



Ray Morgan employees Laura Rotton, left, and Diane Lewandowski have resettled in apartments in Chico with their families after the Camp Fire.
PHOTO BY ASHIAH SCHARAGA

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from spatulas to towels, needed to be replaced. That adds up quickly.

"It was just incredible. I feel like they took care of the needs we didn't even know we needed," Laura Rotton said. "It's been just a huge blessing."

On top of that, the amount of assistance has been stress-relieving, she added. The couple have been able to buy things that they want instead of "thinking about pinching pennies." That's what they did while saving up to buy their first home in

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Paradise two years ago. It's now in ashes.

The company has helped in other ways as well, Rotton said, giving its employees flexibility in terms of time off to help them schedule appointments related to fire recovery and getting their lives back in order.

Scarff said Ray Morgan knows the recovery will not happen overnight, and he is confident the company will continue to rally behind those who need help. It also has been fortunate that so many of its employees have been able to resettle in the area—only four have left Butte County, and two of them were able to transfer to other Ray Morgan branches.

"We always use the term RMC family. And that's the way we feel about our employees. They needed help and we wanted to help," he said. "It was a horrific event, but it sure is incredible to watch so many people within our organization, along with friends within our industry, how much they've rallied to support those that needed help."

Rotton told the CN&R she has been touched not only by how her employer has provided assistance but also by how her co-workers have stepped up. Her colleagues held a mini fundraiser for her, and one day surprised her with cash. A co-worker told Rotton, "We're going shopping."

"It's meant so much. This was already our forever career place," Rotton said, "and this just really showed the true spirit of the RMC family."

Though it was initially difficult for Lewandowski to take in the overwhelming generosity after Nov. 8, that feeling shifted, becoming one of heartwarming acceptance.

Months out, everyone has continued to check in with survivors. They've formed a tight-knit group, Lewandowski said, trading advice on virtually everything related to the recovery effort, from debris removal to purchasing new cars.

Like Rotton, she has experienced countless instances of generosity. In those early weeks especially, "if somebody needed something, they'd bring it in."

Even the little things that aren't necessities mean a lot. One of Lewandowski's co-workers started bringing her coffee every day. Several brought in homemade meals to share, like tamales and rice.

"It's things like that, where we're a big company, but we're very family-oriented," she said. "It's a lot of love."

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