

Time Out New York

JUNE 24-30, 2015

**The Week in
New York**

In Character

Melvin Major Jr., 50
Partner at Melvin's Juice Box
Greenwich Village

Did you grow up in New York?
No, I grew up in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, so I was a country boy, running around barefoot, chasing rabbits, farming.

So how'd you wind up here?
My mom came to Harlem when I was about eight. I arrived once she got settled in and got into the wrong crowd. From 14 to about 22, I was dealing drugs. One day I realized, This is not me. And I just stopped. The first job I got was making juice at Integral Yoga. I didn't care about the pay or anything. I just wanted to be like a normal citizen and do my part.

And you've stuck with it since?
Once I started, I had a passion for it. It's kept me straight ever since. The best thing that ever happened to me was to work. It's wonderful to see people outside on a beautiful day just drinking a juice, hanging out on stoops.

Do you still live in Harlem?
I'm in Brooklyn now, across from Prospect Park. I like fishing, so I fish there daily. I carry four or five poles because people get interested and I'll teach them. It's a beautiful thing to see people just hanging out amongst each other in the park, enjoying life. I wish everyone could always be like that.—Interview by Dana Varinsky



STICKY-NOTE CONFESSIONS

What's the craziest thing you've done to escape the heat?

watched an informational video about scientology just to be indoors

DATED A TOTAL JERK FOR HIS CENTRAL AIR

Filled up a kiddie pool in the center of my kitchen

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WORD ON THE STREET

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"Can you imagine how cool it would be if you didn't have a penis and then suddenly you just got one?"

"It was a combination of dodgeball and bowling, and I was amazing at it."

"It's too tragic to eat space food alone!"

"Every time three gay people get together, a bottle of Fireball magically appears."

"You have a very forgettable vagina."

"I feel like you're either Team Auntie Anne's or Team Cinnabon. Never both."

"I'll only trust myself with expensive sunglasses after I've successfully raised kids for a few years."

"Do you think Batman will be at Output tonight?"

"We got totally owned by the MTA tonight. Wasn't pretty."

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM WISNIAK