstone Decorative Concrete Awards.

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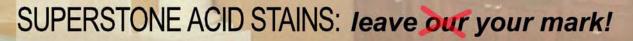
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