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Reports from the scene

The mass migration to U31, a change at The Office and more



Scenesters should know

The mass migration to **U31** (3112 University Ave.) has begun, but it's not yet clear which species of bird will set up a permanent nest in the new North Park club. If owner Steve Billings has his way, hipsters and gritty punks will step it up a notch and order bottle service while kicking back to live and DJ-spun indie and electro from the comfort of U31's custom-made booths.

See, Billings is a perfectionist who dreamt of a club with nicely lit bathrooms, a dance floor with elbow room and a U-shaped bar that would help mitigate cocktail congestion. Luckily for the San Diego native, he made enough money in real estate to turn that dream into a brick-and-mortar business. He started with the **Morena Club** in Linda Vista (which he still owns and operates), then bought **Buster Daly's** and renovated it this summer. Today, the only visible remnant of Buster Daly's is the trickle of former patrons who wander in looking for the hip-hop and rap sounds that used to shake the tiny space late into the night. U31 is huge—it'd look like a warehouse if it weren't for the expensive floor finish, custom walls and lighting and a glitzy bar backed by lit Plexiglas covered in gold leaf—and hip-hop songs are few and far between.

To complete the scene, Billings hired **Erica Jessup**, the former Beauty Bar manager, along with DJs **Gabe Vega** and **Saul**, whose new Friday and Saturday nights promise a mix of live music on U31's brand-new stage and DJ sessions that'll get the giant floor filled. Local electro/indie band **Buddy Akai** devirginized U31 last week. The 200 or so folks who braved the rain seemed to be the kind of crowd Billings is going for—but what about the hardcore hip-hop heads without a home? **The Roseary Room** stopped featuring hip-hop and **Landlord Jim's** closed in early January, which means that crowd is looking for an in, and U31's Sunday nights with reggae masters **Tribe of Kings**, along with an occasional appearance by **DJ Artistic** (not to mention the surprise guest appearance of **Kid Capri** a few weeks ago) could be just what they need. It'll be interesting to see who ends up ruling the roost.

—Kinsee Morlan

Notes from the smoking patio

North Park dive **Scolari's Office** was sold recently to the owners of **Bar Dynamite**. Initial reports from the bar indicate that other than closing the place for three to six weeks for a remodel, everything else would stay the same—management, staff and, most importantly, the music.

About two weeks after the ink was dry, however, the bar's live-entertainment permit expired. What appeared to be a coincidence resulted in the bar opting against a permit renewal. All scheduled shows were immediately canceled.



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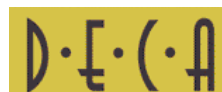
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