

# MATTOLE MEANDERINGS

inspirations from The Mattole Council & Mattole Camp & Retreat Center  
Autumn 2019



## Welcome our new Caretaker Valerie Sanford!

Valerie joins Mattole Camp as our new Caretaker accompanied by her family Mike, and daughter Ranae! Valerie, a Humboldt County local, has a history with the Mattole Valley as she's spent many years visiting her Uncle Richard (caretaker circa 2007-2015). Her family made the decision to leave behind their lives in the Sacramento area to reinvent themselves as stewards to the camp and we are thrilled with their courage and enthusiasm! We welcome the Sanford family with open arms and hearts, and are confident they will serve our camping guests with the utmost of care and professionalism!



## David Goodman, speaks from his heart!

This year has had its ups and downs. Fortunately, we end our year on an up-swing and we hopefully will continue on a steadier course. We lost our caretaker at the start of our busy season, leaving the council to seek another while maintaining and providing for our guests at the same time. We were able to fill in and help with all the camp's needs as the search for a replacement caretaker was underway. We selected a candidate and were hopeful to have the position filled before the end of the busy summer season. On the downside of things our candidate selection did not work out well and after a brief tenure the council determined that they were not a good fit and terminated the arrangement.

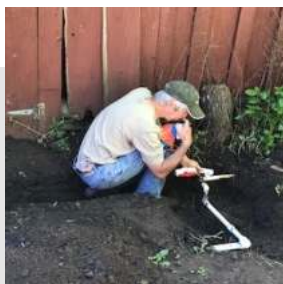
We were back to square one! On the upside, our former caretaker Richard who retired several years ago, was willing and able to lend us a hand, helping us with the day to day responsibilities of the caretaker while we searched for a new one.

We were able to select a new candidate and are looking forward to welcoming Valerie & her family on board mid November!

I truly appreciate all the extraordinary efforts and support of the council this past year and for Richard who came to our aid. Words barely express my feelings of gratefulness. I simply say "thank you all!" I look forward to a prosperous 2020!



Dear David has been actively involved with Mattole Camp since 1965. We appreciate ALL David does for the camp especially his 5lb cans of chocolate pudding!



Lee Dedini  
Ambassador of all things water-related!

## Lee Dedini wonders...

### NO WATER FROM THE FAUCET???

Last winter a group of us went out to Mattole on one of the wettest days of the year to complete the work on the new wood stove brickwork. The rain had been torrential with streams of water flowing in back of the lodge. We had been there about an hour when someone said there was no water out of the faucet. Christine, the caretaker, arrived back with the answer. The hillside water system had been washed down the hill. A slide above the spring box moved earth and rock down the ravine taking all the 2" water lines down to the fire pit area. Fortunately the water tanks did not receive damage. We continued making our mortar for the brickwork by collecting rain water in buckets from the overflowing gutters. Then we found out a tree had slid down blocking the road on the entrance road to the camp. Well, we were planning to spend the night anyway. With some chainsaw work and equipment help from Jay with Mattole Valley Nursery the road was cleared. Other trips were made for the replacement of the spring box and water lines. Jay's crew returned with equipment and loads of fill dirt to clean up and repair the fire pit area. The new spring box continues to supply ample water flow which is very encouraging. We are thankful that we could repair the damages that occurred. We also continue to work on improvements to maintain the camp for many years.



**THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS**

Who come out to the camp each year and work on everything that we can possibly fit in! Our days start early, with coffee and quiet chat on the deck, then breakfast, then WORK, lunch, MORE WORK, maybe sneak in a river romp, MORE WORK, appetizers, cocktails, dinner, dessert and a rousing game of cards all followed by well-needed sleep... We do love it out there!!! This year our accomplishments included: water system upgrade, lodge roof repair, river steps reinstated and uprights reinforced, skirting around shop & PP Palace, deck boards replaced (lodge & Tree deck), all cabins cleaned, new caps on lodge railing, cleaned up mudflow/silt around the lodge, installed spark arrestor, decobbed most buildings, restocked all cleaning supplies in cabins, fixed shop ramp, fixed oven pilots (lost one lighter!), relocated our extra fridge, added downspouts on main lodge center front/back, rebuilt fire pit, replaced cross, built clay dam for spring box, checked water!, landscaped around lodge, weeded the pergola bricks, we passed our annual inspection, reorganized lodge kitchen, fixed sanitizer, a couple of toilets.. **THANK YOU** to: David, Lee, Dan, Pam, Gene, Bixler, Christine.

LOVE YOU ALL!

Jennifer Callen



**NEW WOOD STOVE TO WARM UP THE MAIN LODGE!**

Thank you to David, Lee, Gene, Dan, Christine & Peter for helping out with this hot project!



NEW (and user friendly!) tables for the Main Lodge!



**THANK YOU EVERYONE!!!**

**A NEW GROUP JOINS US THIS YEAR!!! A TESTIMONIAL**

"I would like to just say THANK YOU to Mattole Family Camp and tell you all how much my group of staff, parents and children enjoyed our time at your facility. We are a group of professionals serving adoptive families that have been struggling with connection. We came needing a place where we could all connect with one another and disconnect from electronics and the world and it served as the perfect location. We brought two chefs that prepared amazing meals for our group and it was a treat for us to all dine together. We also had two families that brought their RV's and they were easily accommodated. All of the staff and families found the lodging comfortable and enjoyable. It was an overall great experience and we look forward to having you host our families there again in the future!"

**Bryan Post, Education Director**

(above)  
Let it snow  
Let it snow  
Let it snow...  
And boy did it!



To comply with "Wildfire Solutions" we "skirted" our structures to prevent wind-blown embers from getting underneath!  
We love our camp!



And it goes on and on, watching the river run further and further from things that we've done, leaving them one by one. And we have just begun, watching the river run. Listening & learning & yearning to run, river, run. (Loggins & Messina)





**THE HAPPIEST WEDDING DAY for Jake & Soren!!! Mattole Camp was just oozing with LOVE!!!**

**Raindrops & Dollars & Scents OH MY!! Financial news from Jennifer Callen (Treasurer/Bookkeeper)**

I love the scent of Mattole Camp! It's a mixed bag of freshly cut grass, warm breezes, wet wood, and flowing river. The air is full with a sense of wonder and peace. I contemplate all the improvements we've made, and all that still needs to be done.

And I think about money.

2019 was, generally, a financially sound year with the exception of the rain-drenched setbacks. The rainfall proved to be both a blessing and a curse. It filled the river bank-to-bank while washing out our water system and wreaking havoc on the driveway. (I wish I had taken a picture of us mucking through the knee-deep mud while surveying the damage). It was extensive, but nothing we couldn't handle. Thank you to David, and Lee, and Dan, for all their help, and Jay (Mattole Valley Nursery) for getting out there at the crack of dawn to scrape, reconnect, trench etc! It all cost a pretty plentiful penny.

We, the council, do our best to maintain the health and well-being of the camp. Twice a year we all go out and volunteer ourselves, leaving behind families and friends who sometimes shake their heads and wonder, "why?" It's a fair question. I wonder myself sometimes, but when I'm sleeping on the deck, looking up at a sky full of shooting stars & planets & the river-melody lulls me to sleep, or when we've worked all day and are sitting around playing cards after supper, laughing, and full of the sense of accomplishment, or when we're sitting out on the deck in the morning, drinking coffee and listening to the birds, we KNOW why we spend the time we do out there, working hard, getting dirty, greasy, covered in paint, when it's hot, or cold, or raining (OR SNOWING!!) It's a spiritual place, a happy place, a place that allows, and forgives and nurtures.

Our focus as of late, is on the CARETAKER'S RESIDENCE. Built in the 30's, out of whatever could be pieced together, it's weathered storms, earthquakes, erosion and MANY residents both 2-legged up to 8-legged including the 4' rattler that lived under the couch cushion. We feel it's seen its day. Its time is up. THIS will cost us dearly and we could really use some help with it. We welcome your thoughts and ideas and energy and support, for this is going to be a monumental project!!

Please feel free to contact us if this project is a journey you would like to take with us! You can call the camp phone and we will get back to you or email me at [info@mattolecamp.com](mailto:info@mattolecamp.com). THANK YOU!

And we look forward to 2020 with hopes and prayers for peace to all!



Far left shows where the spring box USED to be. It all washed down to the landing below (left), then down through the fire pit (right) THEN on down to the river! Note the rope rail ends at the top of the rock. THAT'S how high the river was!



**MATTOLE CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER**  
**36841 MATTOLE ROAD, PETROLIA, CA 95558**

The Mattole Camp Council created this newsletter to inform the community of current events, projects and future plans for Mattole Camp. The Mattole Meanderings is published annually and is available free of charge.

Mattole Camp & Retreat Center is a non-profit organization owned by the Presbytery of the Redwoods and managed by the Mattole Council in Bayside, CA. Please check out our website!  
[www.mattolecamp.com](http://www.mattolecamp.com)



If you have any questions or would like information about the camp, or would like to contribute to the newsletter, please feel free to call:  
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The  
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and the  
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Gene Callahan (member), Jennifer Callen (Treasurer/Bookkeeper/Marketing), Lee Dedini (Vice Chair), David Goodman (Chair), Kathy Schmidt (member), Pastor Dan Link (Member), Carrie O'Neill (Secretary) & Caretakers, The Sanford Family