

Carol Rauch

I grew up in Greensboro, the youngest of three children. My grandparents were secular Jews who immigrated from Poland, Lithuania, and Austria. They settled in New York City.

My parents, Lillian and Al Rauch, grew up in the Bronx, met on the beach, and were married in 1945 after my father's return from military service. My father had always loved photography. With an opportunity to buy a camera studio, they moved to Greensboro in 1946. The shop eventually became well known as Carolina Camera Center, and it was located for many years in a property developed by my mother that still constitutes the only privately owned building at Friendly Shopping Center.

My parents were interested in education and had a great love for music. Though their parents had never been able to afford lessons for them, they made sure that each of their children could play at least one instrument. One brother chose piano and the other saxophone. I played piano and guitar. I started playing harp when I was twenty-six and continue to play professionally.

Our family belonged to Beth David Synagogue, where my brothers had their Bar Mitzvahs. They transferred their membership to Temple Emanuel as I was growing up. My parents always made charitable contributions to benefit Israel, higher education, Eastern Music Festival, and the Greensboro Symphony.

I became a Nichiren Buddhist when I was eighteen. About twenty years later, my religious and spiritual studies led me to discover the overlap between mystical Judaism and Buddhism. I began to appreciate my coming into this world as a Jew and having to forge my unique spiritual path.

A sizeable portion of my legacy gift will go to the Soka-Gakkai USA, my Buddhist community, as well as to Guilford College for giving me the opportunity to get a degree in music. My priorities also include the Greensboro Symphony Beginning Strings Program, established by my mother, as well as various animal welfare causes, such as the Oxford School in England and their research and conservation efforts.

I wish to make the world a better place – to elevate myself, world, and spirit. Establishing a legacy with the Jewish Foundation of Greensboro is part of my process.

