

THE DUNES RESORT, THE MIDWEST'S LARGEST GAY / LESBIAN RESORT & ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX!

Celebrating 28 Years of being Gay!

1981 was a big year! Reagan was sworn in as the nation's 40th president, the Iranian hostage crisis ended after 444 days and Walter Cronkite signed off after 19 years with CBS. It was also the year that both Reagan and the Pope were shot; Lady Diana Spender married Charles, Prince of Wales; and Sandra Day O'Connor became the first female Supreme Court Justice. MTV, Justin Timberlake, Britney Spears, Paris Hilton and Beyonce were all born.... And, the CDC reported that five homosexual men in LA had a rare form of pneumonia seen only in patients with weakened immune systems. '81 was a big year.

It was also the year that the Douglas Dunes first opened its doors to curious gay men and women in Douglas (Saugatuck) Michigan.

The original plan for the Dunes was to occupy a B&B space just as you enter the city of Saugatuck on Lake Street. However, after a band of bikers burned the only gay bar in town, the city commissioners decided it was a good time to "discourage" any new "exclusively" gay establishments looking to "drop anchor" in town. As a result, the Dunes instead found welcoming arms across the bridge in the Village of the Douglas. Purchasing the drive-in Amity Motel, the Douglas Dunes was born with 22 hotel rooms, a restaurant, lobby bar and summer only outside dancing.

Over the years, entertainers from Pop (Weather Girls, Lauren Grey, Uptown Girls, Eartha Kitt, Pamela Stanley, Claudja Barry) to Porn (Jack Wrangler), have all brought their talents to the Dunes stage. Drag, leather, bears, trannies, circuit boyz, daddies, lesbians, couples, singles, bi, fags, queers, ladies, gents, curious, straight - whatever you might want to be called, the Dunes has over the years hosted them all. From rumors of murder, to the making of porn (Catalina Video's Down in the Dunes), everything, and most likely everyone has been the topic of discussion over the years either on the dance floor or out back in the bushes. The Dunes has been, and continues to be, a Gay institution.

Owners Mike Jones, Danny Esterline and Greg Trzybinski purchased The Douglas Dunes in 1999 and renamed it, "The Dunes Resort." Since then, the trio has worked tirelessly to perpetuate a gay safe haven while offering

top-shelf lodging and entertainment. "When the previous owners started this in 1981, people came here and they fell in love. We wanted to enhance the Dunes experience, update it and continue its legacy," says Jones.

Now crowned the largest gay resort and entertainment complex in the Midwest, The Dunes is heralded as Western Michigan's premier gay and lesbian vacation destination and a pinnacle of the gay Saugatuck - Douglas community.

This illustrious coming-of-age process has introduced a metropolitan standard to the quaint surroundings of Saugatuck and Douglas. Sprawling over 20 acres, the Dunes Resort now features over 80 rooms, 4 bars in the main building (including West Michigan's largest Gay Dance Bar, a cabaret with live entertainment and a game room), plus a fantastic outdoor patio bar and the areas largest pool and pool bar.

Whether you prefer it progressive or hard, the beat from The Dunes' on-site nightclub is uncompromising. Resident DJ Mark Vallese and an impressive guest DJ schedule featuring Susan Morabito, Tracy Young, Tony Moran, Roland Balmaras, Joe Gauthreaux, David Knapp and Lydia Prim rivals that of any urban dance venue.

The Dunes is a rare and special place where people of all walks can find themselves, lose themselves and most importantly, be themselves. Circuit kids, scenesters, couples and retirees all blend with ease in a congenial, come-as-you-are atmosphere. "You get to leave the real world for a little bit. You can hear fantastic music or come to the cabaret for a great show. Sing Karaoke or watch strippers. You can be gay, straight, old or young, and feel comfortable here. It doesn't matter who you are, everybody is welcome," says Jones.

The Dunes Resort is open seven days a week, twelve months a year. The summer season kicks off at the end of April with the 28th Annual Black & White Anniversary Party (May 1-3, 2009) and continues through Labor Day Weekend. Major events are held year-round.

The Dunes Resort, Celebrating 28 years of being Gay!!

For more information:

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269-857-1401 or www.dunesresort.com

Many of the photos below can be clicked to see a larger version suitable for print.

The Dunes - Then



1984



1985



1985



1990



1991

The Dunes - Now





www.gaysaugatuckdouglas.com
www.saugatuck.com
www.saugatuckdouglas.com