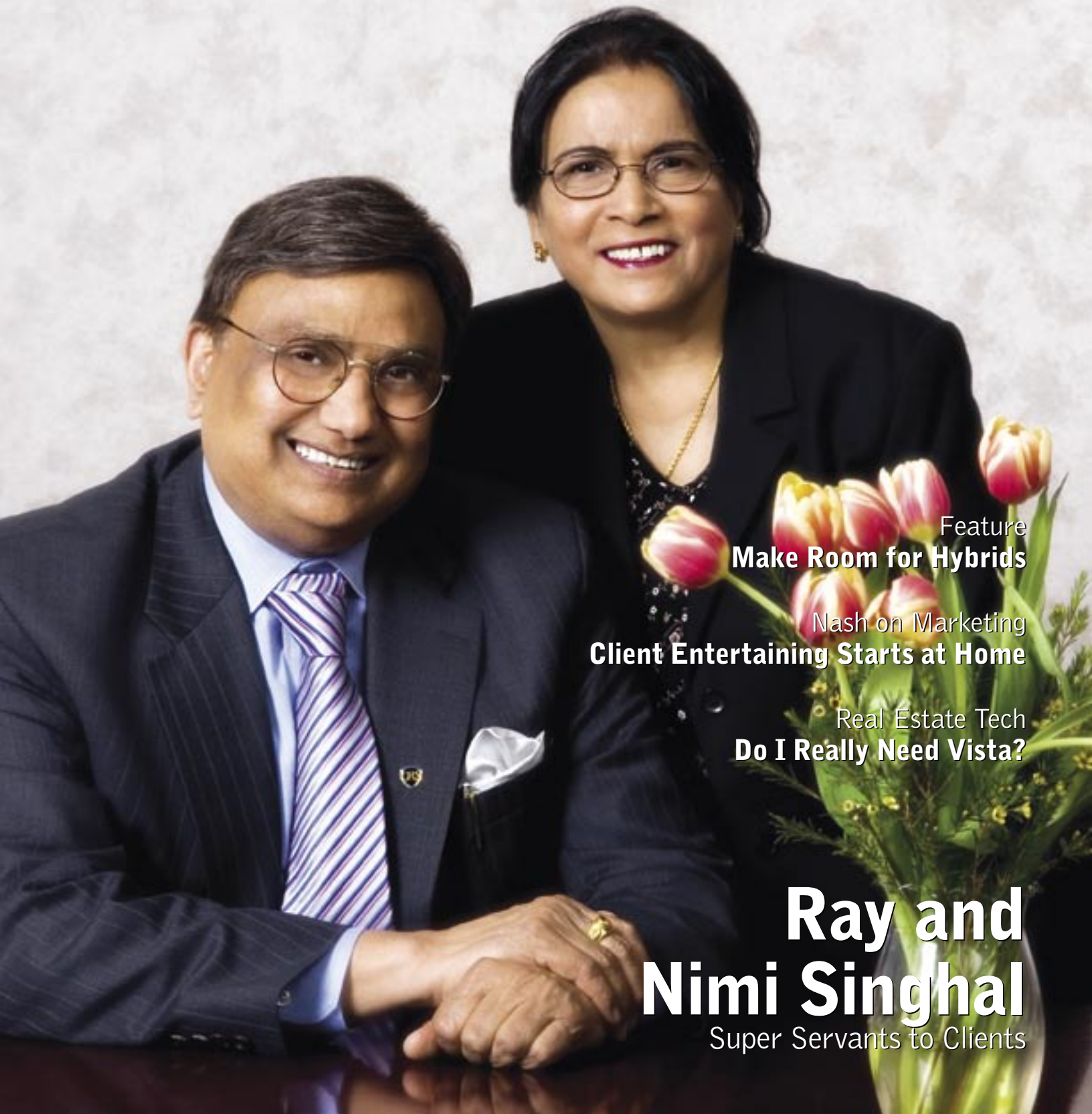


REAL ESTATE

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**Ray and
Nimi Singhal**

Super Servants to Clients

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Super Servants to Clients

By Connie Anderson

What does a Ph.D. professor of pharmacology, author and drug researcher have in common with a driven, focused and highly successful Realtor?

It's the same man — Dr. Radhey (Ray) Singhal. Ray and his wife, Nimi, among many other achievements, are the No. 1 team in the Shoreview/North Oaks Coldwell Banker Burnet office.

The Singhals have come the long way around to end up here in Minnesota — to success in real estate.

Born and educated in India, Ray and Nimi came to the United States in 1962 where he first taught at the medical school at Indiana University in Indianapolis. Then he took a professorship in Ottawa, Canada, where he was appointed Chair of the Department of Pharmacology in 1972. While he was in academia, he wrote over 450 articles, chapters for books, research papers, symposiums and monographs in his special field of drug research. “Google” Radhey Singhal and you’ll be impressed, as his granddaughter was, when you see the numerous references.

In 1994, Ray was hired by Ranbaxy Research Laboratories, a multinational pharmaceutical company that was based near New Delhi, India. This started years of worldwide travel from his base in India where he had moved. Nimi joined him the next year while their grown children stayed in Ottawa and Toronto.

“One day, after five years of this,” Ray said, “I realized I was exhausted. I remembered that an old friend from India who now lived in Minnesota had told me how wonderful Minnesota and the people were — and if we ever returned to the United States, we should move to Minnesota where he taught at the University School of Dentistry.

“Nimi and I had always been intrigued by real estate ever since we bought our first home. So in 1999, we moved to Minnesota where we knew only two people, my friends, Dr. Ramesh K. Kuba and his wife Kanta. Real estate is all about connection, referrals, long-term relationships — so without any of these, I was starting out with a blank slate.

“We were so welcomed, so well received in Minnesota,



PHOTO BY J&K CREATIVE!

Ray and Nimi Singhal are a husband and wife team whose skills complement each other and work to the advantage of their clients.

by the community and the industry when we arrived and started in business,” Ray said, and Nimi nodded in agreement.

After Ray was licensed, he joined CB Burnet in their Shoreview/North Oaks office. One day, about three weeks into his new career, he was holding an open house on Lexington Avenue for a fellow agent. Across the street was a “For Sale By Owner.” After the open house, Ray crossed the street and knocked on the door. The owner told him that he had been struggling to sell his house for three months and Ray was the first real estate person to ever stop by.

This homeowner had an obvious challenge that stopped people from buying the house: His terminally ill wife was in a hospital bed in the home. After Ray’s fellow agents helped him get this man’s listing completed, they told him he had to tell the homeowner that in order to sell the house he would have to move

his wife someplace else until the sale.

“That was one of the hardest conversations I’ve ever had,” Ray said, “but I did it. I spent a sleepless night before, searching for just the right words. After Bill and I visited, he quickly made arrangements and moved his wife. In less than a week the house had sold, and by the closing, sadly, the wife had died in the health care facility. Today, Bill has remarried and we are the best of friends. That’s my ‘first listing sale’ story.”

Nimi was a special education teacher for 25 plus years in Ottawa and continued in Minnesota, teaching in the Anoka School District. Ray said, “I made about \$30,000 the first year in real estate — and spent most of that on marketing and education because I knew how important both were. In fact, he is passionate about education and received the CRS designation — what he likens to a Ph.D. in real estate — in the first two and a half years.

Jack McCarty, Sales Manager at the Shoreview/North Oaks office, was instrumental in helping Ray get started, learn how to handle listings and all the paperwork. Ray greatly admires Jack, and the feeling is mutual. Jack says, “When he first came aboard, I remember saying, ‘When you take your continuing education, have it count for something besides fulfilling the hours required.’” Ray then embarked on achieving the best education and direction he could. Always thirsty for knowledge, Ray earned just about every designation possible. Ray and Nimi continue to expand their knowledge, continue to question and probe, all to become better able to serve their clients. “I have enjoyed helping him start his career and have marveled how far he has come. His desire to serve his clients in the best manner with the best knowledge available is not only gratifying to see, but says a lot for their respect for the business of real estate.”

“Ray and Nimi are consummate real estate professionals whose business is based on ethics, hard work, ongoing communication and an unwavering dedication to their customers. Ray and Nimi’s number one goal is to provide



Ray and Nimi with Nancy Martell, Senior Executive Closer for Burnet Title, Shoreview/North Oaks office, and Linda Dagenais, Vice President of the Shoreview/North Oaks office.

PHOTO BY J&K CREATIVE!

the best possible service to their customers,” said Linda Dagenais, Branch Vice President, Coldwell Banker Burnet Shoreview/North Oaks Office.

Ray said, “Real estate is a profession that is sales driven, and at the same time, you help people make their dreams come true. It was exciting when Nimi got her real estate license in 2001 and joined me.” As an avowed “workaholic” who loves what he does, Ray works 16- to 17-hour days, six plus days a week — and retirement is nowhere in his or Nimi’s plans. In fact, Ray starts every day with renewed joy and a commitment to contribute something to this world.

When Ray started in the business, he worked both with buyers and sellers, but now understands that “listing is the king,” saying, “If you don’t have the listings, why would people call you?”

What makes them so successful? First, is their high level of customer satisfaction as well as their reputation in the community and with industry peers. Second, they have a well-thought-out and executed marketing plan. That’s the “hard facts” of the business, but Ray believes, “If you want to be great, you should be a servant. If you want to be really great, you have to be a super servant. With that attitude, people will always seek you out.”

Lowell and Nancy Bultena of Blaine expressed it best, “Their business acumen is razor-sharp, and together with the implementation of their proactive marketing strategies, their systems and processes, their before- and after-the-sale service, their powerful strategic alliances, sources and their innovative use of deliberate referral systems, the Ray Singhal team constantly added value during our transaction to ensure the entire process was a fun, rewarding and successful experience.”

Working as a couple has many advantages, as some clients prefer to work with a man, others a woman. They both attend every new listing, visiting with the homeowners and completing the paperwork. Nimi works with every buyer, and is the more patient of the two (Ray’s words).

Buyers today are very sophisticated. Most have researched homes on the Internet and have narrowed their search. When they contact an agent, it might mean showing them three or four homes, compared to years earlier when it would take weeks or months. Today the process is more

efficient for everyone. Buyers are ready to buy and sales seem to go faster.

Every one of the houses the Singhal team lists can be seen on one of their 19 different websites, such as TheSinghalTeam.com or RaySinghal.com. Generally the Singhals carry 20-30 listings ranging in list price near \$1 million to \$170,000. Most sold homes are in the \$330,000 to \$1 million range, including single-family properties, such as residential, condos, townhomes, lakefront and golf course properties. The year 2005 was this team’s best year to date, and although 2006 was considered by some to have been one of the worst in real estate for many years, the Singhals experienced only a slight decrease in volume. The Singhals are proud that more than 35% of their business is now from past clients. Referrals and repeat business play a very important part in the success of real estate professionals.

Over the past year of slower-moving properties, the Singhals have been able to help homeowners balance what they sell their house for, sometimes less than anticipated,

Ray and Nimi Singhal with Lori Deschane, Manager of Office Administration, Shoreview/ North Oaks office, Coldwell Banker Burnet, and Nancy Martell, Senior Executive Closer for Burnet Title, Shoreview/North Oaks office.



PHOTO BY J&K CREATIVE!

with a new, lower purchase price on their new home.

So what happens when a homeowner calls the Singhal team? First, they are prequalified during a 15-minute phone call. Next, they receive a three-page e-mail that confirms the appointment and detailing what marketing strategies will be used.

Then, within 24 hours, a courier delivers their complete detailed marketing plan to the homeowner. “Providing all this information about our vision and mission, and everything we do for our listings, does several things. 1) They understand how we do business, eliminating a lot of FAQs; 2) they already feel connected with us and that they can trust us to do a good job for them; and 3) they are ready to sign the papers, saving time for everyone. The next day, the homeowner receives a very nice bouquet of flowers thanking them for signing with us,” Ray said.

This marketing and visibility plan includes outreach through technology, direct mail and delivers to the 1,500-plus people in their database every month a custom printed newsletter and a yellow postcard called “Evidence of Success.” Anyone on their database will hear from the Singhal team three to four times A MONTH!

All new listings get a ton of visibility, including:

- Listing on 19 websites
- Listing in monthly newsletter mailed to a community of 1,500+ people
- Monthly flyers that are home-delivered
- Specific mailings to the people (as the locals say, TPC) who live in Tournament Player Club, also known as the Deacon’s Walk, area that surrounds Blaine’s wonderful golf course
- Listings on TPC neighborhood’s own website (started and



Ray and Nimi Singhal — committed to excellence and education.

PHOTO BY J&K CREATIVE!

managed by the Singhals) showing they really understand that community

- A yellow postcard, “Just Listed,” announces every new listing and goes to 1,500 people
- A yellow postcard, “Just Sold,” announces each home sold and goes to 1,500 people.

“Ray and Nimi have always exhibited tremendous leadership, have excelled in their profession and have led the way for electronic marketing. They are members of Coldwell Banker President’s Premier, a ranking held by only 1% of the company’s Realtors nationwide. They also never stop learning, growing and adopting innovative strategies that will help their home buyers and sellers,” said Pete Rizzo, Senior Vice President, Coldwell Banker Burnet.



Ray Singhal, Ralph Burnet and Nimi Singhal at Coldwell Banker Burnet Awards Ceremony

The Ray Singhal team consists of Ray, Nimi and Kelly Becker, a licensed agent who has been with them for five years. Kelly brings a positive energy and trustworthiness so that the Singhals feel confident taking a few much-needed vacations to visit children and warm places in winter. Thomas Robideau is a computer expert who helps them with their websites. Christine Evenson, a virtual assistant located in Omaha, NE, who Ray hired after six months as an agent, looks after the graphic design work.

They create their own virtual tours and take all the digital photos of new listings, working with software called VisualTour.com. In fact, Ray is a member of Real Estate Cyberspace Specialist, and one of the first 500 nationally to be named “e-PRO 500” for his use of technology.

Robin Peterson, President, Coldwell Banker Burnet, commented, “For years, Ray and Nimi Singhal have been respected role models at Coldwell Banker Burnet, as well as within the real estate industry. Ray and Nimi have been honored with many national and local awards and designations, especially for using state-of-the-art marketing and technology resources to better serve their customers. Today’s Internet-savvy home buyers and sellers appreciate Ray and Nimi’s high-tech, high-touch approach, which helps them successfully achieve their customers’ housing goals.”

Ray has attained all of these credentials: Certified Residential Specialist, Accredited Buyer Representative,

Graduate of Realtors Institute, e-PRO 500, Seniors Real Estate Specialist, Certified Buyer Specialist, Integrity Selling Specialist and Accredited Relocation Specialist.

Ray is also an Executive Sales Associate (multimillion-dollar producer every month), Platinum Producer (ranked top 1% nationally by Broker/Agent Council), member of International President’s Premier, member of the Minnesota and the National Association of Realtors, as well as a member for St. Paul Board of Realtors. Ray is also a director on the board for the CRS Minnesota Chapter. Especially significant to Ray is being a member of the elite

Alan F. Hainge Cyberstar group. He was also named a 2004-06 Super Real Estate Agent by the *Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine*. In 2006, he was named Agent of the Year for HouseValues Certified Professionals amongst its 16,000 plus members.

Matt Heinz, Senior Director of Marketing, HouseValues, added, “Ray and Nimi Singhal represent true professionalism in real estate. They offer unprecedented customer service to all of their buyers and sellers and are also active members of the HouseValues agent community — frequently sharing their ideas, successes and best practices with other members of the HouseValues family. Their success in real estate comes as no surprise to anyone at HouseValues, and we know they have much more success ahead of them in the years to come!”

At every encounter, the Singhal team optimizes their resources with quality one-on-one interactions, an incomparable after-the-sale service program and value-added marketing. This is combined with their “super servant” philosophy and complemented by their vision, problem solving and their ability to develop deep and lasting relationships.

And ... all of this success while starting out in a new country, a new state and a new industry — just an amazing seven years ago!

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