

‘Stay a While in Culver’ – Third in the series

The Culver Cove Resort & Conference Center: Lakefront luxury

By: Anna Campbell, Correspondent

CULVER- The Culver Cove Resort & Conference Center (319 Jefferson Street) was built in the late 1980s on 600 feet of waterfront property on the Northwest shore of Lake Maxinkuckee. The Cove, as it is often referred to, is comprised of 80 privately owned and independently decorated condominiums. The property boasts two beaches, boat slips, indoor swimming pool, hot tub, fitness center, tennis and basketball courts, a banquet room and small meeting rooms.

“We are a vacation destination; we have available lakefront condominiums year ‘round,” Rich West, Executive Director of the Cove for the past 14 years, explains. “We are the only complex that has lakefront property. Here you are 15 to 20 yards from the beach, and you can bring in your own boat and dock it as long as you are renting (or are an owner) from the Cove.”

Minimum-sized rooms are 800 square feet including a private bedroom with a maximum capacity of four guests.

“You are not renting a hotel room; you are renting a condominium that has its own full-service kitchen, where you can sit on your own deck overlooking the lake,” West notes.

The two-bedroom units have approximately 1,100 square feet of living space including two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a sofa bed in the living room with a fireplace overlooking the lake, with a maximum capacity of six guests.

“(The Cove) truly is a home away from home and having the larger space is ideal for families,” West says.

The majority of Cove guests have a connection to Culver Academies. Due to the large size of the condominiums several families come and stay for their summer vacation and/or host family reunions at the Cove because they can comfortably spread out and still have individual space.

Approximately 35 of the 80 units are available for rent.

“There is nothing formal in our bylaws” in regards to having to maintain a certain number of units available for rent, West explains. “There are owners here who look at this as an investment, because it can be rented. It provides owners an opportunity for a subsidy.”

The Cove is actually zoned as a planned unit development, which is in a category of its own because it is both private and commercial.

Over the last 10 to 15 years Cove owners have done extensive remodeling to their individual units. The Cove has recently put in over \$800,000 worth of improvements including new siding on the entire lake side of the building, a new tank-less hot water system, and currently new siding around the main entrance into the lobby.

The Culver Cove has a large banquet room and meeting rooms for social and professional events. For catering options, the Cove works with several local businesses who provide food and beverage services. The banquet room is rented six to 10 times a year and is often used for local volunteer organizations.

A priority of the Cove is to maintain and continue to build a strong connection with the community, says West. The Lake Maxinkuckee Lake Association and the Cove, for example, have a close relationship.

“The Lake Association has an office here rent-free, with pier space and parking spaces for patrol cars,” West notes. “We provide a site for the Tri Kappa Art Fair -- which has hosted the student art fair here for almost 10 years -- The Culver Wine Fair, meetings for the Culver & Lake Maxinkuckee Visitor Center, and other community groups, at no cost.”

Looking towards the future, West also says the Cove is looking into rebranding.

Information on The Culver Cove, booking rooms, and more, is available online at www.culvercove.com.