

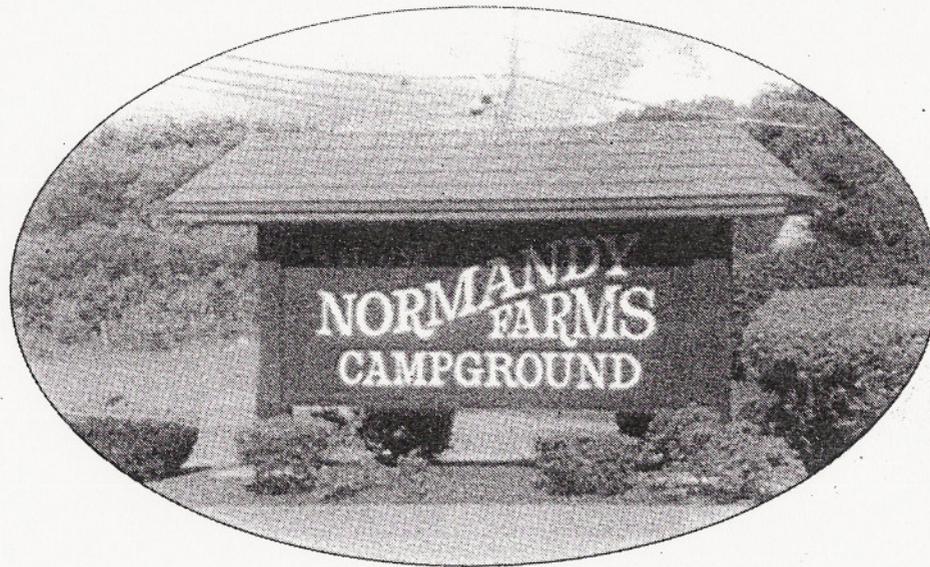
"Top Shelf" Camping At Normandy Farms Campground

By Charlie Heidecker

We had visited Normandy Farms Campground located in Foxboro, Massachusetts, almost 15 years ago. At that time it had been picked by thousands of campers as the number one campground in the United States. It won that same honor a second time in 1995. With thousands of campgrounds in the USA, this is quite an achievement to win once, but two times means they are really doing something right!

I pulled off Route 1, heading for the campground and as I turned into the driveway, we were greeted by what looked like the entrance to a country club. The office and store are housed in one of the nicest buildings I have seen in my over 26 years of camping.

Check-in took a matter of a few minutes and then we were escorted to our campsite by a campground "Ranger". Our "Ranger" guided us to our site, and even assisted us in hooking up the water and electric.



Strangely, we were caught off-guard by the way we were treated by everyone who works at Normandy Farms -- every camper is treated like a V.I.P.!

Founded by Norman Daniels and his wife, Jeanette, in 1971 Normandy Farms Campground started with only 40 campsites and

continues to be family-run. Since that modest beginning, it has grown to 400 sites.

As campers themselves, the Daniels family has one thing in mind -- they make sure all those who camp with them are treated like V.I.P.'s. Janis Daniels told me that each employee must attend a class about "how to treat campers" which informs them on how to make Normandy Farm's visitors

"happy campers" and, of course, on how to handle any problems before they become complaints. Without a doubt, this philosophy starts at the top and is shared by every employee.

Renowned for their reputation in camper customer service, like a fine restaurant, I highly recommend advance reservations if you're planning a visit.

We began to explore the campground after getting set-up. The 20,000-foot fully air-conditioned Recreation Hall was almost overwhelming. The Rec Hall offers an area set aside just for adults which has lots of tables for playing games or puzzles, places to just sit and relax, a pool table, a really large screen TV, and, to my surprise, a computer available for e-mailing your friends.

It also features a larger area to accommodate meetings or picnics on a rainy day, and a separate game room for the kids. In the lower area we discovered an indoor pool and sauna which was in the final stages of being refurbished.

As we continued our tour, we discovered three pools, more saunas, a shuffleboard court, horseshoe pit, and much more to offer for outdoor games. The bulletin board has a list of daily activities to keep campers busy --

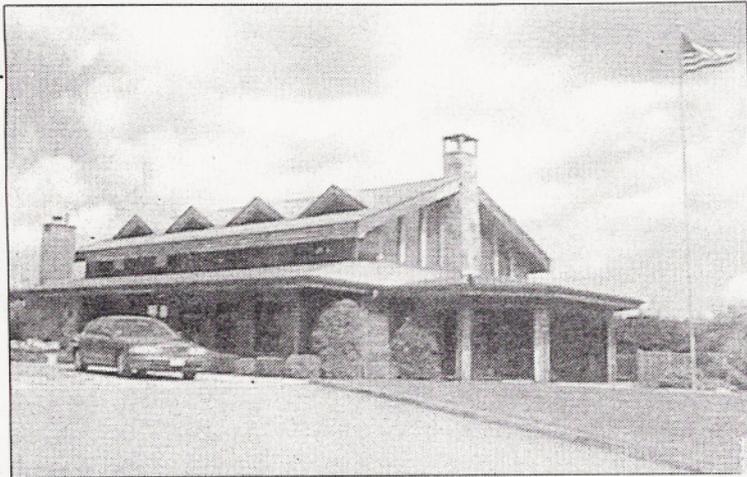
from tie-died tee shirts to ceramics, family softball games, scavenger hunts -- the list went on and on.

Then we had found the "Kampers Kitchen" just outside the main lodge and enjoyed a fine lunch and, of course, an ice cream cone to top it off.

Kampers Kitchen offers delightful dinners, snacks, really great homemade soups, plus just about anything you could want.

If you decide not to tow your trailer or you've purchased a smaller compact car you can make arrangements to leave your RV in their storage area. On the weekends you want to use it, simply call ahead, make your reservation and they will have your unit sitting on the site. There is, of course, a small charge for this service, but it's sure worth it and saves wear and tear on your car and camper.

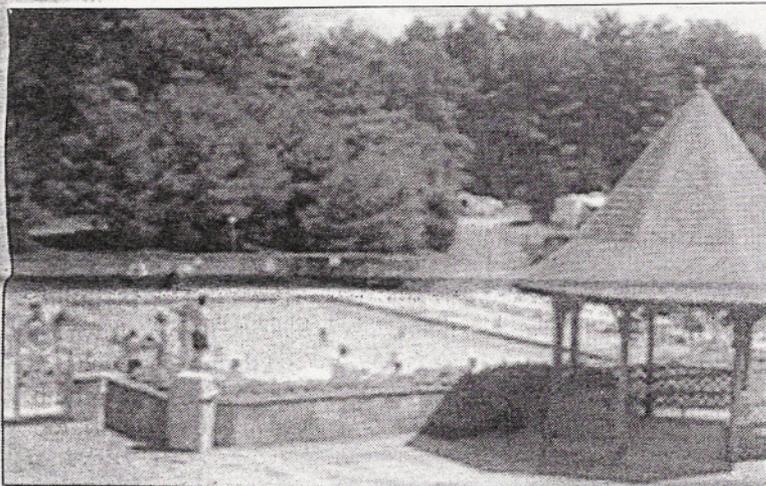
Betty Ann and I are snowbirds



The office and store are housed in one of the nicest buildings I have seen in my over 26 years of camping.



Our campsite at Normandy Farms proved to be spacious and well-maintained.



With 3 pools to choose from, picking which pool to swim in became the "big" decision for the day!

Remember -- Mom's need a vacation too!

We returned to our motorhome for a little R & R, and then decided to take a dip in one of the pools. Deciding which pool we would use was our big decision for the day.

The next morning we awoke to the aroma of coffee being perked and, of course, I got dressed and headed for the "Park Perk" where I enjoyed a warm blueberry muffin and hot cup of freshly brewed coffee. To keep my wife, Betty Ann happy, I took one of those warm muffins and a cup of French Vanilla lattee back for her breakfast.

Normandy Farms also has a full-time mechanic who specializes in RV's and even does on-site service should the need arise. We think this is a real bonus as most of us always have that question in the back of our minds -- "What do we do if we have a breakdown or something fails to work". Fixing a hot water heater or gas furnace is not an amateur. Having a serviceman in the campground sure earns another star from me.

who enjoy our winter camping in sunny Florida, but there are lots of folks who enjoy truly winter camping. Once the leaves fall and snow covers this beautiful area there is snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and sledding on one of the many rolling hills in the campground.

At Normandy Farms you can spend the winter months with full hook-up if you're "winter smart". Water pipes can be wrapped with heat tapes sewer line insulated and yes even storm windows to add to your comfort. Don't forget you must maintain the heat in your camper to prevent freezing damage to your plumbing.

During the winter months all the indoor pools, saunas and showers are fully heated enabling those campers who do not winterize their campers to still enjoy all those creature comforts. Winter camping has become so popular they normally have about 80 percent of the campground occupied during the deep-freeze season.

Well, we spent a week enjoying the "country club of campgrounds"

and the only time we left was to visit a friend who lived nearby. I re-discovered a fine campground and decided that this campground was like a fine wine it just gets better and better with age because the Daniels Family are always asking for input from their campers and without any doubt it will soon become a three time winner as the finest campground in the USA.

So the next time you're looking for a campground that is a "country club for campers," better put Normandy Farms on your list of places to spend a bit of your valuable vacation time.