

## DEAL OF THE YEAR

BY STUART W. ELLIOTT • OCTOBER 17, 2007

Following his REBNY Residential Deal of the Year award win, John Venekamp of Brown Harris Stevens has been getting calls from other brokers, former and current clients, friends and others congratulating him on his coup.

"It's been kind of fun," he said. "They've been saying: 'This is the kind of thing you'd do.'"

The kind of thing Venekamp and fellow BHS broker Leslie Singer did to win the New York real estate version of the Oscars was to come to the rescue of an elderly woman who had been burned out of her Upper West Side apartment by a fire that killed her husband in November 2002.

Venekamp and Singer set to work rehabilitating the West End Avenue co-op after Singer learned of the woman's plight from a friend.

The whole process took eight months. "When we first walked in the door, we realized we needed to go home and get on our jeans to do some work," said Venekamp, who has a background in renovation.

The three-bedroom, two and a half bathroom apartment sold for \$2.4 million last spring. "It didn't take long to sell the apartment," said Venekamp. "There were more than 10 people bidding on it."

The burned out owner, Patricia Feuerstein, still lives on the Upper West Side, though she is currently in poor health, Venekamp said.

In other awards presented during the same ceremony, Kyle Blackmon, also of Brown Harris Stevens, received the Most Promising Rookie Salesperson of the Year Award.

"This is a young kid who came from the South, and he's doing a phenomenal job," said REBNY president Steven Spinola. "He's got that Southern good-looking charm, and I won't say who he probably does well with in selling apartments."

Helene Fields of HF International Realty was presented the Henry Forster Award.

"It's the equivalent of a lifetime achievement and contribution-to-the-industry award," said Spinola. The Real Deal



**Leslie J.W. Singer**

NYRS, Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker  
lsinger@bhsusa.com  
212-588-5675



**John Venekamp**

Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker  
jvenekamp@bhsusa.com  
212-588-5619