

by R. Mark Reasbeck,

owner of Coyote Springs Window and Door in Las Vegas. Mr. Reasbeck's comments are solely his own and, not necessarily, reflect those of this magazine.

A Personal Message

Dear Mark:

Had I not remembered you, I most likely would have thrown your wonderful story in the SPAM folder. I am so glad I didn't. You are so right. We have all got to pull together and buy American-made products to recapture our jobs and livelihoods.

I hear about people losing their jobs to "other countries" every day on the news and it seems to bother fewer and fewer people. I for one am terrified at the alarming rate that we are losing our manufacturing jobs.

I do not understand how the United States can remain a super power at this rate. Our children, I am afraid, are looking at a much different country than the one in which you and I grew up.

Thank you for your effort to do something about it. Together we can move mountains and keep jobs here. Thank you again for your concern and help for American mom-and-pop businesses. We really are the backbone of the country.

Sincerely,
Alice Brooks
Pollock, La.

Yangtze River Claims 130 Jobs No Rhyme or Reason

The Bend Bulletin in Bend, Ore., reported in May of this year that Oregon Woodworking Co. would close its doors in July. The newspaper said the company was a "victim of growing international competition in the lumber remanufacturing market."

Ring Around the Rosie

Although I have been contemplating writing this piece for several months now, I am having a hard time organizing my thoughts, because this hits one of my emotional hot buttons. As an employer, even when you're carrying the burden of running a company and making decisions to cut costs, it brings a feeling of failure when you have to reroute a good employee to the Unemployment Office.

I've been trying to understand how the management at Oregon Woodworking Co. explained to its workers that, even though they are smack-dab in the densest forests in our country, their jobs were being cut due to the impact of foreign products.

Pocket Full of Pozzi's

Arthur Pozzi founded Pozzi Windows in 1978. The products were always considered an industry leader on the West Coast. The mother of all window companies, JELD-WEN must have recognized this and purchased the company from Arthur in 1992, an entrepreneur's dream, until the boredom set in.

I'm assuming that's what happened, because, in 1993, with wood splinters running through his veins, Arthur Pozzi opened Oregon Woodworking Co. (OWC), a producer of doorjamb and door-hanger related wood products. Fourteen years later, he was forced to padlock a building that once provided 130 families with a living wage.

Ashes, Ashes ...

In gathering my facts for this article, the name Lisa Coats-Taylor appeared on nearly all of the press releases I reviewed. She was OWC's human resources director and was



After visiting my local big-box store and only finding porch swings made in China, I recently purchased this porch swing off of eBay that was made by a family in Louisiana.

extremely forthcoming when explaining what happened to the company.

I took my research a step further, tracked Coats-Taylor down, and spoke with her last June. She was a very pleasant, business-savvy woman, and I could hear the frustration in her voice when she told me some information that didn't make it in the other accounts I had read.

Part of the reason for OWC's closure was due to government regulations and restrictions that made it impossible for it to buy local timber at a competitive price. The timber is still being harvested, but it's being sent to ... well, you know where ... overseas.

R.I.P.

So what are you going to do about all these jobs being lost to foreign competition? I have a suggestion—help stop it. Make an effort to find products made in the United States of America.

I recently bought a porch swing on eBay after going to my local big-box store and seeing "Made in China" on all of the boxes. Thanks to the Brooks family of Pollock, La., for producing a work of art out of homegrown cypress wood. I'm proud to have helped create that pile of sawdust on their shop floor. 