

Written by Kathy

Saturday, 06 May 2017 14:36 - Last Updated Sunday, 07 May 2017 11:46



(www.clevelandurbannews.com) / (www.kathywraycolemanonlinenewsblog.com). Tel: (216) 659-0473 and Email: editor@clevelandurbannews.com, Ohio's most read digital Black newspaper. By editor-in-chief Kathy Wray Coleman

CLEVELAND URBAN NEWS.COM-CLEVELAND, Ohio-Seymour Avenue rape victim survivor Michelle Knight (pictured) will join community members, led by community activist women, to remember the abduction, decade-long rape and escape of the Seymour Avenue victims from the wrath of convicted rapist Ariel Castro at an anniversary rally and march at 5 pm on Saturday, May 6, 2017 at 2207 Seymour Avenue on the west side of Cleveland. (Editor's note: Bring protests signs and candles please and call the Imperial Women Coalition at 216-659-0473 for more information).

Knight now goes by the name of Lillian Lee and her attorney, Christine Evans of Hahn, Loeser and Parks LLP, notified key rally organizer Kathy Wray Coleman of the Imperial Women Coalition via email that Knight will speak at the event at 5 pm.

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"Lily will stop by to show her support," said Evans.

Coleman said that "we are excited and pleased to have a survivor and women's and children's advocate of Ms. Lee's (Michelle Knight) caliber to join us on this most worthy date for such a necessary remembrance event."

The activist women say the event will also address the Violence Against Women Act, local, county, statewide and national public policy changes sought, and a demand for resources as to violence against women and children, human trafficking, and the epidemic of missing persons.

May 6 marks the fourth-year anniversary of the escape of Gina DeJesus, Knight, and Amanda Berry from Castro's Seymour Avenue home, which has since been demolished.

In addition to Knight, some 16 speakers will take to the podium, all but two of them of whom are activist women, with Rhiannon Childs, the state director for Women's March

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Ohio, a key organizer of the Women's March Cleveland that drew some 15, 000 people for a march in January, as the keynote speaker.

Other speakers include Kathy Wray Coleman of Women's March Cleveland, Imperial Women Coalition and Cleveland Urban News.Com, Genevieve Mitchell of the Carl Stokes Brigade, the Rev Pamela Pinkney Butts, Juanita Brent of Indivisible District 11, Arnold Shurn of the Cleveland Peacemakers, Lucinda Garmus of Women's March Ohio, Cassandra McDonald of East Cleveland and the Call and Post Newspaper, Angela Ladson, Judi Holowatyj of United We Stand out of Medina, Ohio, Patrice Brown, Minister Gwendolyn Pitts of the Imperial Women Coalition, Alfred Porter Jr. of Black on Black Crime and the Black Man's Army, Valerie Robinson of Stop Targeting Ohio's Poor, Princess Dicee Moore of Rebuilding Our Village and Protecting Our Children's Safety Before and After School, and Fredericka Gates.

Vounteers of the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center will also attend, organizers said.

When Cleveland police raided Castro's west side home in May of 2013 over 100 feet of chain were reportedly found.

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All three victims were initially chained in the basement of the two-story home, which was later demolished as part of a plea deal with Castro, though Berry ultimately became Castro's upstairs bedroom slave.

A fired Cleveland schools bus driver, Castro was subsequently convicted of numerous criminal charges, including multiple counts of rape and kidnapping, and sentenced to life without the possibility of parole following a plea deal. He hanged himself in prison hardly a month into his sentence.

Amanda Berry was snatched up on April 21, 2003, blocks from her home and while she was leaving her job at the Burger King Restaurant at West 110th Street and Lorain Avenue.

She turned 31 on April 22, and was nearly 17 when Castro kidnapped her. Gina DeJesus, now 27, knew Castro's now grown daughter, a peer, and was 14 when she was kidnapped.

Like Berry, DeJesus grew up in the neighborhood, and close to the Castro home on the

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now infamous Seymour Avenue.

Michelle Knight, now 35 and a women's advocate spokesperson, was a small frame 21-year-old when she was abducted by Castro.

Knight disappeared on August 21, 2002, Berry on April 21, 2003, and DeJesus, on April 2, 2004.

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