

This week's "10 Questions With" LESLIE SEGRETE



NAME: Leslie Segrete

TITLE: Co-Host, *The Money Pit Home Improvement Radio Show*; Carpenter on TLC's "While You Were Out"

MARKET: National

COMPANY: The Money Pit Home Improvement Radio Show

BORN: Bethpage, New York

RAISED: Long Island

BRIEF CAREER SYNOPSIS: Set Designer and On-Air Personality

WEBSITE: www.lesliesegrete.com



1. From designer to media star- how did that come about?

I was head of set design for the Oxygen Network out of the New York studios and also designed the sets for the new pilots being proposed. When we would work on the pilots, myself and a producer, Brian Neshel, would build them over the weekend and then strike them for regular production on Monday mornings. He had friends at the BBC who were starting up "[While You Were Out](#)" and heard they were looking for a girl who was fun and could build, and thought I would be a good fit. They called me up and, a few days later, I was filming episodes 4 and 5 in Connecticut, and that was three years and 140 episodes ago. As for "[The Money Pit](#)," another friend, this time Hank Mendheim (also an Oxygen connection who is now at NBC), forwarded me the job listing. I sent in my reel and materials, and the rest is near history. All of these opportunities- even these 10 questions- when they come my way are such a dream, because I never imagined having a career like this.

2. What are you passionate about?

That is a toughie. I love the fact that my jobs allow me to be creative and always challenge my hands. The part that makes it all worth while for me is the fact that I am educating my audience while entertaining. I love that, if you wanted to, you could walk away and actually create these projects yourself. That is what does it for me. I am, however, most passionate about providing a loving relationship for my family and making sure they never feel left out.

3. So far, what about doing the radio show has surprised you the most? What's the best thing about having added "The Money Pit" to your duties?

Working on the radio show has been great. [Tom Kraeutler](#) has taught me so much about what goes on within the walls and the foundation of your home. He really does know everything about everything. While the new knowledge is

fantastic, it has also made me a very paranoid home owner, because I now know of all of the possible pitfalls lurking within. Most surprising has been really trying to let my personality shine through while essentially talking to my office wall at home. And even more surprising is how the tongue has the ability to form a giant knot as the result of overtiredness.

4. Of all the projects you've done for "While You Were Out" and the various shows you've done, which was the most rewarding and why?

We have just added the element on "While You Were Out" of there sometimes being only one carpenter on the show, and I just had my trial by fire. The room was to be a kitchen. Gutted completely, with only the connections for the appliances remaining. There was so much to be done, and I just was thrilled with the turnout. We did not get to grout the countertops or do the floor, but, man, did we ever get a lot completed. It just really proved to me that I am capable.

5. What are some of the biggest design faux pas you commonly see? What things do people do with their homes that make you wince?

Lack of organization. This is so common everywhere we travel, and it is a killer. All things need to have a home and go there when finished with them. Maybe this is part of cleaning OCD, but it can really change a room. Home owners really just need to pick a design style and go with it. Try not to mix and match too many different ideas or themes-it just won't work in large quantities. Bring in small and eclectic collections of items to get that style point across with out over whelming the room.

6. What's your favorite recipe?

I make a banana bread that will melt your heart and go straight to you thighs but it is sooooo worth it.



7. Of what are you most proud?

I am most proud of the relationship I have with my parents. Especially my dad, who passed away last year. Dominick Segrete was an amazing architect who opened my eyes to design, and I only wish that I could have learned more from him.

8. What do you do for fun?

Unfortunately, right now, it has been making a super-hero costume for my best friend Lara's comedy troupe. It is very metallic and futuristic, but totally rocks. My husband I love to go bowling, as lame as that is. He is great, and I am just terrible, and for some reason always manage to pull a muscle, bowling! When we can, we love to travel and we have an obsession with the ocean. We love to see the fish- I am a snorkeler, a top dweller, and he is a diver. But the view is almost the same.

9. Fill in the blank: I can't make it through the day without _____.

...laughing with my husband.

10. What's the best advice you ever got? The worst?

Best: From my dad, when I was faced with finding a new job- not my choice, mind you- he said "Any monkey can drive a car, but if it can make turns, that is a smart monkey." I think that is how I live my life. I am the turn-making monkey. I embrace all opportunities with enthusiasm and try to always do my best. I know it sounds like silly advice, but it works for me.

Worst: I only ask the people I trust most for advice, so it is always the right bit for me. ■

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