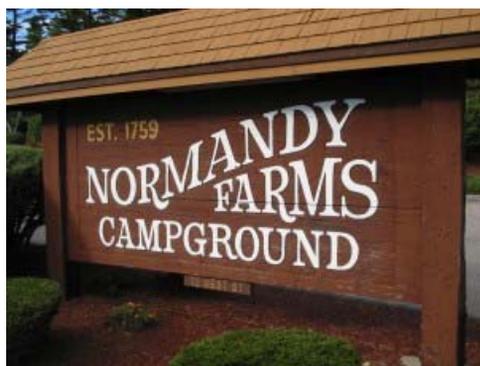


## Normandy Farms:World Class Campground

Posted By [Steve Bibler](#) On March 11, 2013 @ 5:00 am In [Industry News](#) | [No Comments](#)



Entryway sign at Normandy Farms Campground

Nestled in a rolling, woodland near Foxboro southwest of Boston lies Normandy Farms Campground, a luxury camping destination that has been widely recognized as one of the premier resorts in the world.

From the moment one walks into the luxurious reception center and store, complete with a friendly check-in staff and concierge, campers realize the 100-acre Normandy Farms is some place special.

This multiple winner of Campground of the Year honors from the National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (ARVC) draws its largest clientele from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Quebec but also attracts campers from around the world.

Normandy Farms is owned by brothers Al and Bob Daniels and their sister, Janis Pendergast, the children of campground founders Norman and Jeannette Daniels. Al is the president, Janis is the vice president and Bob is the treasurer.

Normandy Farms traces its history back nearly 300 years to a Frenchmen who settled in the area. In the late 1960s, Norman and Jeannette laid out a snowmobile park in the rolling hills and eventually turned that into a 45-site RV park starting in 1971 when they realized they needed another source of income. From there, the campground has evolved gradually through the years, but mostly in the late '70s and early '80s, when RVing became increasingly popular.

Today, the campground has more than 400 sites, including four cabins and three yurts. When filled, the campground resembles a small town with some 2,000 campers flitting among numerous amenities.

### Recreation Lodge, a Campground Landmark



One of the pools at Normandy Farms Campground. The Recreation Lodge is in the background.

Normandy Farms has undergone several expansions through the years but there is still an orderly feel to the layout of the grounds.

A focal point of the campground is the Recreation Lodge in the center of the park, which gives Normandy Farms a true resort feel. The 20,000-square-foot lodge is centrally located, complete with an arcade, fitness center, indoor pool, sauna, double Jacuzzi and Adult & Activities Lofts. Most major events and entertainment are held at this fully air-conditioned facility.

The lodge has been open for several years and has undergone renovation and expansion.

In 2004, the fitness Center was opened and the pool area refurbished. In 2012, the Wellness Center opened. The wellness center features include Swedish or deep tissue massages, which are proving to be very popular among campers, noted Marcia Galvin, human resources director, daughter of Normandy Farms President Al Daniels and one of the three grandchildren of the campground's founders who work at the resort.

Normandy Farms is truly a destination park, offering just about everything a park can offer. Among its other features are:

- A Business & Information Center located in the Reception Center with a concierge who will assist campers in making dining reservations and help arrange their day trip outside the park complete with maps and literature.
- A Creative Arts Center with a large theater screen and surround sound.
- An 18-hole disc golf course.
- A 1 ½-acre Freedom Tail dog park (where dogs are free to chase their tails) complete with agility equipment, a dog wash and drinking fountain.
- Day kennels which allows dogs to hang outside in the comfort of their own custom Canine Coop complete with a doghouse. The campground also provides supervised pet walking.
- A bike park that features a jump line, track and skills area.

Other recreation facilities include four swimming pools, two playgrounds, fishing pond and picnic area, horseshoe pits, full-court basketball, volleyball court, soccer field, bocce court, two softball fields and nature trails.

Conveniently located within the campground, the Kamper's Kitchen, Normandy's open-air snack bar, offers breakfast, lunch and dinner items along with ice cream and snacks. The snack bar is being doubled in size for the 2013 season, as Normandy Farms senses campers' growing trend to do less cooking on their own, Galvin observed.

### Thinking Ahead to Stay Ahead

Normandy Farms is coming off a good 2012 season, led by about a 13% rise in rental revenue. A warm spring got that season off to a good start, reported Kristine Daniels, marketing director and Galvin's sister. Galvin and Daniels observed that the number of first-time campers is growing, helping to spur the rental occupancy rate. They expect that to continue this year.

Normandy Farms owners are always trying to anticipate their guests' needs and wants, Galvin, explained, so the park is constantly undergoing improvements.

Indeed, the campground's success is due to what Kristine calls "a collaborate effort of the family to be one of the best in the industry. We always try to think ahead of the competition and forecast the newest trends on how to best serve the industry."

Management has crafted a vision statement, which is shared with and embraced by the staff. The statement reads: Normandy Farms Campground strives to be a renowned pioneer in the RV industry by being a profitable leader, remaining on the cutting edge with technology, providing creative and innovative recreation activities, utilizing environmentally friendly practices, providing the highest quality of guest service, and exceeding guest value with pristine amenities through working professionally and efficiently as a team.

First-time visitors remark about the quality guest service. David Tetrault, executive director of the Northeast Campground Association (NCA), recalled his visit to Normandy farms last fall.

"The members of NCA were invited to Normandy Farms for our annual Great Escape," he related. "As my wife Pat and I approached the registration office for the very first time, we were greeted by this bubbly young girl that had all our tickets, badges and passes ready for us in one neat envelope. As I continued on and approached the gatehouse, I was in the wrong line and had to call for help. Help came quickly from a young man that treated me like I was his best friend and stopped the on-coming traffic so I could proceed. Our reservation included a cabin and as we drove up to the front door, we found our name engraved on the sign. The guest services during our three days at Normandy Farms continued to astonish us."

Visitors also remark how clean the campground appears. There's a good reason for this.

"We train our staff to pick up trash – everyone is on littler control," noted Galvin.

Another first impression is the large number of boulders that dot the grounds. Hundreds of them. They weren't moved there by man but by the last glacier that came through eons ago.



A fountain graces this pond at Normandy Farms. Yurts are on top of the hill in the background.



Recreational facilities at Normandy Farms are superior, such as this playground.



Kristine Daniels (standing) and her sister, Marcia Galvin, are key staff members at Normandy Farms Campground.

### Marketing a Premier RV Park & Campground

Marketing Normandy Farms falls primarily on the shoulders of Kristine Daniels.

"Most of our advertising is focused within New England; however, we also advertise in the Good Sam/TL directory as well as the MACO (Massachusetts Association of Campground Owners) directory, which is distributed all over, including at the New England camping shows. We also print brochures, which are distributed to sports and outdoor stores throughout New England and to guests upon request. We specifically target New England states with special state weekend discounts.

"Our website also attracts many visitors and we have a newsletter with over 40,000 subscribers, but most of our business is through word of mouth and repeat guests. We do virtually zero advertising in Quebec, yet they're our fourth highest market."

The Quebecois are likely attracted by Normandy Farms' trilingual website which is offered in French, as well as Spanish and English.

### Staffing

Normandy Farms maintains a seasonal staff of around 120 people and holds a job fair every spring to fill open spots. Staff will interview as many as 300 people to fill 40 spots.

"We have a core staff that returns year after year and have about a 33% turnover rate," said Galvin. "We hire for character, not the skills. We can teach the skills."

Galvin makes sure staff is familiar with the community and can quickly refer campers to area attractions. In fact, Galvin leads an annual excursion into Boston to familiarize new office staff with the attractions there.

Normandy Farms is active in state and national campground matters.

Galvin is executive director of the Massachusetts Association of Campground Owners (MACO) and is first vice chairman of the National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (ARVC) and in line to become chairman in 2014. Her father, Al Daniels, is a former ARVC chairman.

The resort is also a member of Best Parks in America network and the Northeast Campground Association (NCA).

"For all the years I've been associated with the park industry, Normandy Farms has been at the very top of the industry," said David Gorin, founder and president of Best Parks. "The Daniels family has always known what the business is all about far ahead of the crowd – attention to delivering the best guest services, attention to every detail of the physical and recreation facilities, attention to every aspect of operations and the business, and attention and leadership of the industry. There is no doubt that

Normandy Farms represents the best of the park industry. Best Parks is truly delighted to have this exemplary resort as a Best Parks in America affiliate."

Normandy Farms hosted the NCA's Great Escape for campground owners last September and is a key supporter of The Jimmy Fund, a benevolent fund in the Northeast. Normandy Farms is a founding member of the first ARVC 20 Group, which has been meeting for the past 18 years.

### **Improvements**

In 2012, the campground installed a new reservation service, which included the capability to show pictures of every reserveable site. The resort also added several lean-to tent sites.

Added Kristine Daniels, "Most of our focus and investment for 2013 will be on our infrastructure as we continue to upgrade our sites to ensure that most offer cable TV and 50-amp electric."

Most RV sites are metered to measure electrical consumption.

The campground provides ample storage for RVs and boat during the off-season.

### **Promoting Massachusetts, Green Park and Shoulder Seasons**

Normandy Farms helps promote the area through its concierge service. The campground is located just 30 miles from Boston where visitors can walk the Freedom Trail viewing unique historical sites and just 50 miles from Cape Cod where campers can enjoy the salty air while having a romantic ocean side dinner. Normandy Farms is also just 5 miles from Patriot Place and the Gillette Stadium, home of the New England Patriots. Not to mention a short distance from Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox, a commute made even easier by public transportation.

Normandy Farms also distributes a free monthly e-newsletter, which contains information about specials, upcoming events and much more.

Normandy Farms is a "green" park. The park offers single sort recycling, sensor lights at the restroom and laundry facilities, water saving devices on the showers, and waterless urinals in the men's restrooms. Staff also replaced all of the lights in the park with fluorescent bulbs.

Normandy Farms also hosts themed birthday parties April 1 through May and Labor Day through November on Sunday afternoons and midweek; and baby and bridal showers from after Labor Day until it closes for the winter and then April 1 until mid-June. After that, the park facilities are for our camping guests only.

### **Normandy Farms Campground**

**Location:** 72 West St., Foxboro, Mass.

**Season:** April 1 – Nov. 30 (While the office remains open and continues to take reservations, the campground is closed for all activities from Dec 1 – March 31.

**Phone:** (866) 673-2767

**E-mail:** [camp@normandyfarms.com](mailto:camp@normandyfarms.com)

**Website:** [www.normandyfarms.com](http://www.normandyfarms.com) <sup>[2]</sup>

### **Growing Up at Normandy Farms Campground**

**Editor's Note:** Marcia Galvin shares some personal memories of her early years at Normandy Farms with her sister, Kristine.

"Kristine and I both grew up at the park. We opened when I was 7, three years before my sister was born. My most fond memories are the friends that I made. I not only had my school friends but I had friends from all over the country. I still keep in touch with many of them, in fact we have Normandy Farms reunions with the kids that all grew up here! Many of them continue to camp here with their families.

One of the specific memories that I have is when my sister was 3 and I was 13 and I was assigned babysitting duties at the campground. Well, my sister has always been pretty independent and wanted to do her own thing so when I lost track of her and we later found her at the Rec Lodge, my father grounded me until I was 16! It didn't last 3 years.

Since the campground was still a farm for many years, many of my memories involve that part of the campground. I had a pet lamb as a kid. I learned to drive a standard truck at 14 so I could drive in the hay fields while my dad and uncle bailed hay and I had my own small snowmobile to ride around the fields.

We both worked at the campground all through school, myself in the office and Krissy at the pool. We both went to college and worked in our fields but ended up coming back to work here full time. I am very blessed to have been given the experience of growing up in a campground and am more blessed to be able to allow my children the same experiences."