

If I Were a Rich Man

What would you do with a million dollars?

In my last column, I briefly mentioned my growing concern about being able to retire. Since I have fewer working years ahead of me than behind, I decided to take action and attend a financial planning seminar hosted by Robert North and Jim McVittie at Q Center. And while I went looking for a rich husband (to supplement the artistic one I already have), I ended up instead with a wealth of useful and valuable information.

I also ended up with two new friends, Laura Mosier and Hanna Linder, who are "doing the domestic partner thing" while breeding puppies. Sean Moore and Joe Eustaquio were there, just days before Sean had a mild heart attack. "At this

point, life is truly an adventure," he wrote when I inquired about his health. "In the past, checking out someone's ass might have ended in an evening of pleasure. Now, having my ass checked out means gloves, KY, hoses and cameras. And none of them in a fun way!" Special thanks to my good friend Chris Davis (in bold for being one of my most loyal straight readers) for alerting me to Sean's health crisis.

Sean's situation reawakened my anxieties about retirement and whether I'd have enough money on which to survive. So, during rehearsals for Portland Opera's exquisitely sung production of *Aida*, I began asking the chorus, extras and crew what they'd do if they won a million dollars. Some of their answers surprised me.

"I'd get as many people together as I could, build a bubble and live inside it for a week," said tenor Jonathan Hicks. "I'd be the king, and everyone would be my subjects. It'd be like my own personal Renaissance fair." Matt McCarthy would go to Peru on a Reiki retreat. "The Celestine Prophecy made it sound so cool," says the Reiki practitioner.

"Is that before or after taxes?" the ever-practical Jack Galliano asked, then said, "I'd buy the entire Armani line for the season and invest the rest. Or buy a pirate ship and sail the open seas." Others who yearn for new ports are Zachary Koval, who wants "to travel the world until the money ran out," and Brian Langford, who said: "I'd go straight to Italy and buy a condo on the Arno River in Florence. Then I'd come home, make a recording studio in Portland and fill it with a French double harpsichord and a huge pipe organ."

"I'd buy a million dollars worth of prostitutes," chorus member Adam Tracy said, "or else a nice house and then throw a big party for my friends." Rehearsal pianist Tom Webb, the unsung hero of the opera, would "pay off anyone I needed to in order to get a visa, then move to Australia immediately to be with my partner, Rob." Brittain Jackson would philanthropically "put it all toward a scholarship in my mom's name." The fund would benefit graduating seniors of Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Brittain's hometown of Washington, D.C.

Erik Tweed says he wants to "hire lots of help to cook, clean and do yardwork."

But Lenny Gattuccio "wouldn't change much of anything—except my attitude. And some people would be in trouble." Similarly, Brian Paatz is eager to "tell a lot of people to get behind me and pucker up."



Out Going
BY FLOYD SKLAVER

The next afternoon, over a delicious lunch at Artemis Café with Noah C. Buck, employee Katie Leedy recognized me as "the guy from *Just Out*." When I asked her the million-dollar question, she said she'd "buy a minivan, pimp it out and drive around the country." Ben Greene would "buy land in Southern Oregon along the Coquille River and live with my boyfriend," Joel McGrady. The couple have been together for two years and are "thinking of getting married." The third member of Artemis' "management team," Sarah Ditson, would travel to Spain. "I want to see the graffiti there, and I'd buy a real sick camera to photograph it."

"Is sick good?" I wondered. For someone thinking about aging and retirement, it isn't the adjective I want to hear.

As for me, if I got a million dollars, I'd invest half, donate quite a bit and spend the rest. After all, I want to have some fun before I'm Out Going. 10

FLOYD SKLAVER wants to know about your event. E-mail him at floydsklaver@comcast.net.



From left, Zachary Koval, Floyd, chormaster Rob Ainsley and Brian Langford backstage at *Aida*.

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