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Into the Night

By Mark Armstrong
Athens NEWS Writer

Ah, welcome to February. That indelible month of Love and Choccolate, and of course, Black History. How's that for an emotional roller-coaster?

Personally speaking, though, since May of 1981, February has taken on a deeper and greater significance. Why? Because February is the birth month of a man who someone once called "the most well-known Black man on the globe..." Well, that could be a stretch, but as I try to think harder about it, perhaps only Mandela and Martin (The Rev. King) could be more well known globally. I'm referring to the Honorable Robert Nesta Marley, O.M. (Order of Merit), otherwise and affectionately known as "Bob."

Bob Marley was born Feb. 6, 1945. Since his departure in 1981, many people in many corners of the globe celebrate both his birth and his passing. So do I. With this in mind, I feel obliged to inform any interested parties that this Saturday, Feb. 3, a friend of mine in Cleveland will be hosting a Bob Marley Lecture and Concert "celebration" at the Odeon, a club in the Flats. One reason that this gig is extra-special is that he's doing it in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Education(!). They're bringing in a guest lecturer who has more than two hours worth of unreleased video footage of Bob Marley, the legend. Plus one or two Reggae bands, natch. (By the way, we'll be having our own "early" Bob Marley Day bash next week, courtesy of The Dugout and Aloha Productions.)

This week, however, here's what's happening. Up at the Union it's Thursday night at the fights as **Cassius Clay**, from Chicago, steps into the ring to deliver the first-round knockout. After listening to the group's CD "test," I'm reminded of that once-famous-but-now-

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defunct Athens original. The Woodoo Birds. Yep, that funk-rock cross-assimilation appears to have become quite the popular formula. Round two will feature **Psycho Suitcase**, a local group that's logged a year or two around town now. Tomorrow, it's **Shrug** (huh?), from Dayton, ably aided and abetted by **Brinker's Edge**, from Athens. Saturday's show features **Our Smiling Jesus Band**, another local ensemble that's reeling in the years.

Down at the Smiling Skull, there's no show tonight — reportedly Alternative Night will be back next week. However, there'll be live music both Friday and Saturday night this week as **Snapper and the Blues Invaders** pull a weekend. Heretofore, only the famous Armstrong-Bearcat Band has been able to carry the two-night mantle.

Over at Casa Cantina, Friday's Happy Hour will feature a local country crooner and veteran musician, **Jim Wachtel**. Allow me to elucidate here, so as to avoid any misunderstanding, as happened when I referred to another band as "country gents." Chris, are you listening? When I say "country crooner," I'm referring to the fact that this particular person resides out in the idyllic "country" side that surrounds us. This is not to imply that he, or she, sings "Country" a la Dwight, Tim, Tracy, Clint, Vince, Reba, or Wynonna. If I meant that, I would have capitalized the word "country," as I did in the previous sentence. Jim Wachtel can play almost any style — we even played acoustic Reggae at a party once — but the one I like most is the one that is more than vaguely reminiscent of Leon Russell. Friday's evening show features folk/blues solo artist **Nathan Whitt**, while Saturday's performance will have **Kevin's Brother Jimmy** (Ford??), and a



Snapper and the Blues Invaders roll into the Smiling Skull Saloon this weekend, for shows both Friday and Saturday nights.

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St. Louis based band, **The Resistance**. Downstairs in the Dugout, the universe is groovin' once again tonight, as per usual, while this weekend sports two newcomers, at least to me. On Friday it's **Soulfinger**, with another group **The Trails**. Saturday's guest is **Brownie Mary**. Opening for them will be the afore-mentioned **Nathan Whitt**.

Dude gets around.

There's also been some word around town that the Swindlesfish Saloon is finally coming out of liquor-license-related hibernation with its better than ever live music venue. Not a moment too soon!

Have fun, and a posthumous Happy Birthday to Bob. Ite, mori!