



MODERN SLAVERY EXPOSED



Photos by CAROL TEDESCO/The Citizen

An installation of works by Washington, D.C.-based photographer, artist and activist Kay Chernush placed within the African refugee cemetery grounds on Atlantic Boulevard in Key West, titled 'Bought & Sold: Voices of Human Trafficking' is one component of the three-part 'Blind Spots: Modern Slavery Exposed' exhibit developed by Key West resident Erika Biddle.

African Cemetery hosts human trafficking exhibit

BY MANDY MILES
Key West Citizen

The Key West African Cemetery at Higgs Beach has long honored the 294 Africans who died in Key West in 1860 after the U.S. military intercepted the illegal slave ships that were taking 1,492 Africans to a life of slavery in the sugar plantations of Cuba.

Upon finding the slave ships at sea, and noting the deplorable conditions on board, the U.S. military brought the ships to Key West, where the island's residents provided food, shelter, clothing and medical care until the Africans were loaded onto different boats and taken back to Africa. Despite the best of intentions,

See EXHIBIT, Page 8A



Two of four abandoned wooden doors that have been transformed into messages representing "doors to freedom" by local artists and students are at the African refugee cemetery exhibit.



Washington, D.C.-based photographer, artist and activist Kay Chernush chose to interweave imagery with first-person narratives for 'Bought & Sold: Voices of Human Trafficking,' a traveling exhibit currently in Key West.

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NOTICE OF MEETING

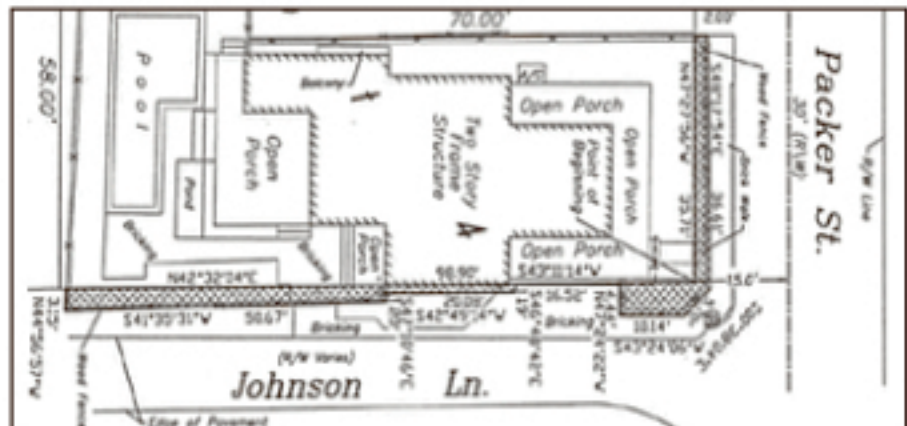
Key West Bight Management District Board Meeting
Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 4:00 P.M.
City Hall, 1300 White Street, Key West, FL

ADA Assistance: It is the policy of the City of Key West to comply with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Please call the TTY number at 800-955-8771 or 800-955-8770 (Voice) or the ADA Coordinator at 305-809-3811 at least five business days in advance for sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or materials in accessible format.

February 6, 2019 Key West Citizen

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR EASEMENT

The City Commission of the City of Key West, Florida, will consider a request for Easement at 908 Packer Street, Key West, Florida, at 6:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard February 20, 2019, in Commission Chambers, City Hall, 1300 White Street, Key West, Florida. Applicant: Richard McChesney for Elizabeth Fuller Property Owner as shown in the following survey.



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Pursuant to F.S. 286.0105, notice is given that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, that person will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, that person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Cheryl Smith

Cheryl Smith, MMC, CPM City Clerk

February 7, 2019 Key West Citizen

Exhibit

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the Africans were returned to Liberia, Africa, a new colony for repatriated slaves that was typically hundreds of miles from where they had been captured.

During the Africans' months-long stay in Key West, 294 of them died as a result of illness or infection they had acquired on the slave ships. The city's residents raised money to provide graves for the 294 deceased, involuntary visitors who remain buried, undisturbed beneath the ground there today.

A new art exhibit called "Bought & Sold: Voices of

Human Trafficking" by artist Kay Chernush is designed to shed light on modern-day slavery and human trafficking. It is now on display at the African Cemetery and will be there through Feb. 28 as one of the three prongs of Key West resident Erika Biddle's "Blind Spots" exhibit.

Artist Kay Chernush has created a series of display easels at the cemetery, each of which features a piece of art as well as a heart wrenching story of human trafficking and modern-day slavery from various countries.

"I was 10 when she sold me. The men, they think if they have sex with a virgin girl, they get good luck. They will get sons. They will get

money, get very rich. They pay very much money for sex with virgin girl, young virgin girl. So after first time, you get stitched up...two, three, four times. I was four times virgin."

The quotation is from a Cambodian girl who was trafficked within Cambodia, according to Chernush's piece. Other easels display words as powerful as the artistic images alongside them. In addition to the month-long display of Chernush's work at the African Cemetery at Higgs Beach, an opening premier of Biddle's "Blind Spots - Modern Day Slavery Exposed" will begin with a reception at 6 p.m. Thursday at The Studios of Key West, 533 Eaton St.

"This multifaceted, three-part exhibit, developed by Biddle to encourage action against human trafficking and child exploitation, includes images by renowned photographer U. Roberto (Robin) Romano, and art installations by local artists Cricket Desmarais and Gretchen Mills, along with participation by local students and the artistic display by Chernush."

In recent years, reports that Monroe County children have been victims of sex trafficking targeted by groups from the mainland shocked our community.

"This strikes home as much as any other violent act that we see in the world today," said Heidi Golightly, of the Keys to be the Change organization, which, along with the Florida Keys Council of the Arts, is sponsoring the event. "Blind Spots" offers not only awareness, but inspiration for concrete actions that

people of all ages can take to combat this worldwide epidemic.

As the mission of Keys to Be The Change is to empower young people to realize their full potential while taking action to create positive change in the world, we are eager to support this project in hopes that our community will band together to put an end to human trafficking once and for all."

The schedule for "Blind Spots" is as follows:

At 7 p.m. Saturday, The Studios will host a film screening of "Children of Bal Ashram," documenting the work of Nobel Peace Prize recipient Kailash Satyarthi, who liberated and rehabilitated more than 87,000 children from child labor, slavery and trafficking.

A question-and-answer session with director Len Morris, and discussion about what actions can be taken to protect the innocent will follow. In addition, an outdoor exhibit about Human Trafficking will be on view for the month of February. presented by ArtWorks For Freedom, entitled 'Bought and Sold,' by Kay Chernush, sponsored by Keys To Be The Change at the African Cemetery, on Higgs Beach.

"The location was selected to honor the memories and tragedy of those unfortunate individuals who were abducted from their home in Africa to be sold as 'commercial goods' so many years ago. This injustice and transgression is not something that merely happened in the past. Human Trafficking, or modern slavery, still continues to this day," Biddle said.

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NOTICE OF MEETING

Art in Public Places Advisory Board
Thursday, February 14, 2019 at 5:00 P.M.
City Hall, 1300 White Street, Key West, FL

Members of the Key West City Commission may be in attendance at this meeting.

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February 6, 2019 Key West Citizen

NOTICE

The City of Key West has two Independent Passenger Vehicle for Hire licenses available. A lottery drawing will be held by the City Clerk's office, 1300 White St., on Friday, February 15, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. Interested parties should submit their contact information, as well as documentation demonstrating at least five years' experience in the vehicle for hire industry as an owner, driver, or dispatcher, to the City Clerk's Office in a sealed envelope no later than 11:00 a.m. February 15, 2019. Applicants need not be present at the drawing. Awardees will be required to submit a completed application package, including all supporting documentation, to the Licensing Division no later than March 15, 2019. Please refer to City of Key West Municipal Code Chapter 78, available at www.cityofkeywest-fl.gov, for more information.

February 6, 2019 Key West Citizen