



MIKE GEORGE / THE SUN CHRONICLE

Chatting around the campfire at Normandy Farms in Foxboro are winter campers, from left: Bill Struck, Gina Struck and Alexandria Struck of Brockton; Carol Briggs of Avon; Angle Sundling of Holbrook; Haley Starr, 6, of Brockton; Al Sundling of Holbrook and Ralph Cochran of Avon.

# Forest frolic

Friendship thaws the chilliest days at Foxboro's Normandy Farms community

BY GLORIA LABOUNTY  
SUN CHRONICLE STAFF

FOXBORO

**N**either rain nor snow nor winter's cold can deter these friends from their outdoor gatherings. They meet year-

round at Normandy Farms, a campground that lured them first as a vacation spot, and has now become their destination for all seasons.

Families that have been camping at Normandy for years have become forever friends, getting together there and elsewhere all year long.

"It's like having a cottage at the Cape," said Angle Sundling of Holbrook, who has been going there with her family for years, and who spends many winter weekends there.

"It's a home away from home."

▼  
**'It's like having a cottage at the Cape. It's a home away from home.'**  
▲

Angle Sundling of Holbrook

Its inhabitants have become as close as kin.

"It's like an extended family," said Jack O'Connor of Cambridge, who has been camping there since 1979, and living there full time with his wife for the past eight years. They gave up their apartment overlooking the Charles River, and now O'Connor commutes daily from Foxboro to his job in Cambridge. While the drive is tough at times, he knows it's well worth it every time he comes back home.

"When I pass through the



Haley Starr, 6, of Brockton, lights homework with sun.

gates (of the campground), it's like being in Vermont or Maine, like being in the wilderness," he said. "Out in the trees, in the woods, you can dream you are anywhere. It's a good life."

"It's a summer community that goes into all seasons," said Jane Bernier of Warwick, R.I., who has been camping there with her family for years. She totes her trailer back and forth,

and has camped at times in other locations, but no other place is quite the same.

"No matter where we went, the kids couldn't wait to get back and go to the campground," she said.

A number of families like the Sundlings leave their trailers there through the winter, and spend weekends, especially the holiday ones.

Many of them were there last weekend for St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

But don't think these winter-time campers are necessarily roughing it. People have that image, Bernier said, but "we are not hardy souls that go into the woods."

Not a tent-on-the-ground kind of camper, Bernier said she likes having heat and running water, and accommodations that she calls "comfy."

