



Steve Feldman at 1st annual NKBA Renovation Angel Luxury Kitchen Recycling Awards with Angel Award winner Peter Deane and Master of Ceremonies, NBC's George to the Rescue.

# The Vision Transforming Real Estate ... and Society

Turning luxury renovations into reduced landfill, new jobs and philanthropy

By Steve Feldman, Founder & CEO, Renovation Angel

I never envisioned I'd be a CEO, however at 47 I become one! Quick history: I started my career as a rock-n-roll DJ, working up to Senior Marketing Manager, Clear Channel Providence. In 1998, I left radio to fundraise for addiction recovery outreach programs (I'm a recovered addict for 32 years). I landed one good donor in Greenwich, Conn. who unfortunately lost \$30 million in the 2001 market crash. She handed me her final check with the words, "Good luck."

Fortunately, opportunity was literally "next door." My donor's neighbor was Farah Pahlavi (the Queen of Iran). I saw a sign in the Queen's driveway: "Demolition in Progress." So, I drove up to her 10,000 sq. ft. Rockefeller Mansion and it was gone. The idea struck me – why not earn the money, rather than asking for it, by selling donated kitchens, fixtures and furniture out of demolished mansions.

After a four-year successful pilot project, in 2005 I established Renovation Angel, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organiza-

tion. Our mission is protecting the Earth, creating new recycling jobs, and helping those in need. In 15 years, we have recycled over 7,000 kitchens, diverted over 40 million pounds from the landfills, created over \$25 million of jobs, and distributed \$2.3 million to charity.

### Recycling and Charity

Our vision is two-fold. The first is recycling the 100,000 luxury kitchens being remodeled every year, creating an estimated \$400 million in new recycling jobs. The second stage of our rocket (like Bombas Socks) is for every kitchen we recycle to create jobs, we want to give one to a family suffering from fire, flood or poverty.

The appeal of luxury recycling has "win-win-win" benefits. Significant financial tax and removal savings, landfill waste reduction, and the good feeling of supporting a self-sustaining charity. Renovation Angel's high-net-worth donors appreciate that we do not fund-raise; instead we ask to recycle their luxury kitchens, renovation items, furniture, artwork, etc. An average luxury kitchen

donor saves \$10,000 to \$50,000 on their project. A donor contributing a full house of furnishing saves \$100,000+. You may wonder what happens otherwise to these kitchens. If they are not “recycled” they suffer the three “D’s”. D #1 is the dumpster – expensive and wasteful. D #2 is devalued – you barter or sell your kitchen away and receive a low value for it. D #3 is dis-appear – you pay for demolition and someone takes it for free.

Renovation Angel has proven to be “crisis-resistant” as we have survived and grown through the Banking Crisis (2008), Social Security scare (2011) and now COVID-19. Before the pandemic, the awareness about sustainability was growing. Now the combination of environmental and economic benefits is becoming that much more attractive to property owners who are renovating, remodeling and relocating.

### Expanding with Partners

The future of Renovation Angel relies on our transition from organic growth to strategic expansion. Our plan includes a robust nationwide network of performance-based Industry Partners who are focused on acquiring luxury donations. Renovation Angel’s partners include highly respected professionals from an array of industries including design / build, finance and estate management.

On the corporate level, Renovation Angel is developing vital partnerships with high-profile companies like Miele, a luxury appliances manufacturer. In June 2020, Miele announced a Recycle & Rebate program with Renovation Angel. Through the program, homeowners who donate their qualified kitchens receive an instant discount on new Miele appliances and significant tax and removal savings.

“Miele has made a commitment to producing long-lasting, energy-efficient appliances and conserving resources during the production process for our entire line,” said Jan Heck, President and CEO of Miele USA. “Our partnership with Renovation Angel continues that sustainability effort, and we are pleased to offer donors an advantage to help them complete their renovations with quality products that will help serve them and their families for years to come.”

In 2016, Walker Zanger, a stone and tile manufacturer,

became Renovation Angel’s nationwide Awareness Partner. “We are proud to partner with Renovation Angel, and through this collaboration Walker Zanger will be able to raise awareness among homeowners and designers on the many environmental, charitable and financial benefits of recycling during their luxury kitchen remodel,” says Jonathan Zanger, president of Walker Zanger.

### CEOs’ Involvement

CEOs and business executives reading about Renovation Angel may ask the question, “How do I get involved?” Here are three answers:

- 1. Renovating or relocating.** Contact Renovation Angel for a free Net Value Estimate showing your tax and removal savings.
- 2. Word-of-mouth.** Tell someone you know about Renovation Angel – your neighbor, friend, architect, designer, or real estate agent.
- 3. Partnership.** For CEOs in real estate, construction, luxury products, or finance, contact Steve Feldman to initiate a conversation to develop a private label partnership tailored to your company and brand.

In the next 10 years, luxury recycling will be best practice with high-net-worth homeowners and their providers. As you know, it’s better to be a leader than to be a follower. “White markets” are more profitable than crowded ones.



*Steve Feldman founded Green Demolitions in 2005 in Greenwich, Connecticut as an environmental solution to the mansion demolition boom. From a career that started as a rock-n-roll DJ, to fundraiser for addiction recovery as a recovered addict himself, Steve’s idea was to earn money instead of asking for it by selling donated kitchens, fixtures, and furniture out of demolished mansions.*

*The “entrepreneurial charity” evolved into its current form: Renovation Angel, a nationwide recycling program for luxury kitchens, architectural elements and furniture. RA transforms a wasted resource - thousands of luxury kitchens headed to landfills, into millions of dollars of new jobs and funding for charity. Renovation Angel is a self-sustaining non-profit, earning revenue by creating a “circular economy” for the luxury kitchen and interiors industries.*