



A WONDERFUL ARRANGEMENT -- Doris Daniels, activities director at Normandy Farms Campgrounds, is pleased to be hosting the Foxboro Garden Club's first-ever flower show this Saturday. (Photo by Evie Malm)

Keeping the campground business all in the family

Normandy Farms Campground, by some accounts one of Foxboro's best-kept secrets, will open its recreation hall to the community this Saturday as the Foxboro Garden Club holds its first-ever flower show.

Thanks in part to Doris Daniels, activities director at the campground, and the entire Daniels' family, Normandy Farms hosts the show, to be held from 1 to 5 p.m.

Daniels happens to be the sister of Diane Bryant, a master gardener and active member of the local garden club. So when she was approached with the idea of having the show at the campgrounds, she welcomed the idea.

The next step was to find a date in the very full schedule of events offered at the campground. This Saturday (May 6) worked perfectly. While the campground is busy at this time of year, it is not running at a full daily schedule; thus, the recreation hall was available.

Normandy Farms has a great deal of local history. In 1759, a French soldier named Francis Daniels settled in Foxboro and established the farm. The land is still in the Daniels' family. In the early 1970s, the family recognized that sustaining a farm was becoming more and more difficult, and looked to ways they could maintain the rural atmosphere while keeping the land in the family.

Thus, was established the campground. Today the sixth, seventh and eighth Daniels' generations continue to operate the campground and are committed to Francis Daniels' values "including hard work, pride in the family name, and productive use of the land."

Today the campground, founded by Norman and Jeannette Daniels, is overseen by brothers Albert and Bob Daniels and their sister, Jan. But the organization doesn't stop there. Wives, children and grandchildren and even the extended family all have become part of the fabric that makes the local campground nationally renowned.

Doris, who married into the Daniels' family, points out when they established the campground, she as the natural athlete and organizer in the family fell into the role of activities director.

A former nurse who worked in the operating room at Sturdy Memorial Hospital, she is responsible for planning the thematic weekends -- beginning with Martin Luther King weekend in January through the New Year's Eve party weekend in December.

Next weekend is Mother's Day, and Doris will run an afternoon tea just for mothers. Those in attendance will enjoy an afternoon concert given by a local artist and played on the Ivers Pond upright piano that belonged to Doris' father.

Doris points out the piano was important to her and her two sisters, Diane and Verda. After their father died, they were looking for a special way to honor him. Since he always liked to come over to the campground on Tuesdays, Doris came up with the idea of refinishing and tuning the piano and placing it in the adult lounge area of the recreation building.

In his honor she initiated Tuesday afternoon concerts where she invites area concert pianists to come in and perform. Doris makes the desserts and serves afternoon tea to the campers who come to the concerts.

In addition she trains the 10 counselors and oversees the daily activities, which run from early morning to late evening. There are record hops for the teenagers, story time for the youngsters and plenty in between. Adults can enjoy Saturday night live entertainment.

The games manual, developed by Doris for the staff, outlines the rules and regulations for over 50 games used throughout the season. She is continually upgrading the handbook given to the over 100 employees, which covers everything from the history of the campground to guest relations to knowing all the safety regulations.

Doris points out people in the campground business marvel at the way the Daniels family has run a campground for so many years without any rifts developing. She points out each has his own as she puts it "little hole or area" and "we work well together."

The entire Daniels family welcomes the community to visit the grounds and attend this Saturday's flower show. Tickets for the show are available for the show by calling 543-8003. Admission is \$5 and \$3 for seniors.

May 2000