

Ellen Rio Hoff Watson, *Hava Zisel bat Yosef v' Malka*  
Date of death: 2/26 /08, 20 Adar I 5768  
Rabbi Eliezer Havivi

Rio was so energetic and alive, from the very beginning. As a kid, she loved to hula hoop, and stand on the back of David's tricycle and ride around. She was on the swim team at Starmount, she was an active Girl Scout, and she had her own horse, Sunny Boy, who she rode and took to horseshows, and won ribbons with.

Rio was born on April 1, 1952, in New York City. Her parents were George and Muriel Hoff. David was her older brother, and then came Ellen, then Cindy, and then Steven.

They moved to Greensboro when Ellen was just a year old, maybe two, in 1953. She grew up here – went to Sternberger, and Kaiser and Grimsley High. Ellen was Bat Mitzvahed and Confirmed at Beth David Synagogue.

At 16 and 1/2, she was already talented and artsy, and fashion-conscious. She designed her own belts, went to Chapel Hill one day, and sold them and came back with orders for \$1800.

After High School, Ellen went to FIT, a prestigious fashion and arts school in New York. She actually missed the admission date to apply, but once they saw what she could do, and the talent she exhibited, they admitted her anyway.

After graduating FIT, she went on to start her own businesses, designing leather organizers and shoulder strap handbags, and other things. Her products were featured on the cover of Women's Wear magazine. She went around the world to buy materials. She sold to big stores like Abraham and Straus and Macy's.

In the late '80's, Rio moved to California, she met Dan, while he was delivering a package to her, they fell in love, got married, and both got in to Laho Chi, a form of spiritual energy healing. Together, they ran workshops all over the world, which in turn, produced friends and admirers all over the world. Rio touched and uplifted many of her students, and changed many people's lives.

In the late90's, Rio and Dan moved back to North Carolina, to Hillsboro, which delighted her parents, and then about a year ago, to Hendersonville. Six months ago, Rio discovered that she had cancer, it spread through her body, and on Tuesday, she died, surrounded by friends, and flowers, and family who loved her.

Ellen –Rio – was bubbly and adventurous, she was organized, she was a good business woman, and she was a doer. And a networker. She connected people, she brought people together. We all mourn her death, and we grieve for her.

Ellen Rio Hoff Watson left this world after 55 years of life on February 22, 2008, 20<sup>th</sup> of Adar I, 5768.

To George and Muriel

To Dan – her partner and lover for fourteen and more years,

Dan's Parents Dr Richard and Jan Watson,

to siblings David and Nina and Esther, to Cindy, to Steve,

to Muriel's sister Doris Feibelman and daughters Laura and Shari and Ray,

And all who knew Ellen, or knew Rio, and learned from her, and respected and loved her;  
Our hearts reach out to you in comfort and consolation.  
May Rio's memory always be a source of blessing for us.