

★★★★★ THE ★★★★★ GEORGETOWNER

DC LIVING WITH DEBBIE & SKIP

By Joe Russo

Whether it's Granola, Tennis, Law or Real Estate, P.L. "Skip" Singleton, Jr. and Debbie Singleton succeed by focusing on quality. Six years ago, the dynamic husband and wife team founded DC Living Real Estate, LLC a special boutique real estate brokerage offering high quality sales and management services for buyers, sellers and owners of residential real estate in the greater DC Metro area of DC, Virginia and Maryland. Skip and Debbie are the Principal Broker and Sales Manager of the company, respectively. While the Singletons have purposefully kept their company small to focus on high quality service, the annual sales of the Singleton team places them in an elite category of successful agents in the DC Metro area – the top 1 percent of all DC Metro area agents – and they set the standard of excellence for all sales professionals at DC Living.

Skip and Debbie had a unique series of events that brought them to Washington, DC. At the age of 23, Skip owned two apartment buildings

while living in Northwest Florida. By the time he was 30, he and Debbie owned a personal real estate investment portfolio comprised of several apartment buildings, homes, condominiums, and a commercial building they had designed and built, renovated, and/or bought as investments, in addition to an award-winning personal home they designed and built on a golf course. But real estate is what the Singletons loved to do for fun; and their real estate investment portfolio was their hobby.

Their jobs were as interesting as their real estate hobby. Skip was a master tennis professional and club manager at a top resort in Northwest Florida. During his tennis career he was named Tennis Professional of the Year in Florida, and the club he ran also was named Club of the Year in the state of Florida. He was the youngest USPTA Master Tennis Professional in the world at age 34. During his tennis career, Skip authored three best selling books on the sport – Intelligent Tennis, Intelligent Doubles and The Junior Tennis Handbook – and he was a nationally ranked player in addition to being a frequent speaker throughout the nation on strategies of the game.

Debbie, at that time, started and ran an award-



winning international specialty food company – Debbie's Famous Granola – with accounts in 40 states in locations such as Neiman Marcus, Disney World and Harrods, among many others. Pamela Harriman used to order Debbie's Famous Granola from the old Neam's of Georgetown by the case, and Frank Sinatra was a regular customer purchasing the cereal both in New York and London.

Debbie's Famous Granola was one of the first ever "gourmet" granolas and the first granola to go into Neiman Marcus gift baskets.

Debbie's Famous Granola won a Best Product Award at the International Gourmet Food Show in San Francisco.

But that all changed when McKee Foods, the makers of Little Debbie snack cakes, filed a trademark action against the Singletons at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office when McKee Foods' application for "Little Debbie" for their Sunbelt brand granola was denied registration. Instead of contacting the Singletons to work out their trademark differences, McKee Foods filed suit over the rights to the "Debbie" mark



Great times.

*Distinctive
retirement living
Private Suites • Fine Dining
Social & Cultural Activities
Chauffeured Sedan
Assisted Living Services
No Entrance Fee*



Good friends.

**The
Georgetown**

ASSISTED LIVING FOR INDEPENDENT PEOPLE



People who care.

*Call us
for a tour
202-338-6111
2512 Q Street, NW,
Washington, DC 20007
www.thegeorgetown.com*



for granola.

The Singletons defended their rights to the Debbie's Famous Granola trademark for years thereafter. The case was ultimately settled with McKee Foods paying the Singletons for use and registration of the Little Debbie mark for granola. That legal battle inspired Skip to go to law school to change careers to become a trademark lawyer.

The Singletons then moved to Washington, DC for Skip to begin practicing law at Shaw Pittman, one of DC's most prominent law firms. Over the course of the years following, his law clients included Nike, Toyota, Washington Redskins, Toshiba, Giant, Chevy Chase Bank, AutoZone, Goodyear, and many others. He also taught part-time as an Adjunct Professor at American University, teaching the Legal Aspects of Producing Film & Video in their graduates program. While no longer practicing law full-time, Skip remains a member of the Bars of DC, Maryland and the American Bar Association.

Debbie meanwhile began her career in residential real estate sales with Re/Max in Georgetown. From her rookie year on, she was one of the top selling agents in the Greater Washington, D.C. area every year winning the highest Platinum Award offered by the Greater Capitol Area Association of REALTORS. As her sales continued to grow, Skip began helping her on the evenings and weekends. He was enjoying so much getting back into real estate that he loved that he quit his law firm job and joined Debbie in founding DC Living Real Estate, LLC.

For the past 6 years, the Singletons have

focused exclusively on their real estate business. "We aim to provide top quality service in a personal manner to our clients," says Debbie Singleton. "With the skills and experience both Skip & I bring, our clients know they are being taken care of at the highest level." Debbie further adds, "And our clients love that we are interchangeable, which means they get personal attention from both of us throughout the entire transaction."

Debbie comes from a family of artists and she certainly has an eye for detail and design. Her artistic background and construction experience helps provide her with the vision to make a house into a dream home. Over the years, Debbie & Skip have personally overseen the renovation of many homes including designing and building a custom home and apartment buildings. The Singletons have taken to the same approach to property renovations as they do with their clients and brokerage – focusing on quality projects.

In 2006 - 2007, the Singletons completely redid the fabulous corner Federal at 2701 O Street NW in the East Village of Georgetown across from the tennis courts at Rose Park. It was a year long project, and the home was completely gutted and rebuilt by master craftsmen from the ground up and four walls. The result was a high quality, energy efficient, fully custom home inside with an historic feel, while the outside was painstakingly kept in its handsome original historic brick façade. They currently are doing another single family home project in the East Village of Georgetown which will take a full year to do with the same high level of craftsmanship and

attention to detail, and it is slated for completion in early Spring 2008.

Despite the company's size, the DC Living web site at www.DCLiving.com also is recognized as one of the leading sites for real estate information in the Greater Washington, DC area. "We worked with a site designer out of New York for the better part of a year to create a unique site for our brokerage," explained Skip. "It gives us great pleasure to hear the positive comments on it from the many users, and we are pleased to offer it as an effective tool for our clients." The agents with DC Living are also all tech-savvy and top professionals, and use technology to stay well connected with each other and with their professional clients who expect a higher level of connectivity in their lives.

As for the local real estate market, Skip & Debbie are both enthusiastic about the future of the metro area of Washington, DC. "We have been playing catch up with some of the major metropolitan cities in the United States the past years," says Skip. "We're the capital of the United States and a world leading city - this significantly sets us apart from national real estate trends," stated Debbie. "With the job market staying robust, the commuting traffic worsening, and the quality of life continuing to improve in the city itself, DC will likely continue its path of a truly great city in which to live, and the local real estate market will likely continue to reflect that increased demand," states Skip.

The Singletons also made note when their

long-time friends decided they wanted to move from Northwest, Florida in search of a city that offered top health-care and more a culturally rich and diverse environment. "They essentially could have lived anywhere so they searched the United States, spending time in many of our nation's major cities," explains Debbie. "They ultimately chose DC and, in particular, Georgetown to live and they couldn't be happier!" "The only thing they say is they wish they had done it 10 years earlier," says Skip.

Skip & Debbie live in an 1892 Queen Anne Victorian that is a DC Historic Landmark home on MacArthur Blvd in the Palisades. When not working, they enjoy jogging and the outdoors, kayaking, wine collecting, antiques, investing in real estate, and spending time with their 3 Yorkshire terrier dogs and Cockatoo bird. They also enjoy a rare get-away to their second home in Gibson Island, MD on the Chesapeake Bay.

Debbie is a licensed Sales Professional in the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland. Skip is a licensed Principal Broker in the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland. They can be reached at Debbie@DCLiving.com and Skip@DCLiving.com, DC Living Real Estate, LLC, 202.337.0501, 4933 MacArthur Blvd NW, Washington, DC 20007.

Joe Russo is the Founder and CEO of a residential real estate settlement services firm serving Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia. Readers may send questions or comments to jrusso@etelc.com.

DOYLE
NEW YORK

**SELL AT AUCTION
IN NEW YORK**

20TH / 21ST CENTURY DESIGN

Our Georgetown office is currently accepting property for our October 10 auction of 20th / 21st Century Furniture, Art and Design.

Please call Reid Dunavant at **202-342-6100**
or email DoyleDC@DoyleNewYork.com



George Nakashima Walnut Free Edge Three-Sliding Door Cabinet, Circa 1973. Sold for \$36,000

DOYLE NEW YORK | AUCTIONEERS & APPRAISERS
3256 PROSPECT ST NW | WASHINGTON, DC 20007 | 202-342-6100

DOYLENEWYORK.COM

*Addressing Your Real Estate Needs With
Professionalism and Objectivity....*

Whether you are buying or selling real estate, assess your options by calling me. As a former Vice President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and founder of the Great American Home Awards®, I will put my strong experience to work for you.

*Quality Home Ownership
Deserves Quality Service!*

Margaret Byrne Heimbold
Realtor®

Long & Foster Real Estate, Inc.
Georgetown Office
1680 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20007
202-812-2750
summervillemedia@erols.com

