

---

## Sculpting a new future

(Wed, Apr 11 07) - Contributed by KENNEDY, MERI R. - Last Updated ()

By MERI R. KENNEDY For more than five decades, Ed Rondeau was best known for his work in the Cranston Public School system. A former Cranston High School West principal, Rondeau taught his students, whether it was in the many years he spent in the classroom or within administration, to always strive to do their best and to pursue their dreams. In fact, Rondeau is now doing just that as he is among the few commercial steel artists in Rhode Island. Rondeau always had an interest in visual arts. For more than 40 years he has been active with The Players, a theater group in Providence, where he designs productions and directs. At age 12, in fact, Rondeau did his first set design. Now his latest muse is steel. "I wanted to do this for a long time, yet I needed to learn the techniques of welding to work with sculptural steel," said Rondeau. "It is a blending of basic shapes with organic and emotional component of steel." His first solo art exhibit opens this week at The Gallery at Little Falls Bakery and Café, located at 2166 Broad St. in Pawtuxet Village. What you will find at the exhibit is an array of steel sculptures by Rondeau. Most are abstracts or exaggeration of known objects, such as sailboats. They weigh as little as 5 pounds and most stand only a few feet tall. What you won't find is the work under the name of Ed Rondeau. He works under the name of E Lyman Rondeau. Lyman, his father, was a Rhode Island folk artist whose past love of the arts serves as Rondeau's inspiration. "I have worked as a visual artist for more than 50 years but, until recently, my medium has been performance art as an actor, director, scenic designer and set builder. Among my many mentors, I note my father, Lyman (Bud) Rondeau; Adrian Hall – noted director; Angelo Rosati – teacher, painter, sculptor and friend; and Raymond Picozzi – teacher, author and dear friend," said Rondeau. For Rondeau, his artwork is a commercial venture, not a hobby. Some of his art has already sold from \$200 to \$2,000. All the steel sculptures in the exhibit are for sale. Years ago, Rondeau experimented in work with metal, but he lacked the training, tools, teachers and opportunity to become a serious metal artist. Rondeau took a weekend course two years ago at The Steel Yard and from then on he was on his way to becoming "the man of steel." His works of art range from 5 pounds to 200 pounds. His first work, called "Rabbit Run," was a gift to his wife of 41 years, Maria. Weighing 40 pounds and standing 2 feet tall, this abstract work was just the beginning of a new career for Rondeau. His family, especially his wife Maria, is supportive of Rondeau's newest career. "She did make some sacrifices," said Rondeau, "like parting with the use of the garage at home." Rondeau's garage is now his workshop. His daughters, Laruinda and Jennifer, also support their father's new career and his two grandsons, age 7 and 9, are already building "contraptions" of their own. His largest work of art is called "Spirit" and honors those who died during 9/11 in New York City. The sculpture is 8 feet tall, weighting over 200 pounds. Out of the base of "steel rubble" comes a long shaft topped by a metal star, which moves with the wind, reaching toward the heavens. This, and others, can be found on his lawn at his home on Norwood Avenue. "I often see something that will trigger a design in my head, and then the challenge is getting the pieces of steel to work with what I perceive the outcome to be," said Rondeau. "I sculpt because I have a passion for creating objects of beauty, which bring to life the musings of my imagination. I sculpt in steel because I am fascinated by the power, durability, energy and versatility of the metal." Rondeau is presently working on a tribute to the Jamestown Bridge using steel he obtained from an engineer on site after the bridge's demolition late last year. "The bridge and I were both born in 1940," said Rondeau. Rondeau's exhibit will be on display at Little Falls from April 7 through April 27 from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, and from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday. To review just some of Rondeau's work, view his Web site at [www.sculptureinsteel.net](http://www.sculptureinsteel.net) or contact him by calling 467-4392. "My personal goal is to create objects of beauty, which will embody and transmit these ideas, images and feelings to all who view and experience the work. Hopefully, those who view my work will experience and realize their own ideas, images and feelings from their interaction with the work," said Rondeau.