

➤ In the yard

Rippling in the wind

Decorate your dock with the Dori Pole

By Kelle Barr
Special to LAKE LIFE

Vibrant-colored flags have long been an effective marketing tool, but they are the new rage at area lakefront homes when it comes to rippling, multi-hued fun.

You've seen them. They flutter in the breeze, attracting attention and luring traffic to apartment complexes, marinas and other establishments. They dot the skyscape on Stadium Drive in Kalamazoo, above the row of dueling car dealerships.

You expect to see them wherever there is a Ferris wheel or a hot dog stand — they merrily dance in the wind to mark the territory for festivals, fairs and sales events.

The pennants have now become highly visible decorations at lakeside homes. The

DORI POLE

WHAT: Dori Pole, a colorful pennant on a pole ranging from 19 to 22 feet high.

WHERE: Available at Consort Display Group

MORE INFORMATION:
(800) 525-6424 or info@consort.com

Dori Pole Pennant System, from Kalamazoo's Consort Display Group's product line, has found a niche.

Make no mistake, this is no ordinary windsock. As soon as the Dori Pole was added to the line of his company's products last year, Consort President Roger Lepley took a few home to fly over his Sylvan Lake cottage in Newago.

"I first placed one into the end dock post," he said. "I liked the effect so much that the next week I added two

more on a 60-foot dock section at 20-foot intervals."

The festive, color-splashed result was contagious. And the fun spread fast across Sylvan Lake.

Since 2006, 14 of Lepley's neighbors' homes have sported Dori Poles that respond with beauty and grace to the whims of the wind.

"The response from our neighbors was unbelievable," said Lepley, who now enjoys the view of his own Dori Poles, as well as being surrounded by a neighborhood full of the dancing daytime beauties. He likens them to the relaxing, hypnotic flicker of a beach fire at night.

"They are so creative and so much fun," said Susan Brown, who summers, with her husband, Bob, on Gull Lake Island.

The Browns' two Dori Poles, one with a maize pennant and one in blue, not only remind Susan of her beloved alma mater, but they also bring a smile.

"I love the University of Michigan," she said. "I met my husband there when we were graduate students and I'm still very involved. But (the Dori poles) are more than U-M to me.

"Life on the island is easy and fun — not very many people live on an island, so it's unique. Everyone is very social — we have meals together, we sit in our kitchens together. People play in the water with their children, people play sand volleyball on the beach. It hasn't changed much since the 1920s."

Brown says the festive flags symbolize life on Gull Lake Island. "It's very free," she said. "And our pennants absolutely epitomize all of that. Freedom, fun, and the spirit of the water."

Lepley concurred, calling the flowing pennants on various-sized poles "very elegant and extremely colorful. It's like watching a ballet."

Landscape architect Vince Mackel created the Dori pole, named for his daughter, in 1984.

Along with the beauty that it has become known for, one of the unexpected perks of putting up a Dori pole on the waterfront is that it acts somewhat like a scarecrow.

"Put one on a dock or a raft and the geese, gulls and other wildlife tend to stay away," Lepley said.



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A Dori Pole Pennant System dances in the air overlooking Gull Lake at the summer cottage of Bob and Susan Brown.