

A piece of World Trade Center metal is transformed into art

Jessica Cohen

One day about five years ago, Fred Marusi came by the home of Deerpark Councilman Arthur Trovei and dropped off a piece of metal retrieved from the site of the World Trade Center.

Marusi had gotten the piece from a friend who drove a water bottle truck at the site.

"Take this, so we don't forget," Trovei recalls Marusi telling him.

Trovei had the piece on his front porch for five years.

"Then I thought it would be nice to get it painted," he said.

So, he approached his second cousin Ken Krause, whom he knew had some skill in that realm, and asked him to paint something appropriate on the piece of steel.

"Ken looked at it for a long time before he decided what to do with it," said Trovei.

"It had nothing on it but rust," Krause said.

Krause was 13 on Sept. 11, 2001. "I was in science class, and the teacher turned on the TV," he said. "We saw the second plane go into the tower. The class was confused and scared, not talking. I was freaking out."

His mother picked him up, and they spent the day at Trovei's junkyard, where his mother worked.

"I went on the computer, looking for news," Krause said.

And on the computer, a decade later, was where he found the two images for the metal remnant, which has two parts, rising side by side, like the World Trade Center towers.

He found a photo of Arlington Cemetery, where WTC victims are buried, and a photo of the WTC site, with the American flag being raised.

"It had light from the side rather than straight-on harsh light," Krause explained. And a piece of the World Trade Center juts out of the smoke.

He set about painting over the course of several months. He colored the metal blue.

"It's my favorite color. And I felt it would be the perfect color for the tranquil, somber feeling," he said. "The hardest part was positioning the figures and making them flow."

He added the moon and the bald eagle.

"I found an eagle on the Internet that happened to be looking down, so he looks down on the scene. It's ironic."

Now he says he thinks of the 911 events "randomly."

"It makes me more skeptical of people, more angry," he said.

Trovei says he put the painted piece inside his house, by the stairs going down to the family room. But for the month of September it will be on display at UpFront Gallery Exhibition Space at 31 Jersey Ave.