

south bay edition

BROKER AGENT TM

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A close-up portrait of Wayne Haraguchi, a middle-aged man with dark hair, smiling broadly. He is wearing a dark grey textured suit jacket over a white collared shirt. The background is a softly blurred indoor setting with a window and some plants.

WAYNE HARAGUCHI

broker/agent of the month

presented by



WAYNE HARAGUCHI

by Roberta Silverstein * photography by Thad Smith, Thad Smith Photography

KEEPING IN TOUCH



broker/agent
of the month



When Wayne Haraguchi started his career in corporate finance, he never imagined his number crunching days would add up to a life in real estate. Yet, working as an auditor, controller and later a finance and tax consultant just didn't seem to fulfill Mr. Haraguchi's desire to be connected with people. "I always wanted to help people," he explained recently to Broker Agent Magazine. "Reviewing numbers on financial statements or a company's policies and procedures helped stockholders and investors or seeing people once a year for their tax returns was OK, but it just didn't feel like I was really helping people."

Connection and trustworthiness are key elements of Mr. Haraguchi's work and home life. Meet Wayne for the first time

and he gives you a big grin while offering his hand. He asks if you'd like a beverage or even lunch (if it's Noon). His favorite beverage of choice is a cold can of Pepsi. Always making sure you have the most comfortable seat and that the room isn't too cold or hot, are small examples of the care and concern he applies when helping people.

"Wayne is all about little details that make a client comfortable," concurred his assistant of eleven years and real estate agent herself, Kristina Carter. "He cares about his clients." In fact, Mr. Haraguchi's organized previous life in finance is evident in his creation of checklists detailing every possible element of a transaction - whether representing buyer or seller.

IT'S IN THE DETAILS

Wayne began his real estate career part time, after seven years in the number trenches as an auditor at Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co., now KPMG, and later preparing tax and financial statements for individuals and small businesses. In 1990 Wayne decided to give up the accounting and tax work and go into real estate full time.

With real estate values declining and home sales slow, it was not the ideal time to begin a real estate career without any other source of income. Without much money and no clients Wayne started knocking on doors for business. "I liked the personal contact of knocking on doors and meeting people," said Wayne. "During my first year in real estate I knocked on over 5,000 doors." While door knocking in his farm areas is a thing of the past, people tend to remember Wayne Haraguchi. Now, Wayne's focus is keeping those relationships going with advertising initiatives such as direct mail, calendars and personal notes to former and current clients. He even holds open-house parties, welcoming friends, colleagues and clients to his home. With over 70% of his business through referrals, Wayne's focus on connection and relationship building still pays dividends.

ACCOUNTING FOR HIS TIME

While he prefers representing sellers as their listing agent, Wayne also helps buyers. If the numbers are any indication, he's successful at both - selling over thirty-three homes during the past three years in his farm in the West San Jose/Cupertino area. What's fascinating about Mr. Haraguchi's success is his ability to keep long lasting connections with clients - both his and those of the other REALTORS®. Marlene Kasparian is one of the fortunate clients who have been helped by Wayne Haraguchi. "When I bought my home Wayne represented the sellers. I was so impressed with how he handled the sale that I kept Wayne's card. When I was ready to sell my home, the first person that came to mind was Wayne Haraguchi. The best thing was that there were no surprises. I knew what was involved in terms of costs and fees and what would be expected from me, as the seller. Wayne also coordinated all the repairs that were requested by the buyers, and took that process off my shoulders." Clients say they appreciate Wayne's detailed, honest and trustworthy manner.

Marlene Kasparian is one of eight buyers to have purchased a Wayne Haraguchi listing using their own agent, who then used Wayne when it came time to sell the property. This gave Wayne



Wayne with his assistant of eleven years, Kristina Carter.

the opportunity to sell the same house for two different sellers. On two other occasions Wayne has listed and sold the same house three times.

Ms. Carter agrees. "I've learned from Wayne to always keep the client in mind. Whether it is managing the transactional paperwork, scheduling repairs or working directly with a client. We go that extra mile for our clients because it's just a part of what we do." Ms. Carter also keeps Wayne Haraguchi's business firmly focused on the future. "Wayne is lucky to have me and I am lucky to have him!" she chuckled. "I'm his catalyst. I make suggestions about marketing the business. I teach him patience. We have a great professional relationship."

MUTUAL RESPECT

Mr. Haraguchi is not all about work. He believes in a true work/life balance and spends as much time as he can with his immediate family. Again, he lives his creed of mutual respect for both clients and family. He met his wife, Yumi, while they were both exchange students living in Japan. A long distance romance, he at Santa Clara University and she at the University of Missouri, extended into a long-lasting marriage with two boys Brett, 18, and Kirby, 14. Mom and sons are all avid hockey players and so Wayne spends his time commuting between all three of his family members' games. "Brett is an assistant captain on The Lawrenceville School's Varsity Ice Hockey team in New Jersey. Kirby is a freshman at Cupertino High School and active in ice hockey. Yumi plays in a Women's League. Me, I'm just the designated driver," laughs Wayne.

Wayne makes sure that he stays fit by lifting weights and working with a personal trainer. Still recovering from an Achilles' tendon injury and back problems, Wayne believes that

every day is a gift for good health. "I want to stay around and reap the rewards of all my hard work," he says emphatically. Next year, his goal is to do more than fifty transactions - as he will have one son in college and another shortly joining those august academic halls.

Mr. Haraguchi proudly points to his son Brett's decision to leave San Jose and take a chance at a New Jersey prep school known to be a feeder institution for Princeton, Harvard and Yale. "We're always traveling to one of our sons' games - whether it's during Thanksgiving for Kirby's games in San Diego or Brett's games on the East Coast or Yumi's games, we're always traveling on the holidays somewhere," he said with a smile. This past holiday season, Yumi and Wayne supported their sons by each traveling to a different tournament in a different city. Yumi went to Toronto, Canada, with Kirby while Wayne traveled to Buffalo, New York, with Brett.

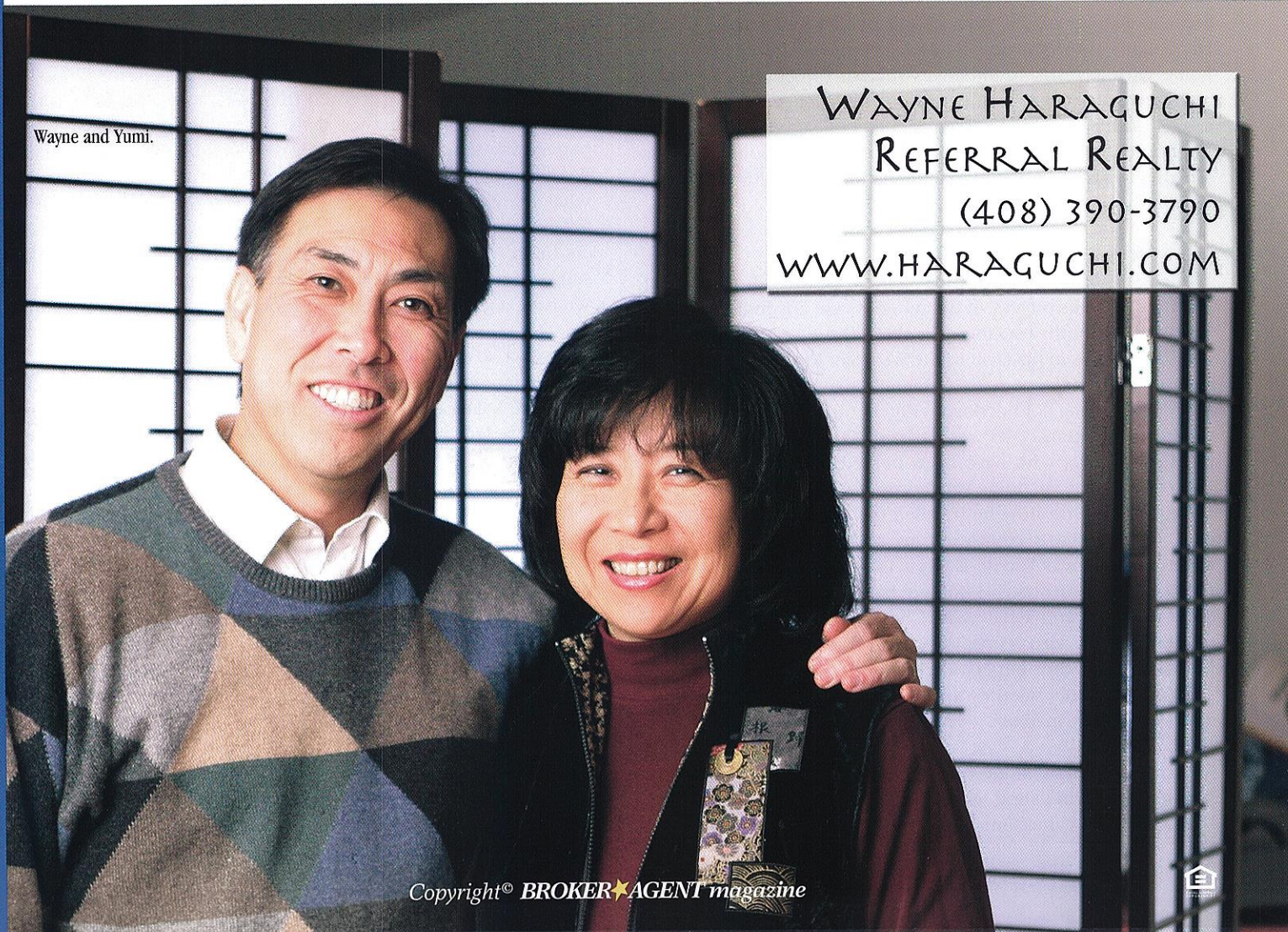
ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

All that traveling is possible because Wayne takes the time up front to ensure a smooth and successful transaction for his clients. Operating 80% of the time for sellers, he's also honest about his opinions regarding a house. "I tell my clients exactly what I think about a property. If I think that there are issues with the property, I make sure those issues are disclosed properly. If I'm representing a buyer, and I think there is something wrong with a particular listing, I will tell him. It may have lost me a few deals in the past, but I know that if I didn't share my concerns

honestly with the client, I couldn't sleep at night. Ultimately, the client is my boss and I will do what they want. I just want to make sure that I never get into a situation where the client asks 'why didn't you tell me about x or y BEFORE I bought that house?' It just wouldn't be the right thing to do."

A long-standing member of Wesley United Methodist Church, where he's taught Sunday school for the last ten years, Mr. Haraguchi practices what he believes: 'Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you'. He's also been chairperson for the church's Council on Ministries and a member of the San Jose District's Church Building and Location Committee. He even assisted one of the Church's ministers, Reverend Mariellen Sawada-Yoshino, find a quality home in San Jose that was close to the Church and met her needs. "I felt that I wasn't just another client for Wayne Haraguchi. I was made to feel special and important. I felt that he wanted me to live in the best house in the world - which of course is where I now reside."

When asked what advice he could provide Broker/Agent readers, Wayne just gave one of his big customary grins and said simply, "Every real estate transaction is different and new. There is no such thing as a simple transaction. Our job as REALTORS® is a matter of finding out what to do and doing it. Fairness applies to other agents as well as clients. I want other REALTORS® to want to work with me and bring me their clients, because they know my reputation for detail and attention. They know I'll provide for a smooth, honest and fair transaction." ★



Wayne and Yumi.

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