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INTERNAL AFFAIRS INVESTIGATIVE REPORT 2009-008-AI-2
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SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENT

On December 24, 2008, Sheriff's Office Deputy Halford "Bubba" Harris was on duty when he became involved in a domestic disturbance with his wife Jessie Harris. At the time of the incident, Deputy Harris and his wife were unofficially separated and living in different residences. Deputy Harris was living in an apartment and his wife was staying at their residence located at [REDACTED].

At approximately 1300 hours that day, Deputy Harris was working Zone 9 when he went to the residence on [REDACTED] and confronted his wife who was in the shower with their two year old daughter. Jessie Harris alleged that Deputy Harris became angry when she refused to let him see her cell phone. During the ensuing domestic disturbance, Jessie Harris further alleged that Deputy Harris refused to leave the residence, blocked her with his body and disabled the house telephone when she told him she was going to call 911.

The incident initiated a criminal investigation (SJSO08OFF016623) conducted by Special Victims Unit Detective Michael Hartsell. During the criminal investigation, it was learned from Jessie Harris and several other witnesses, that numerous alleged incidents occurred in the past involving Deputy Harris, during and prior to his employment with SJSO. These allegations included acts of domestic battery, aggravated assault and illegal drug use.

Detective Hartsell's investigation concluded that although there was no physical evidence involved, there was reason to believe the domestic violence alleged occurred, based on the testimony of witnesses closely associated with Deputy Harris and his family. The criminal case was reviewed by the State Attorney's Office, however no criminal charges were filed.

Upon review of the information, Chief of Staff Joel Bolante authorized Internal Affairs to conduct an Administrative Inquiry into the numerous allegations made against Deputy Halford Harris and determine if violations of Sheriff's Office policy occurred, specifically, but not limited to:

Policy 26.1.72 – "Commission of a criminal act in violation of a county, state or federal statute," to wit: Domestic Battery.

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY

The following is a summary of information obtained from Domestic Violence investigation SJSO08OFF016623, initiated on December 29, 2008.

For approximately the last four months, Deputy Halford Harris and his wife Jessie Harris have been unofficially separated and living in separate residences. The couple had been having marital problems stemming from several extramarital affairs Deputy Harris reportedly was involved in.

On December 24, 2008, at approximately 1300 hours, Deputy Halford Harris was on on-duty when he reportedly went uninvited to the residence where his wife and daughter were staying. Deputy Harris became involved in a domestic disturbance by confronting his wife while she was in the shower with their 2 year old daughter [REDACTED]. According to Jessie Harris, Deputy Harris suspected she was having an affair with a physician she worked with and he demanded to see her cell phone. When she refused, Deputy Harris became angry and refused to leave the residence.

Jessie Harris reported she had been the victim of domestic battery in the past by Deputy Harris, including before and after he was hired by the Sheriff's Office. She said this included such acts as him striking her, shoving her across a room and using physical "pressure point" control techniques on her. Based on the past abuse, Jessie Harris said she was in fear of further domestic violence and she tried to leave the residence with her daughter to get away from Deputy Harris. She was reportedly unable to do so because Deputy Harris began blocking her with his body.

When she threatened to call 911 for help, Jessie Harris reported that Deputy Harris disabled the house phone. Utilizing her cell phone, Jessie Harris said she then tried to call Deputy Earl "Tres" Edenfield, a mutual friend of both parties, but she was unable to get a signal on her phone.

In an attempt to flee the residence, Jessie Harris made it to the garage area with her two year old daughter. After getting in her car, Jessie Harris reported that Deputy Harris tried to get in the backdoor of the car, but was unable because the door was damaged and would not open. Without any clothes on and her daughter wrapped in a towel, Jessie Harris said she and her daughter were finally able to flee the residence and drive down the street to get away from Deputy Harris.

Jessie Harris said after she was away from the residence, she called Deputy Harris' supervisor, Sgt. Ricky Noble. According to the incident report and the affidavit completed by Sgt. Noble, he received a call from Jessie Harris, who explained to him

what was happening, including Deputy Harris disabling the phone when she told him she was calling 911 for help, and him attempting to stop her from leaving the residence by blocking her with his body. Sgt. Noble noted Jessie Harris told him that during the domestic disturbance, she was never “touched” by Deputy Harris.

According to the incident report, Sgt. Noble arrived on the scene to find Deputy Harris “*pacing around like a wildcat*” and “*extremely agitated*.” Sgt. Noble’s affidavit also noted when he responded to the residence he found Deputy Harris “*in an extremely upset state and hard to talk to.*” Sgt. Noble notified Lt. Ben Tanner, and he responded to the residence.

While waiting for Lt. Tanner to arrive, Sgt. Noble described Deputy Harris as becoming “*even angrier than he was before*” because after his wife left the residence, he found a card Deputy Edenfield gave to his wife. He then assumed she was having an affair with Deputy Edenfield. Deputy Harris ignored continual efforts by Sgt. Noble to calm down. Deputy Harris then called Deputy Edenfield and they “*had words,*” but Sgt. Noble could not hear exactly what was being said.

According to the report and an affidavit completed by Lt. Tanner, upon arriving at the residence, Lt. Tanner was apprised of the situation by Sgt. Noble and was told by Deputy Harris that “*everything was fine*” until his wife refused to let him see her cell phone. When she refused, he “*became upset.*” Lt Tanner eventually drove Deputy Harris to the Sheriff’s Office, where they met with the Patrol Bureau Commander, Captain David Messenger. Both Deputy Harris and Deputy Edenfield were given “no contact orders” for each other with an additional restriction placed on Deputy Harris to have no contact with his wife. Deputy Edenfield was also transferred to another shift.

Sgt. Noble completed a sworn affidavit about the incident and gave it to Lt. Tanner along with a previously completed affidavit from 3 months earlier. In the previous sworn affidavit dated September 27, 2008, Sgt. Noble documented that he received a call from Jessie Harris and she revealed to him that her marital problems including arguments with her husband Deputy Harris had “escalated.” According to Sgt. Noble’s affidavit, Jessie Harris revealed that Deputy Harris had “*grabbed her arms causing marks, thrown her around their room at home, and intimidated her by getting in her face,*” Sgt. Noble’s affidavit also noted that Jessie Harris revealed that Deputy Harris “*had blocked her with his body when she was trying to leave their home after retrieving some belongings.*”

The earlier affidavit completed by Sgt. Noble also noted that Jessie Harris “*had talked with Lt. B. Stewart about their problems but did not mention anything physical happening....*” Sgt. Noble further documented in his affidavit of September 27, 2008, “*I told Jessie that I would be talking to Lt. Stewart tomorrow and tell the updated*

information and other members of my chain of command reference this situation," and noted, "When I came on duty today, 9-28-08, I spoke to my supervisor, Lt. T. Aman, and explained to him the situation. Lt. Aman told me that he was calling Captain M. Fagan reference the situation and would tell me how the situation would be handled next."

PRIOR INCIDENT ON DECEMBER 23rd

The report further documented an incident that occurred the day prior on December 23, 2008. According to Jessie Harris, she had to run next door to a neighbor's house after Deputy Harris (off duty) came over to the residence angry. He began accusing her of having an affair with a physician, Dr. Michael Rally, because a week before he found a receipt for a sweater Dr. Rally had given her as a gift. Jessie Harris said at one point during the confrontation, Deputy Harris grabbed her by her arm and tried to hold her against her will. She was eventually able to get away, retrieve her daughter and flee the residence. According to the report, Jessie Harris' sister responded to the residence and found Deputy Harris in the process of "cutting the sweater into pieces."

Jessie Harris noted that she learned later how Deputy Harris had called Dr. Rally and left a message on his answering machine, instructing him to leave his wife alone. Dr. Rally provided Detective Hartsell with a copy of the recorded message from Deputy Harris and a copy of the message was obtained by Internal Affairs for this investigation. In the phone message, Deputy Harris states the following:

"Doctor Rally, this is Mr. Harris. I left a message for you at your job. This will be the last time I make a phone call to you. I would advise you to stay away from my wife, Jessie Harris. I've got the gifts you've given her. You better not call her, you better not text her, you better not come in contact with her, unless it's on a professional basis. This will be the only call pertaining to this situation I make and I hope we have an understanding."

Dr. Rally indicated to detective Hartsell that he took the message from Deputy Harris as "somewhat of a threat" and he felt it was inappropriate for him to have made the comments. Dr. Rally noted that he and Jessie Harris were only friends and were not involved in a relationship. Jessie Harris also denied having a relationship with Dr. Rally. Jesse Harris said it was like "walking on eggshells" when she was around Deputy Harris, and that certain things would "set him off." She reported that when she tried to talk to him about his past affairs and [REDACTED]'s he reportedly transmitted to her from the affairs, he would "lose control of his temper." Jessie Harris said her husband Deputy Harris has had at least seven affairs and she keeps track of the incidents by which girl he is having an affair with at a given time.

In her interview with Detective Hartsell, Jessie Harris disclosed other incidents concerning Deputy Harris, including those which involved previous incidents of domestic violence. Deputy Edenfield also disclosed incidents he said he witnessed regarding Deputy Harris' conduct. A summary of the individual allegations are as follows:

STEROID USEAGE BY DEPUTY HARRIS

Detective Hartsell noted this allegation was made by Jessie Harris off the record and prior to her taped interview. Jessie Harris revealed that for approximately ten years, Deputy Harris has used anabolic steroids and she has observed his usage during their marriage. Jessie Harris further revealed that on occasion, she actually injected him with the drug. Deputy Edenfield also reported he had knowledge of Deputy Harris using steroids and said he was told by Deputy Harris that his steroid supplier had been arrested a few months ago.

AUGUST 2005

Jessie Harris reported that in August 2005 while they were dating and before he was employed by the Sheriff's Office, they became involved in a verbal argument over her receiving a text message from a male friend. The incident was reported to have taken place at her parent's residence on Quarter Horse Road. In her interview with Detective Hartsell, Jessie Harris stated that Harris was "so mad he couldn't speak." Jessie Harris further disclosed how at one point Harris threatened her by putting a knife to her throat and reportedly told her, "*I ought to fucking slit your throat.*"

MARCH 2006

In another event reported to have occurred prior to Harris' employment at the Sheriff's Office, Jessie Harris described an incident when she was pregnant and she and Harris were at his mother's residence in Live Oak. Jessie Harris reported that Harris became angry and began "*physically hitting her and throwing her around the bedroom for an hour and a half.*" In her interview with Detective Hartsell, Jessie Harris noted that during the incident, she was hit on her breasts and thrown into the bed and a dresser located in the room. Approximately 3 ½ months later, the couple were married.

JANUARY 2007

After Harris was hired by SJSO in November 2006, Jessie Harris learned approximately 2 months later he was reportedly having an affair with Deputy Leigh Skelton. From that point on, she indicated Deputy Harris "*would hold her against her will and use pressure points to control her.*"

JULY 2007

Jessie Harris reported that during this time, she received an [REDACTED] from Deputy Harris resulting from a “one night stand.” According to the report, Deputy Harris would “*lose his temper and do things in order to restrain her movements.*” She further reported Deputy Harris “*would also slam doors when she was walking through them which would catch her body in the door.*”

EASTER 2008

During an incident at Deputy Harris’ mother’s residence in Live Oak, Jessie Harris reported that Deputy Harris “*threw her to the ground*” following an argument. According to Jessie Harris, the argument began when Deputy Harris became angry over her talking with a male friend at a night club. As she tried to leave in a vehicle with her daughter to get away from him, Jessie Harris reported that Deputy Harris tried to “snatch” their daughter out of the vehicle and she had to physically strike Deputy Harris with the palm of her hand, in order to keep him from removing the child from the vehicle.

APRIL 2008

Jessie Harris reported that during this time she revealed to her mother, Shelia Cordell, the visible bruises on her arm she said were the result of being grabbed by Deputy Harris. In a written statement attached to the incident report, Mrs. Cordell confirmed that she observed the bruises on her daughter Jessie, stating the following: “*Right before the summer of 08 Jessie had come over with [REDACTED], her child. Jessie started crying and she told me that Bubba had hurt her and I thought she meant mentally, she said no Mama I mean he hurt me. She then showed me the bruises on her forearms and upper arms. I showed this to my husband and he spoke with Bubba that night and told him he better not put his hands on Jessie again.*”

Detective Hartsell noted that later in a phone interview with Jessie Harris’ father, Steve Cordell, Mr. Cordell said he did not remember seeing the bruises that day. However, he did remember speaking by phone to Deputy Harris later that evening. The report noted, “*He stated he wasn’t real clear on exactly what he told H. Harris but it was along the line that he had better not ever harm J. Harris.*” Mr. Cordell noted that for whatever reason, he was kept “in the dark” about the issues between his daughter and Deputy Harris. In a sworn affidavit completed by Deputy Edenfield regarding the criminal investigation, he observed bruises on Jessie Harris around the same time period of April 2008. Deputy Edenfield noted in his affidavit, “*I noticed bruising on the left arm of Jessie and at the time didn’t think much about it.*”

SEPTEMBER 2008

Jessie Harris reported that after learning Deputy Harris had an affair with a female named Sarah Birchfield, she moved out and came back to the residence in an attempt to retrieve some of [REDACTED]'s belongings. She asked Deputy Edenfield to meet her there in order to "keep the peace." While she was there, she reported Deputy Harris became angry when she refused to talk to him. The report noted, "*H. Harris got more and more angry and Deputy Edenfield was unable to get him under control.*" The report further noted that Deputy Edenfield never observed Deputy Harris "put his hands on" Jessie Harris, but observed him "*constantly trying to block her with his body from leaving.*"

SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

As a result of an argument on this date, Jessie Harris reported Deputy Harris (off duty) threatened her and "...became enraged and started acting out of control. She stated she told him she was going to call 911 and he told her, "Let me make something clear to you. If you call and they take my job, I'm going to give them a reason to put me in jail." The report notes that Deputy Edenfield (also off duty) arrived during the argument and described observing a "heated" argument between the two, and he described Deputy Harris as having "lost it." In his affidavit attached to the criminal investigation, Deputy Edenfield documented he was finally able to convince Deputy Harris to leave.

According to Deputy Edenfield, while riding as a passenger with Deputy Harris down Russell Sampson Road, Deputy Harris was driving approximately 90-100 mph and said he was not going to stop and was "going to hit the first thing I see." Deputy Edenfield noted that he had to physically grab Deputy Harris by the neck and "squeeze" at which time he slowed down.

OCTOBER 2008

After Deputy Harris moved out of their residence, Jessie Harris reported how he was off duty and showed up to visit. According to Jessie Harris, Deputy Harris "was drinking heavily" and was upstairs dancing around in his SWAT helmet. Jessie Harris reported that she was afraid because she thought Harris might "try to force her to have sex." Detective Hartsell noted in his report that Jessie Harris disclosed how "*withholding sex from Bubba is not an option.*" In her interview with Detective Hartsell, Jessie Harris said with regard to withholding sex from her husband, if you do, "You'll be sorry."

Jessie Harris then called Deputy Edenfield for help. In his sworn affidavit, Deputy Edenfield noted that he spoke to Deputy Harris on the phone and Harris told him he "didn't give a fuck anymore" and he was "tearing things up" in the residence. Deputy

Edenfield's affidavit also noted that while speaking with Deputy Harris, he could hear him "throwing pictures around" and "glass breaking." Jessie Harris and her daughter were able to get out of the residence and spent the night at Deputy Edenfield's ex-wife Amanda Edenfield's residence.

During the investigation, Amanda Edenfield reported that when Jessie Harris stayed the night at her residence, they spent the night talking. During that time, Jessie disclosed she was "*terrified of what H. Harris would do and she couldn't stop shaking.*" The report further noted, "*A. Edenfield stated J. Harris told her that H. Harris constantly grabs her and pushes her but he has never hit her with a fist.*" Jessie Harris also played a message on her phone that Deputy Harris left for her and "*she could hear things being broken in the background and H. Harris said, 'This is what is going to happen to you.'*"

According to the report and Deputy Edenfield's affidavit, the next day he spoke to Deputy Harris and told him he needed to get some help. Deputy Harris was reported to have said that he didn't want to see his wife with another man and if he saw another car parked in her driveway, "*he would go to the house and only [REDACTED] would leave alive.*"

NOVEMBER 15, 2008

Deputy Edenfield reported that on this date while off duty, he met with Jessie Harris in the parking lot of the CVS store at S.R.16 and U.S.1 to give her daughter a birthday present from his family. While talking in the parking lot with Jessie, Edenfield reported that Deputy Harris drove by in his patrol car, in uniform and began yelling at them. He then pulled into the parking lot and began to accuse Edenfield and his wife of having an affair. According to the report, "*H. Harris got so angry that he told her that he was going to put a fucking bullet in her head.*"

The report further noted that on another occasion when Deputy Harris was "agitated," and was speaking with Deputy Edenfield, he made the threat to Edenfield that he would "*barricade himself in his house and no one would be able to make him leave.*"

JAGUARS GAME INCIDENT

In her interview with Detective Hartsell, Jessie Harris described an incident which occurred on or about December 19, 2008. Although she was not present, she learned Deputy Harris was off duty at a Jaguar's game in Jacksonville when he reportedly became involved in a physical altercation with another subject and had to be "pulled off" the subject by another SJSO employee. Jessie Harris noted that she was told the unknown subject involved reportedly was an employee for Deputy Edenfield's father's company.

PRIOR INCIDENT WITH HARRIS' EX-WIFE

Detective Hartsell's investigation included an interview with Deputy Harris' ex-wife, Angela Wood. The report documented that Wood and Deputy Harris were high school sweethearts who dated for approximately 10 years and were married for approximately 3 years. Angela Wood did not disclose any physical abuse by Deputy Harris, but noted he would "*emotionally and verbally threaten her which included name calling and threats...*" However, the report documented an incident "*where he threatened her with a gun and told her that he could do things to her and people wouldn't know what happened.*"

The report further documented that Angela Wood was afraid enough after Deputy Harris made the threat, that she called her father to tell him if she was found dead "it was not from her committing suicide." Wood's father eventually learned of the threat and was so concerned he spoke to Suwannee County Sheriff Tony Cameron, who then contacted Deputy Harris. According to Angela Wood, Deputy Harris then called her and confirmed he received a call from Sheriff Cameron. She noted after that, no further threats were made by Deputy Harris.

Detective Hartsell documented that in his interview with Angela Wood, she was "*reluctant to give information that might get H. Harris in trouble because she said he is a good father and they are finally able to get along.*"

Deputy Harris' SJSO personnel file contained an affidavit he completed on February 12, 2007, in which he confirms receiving a call from Sheriff Cameron. In his affidavit, Deputy Harris describes Sheriff Cameron calling to inform him about his ex-wife "threatening to file an injunction" against him because he threatened her earlier that day. Deputy Harris denied making any threats and noted that he felt the allegation was retaliation by his ex-wife because at the time he was trying to get custody of their 3 year old daughter.

Deputy Harris further noted that his FTO, Deputy William Petty, was present and witnessed the phone conversation. The affidavit was notarized 2 days later on February 15, 2007 by Sgt. Chad Anderson. A review of Deputy Harris' FTO file found no documentation of the incident on Deputy Harris' Daily Observation Report for February 12, 2007 or on any DOR's thereafter. According to SJSO Human Resources, William Petty resigned from the agency on May 23, 2008.

KNOWLEDGE OF INCIDENTS BY SUPERVISORS

It should be noted Detective Hartsell's report documented interviews he conducted with SJSO supervisory personnel, regarding their knowledge of the domestic issues between Deputy Harris and his wife Jessie. This included interviews with Harris' first line supervisor Sgt. Ricky Noble and Lieutenants Robert Stewart and Christopher Strickland.

According to Detective Hartsell's report, Sgt. Noble reported he first learned of the allegations of domestic violence between Deputy Harris and his wife back on September 27, 2008, approximately 2 months prior to the December 24th incident. Sgt. Noble reported that on this date, he received a call from Jessie Harris who disclosed to him how Deputy Harris "*has been using pressure points on her, grabbing her by the arms which has caused bruises, thrown her around the room in their home and intimidated her by getting in her face.*"

The report notes the following when Sgt. Noble asked Jessie Harris why she never revealed this before; "*she told him that she has been trying to work it out. She also wanted to let Sgt. Noble know that she was filing for divorce so she wanted him to be prepared in case H. Harris got out of control. J. Harris also told Sgt. Noble that she was afraid that SJSO would not help her because of H. Harris' affiliation.*"

Detective Hartsell's report further noted; "*Sgt. Noble stated he told his chain of command about the conversation which resulted in Lt. Chris Strickland getting involved. Sgt. Noble also wrote an affidavit about the conversation he had with J. Harris but was told by Lt. Strickland to hang on to it for the time being.*" This particular affidavit was not officially submitted by Sgt. Noble until after the incident on December 24, 2008.

In reviewing Sgt. Noble's affidavit of September 27, 2008, he reports the above listed allegations and notes further; "*She (Jessie Harris) also said that just the other day, Deputy Harris had blocked her with his body when she was trying to leave their home after retrieving some belongings. After assuring Jessie that SJSO would respond any time she called, she told me that she had talked to Lt. B. Stewart about their problems but did not mention anything physical happening to him. Jessie said that Lt. Stewart told her he would talk to Deputy Harris.*" Sgt. Noble went on to note; "*I told Jessie that I would be talking to Lt. Stewart tomorrow and tell the updated information and other members of my chain of command reference this situation.*"

Sgt. Noble concludes his affidavit by documenting that he passed the information on; "*When I came on duty today, 9-28-08, I spoke to my supervisor, Lt. T. Aman, and explained to him the situation. Lt. Aman told me that he was calling Captain M. Fagan reference the situation and would tell how the situation would be handled next.*"

Regarding involvement by Lt. Robert Stewart, Detective Hartsell's report noted that on September 27, 2008, the same date Sgt. Noble was contacted by Jessie Harris, she also made contact with Lt. Stewart. The report documents; "*J. Harris stated she called Lt. R. Stewart to tell him about what has been happening with her and H. Harris. She said she called him crying and told him about more women H. Harris was seeing and that he has been threatening her. She told him that she was scared to file for the divorce because of what H. Harris might do.*"

The report continued; "*She stated that Lt. Stewart told her that he would talk to H. Harris and they would handle it amongst the "team" referring to the SWAT team. Lt. Stewart stated that he did speak to J. Harris around that time but she never told him about any violence between her and H. Harris. He also stated that he never spoke to H. Harris about any domestic violence issues.*"

However, Detective Hartsell documented in his report that on September 28, 2008, Deputy Edenfield, after returning from a softball tournament in Live Oak with Deputy Harris, he "...went to the Mobil Station on CR210 and called Lt. R. Stewart. *He said the reason that he called Lt. Stewart was to let him know that he could no longer control H. Harris and he needed some assistance on what to do. He said he explained to Lt. Stewart about the things that H. Harris was doing and H. Harris was out of control.*"

In his sworn affidavit, Deputy Edenfield documented in detail his call to Lt. Stewart, a Deputy Sector Commander with the Sheriff's Office and member of the SWAT Team, noting; "*After returning back to the county on Sunday I contacted Lt. B. Stewart and told him of the incident which had occurred over the weekend. I told him that Bubba was getting out of control and that someone needed to get a hold of him and make him understand the ramifications of his actions if he doesn't calm down. I explained to Lt. Stewart that I was doing all that I could to keep him from losing his job and his mind but that I did not feel at the time that I was having much impact. Lt. Stewart advised me he would talk to Bubba.*"

Deputy Edenfield further noted that he also contacted Lt. Christopher Strickland, the Field Investigative Services Unit Commander for the Sheriff's Office, and apprised him of Deputy Harris' actions. Deputy Edenfield noted; "*I then made contact with Lt. Strickland who Jessie had told me she had talked to as well as talking to Sgt. Noble and I told Lt. Strickland about Bubba's erratic behavior and that as his friend I wanted to do all I could to help him and make sure that he did not lose it to the point of losing his job. I explained to Lt. Strickland that I was and will do all that I can to help save Bubba but that I thought he would possibly need to be talked to by someone with even more authority than me.*"

Edenfield's affidavit continued; "Lt. Strickland said he was looking in (to) the matter but that for the time being I should try to keep Bubba in line and continue to do what I had to to prevent him from any violent acts." Deputy Edenfield further documented in his affidavit how Jessie Harris told him she had "spoke with Lt. Strickland at length," and "Jessie told me that Lt. Stewart had left her a voicemail and that the issue would be handled 'on the team.'"

In all, the statements and information indicate the possibility at least four Sheriff's Office personnel above the first line supervisory level had prior knowledge of Deputy Harris' behavior, two months before the incident on December 24, 2008. Further Administrative Investigation is recommended regarding this issue.

On February 6, 2009 at approximately 1641 hours, I conducted an in person, digital recorded interview with Deputy Halford "Bubba" Harris in conference room "C" at the Sheriff's Office. Also present was his attorney, Mr. Ryan Peters. Harris acknowledged receiving notification of this inquiry, a copy of the Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights and reviewing information relating to the circumstances of this case, including the recorded interview of his wife Jessie Harris with Detective Hartsell. I read Harris the Garrity Warning from SJSO form 034, and he read and signed the form, indicating he understood the content. Harris stated he was familiar with the incident and was prepared to speak about it. The following is a summary of his interview.

Harris stated he and his wife Jessie Harris were married on July 15, 2006 and they have a two year old daughter named [REDACTED]. Harris said since August 2008, he and his wife have been separated, but their separation was not an official one done through the courts. Harris noted that when they separated, his wife had already filed for a divorce. As an agreement of the separation, Harris' wife remained living in their home on Silver Hawk Drive and Harris took up residence in a security apartment.

Since their separation, Harris said they have been trying to "work things out" and had been talking "back and forth." Harris noted that a week or so before the December 24th incident, he was with his wife when she received a text message. Harris said he didn't believe his wife's explanation as to who it was texting her and he eventually found a receipt for a sweater and a shirt that was given to her as a gift from a co-worker of hers, named Dr. Michael Rally.

Harris said he "put two and two together" (the phone call and the gifts) and wanted to know if she and Dr. Rally were having an affair, but his wife refused to discuss it with him. Harris said he called and left a message for Dr. Rally, and admitted he eventually destroyed the sweater and the shirt. Harris stated, "And I was...I was pretty upset about the whole thing, 'cause we...here we are talking about working things out and salvaging

our marriage, and then I find this receipt. I found the gifts and, I...I...I cut the gifts up and put them in the trash."

DECEMBER 23RD INCIDENT

According to Harris, after this incident he and his wife did not speak for 5 or 6 days. On December 23rd he went to his wife's residence and she was outside mulching the yard. Harris stated, "So I think I had talked...the morning of the 23rd I think I had talked to her on the phone and I went around there, and she was mulching the yard. So I helped her mulch a little bit. We went inside."

Harris said he was still upset about the phone call the week before and his wife's refusal to talk about it. Harris stated, "This was still fresh on my mind about this... and I still hadn't got an explanation for it. So I asked her about it. Well, she was still refusing to talk. We kinda started got...getting into an argument. I just walked out of the garage. I got in my car and left. And she walked back outside and started mulching the grass."

Asked if during the incident he ever grabbed his wife's arm or tried to hold her against her will as she alleged, Harris stated, "That didn't happen at all. Now, she did say she was going to the neighbor's house. She didn't never go over there and knock on anybody's door or...you know, she walked out of the house. I...I could see an argument was starting. I got in my car and left."

When asked why a week earlier he cut up the sweater that was given to his wife, Harris replied, "I was...I was upset about it...reacted out of emotion. Another man had bought my wife gifts. It kinda upset me." Harris confirmed calling Dr. Rally and leaving a message on his answering machine. Asked for the purpose of the message, Harris stated, "Well, I wasn't sure what their relationship was, and the purpose of the call was to let him know that, Hey, we're not divorced. We're trying to work things out. You need to stay away from her."

Asked if his wife ever indicated she was having an affair with Dr. Rally, Harris replied, "No, I never knew anything until...until I found the receipt, and then I started putting together the text message. But I'll tell you this, he's got a long distance phone number and she gave me his phone number right off the top of her head, so that indicated to me there's obviously been some phone calls back and forth." Although he had no proof of his wife having an affair with anyone, Harris acknowledged that he himself had "roughly" four affairs while married to his wife Jessie.

DECEMBER 24TH INCIDENT

According to Harris, the next day on December 24, 2008, he was on duty at the Sheriff's Office working the day shift. He was unsure if he was working Zone 9 or Zone 11 on that particular day. At approximately 1230 hours, Harris said he drove to their residence on [REDACTED]. Regarding his purpose for going there, Harris stated, "I wanted to know what our plans were, because we had had plans to go to her family function, but at the same time, if I was no longer invited to it I needed to know, and then I needed to know what we were gonna do about splitting the holiday with my child...our child." Harris further stated, "I was gonna be getting off at 4:45, like I normally do, and it...I think it started at 3, and I was gonna go around and meet them at some park, and her whole family dinner and stuff."

Harris said another reason he went to the residence was because his wife sent him a text message. Harris stated, "So I was working and, I called her, couldn't get her on the phone. I thought she had probably already left. She had sent me a text message to come let the dog out and to pick my boots up that I had ordered. And so I sent her a text message back. It said, Okay, that I will do that. I will let Tito out. Leave my boots on the front porch. So I went around there. My boots were on the front porch. I went inside. They're in the shower."

When he entered the bathroom, Harris said he saw Jessie's cell phone next to the shower. Harris stated, "Her phone was laying on the rug next to me. I've never been one to pick her phone up and look through it, because honestly, if there was something going on, I didn't wanna know about it. So I've never gone through her phone."

Harris further related, "Jessie gets out of the shower, and before she grabs a towel, she picks her phone up, which kind of threw up another red flag to me. So I was asking her about that. Now, I'm drying [REDACTED] off, holding her, and we're in a discussion about this phone. I never raised my voice. It never got heated. I just was telling her, look, if you've got something going on, you let me know so that I can move on. If you don't, if there's nothing on your phone, then just prove it to me. So that was kinda the realm of things that were happening. And she was walking around between the...the master closet and the bathroom, drying off, getting the clothes."

According to Harris, they eventually ended up in the living room of the residence, and Jessie still refused to show him her cell phone. Harris stated, "She was very adamant that she wasn't...she never put her cell phone down. She kept it in her hand the whole time. She was very adamant that I wasn't gonna see her phone, and she wasn't gonna show me her phone." Harris said at that point she asked him to leave the residence.

When he refused to leave, Harris said Jessie told him she was going to call Deputy Edenfield. Harris stated, "She picks the portable phone up. I'm by the base station, probably from here to the computer right there. And, she picks the phone up, dials the number. I walked over there to pick the phone up, 'cause if Trey did answer I was gonna say, look, there ain't no reason she's calling you. Nothing's going on,' or to even listen to what the conversation was going to be about. Well, when I picked the phone up, she hung the portable phone up and laid it down on the table."

Harris said Jessie, still without any clothes on, picked up [REDACTED] and told him she was leaving. Harris stated, "Now, she's got no clothes on. Okay? We have a big foyer, and I stood in the foyer and I said, 'Jessie, please do not go outside. My patrol car is parked out there. You have no clothes on. Please do not go outside. The neighbors are home.' We live in a neighborhood. I said, 'Please do not go outside.' So she goes through the kitchen, goes out the garage door, and gets in her car. And honestly, I don't remember if she had a towel on at this time or ...or not."

"But she got in her car and I walked over to the side of the car, telling her, 'Please do not leave. At least put some clothes on or a towel or something.' I...it seemed...seemed like she didn't have a towel on. I know that she was holding [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] had the towel on. The whole time she's got her cell phone and she's dialing something, and my thing to her was, 'What are you doing, clearing out messages so that you don't have to show me anything 'cause there's something on your phone?' And this is all talk between glass now. She backs out and she leaves."

Harris said he then received a call from Sgt. Noble. Harris stated, "Well, Ricky Noble calls me on the phone. He says, 'Hey, meet me at, IGP and 95, at the Shell station.' And I said...I said, 'Ricky, did Jessie call you?' He said, 'Yeah.' I said, 'No, you come around to the house, because I wanna talk to her, and if she wants to...if she feels more comfortable with you standing here, then I wanna find out what's going on.' So he says, 'Okay. I'm on my way.' Well, while Ricky is on the way, she's gone. I don't even see her anymore. I don't even know where she went. I would assume she stayed in the neighborhood, because she had no clothes on."

According to Harris, he then looked through his wife's work bag and located a card from Deputy Edenfield that was addressed to Jessie. Harris stated, "Well, now I find this card that's dated in October of '08 that is expressing his love for my wife. And, not...not once does it ever mention me or my family in the card. It just mentions Jessie and [REDACTED]. And, so, yeah, at that point I...I became very furious. And when Ricky pulled up, I had laid the card on the table. I walked outside. I tried to call Trey. I ...I don't know. I think I got a hold of him once, said something to him about the card. We hung up. I think that was it.

I...I don't even know. But when Ricky pulled up, I was standing in the garage and I was pretty ticked off about it."

Harris denied that his anger was from the earlier incident inside the residence with his wife. Harris stated, "It wasn't until I found that card and Jessie was already gone that I got ...I got ticked about it. I mean, understandably, I hope. So I think Ricky was under the impression that I was mad...I was that mad while Jessie was at the house, and that's not true. I...I didn't get mad until after she was gone."

After Sgt. Noble arrived, Harris said he was so upset that he just wanted to leave and got into his patrol car. Sgt. Noble then told him not to leave and that Lt. Tanner was on the way. Harris stated, "So, Lieutenant Tanner shows up and I...pretty much I'm in tears, and, about what I had found out. And, he stands there and he talks to me for a minute. And he says, 'Come on. Let's go for a ride.' So we got in his truck and...or his Tahoe and we came up here to Captain Messenger's office where, you know, I told him the story and gave him the card, and...and explained to him what had happened." According to Harris, he was then issued a no contact order for his wife Jessie and for Deputy Edenfield.

Regarding his wife's allegations about the December 24th incident, Harris denied that he was angry and tried to keep her from leaving the residence by blocking her with his body. Harris stated, "No, sir, that didn't occur, 'cause she was holding [REDACTED]. And no, the only time I...and I don't...I don't wanna say I moved in front of her to stop her. I was standing in the foyer when she claimed...when she come walking down the hallway saying she was gonna leave, and that's when I just said, 'Please, don't go outside because you have no clothes on.' So as far as blocking her, no, sir, I didn't do that."

Harris further denied that he ever tried to disable the phone when his wife tried to call 911 for help. Harris stated, "That's not correct 'cause she said she was gonna call Trey, and that's when she picked up the portable phone and dialed a number. And actually, I waited till the number...she got finished dialing the number, then I picked up the...the base phone, and she hung up. But now this whole time she had her cell phone in her hand..."

Asked if he tried to get in his wife's car as she was trying to leave the residence, Harris stated, "No, sir. I mean, I...I knew that door wasn't...I've been knowing that door was damaged, and the window was down and the baby's car seat sits on that side, so if I wanted to get in, I could've reached in through the handle on the inside and opened it up. So no. Like I said, all our conversation from that point was through glass. I actually remember leaning on the door frame and just looking at her as she backed out of the driveway. I looked, leaning on the door frame of the house."

Harris was asked if the incident at the residence was not as bad as his wife described, why then would she leave the residence in such a hurry, particularly without any clothes on, to which Harris replied, "Well, I think that if she was...if she felt like there was a...a desperate need to get out of the house, she...she was standing by the back door. She could've went out the back door and she didn't."

"I honestly think that there was something on her phone that she was worried that she was gonna have to show me, and I believe that the whole getting out of the house with no clothes on and calling my supervisor was a diversion, because really, if the incident that was taking place was that bad, when she backed out of the driveway, or when she got in the driveway with her cell phone or in her car with her cell phone, why didn't she call 911 at that time?"

Regarding Sgt. Noble's description of his demeanor as a "wildcat" when he arrived, Harris stated, "I don't think I'd describe myself as a wildcat." Harris further stated, "I mean, I was very upset. There...there was some anger in there, too. You know, I was...I was mad, sure. But you know, like I said, I was in tears, also. But it...my feelings weren't as much towards her as they were towards Trey, because I just felt betrayed. I mean, you're talking about being on a SWAT team with me and...and having a whole different mindset about brotherhood, and then to find this out was devastating."

STEROID USEAGE BY DEPUTY HARRIS

Detective Hartsell's report noted an allegation by Jessie Harris in which she revealed that for approximately ten years, Deputy Harris used illegal anabolic steroids and on occasion, said she actually injected him with the drug. Deputy Edenfield also reported he was told by Harris that he was using steroids and that his supplier had been arrested a few months ago.

Harris was asked if he had ever taken orally, injected or used in gels or creams, anabolic steroids, or any other performance enhancing drugs, including any type of steroid supplements while employed at the Sheriff's Office. Harris denied using illegal steroids while employed at the Sheriff's Office, but admitted he currently takes over the counter steroid supplements. Harris admitted he did use steroids without a prescription in 2003 or 2004, while he was working for the Valdosta Fire department prior to his employment with this agency.

Asked how he acquired the drug without a prescription, Harris initially stated he obtained the illegal drugs by purchasing them from a supplier who was a "friend" of his, then said he didn't purchase them at all, saying, "He gave them to me." Harris described the drug as a "testosterone booster" and said he only used it for approximately 2 months.

When asked if there was a reason why his wife would say he has was involved in illegal steroid use for the last ten years if he wasn't, Harris stated, "No. I mean, I...I...I basically think that she's got it in her mind that I have an anger issue. I think she's looking for something to blame it on and she states in her report that...or in her interview, she wants me to get help. So I think she assumes that maybe my anger's from the use. I...I don't know why she would say that."

AUGUST 2005 INCIDENT

Regarding Jessie Harris' allegation that before they were married and during an argument, Harris had threatened her by putting a knife to her throat and reportedly told her, "*I ought to fucking slit your throat,*" Harris was asked if the incident was true. Harris stated, "No, sir. And, just so you'll know, she bought me a pocket knife for Christmas this year, so I just thought that was kind of funny that that accusation was made and then she buys me one for Christmas." According to Harris, at the time of the incident, Jessie had received a text message from an old boyfriend.

Harris further advised, "I mean, talking about 2005, I don't know exactly what it (the text message) said, but it pertained to her having a boyfriend. And it made me feel like they had been in communicating with each other, so I got upset. But putting a knife to her throat, no sir." Asked why his wife would make the allegation, Harris replied, "I don't know." Asked what would motivate his wife to accuse him of an aggravated assault, Harris replied, "Don't know. Couldn't tell you."

MARCH 2006 INCIDENT

Regarding allegations that when his wife was pregnant, Harris became angry and began "*physically hitting her and throwing her around the bedroom for an hour and a half,*" hit on her breasts and threw her into the bed and a dresser located in the room, Harris acknowledged the argument, but denied the physical abuse. Harris stated, "Well, for one, I wouldn't violently put my hands on her, anyway. She was probably two months pregnant at the time with my child, so, no. Were we arguing? Sure..."

JANUARY 2007 INCIDENT

Regarding the allegation that after Harris was hired by SJSO in November 2006, Jessie Harris learned approximately 2 months later he was reportedly having an affair with Deputy Leigh Skelton, and from that point on Harris "*would hold her against her will and use pressure points to control her,*" Harris acknowledged that Deputy Skelton was, "one of the ones that there was some physical contact with." However, he denied ever holding his wife against her will or using pressure points to control her.

Asked how his wife knew about “pressure points,” Harris explained that he used to wrestle with his wife’s brother and he showed him how to use them, as well as other members of her family. Harris stated, “They were wanting to know and that’s how I was holding them down, and then we’d get up and they’d say, ‘Show me how to do that.’ So it was observed by everybody in their family. But I never used them on her.”

JULY 2007 INCIDENT

Harris denied his wife’s allegations that during this time when she tried to talk to him about his having affairs he would lose his temper, do things in order to restrain her movements, and slam doors when she was walking through them, catching her body in the door. Harris stated, “And the way our house is set up, I don’t see how I could even slam a door to...to hit her with it. No, I mean, when she would talk about...the affairs...the affairs is what would start the verbal arguments between us. But if she’s starting an argument with me, if I’m not wanting to talk about an affair, why would I hold her against her will to keep her around me to continue to talk about it? So, no, I did not hold her against her will.”

EASTER 2008 INCIDENT

In this incident, Harris’ wife alleged that during an argument, he accused her of having an affair and at one point, *“lost his temper and threw her to the ground.”* Asked if this occurred, Harris stated, “No. We were arguing in the yard, but she was holding my daughter beside my truck, so I didn’t throw her to the ground.” Harris further related that his mother witnessed the argument, stating, “I think she came outside when we were arguing.” Asked why his wife would accuse him of throwing her to the ground during this argument if it didn’t happen, Harris stated, “I don’t know why she’s accused me of any of this.”

APRIL 2008 INCIDENT

Regarding the allegations that his wife received bruises from his physical abuse and the bruises were observed by her mother and Deputy Edenfield, Harris stated, “I don’t know where she got the bruises. Like I told Detective Hartsell, she’s very physical when she’s riding her horses, so it wasn’t uncommon for her to be bruised on the legs and arms and sore hands.”

Harris said he never saw any bruises on his wife and further stated, “I mean, she was very physical riding horses and feeding up...and loading up feed bags and hay...” Asked if riding horses and loading up feed bags and hay would cause bruising to her arms between

the wrist and elbow as the criminal report documented, Harris stated, “I...I don’t know if it would or not.”

When asked about his relationship with Jessie’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cordell, Harris stated, “I thought we had a great relationship. We always got along good. I always got along with Jessie’s parents good up until we separated, and then, you know, we just kinda...I kept my distance from them...” Harris stated that now, “I don’t...I don’t think they like me now. I think they have a problem with me now because of what Jessie and I have been through.”

Regarding the statement of Shelia Cordell, in which she specifically states she observed the bruising to Jessie’s arms and that her husband spoke to him about hurting their daughter, Harris was asked why Jessie’s mother would say these things. Harris stated, “I mean, obviously they wanna find me doing something wrong. I mean, obviously I hurt their daughter through the affairs that I’ve had and they’re...they’re ticked off at me.” Harris further denied Mr. Cordell ever spoke to him about Jessie’s bruises, stating, “Not true. I’m...he never spoke to me about anything violent.”

SEPTEMBER 2008 INCIDENT

Harris was asked about Deputy Edenfield’s statements in which he describes Harris being angry during an argument with Jessie, and Edenfield was “*unable to keep him under control*,” and further allegations Harris tried to constantly “*block her with his body*” during the argument. Harris stated, “Well, no, sir, that didn’t occur. But I don’t wanna make light of the fact that this is coming from an individual that obviously has some sort of affection for my wife.”

Harris further stated that if the allegations were true, Edenfield had “an obligation as a deputy that if he suspects that something like this is taking place, he should be reporting it.” Harris continued, “So now it looks like, to me, that he’s reporting this to get the monkey off of his back and put onto me, and obviously he’s got some sort of feelings for her. So do I think that anything he has to say has got any leverage? Not in my personal opinion, I don’t. I don’t...I don’t see where he would say anything good about me.”

SEPTEMBER 26, 2008 INCIDENT

Regarding an argument on this date in which Harris was alleged to have made the threat to his wife, “*Let me make something clear to you. If you call and they take my job, I’m going to give them a reason to put me in jail.*” Harris stated, “I remember the argument. I do not recall saying those words. Her whole family, I believe, was there.” Asked if saying he “didn’t recall” saying those words meant he didn’t remember saying it, or did it

mean it never happened at all, Harris replied, "I don't...I don't believe I would say anything like that."

Asked what the argument was about, Harris stated, "She had found some phone numbers on my phone. She had asked to see my phone and I gave it to her, and she had found some numbers on my phone and questioned me about it, and got upset and started an argument."

Regarding Deputy Edenfield's statement that after convincing Harris to leave, Harris drove down Russell Sampson Road, driving approximately 90-100 mph and threatened not to stop and was "going to hit the first thing" he saw, Harris stated, "I don't believe I was doing 90 or 100 miles an hour, and I don't believe that I would run a stop sign to hurt anybody else. And again, coming from a statement from Trey Edenfield, and I...I drove a Ford F-250, four-wheel drive. I don't know that it would do 90 miles an hour. And, so the ...may...was I exceeding the speed limit? Well, it's 25 or 35 down that road, so probably so. Was I doing 90 or 100? No sir."

Asked if he ever said during the incident that he "didn't care what happened" to him, Harris replied, "I...I don't remember. I mean, I was upset. I don't believe that I would...for one, I'm not gonna do anything intentionally to hurt myself. I certainly don't feel that I would do anything to harm anybody else in...even in the lowest state of mind."

When asked about Deputy Edenfield's allegations he had to physically grab Harris by the neck and "squeeze" to make him slow down, Harris stated, "I don't believe he did. I...I don't believe he grabbed me by the neck." Asked if that meant Edenfield could have and he didn't remember, Harris stated, "Sure he could have. He was sitting right next to me." Asked why Edenfield would have grabbed him by the neck, Harris replied, "I don't know."

OCTOBER 2008 INCIDENT

Regarding Harris' wife's allegation that during this incident, she was afraid because she thought Harris might "*try to force her to have sex,*" and her statement to Detective Hartsell that, "*withholding sex from Bubba is not an option,*" Harris denied this occurred. Harris stated, "No, that's not true. And I'll tell you something personal about my wife. My wife has never not...wanted to go without sex. Honestly, I mean, for lack of a better word, she's a nympho and somewhere in her statement, in her interview, she states that she has never kept anything physical from me. So, no, that's not true. I've never been sexually forceful, only her. I've never had to be."

Harris acknowledged he had been drinking and was upstairs at the residence listening to music, but denied he was “dancing around” or being violent. Harris further denied there were any issues or problems during this particular incident that would have caused his wife to flee the residence with their daughter and require them to spend the night at Amanda Edenfield’s residence. Harris also denied making the statement to Deputy Edenfield the next day that he didn’t want to see his wife with another man and if he saw another car parked in her driveway, “*he would go to the house and only [REDACTED] would leave alive.*”

Harris stated, “No, sir, I didn’t make that statement. And again, I’m gonna keep referring to this, this is the month of October. The card that he wrote to my wife, and that statement there was made by Trey. The card that he wrote to my wife was dated in October of 2008, so you know, that in itself should say something about his statements.”

NOVEMBER 15, 2008 INCIDENT

In this incident, Deputy Edenfield reported he met with Jessie Harris in the parking lot of the CVS store at S.R.16 and U.S.1 to give her daughter a birthday present from his family. While talking in the parking lot with Jessie, Edenfield reported how Deputy Harris drove by in his patrol car, in uniform and began yelling at them. He then pulled into the parking lot and began to accuse Edenfield and his wife of having an affair. According to the report, “*H. Harris got so angry that he told her that he was going to put a fucking bullet in her head.*”

In response to the allegation, Harris said he was on duty at the time working in Zone 9. According to Harris, he told Sgt. Noble he had to go to the bank, explaining why he was in the area of the CVS store. Harris acknowledged he saw Edenfield and his wife in the parking lot of the store, but denied he ever made the threat to Edenfield that he was going to “put a bullet” in his wife’s head. Harris questioned why Edenfield as a deputy, didn’t take any action if he allegedly made the threat, which if true, would have been an aggravated assault. Harris also questioned why Edenfield didn’t document the threat in his affidavit.

Regarding this incident, Harris further stated, “I had called and left him (Edenfield) a message on his phone not to...not to meet up with Jessie, and I had a reason for that, because I was going to work. I didn’t want them two meeting up alone, ‘cause I had indication that something was going on. And all of a sudden, they’d meet up with each other. It happens to be outside of my zone, which I thought was awful convenient.” “And, no...neither one of them called me and said...you know, I’d have thought just out of respect somebody would have said, Hey, man, I’m...’m gonna go up here and meet Jessie and [REDACTED] her present off, or, hey, Bubba, I’m leaving the training center. Let me

bring you the present and you can give it to [REDACTED]. And then I...all of a sudden, bam, here they pop up in the parking lot."

Regarding Deputy Harris being "agitated" one day and telling Deputy Edenfield he would "*barricade himself in his house and no one would be able to make him leave*," Harris admitted he made the comment, but said he was not serious. Harris explained how he and Edenfield were at his house and he (Harris) was hooking up some new comm gear to his SWAT vest.

Harris further related, "He came in, said, 'What are you doing?' I said...I...I don't even know what I said. I didn't even say it in a serious way. I said, well, if something happens I'll just barricade myself in the house. I got all my stuff with me in case I need to. So it was said in a joking manner. It wasn't even said seriously. And then we went on and ...and talked about the way the comm gear hooked up, or something to do with the equipment after that."

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS WITH DEPUTY EDENFIELD

Harris was asked about the living arrangements with Deputy Edenfield and why he was staying with Harris and his wife at their residence. According to Harris, a few months before September 2007, Edenfield began staying with them on and off. Harris said this included Edenfield having a bedroom of his own and a key to the house. Harris stated, "I mean, for years Trey has been staying at his momma's house. You know? He's...it wasn't that, you know...it's not like they...anybody had kicked him out. He just needed a place to stay. I thought I was helping him out by saying, 'Look, hey, why don't you just come stay with us?'"

"Cause he was complaining about how early he had to get up. He would...he would tell me about how on night shift, when he was going home, about how he felt like he was falling asleep. So I was like, man, I don't want nothing happening to him. Why don't you just stay at our house? So kinda I did it thinking I was...I'm being a friend to him."

Harris also described some incidents taking place while Edenfield was staying with them he didn't like. Harris stated, "Because it would kinda make me uncomfortable that he would walk around the house with just his boxers on, and I...and, you know, he's...he'd...he's done some disrespectful stuff during that time. I mean, there was one time he's standing in the door of my bedroom and her and I were in the bed fixing to go to sleep, and he's standing there and he's got things hanging out of his boxers."

"Or there was another time whether he just got out of the shower, and he was standing...there's a...a door that leads into a...a short hallway where his bedroom was on the right, my daughter's bedroom was on the left, and the bathroom's right there. Well, there was a

short door right there, also, and he stood in front of the door with a towel there and he was, of course, naked. He just got on the other side. And he's like, 'Jessie, you wanna see what's behind curtain number three?' I mean, he was an idiot, and I thought just 'cause he was retarded is why he would do something like that..."

Asked if he ever talked to Edenfield about his inappropriate behavior or told him he could no longer stay there, Harris stated, "I...I don't know. If I did, I didn't...you know, it was very brief. I said, look, don't do that anymore. I may not have...go into great detail about it." According to Harris, he always had "a gut feeling" and "thought something was going on" between his wife and Edenfield, but they both denied it and he never had any proof of an affair between the two.

JAGUARS GAME INCIDENT

Harris was asked about Jessie Harris' description of an incident which occurred on or about December 19, 2008, in which Deputy Harris was off duty at a Jaguar's game in Jacksonville and allegedly became involved in a physical altercation with an unknown named subject, and reportedly had to be "pulled off" the subject by another SJSO employee. According to Harris, he was present at the game on December 19, 2008, but denied any physical altercation ever took place.

Harris explained that he rode to the game with fellow SJSO employees David Zufelt, George Gazdick and Christine Lee, but only he and Zufelt sat together at the game. Regarding the incident, Harris stated, "I...I don't even know what she's talking about. I...I didn't hit anybody. I don't know where she got that from. I think it's funny that she puts in there that a...the guy worked at Trey's father's company. There's 66,000 people at this game and I happen, supposedly...which no violence occurred, I didn't strike anybody. But how coincidental would it be that I picked out one guy that happened to work at Trey's daddy's office? Now, how would she even know that he worked at Trey's daddy's office?"

Asked if there was any altercation of any kind, either verbally or physically, Harris stated, "No sir." He then stated, "I had a swollen hand and I...I...you know, I've got a bad hand, anyway. So if I bang it on the least little thing, it swells up. And I don't...I had to go get an X-ray, and I don't know if, they assumed I hit somebody, but I did not hit anybody."

Harris indicated it was his right hand that was swollen and when asked when the injury occurred, Harris stated, "On or about December 19th." Asked how he injured his hand, Harris stated, "I hit it on a door." Asked to elaborate, Harris explained how he was off duty when he closed a car door on his right hand. Harris stated, "Shut it on it. And that

knuckle's bad, anyway." Harris advised that an X-Ray determined his hand was not broken and only bruised.

PRIOR INCIDENT IN 2006 WITH HARRIS' EX-WIFE

In his response to his ex-wife Angela Wood's allegations that Harris would "*emotionally and verbally threaten her which included name calling and threats...,*" and on one occasion "*threatened her with a gun and told her that he could do things to her and people wouldn't know what happened,*" Harris denied making any threats to his ex-wife.

Harris stated, "And the reason that that statement was made on her behalf was 'cause we were going through a custody issue with our child...And that's why. She claimed that because we were fixing to go to court, and the sheriff (Cameron) got involved and called me up and that...you know, I...I...basically, I had a witness. Will Petty was sitting with me during the whole conversation that I had with her on the telephone."

Asked if anything ever came out of the custody issue, Harris stated, "No. We're great friends, and I...I found it hard to believe she would say something like that." Asked how he and his ex-wife Angela get along now, Harris stated, "Oh, we get along great. We got along great for years." Harris was then asked that if everything was okay now, why would Angela have recently said he had threatened her with a gun back in 2006, to which Harris replied, "I have no idea."

KNOWLEDGE OF INCIDENTS BY SUPERVISORS

Regarding his relationships with SJSO supervisors, Harris said he considered Sgt. Noble a friend and noted that he was in Noble's wedding. Asked if he socialized off duty with Sgt. Noble, Harris stated, "Um, no, not really. I mean, I couldn't tell you when the last time I've been to his house, when he's been to my house, you know. But, you know, there was a...I guess, a time frame there where I kinda stuck with Ricky when he was going through some hard times."

When asked if Sgt. Noble ever told him that Jessie had contacted him and expressed concerns about him being physical with her or anything like that, Harris stated, "I mean, we'd always talked about my marital problems and...and his marital problems, because we had that friend basis. But he never came to me as my supervisor and said, 'Look, Jessie's saying you're hitting her'.... Harris further stated, "I mean, he was concerned about our marriage. He kept saying, 'Man, we thought y'all were the perfect couple. We were praying for y'all. We want y'all to stay together. I hope y'all work things out.'"

Asked specifically if Sgt. Noble ever discussed with him that Jessie had accused him of using pressure points, grabbing her arm causing marks, thrown her around a room and intimidated her by getting in her face, as listed in Sgt. Noble's affidavit of September 27, 2008, Harris stated, "No, I...I don't remember him coming to talk. I think I would remember that if it happened, but I had no idea that...that any...Lieutenant Aman or Captain Fagan, anybody was told."

Harris was also asked about his off duty relationships with SJSO supervisor's above the level of first line supervisor. Regarding his relationship with Lt. Robert Stewart, Harris said Stewart was "a good friend" of his and was a fellow team member on SWAT. Asked how often he socialized with Lt. Stewart off duty, Harris stated, "We used to socialize pretty much every day until Jessie and I started having our problems."

When asked how he and Lt. Stewart spent their time together, Harris stated, "Hunt together, play ball together. I've been to his house. He's...he...he was over at our house continuously. I mean, his wife worked nights. We knew he was by himself. He'd come over and eat with us all the time, play with our kid." Harris said Lt. Stewart was at his house "two or three times a week, probably" and that his daughter [REDACTED] referred to Lt. Stewart as "Papa Stew." Harris further advised that he and Lt. Stewart recently went on a hunting trip together in North Carolina.

According to Harris, Lt. Stewart also had occasion to be his supervisor. Harris stated, "But he was very...Stew's a different individual. He's...he's good at separating work from pleasure, per se. He was different towards me as a lieutenant than he was when we were off work."

Asked if Lt. Stewart ever told him about the concerns Jessie expressed to him about his behavior, Harris stated, "He...he...we talked outside of Cracker's one day, where he...he just said, 'Look, I hate to act like your dad because I'm not, but, I want you to know I don't condone your'...how did he put it...it had to do with I...I was...Jessie and I were separated, and I was kinda seeing another girl. And that's what he was talking to me about. And it was very brief and short, and he said that...and...and basically, he gave me this advice. 'If you don't wanna be with her and you wanna do your own thing, she deserves to know the truth.'"

Harris was asked if Lt. Stewart ever told him that Jessie had shared her concerns with him about the domestic violence allegations, to which Harris replied, "I don't remember him saying anything like that to me." Harris further stated, "I...I don't...I don't believe we had a conversation about that. Um, yeah, I think he states in...in his interview that he never had any indication of any physical violence."

When reminded that he was being asked what was said to him, and not what was written in the report, Harris replied, "Right. I understand that. But I think that if...if he had indication of it, he would've talked to me about it...he's that type of guy, that if it...it had been brought to his attention, he would have definitely pulled me to the side."

Asked if Lt. Stewart spoke to him because Jessie had expressed concerns about his affairs to Lt. Stewart, Harris replied, "Yes. I...I...I don't even know if she expressed...I don't even know if she said anything to him. I don't know if he just knew about it, or if she called him. He didn't come to me and say, 'Look, Jessie's called me and said this.' Whether he knew it and took it upon himself to say, you know, 'Here's the deal.' For one, he said, 'You're hanging out with the wrong crowd. You need to be hanging out with me and Canova and Squirrel 'cause we're married, and stop hanging out with the single guys. And if you're gonna do this, she needs to know the truth.' So he never gave me an indication that she had called and said anything to him."

Regarding his relationship with Lt. Christopher Strickland, Harris said he also considered him a friend and explained, "I met Chris through Jessie. Um, basically, anything outside this office has been at the Saddle Club, where his wife rides horses and, I may have seen him up there twice. Well, for...I mean, you know, do I run into him at Cracker's when we go in there and eat? Sure. Shake hands. 'Hey, Bubba, what's going on,' this, that, and the other. We don't hunt together. We don't fish together. We don't play ball together." Comparing his relationship with Lt. Stewart, Harris stated, "I don't think Chris and I would be as close as me and Lieutenant Stewart, friend-wise, just because me and Stew do more things together."

Harris said Lt. Strickland never told him about any concerns of domestic violence Jessie had relayed to him, and said that he himself never spoke to Lt. Strickland about his many affairs. Harris stated, "No, because I'm a very private person. You know, I talk to my counselor about issues, but I don't...I don't like to spread my business, especially through the Sheriff's Office, because it spreads like wildfire." Harris further advised, "I think the only thing that I ever got out of Chris was, 'Hey, my door's always open if you need somebody to talk to.'"

Regarding any supervisors discussing Jessie's allegations of domestic violence, Harris stated, "Lieutenant Stewart and Sergeant Noble are both family friends, anyway. So, yeah, would they talk about our marital problems? Stew less than anybody, 'cause he just don't get involved in something like that. Ricky would talk to me, like I said, concern for us divorcing, not wanting us to divorce. But did they ever come to me and say anything about any physical violence? No sir."

CLOSING STATEMENTS BY HARRIS

In closing statements of the interview, Harris dismissed that his wife was currently in fear of him and noted that she has been attempting to work things out. Harris stated, "Just to kinda, you know, bring you up to speed, obviously she's not in...in fear of her safety now. I mean, here's a...a report and some allegations that were made during the time that she was mad at me, for one, and the card surfaced from Trey."

"This situation, she doesn't want anybody to think that the failure of our marriage is coming from the fact that her and Trey have had an affair. Now that she's cooled off and five or six weeks, however long it's been, has gone by, through a friend of ours, she's wanting to work things out. She's already checked herself in to Kathleen Abbott, talking to Kathleen about it."

"She's come to Captain Messenger...I understand she's come to Captain Messenger about dropping the no contact order. So obviously she's not too concerned about her safety or, you know, me being some kind of abuser if she's wanting to...to work things out. Actually, I had to see her last week in court for a divorce hearing. And she blatantly told me, and my attorney was sitting there, she doesn't want to get divorced, so...you know, and also at the end of her interview, they asked her about was she in fear for her safety and she didn't answer the question."

Asked how he knew Captain Messenger was contacted by Jessie to request the no contact order be dropped, Harris stated, "I think she called him, and that's through, a mutual friend we have." Harris identified the mutual friend of he and his wife as Chrissy Jenkins. According to Harris, Jenkins was living with him for awhile. Harris further stated, "She's like a sister to me, and her and Jessie befriended each other a year ago, probably."

Harris said it was through his roommate Chrissy that he and his wife Jessie have been communicating by "having to talk back and forth through Chrissy about our child." Harris said he also spoke with Jessie in court on January 28th and Jessie told him the same thing. Asked if Jessie told her attorney and his own lawyer about her wanting to work things out, Harris replied, "I don't know if she told them or not." Asked if they were still proceeding with their divorce, Harris stated, "Well, for the time being it is. Nobody's stopped it yet."

Harris also wanted to note that he felt the criminal and internal investigation were the result of Deputy Edenfield and his wife having a relationship. Harris stated, "The whole purpose in this is...we're sitting in here today because obviously her and Trey had some kind of affair going on. I mean, six-page affidavit written against me. I never did anything to that boy for him to...to turn against me other than the fact that he wants to

have some sort of relationship with my wife and has had some sort of relationship with my wife.” Harris said he felt the card he found from Edenfield addressed to his wife showed that Edenfield had “some ill intent.”

Regarding the statements of his wife Jessie, Mrs. Cordell, his ex-wife Angela Wood, Deputy Edenfield and Sgt. Noble, Harris was asked what the motive would be for all of these people to illustrate an issue of domestic violence, anger and rage with him, if in fact there was no problem as he stated. Harris replied that it was only his wife, ex-wife and Edenfield who were saying there was a problem, and stated, “If you look at the people that are claiming this stuff, it’s people that are not gonna have anything good to say about me, anyway.”

Harris was also asked to consider the fact that his wife did not want to pursue criminal charges against him, and that she and his ex-wife were at times both reluctant to provide information that would “get him in trouble” or make him lose his job. Based on these facts, Harris was asked why then would his wife be making the allegations if she didn’t want him to get in trouble. Harris replied, “I think that she’s saying these things because she wants me to get into some counseling for an anger issue. I think she believes that I have an anger issue, and she wants me to get into counseling for it.”

Asked if for that reason his wife would go to such an extreme as to make such allegations and possibly jeopardize his job, Harris stated, “Yeah, I absolutely do, because of that card. Had that card not surfaced, we wouldn’t be sitting here. I’m telling you, that’s the reason right there. She doesn’t want it to look like our marriage has failed on account of her actions. She wants...she...she has said it, she wanted to expose me to the Sheriff’s Office, and the infidelities that I have had. I mean, obviously if she had a serious issue with all these allegations, she would’ve proceeded with charges. She had the option and she didn’t wanna do it.”

Prior to concluding the interview, Harris was asked if he was offered the opportunity, would he submit to an optional polygraph examination if it was offered by the Sheriff’s Office. Harris stated, “No. I think I told the truth in here, and I won’t.”

Following the interview, Deputy Harris was served with a written order from Sheriff David Shoar to immediately submit to a drug screen test, based on the allegations of his illegal drug use. Sgt. Susan Tree of SJSO Human Resources coordinated the test.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following interviews were conducted based on information obtained from the interview of Deputy Halford Harris II.

On February 9, 2009 at approximately 1052 hours, I conducted an in person, digital recorded interview with Deputy David Zufelt in conference room “C” at the Sheriff’s Office. Also present was IA Detective Timothy Burres. Zufelt stated he understood he was not the principal or focus of this investigation and was present in the capacity of a witness. I read Zufelt the Garrity Warning from SJSO form 034, and he read and signed the form acknowledging he understood the content. The following is a summary of the interview.

Zufelt stated he and Deputy Harris are “work acquaintances” and are both members of the SWAT Team. On or about December 19, 2008, he and Deputy Harris went to a Jaguar’s evening football game in Jacksonville. Zufelt said he and Harris drove to the game with Deputy Steve Gazdick and Sgt. Christine Lee, but they did not sit with them at the game because they had seats in another area of the stands. Zufelt said Harris was talking on his cell phone while they were driving to Jacksonville, telling the person on the other end that his wife was cheating on him.

According to Zufelt, he was sitting next to Harris at the game when at one point Harris “got into a verbal altercation in the stands.” Zufelt described it as “a yelling match” between Harris and an unknown male subject sitting somewhere behind them in the stands, but said he didn’t remember what the yelling was about or how it started. Zufelt stated, “He, for some reason, he turned around and got in an argument with the people behind us, I don’t remember what the whole thing was of, I don’t know if they were directly behind us or up a couple rows or what. I just told him, turn around and watch the game.” Zufelt said Harris had been drinking, but he did not describe him as intoxicated.

Asked if during the verbal altercation he ever had to physically restrain Harris at any time, turn him around or redirect him, Zufelt stated, “I don’t believe so...no.” Zufelt said the incident was only verbal and never became physical. Zufelt further stated that law enforcement was not involved in the disturbance, however he thought a security guard came up in the stands and spoke with Harris “and the other group too.”

Asked if Harris received any injuries at the game, Zufelt said he noticed Harris’ right hand was injured, but stated, “That was injured prior to us going out that night, he said, I think he said he hit a wall or steel door or something.” Zufelt further stated, “He said he hit something because he was upset.” Zufelt said he observed bruising on Harris’

knuckles and on the top part of his hand, and he told Harris that he thought his hand was broken and he should see a doctor.

Regarding the allegation that Harris was involved in a physical altercation at the game and Zufelt had to pull him off the subject, Zufelt stated, "Wow, I don't remember that at all. We didn't...we didn't even go home together, he actually went home with somebody else." Zufelt said after the game, they waited for Harris in the parking lot for approximately an hour when they learned he went home with someone else. Zufelt further advised Harris was away from him for a time after the game and that something could have happened then. Asked if Harris ever told him at any time later he had been involved in an altercation at the game, Zufelt stated, "I don't remember him ever saying anything."

Zufelt stated he knew Harris and his wife have been having marital problems off and on since last summer. Zufelt stated, "He was upset that he felt like she was cheating on him, and I said, well, you're doing the same thing, so...you know, you can't be mad at someone that's doing the same thing you are."

On February 9, 2009 at approximately 1236 hours, I conducted a second in person, digital recorded interview with Deputy David Zufelt in the IA office in CID. Also present was IA Detective Timothy Burres. Zufelt stated he understood he was not the principal or focus of this investigation and was present in the capacity of a witness. I read Zufelt the Garrity Warning from SJSO form 034, and he read and signed the form acknowledging he understood the content. The following is a summary of the interview.

Deputy Zufelt stated after concluding his earlier interview, he remembered some further information regarding the off duty incident at the Jaguar's game involving Deputy Harris on or about December 19, 2008. Zufelt stated he remembered a second incident while he and Harris were walking out of the stadium after the game, when Harris became involved in another verbal altercation with an unknown subject.

Zufelt stated, "The only other incident I recall occurring is a, he got in another verbal argument with somebody, as they walking out the east side of the stadium, they began getting in an argument with each other, yelled at each other, and then before anything got any...any physical thing occurred, I started pushing Bubba out toward the parking lot. At that time he met up with some girl and they left and went their own way." Zufelt said he did not know who or what caused the second verbal altercation with Harris, only that he and the subject "exchanged words." Zufelt stated he pushed Harris out into the parking lot before anything could become physical and said he had no knowledge of law enforcement becoming involved in the second incident.

On February 9, 2009 at approximately 1630 hours, I conducted a digital recorded telephone interview with Sgt. Christine Lee. At the time of the interview, Lee was attending a school out of county. Lee stated she understood she was not the principal or focus of this investigation and was being interviewed in the capacity of a witness. I read Lee the Garrity Warning from SJSO form 034, and she acknowledged she understood the content. The following is a summary of the interview.

Lee stated she along with Deputies Gazdick, Zufelt and Harris rode together to a Jaguar's football game on December 19, 2008. Lee said she and Gazdick sat in a different location at the game, away from Zufelt and Harris. She further advised she was not aware of any incidents or problems occurring with Harris at the game until she was notified today by Internal Affairs of the allegations.

According to Lee, while driving to the game she remembered Harris was talking on his cell phone. Lee, stated, "You could tell it was some kind of argument in his conversation. I heard him say something about mom several times which led me to believe he was talking to his mother. I wasn't happy about being in this situation to begin with, so Deputy Gazdick and I just basically continued our own conversation in the front seat." Lee said she got the impression things were not well between Harris and his wife by the way he and Zufelt were talking in the back seat.

Lee stated once they arrived at the game, she and Gazdick did not see Zufelt or Harris again until after the game when they were both waiting for them in the parking lot. She said Zufelt met with them in the parking lot first and Harris showed up later, but Harris did not ride back with them. Lee stated she did not observe any problems or issues with Harris at the game, and said she did not remember Zufelt ever telling her that Harris had been involved in any type of altercation during or after the game.

Regarding the injury to Harris' hand, Lee said she remembered observing the injury to his hand, and believes she saw it while driving to the game, or in the daylight when Harris was initially picked up to go to the game. Lee stated, "I remember asking him or telling him you probably need to get some ice on that, what did you do? I think he might have said he slammed it in his truck's door, but I don't...I really wasn't having much conversation with him. I said it looks pretty bad, you need to put some ice on it. It was pretty swollen."

On February 10, 2008, I was advised by Victim Advocate Anna Gibson that she had received a call from Deputy Harris' wife Jessie Harris. Gibson related how Jessie was very upset because she learned her husband had received a recording copy of her interview with Detective Hartsell and had listened to the statements she made. Gibson related that Jessie told her this information was given to her by a girl named "Chrissy"

who was Deputy Harris' roommate. Gibson provided me with Jessie's phone number, and I advised Gibson I would call Jessie and explain the administrative investigation process to her. I then called Jessie and left a message requesting she call me.

At approximately 1034 hours, I received a call back from Jessie Harris. She was crying and said she was upset because she learned her husband had in his possession, a copy of her recorded interview with Detective Hartsell and learned Deputy Harris had listened to what she said. I asked Jessie who told her that Deputy Harris had a copy of the interview and had listened to it. Jessie said a girl named "Chrissy" who had been a roommate of Deputy Harris and was a mutual friend, called her and told her the information. Jessie did not want to give me Chrissy's last name, and said she did not want to get her husband "in any more trouble."

Jessie said she was told by Chrissy how Deputy Harris had "heard the verbal" portion of her interview with Detective Hartsell. Asked what specifics of the investigation had been relayed to her by Chrissy, Jessie said Chrissy told her that Deputy Harris had "heard her talk." Jessie further relayed how Chrissy told her Deputy Harris also "had a print out" of the statements involving the case. Jessie said as far as she knows, Chrissy did not read the report. I explained to Jessie how Internal Affairs investigations work and that her husband was entitled under Florida law to hear any allegations made against him. Jessie thanked me for explaining the process to her.

Jessie denied having any contact with Deputy Harris and said the information about the case was relayed to her by Chrissy. Jessie was reluctant to provide any more details and told me several times during the conversation that she did not want her husband to lose his job and she blamed herself for the situation. Jessie also told me the allegations she made against her husband were true and that she would "never lie" or "embellish the truth." Jessie confirmed that her plans to divorce Deputy Harris had not changed, and said the divorce should be officially finalized on March 11, 2009. At my request, Jessie agreed to give my name and number to Chrissy, and asking her to call me.

The following interview was conducted after receiving information from Victim Advocate Anna Gibson.

On February 13, 2009 at approximately 1035 hours, I conducted an in person, digital recorded interview with Victim Advocate Anna Gibson in the IA office in CID. Gibson stated she understood she was not the principal or focus of this investigation and was present in the capacity of a witness. I read Gibson the Garrity Warning from SJSO form 034, and she read and signed the form acknowledging she understood the content. The following is a summary of the interview.

Gibson stated she received a voice mail from Jessie Harris on February 9th and called her back later that afternoon. Gibson said Jessie was upset and was initially concerned that her husband Deputy Harris heard her statements in full, regarding her interview with Detective Hartsell. Gibson further noted that Jessie was also afraid of "some form of retribution" if her husband ended up getting in trouble. Gibson stated, "She was embarrassed and or fearful that there may be retribution for that honesty she came forth with." Among other things, Gibson said Jessie told her she was embarrassed about Deputy Harris hearing her talk about the [REDACTED]'s she alleged he gave her and other details of the interview.

Asked how Jessie received the information about Deputy Harris listening to the recording of her interview, Gibson stated that Jessie told her a woman named "Chrissy" or "Christy" called her and told her that Harris had listened to the entire taped interview. Jessie identified the woman who told her this as someone who lived with or had lived with Deputy Harris. Gibson said Jessie did not tell her what prompted the phone call from the woman. According to Gibson, during her conversation Jessie relayed "almost remorse" and appeared to be in fear of retribution from Deputy Harris. Gibson stated, "She did convey once again the knife to her throat incident, and I basically told her that is violence that you should not accept ever, and that she should definitely notify law enforcement and that she was doing the right thing."

Gibson further stated, "I kind of tried to instill confidence and some esteem in her for making the phone call, because she was regretful that she did start the proceedings from the beginning." Gibson stated Jessie also told her she was still divorcing Deputy Harris and the divorce would be finalized in March. Asked if Jessie ever recanted any of her earlier statements or allegations against Deputy Harris, Gibson replied, "No, not at all."

During the course of this investigation, information was obtained documenting prior incidents involving Halford Harris II. The following is a summary of the incidents:

LIVE OAK POLICE REPORT 99-0302434

On 03/10/99, Officer Joel Brown completed a Criminal Mischief report in which he documented damage done to a vehicle. The report listed the suspect in the incident as "Halford Harris II." According to the report, Jeffery Shaillou, the victim, reported that he parked his vehicle in the Live Oak Plaza and returned twenty minutes later to find "*his tail lights, and passenger side head light had been broken out and his drivers side mirror had been ripped off and placed on the hood.*"

A portion of the report further noted: "*Shaillou said that as he was driving through the parking lot leaving, he noticed that Harris was standing talking with a group of guys.*

Shaillou said as he drove by, Harris began to scream at him and threaten him. He said that Harris also started to run at his truck yelling, "I'm going to kick your ass!" Shaillou then exited the parking lot and flagged me down. Shaillou told me that this was an on going problem with Harris and he was afraid that it was going to get worse.

After speaking with Shaillou I went to the plaza and spoke with Harris. Harris told me that he and Shaillou did have words as Shaillou drove through the parking lot but he said Shaillou began screaming profanities at him first. Harris told me that he did not have any knowledge of the damage done to Shaillou's truck." No charges appeared to have been filed in the case. A copy of the report is included with this investigation.

LIVE OAK POLICE REPORT 02-1038512

On October 25, 2002, Officer Keith Davis completed a Battery report documenting a physical altercation. The report listed the suspect in the incident as "Halford Harris II." According to the report, 61 year old Gary Anders, the victim, reported Harris was driving behind him in a pick-up truck with bright lights on, so he pulled over and let the pick-up truck pass.

The report further noted: "*As the truck passed he flashed his bright lights at the truck. The truck stopped in the road in front of him. They both got out of their trucks. As Anders started to tell the driver of the other truck that his headlights were bright they got into a verbal argument. As Anders started to get back into his truck the other driver that was later identified as Halford Harris pushed him. Anders hit his head on his truck causing a bump on the right side of his head. Anders then passed the other truck and stopped at the Ready Freddy to call police. Harris pulled into the parking lot also. Anders then left and went home to call the police. Anders then went back to the store to explain to the store clerk what happened. When he got out Harris drove back up and approached Anders again. Anders told the clerk to call the police.*

Harris and Anders got into a verbal argument again. Harris then pushed Anders again causing him to fall. Harris then told him to get out of there and go home. Anders left and called the police again. Anders completed a written statement. After I identified who the driver of the four wheel drive truck was I made contact with him by phone. He told the same story as Anders. He then said that he would like to apologize to Anders. I advised him that I would make contact back with Anders and then call back if he wanted to speak with him. Anders agreed to talk with Harris. Harris apologized for the incident and Anders signed a non-prosecution form for the incident." The case was exceptionally cleared. A copy of the report is included with this investigation.

FINDINGS

The facts and statements presented during this investigation revealed that on December 24, 2008, Deputy Halford Harris II and his wife Jessie Harris were mutually separated and living in separate residences. At approximately 1300 hours on that date, Deputy Harris was on duty and went to the residence on [REDACTED] where his wife was residing with their 2 year old daughter [REDACTED]. Jessie Harris stated her husband Deputy Harris appeared at the residence unexpected and uninvited. Deputy Harris said he was invited there after receiving a text message from his wife.

When Deputy Harris arrived at the residence, his wife and daughter were in the shower. Deputy Harris began to question his wife about who she had been calling and who was calling her on her cell phone. Jessie Harris reported that Deputy Harris became angry and started to block her with his body and prevented her from freely moving about the house. After refusing her requests to leave the residence, Jessie Harris reported she then told Deputy Harris she was going to call 911 or someone to get him to leave, and Deputy Harris disabled the phone.

Without any clothes on and her daughter wrapped in a towel, Jessie Harris was able to flee the residence in her car. Jessie Harris then contacted Deputy Harris' supervisor, Sgt. Ricky Noble and asked him for help. Sgt. Noble reported he then responded to the residence and found Deputy Harris "pacing around like a wildecat." While waiting for Lt. Ben Tanner to arrive, Sgt. Noble reported how Deputy Harris attempted to leave the residence but was ordered by him not to do so. Deputy Harris then went back into the residence and emerged a short time later, "angrier than he was before" because he found a card given to his wife from Deputy Earl Edenfield.

Lt. Tanner arrived and eventually drove Deputy Harris to the Sheriff's Office where they met with Patrol Bureau Commander, Captain David Messenger. Deputy Harris was issued a no contact order for his wife and Deputy Edenfield from Captain Messenger. He was then authorized to take immediate leave.

On December 29, 2008, a criminal investigation was initiated (SJSO08OFF016623) conducted by Special Victims Unit Detective Michael Hartsell. The case was initiated as a result of the incident on December 24th. During the criminal investigation, it was learned from Jessie Harris and several other witnesses, that numerous alleged incidents occurred in the past involving Deputy Harris, during and prior to his employment with SJSO. These allegations included acts of domestic battery, aggravated assault and illegal drug use by Deputy Harris. On January 7, 2009, Deputy Harris was officially placed on Administrative Leave pending the outcome of the criminal investigation and the Administrative Inquiry which followed.

Detective Hartsell's investigation concluded that although there was no physical evidence in the case, he cited there was reason to believe the domestic violence alleged by Jessie Harris occurred, "based on the testimony of witnesses closely associated with Deputy Harris and his family." The criminal case was eventually reviewed by the State Attorney's Office, however no criminal charges were filed. On February 2, 2009, an Administrative Inquiry was initiated based on allegations reported in the criminal investigation. The allegations against Deputy Harris while employed at the Sheriff's Office included the following:

- January 2007, becoming angry and using "pressure points" to control his wife.
- February 12, 2007 (approximately), following an argument over child custody, threatening his ex-wife with a gun and telling her he could "do things to her and people wouldn't know what happened."
- July 2007, becoming angry and slamming doors on his wife.
- Easter 2008, becoming angry and throwing his wife to the ground during an argument at his mother's house.
- April 2008, becoming angry and causing bruising to his wife's arm by grabbing her during an argument.
- September 2008, becoming angry and blocking his wife with his body to keep her from leaving the residence.
- September 26, 2008, becoming angry and threatening to "give them a reason" to put him in jail if his wife called 911 for help.
- October 2008, becoming angry and threatening that if he found another man's car parked at his wife's house he would go in and only their daughter "would leave alive."
- November 25, 2008, becoming angry and threatening to "put a fucking bullet" in his wife's head.
- December 19, 2008, while off duty, becoming involved in two separate verbal altercations with unknown subjects at a Jaguar's game.
- Over the last 10 years, using illegal drugs (steroids) without a prescription.

The criminal investigation also documented other significant incidents that were similar in nature and reported as occurring prior to Halford Harris II being employed by the Sheriff's Office. This included the following:

- March 2006, while Jessie was pregnant, becoming angry and hitting her on her breasts and throwing her into a bed and dresser.
- August 2005, after dating Jessie for 8 months, committing an Aggravated Assault on her by becoming angry, putting a knife to her throat and threatening, "I ought to fucking slit your throat."

Additionally, the Administrative Investigation found the following incidents officially documented by Law Enforcement:

- October 25, 2002, reported by the Live Oak Police Department; Halford Harris II, was listed as a suspect in a criminal case in which he was reported as committing Battery (twice) on a 61 year old male victim following a verbal argument. The case was exceptionally cleared when the victim declined prosecution after receiving an apology from Harris.
- March 10, 1999, reported by the Live Oak Police Department; Halford Harris II was listed as a suspect in a criminal mischief case in which he was reported as damaging the vehicle of a rival subject and then becoming involved in a verbal confrontation with him. Harris was documented as having threatened to "kick his ass." Harris denied committing the criminal mischief, but acknowledged the verbal confrontation.

During his criminal interview with Detective Hartsell, Deputy Harris denied the 12 incidents which included numerous acts of domestic violence. He also denied the 2 reported felony incidents which occurred before his employment with the Sheriff's Office, alleging that he committed battery on a pregnant female and committed an aggravated assault with a knife. Deputy Harris explained that the criminal allegations against him were a conspiracy by his wife and Deputy Edenfield, who he alleged were having an affair.

When interviewed during the administrative investigation, Deputy Harris also denied the numerous allegations of domestic battery alleged while he was employed at the Sheriff's Office. Harris also denied the 2 felony allegations prior to his employment that he battered Jessie while she was pregnant and that he committed an aggravated assault by putting a knife to her throat. Unlike his interview during the criminal investigation, Harris offered more explanations for the allegations being made against him during his

administrative interview. After initially saying several times he had “no idea” why she was making the allegations, Harris was asked to explain what the motive would be for his wife, his ex-wife, his mother in law, his supervisor and a fellow deputy and SWAT Team member to make allegations against him indicating he had an issue of domestic violence, anger and rage with him, if in fact there was no problem as he stated. Harris replied that it was only his wife, ex-wife and Edenfield who were saying there was a problem, and stated, “If you look at the people that are claiming this stuff, it’s people that are not gonna have anything good to say about me, anyway.”

Yet both his wife and ex-wife were consistently reluctant to provide information against Harris that would result in Harris getting in trouble and losing his job. This included his wife’s decision not to file formal criminal charges against him and was consistent with her not documenting the violence on the paperwork she filed for divorce. They also indicated Harris was a good man when he wasn’t angry. Detective Hartsell noted in his report that Angela Wood was, *“reluctant to give information that might get H. Harris in trouble because she said he is a good father and they are finally able to get along.”*

Furthermore, Harris himself described having a good relationship currently with his ex-wife Angela Wood. Harris went so far as to describe their present relationship as “We’re great friends.” However, when confronted with this fact and then asked to explain his ex-wife’s motives for saying he threatened her with a gun approximately three years ago, Harris simply stated he had “no idea” why she would make the allegation.

To explain Deputy Edenfield’s motive for making the allegations against him, Harris said Edenfield and his wife Jessie were having an affair. However other than a card he found from Edenfield to his wife, Harris had nothing else to indicate the existence of any romantic relationship between the two. Jessie Harris and Deputy Edenfield both denied they were having an affair.

Harris acknowledged Edenfield had helped him by arranging him to have counseling sessions with a counselor that he himself utilized. Edenfield was also found to have been present during times of conflict involving Harris and his wife, trying to keep the peace and deter Harris from committing any acts that could jeopardize his career. Edenfield said he went so far as to finally seek assistance from SJSO supervisors after he could not “control” Harris any longer.

Finally, Harris attributed his wife Jessie’s many allegations against him as nothing more than a ploy to get him some counseling for an anger issue he said he didn’t have. Harris further placed the blame on the card from Deputy Edenfield, but mostly on his wife Jessie, stating she was making the allegations because, “She doesn’t want it to look like our marriage has failed on account of her actions.” Yet, Harris admitted to having

“roughly” 4 affairs while married to his wife and stated it was when his wife wanted to talk about his affairs is what would start the arguments.

Based on a totality of the circumstances, the investigation determined there was a preponderance of evidence to support that Deputy Harris’ overall conduct, including the incident triggering the criminal investigation, was conduct contrary to agency policy and the philosophies of Sheriff David Shoar. Deputy Harris was found to have demonstrated conduct that was unbecoming an officer of the St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office and in violation of several agency policies. The following facts were determined as a result of both investigations and support the findings:

1.) The investigation determined there was sufficient evidence to indicate Deputy Harris committed acts of domestic violence while employed at the Sheriff’s Office as his wife Jessie Harris described in consistent detail. Jessie’s statements were unvarying and indicative of a continued pattern of behavior by Deputy Harris in which he displayed anger, rage, made threats to do violence and committed physical acts of violence. Other information obtained during both the criminal and administrative investigations supported this conclusion. The facts are as follows:

- **Jessie had visible signs of injury which she said occurred after Deputy Harris grabbed her arm during a domestic argument.** The bruises were observed by her mother Mrs. Cordell, who stated she observed bruising on Jessie’s forearms and on her upper arms. In a sworn affidavit, Deputy Edenfield documented observing bruising to Jessie’s left arm, including “several small old bruises on the top of her arm between her wrist and her elbow.” The bruises were consistent with her description of being grabbed by Deputy Harris.
- **Jessie consistently disclosed to others that she was the victim of domestic violence by Deputy Harris.** Jessie told her mother Mrs. Cordell and also Amanda Edenfield, who stated when Jessie spent the night, she observed Jessie couldn’t stop shaking and told her that Deputy Harris “consistently grabs her and pushes her.” In an affidavit completed by Sgt. Noble on September 27, 2008, approximately 3 months prior to the December 24th incident, Sgt. Noble documented being told by Jessie that Deputy Harris had grabbed her arms causing marks, thrown her around their room at home, used pressure points to control her and intimidated her by getting in her face.”
- **Jessie displayed behavior indicative that she was in fear of further violence from Deputy Harris during the incident on December 24, 2008.** This was evidenced by the fact Jessie attempted to call 911 and then fled the residence in

such urgency that she didn't take the time to put on clothes for herself or her daughter. Jessie escaped the residence completely nude and with her daughter wrapped only in a towel. This was confirmed by Deputy Harris during his interview. When Sgt. Noble arrived on the scene, he described Deputy Harris' rage as "pacing around like a wildcat" and "extremely agitated." He described this as Deputy Harris' behavior before he found the card from Edenfield to his wife.

- **Deputy Harris has no reasonable explanation for the numerous allegations of domestic violence made against him.** Deputy Harris told Detective Hartsell the allegations were motivated by his wife and Deputy Edenfield conspiring against him because they were having an affair. In his interview with Internal Affairs, Harris made the statement several times he had "no idea" why she was making the allegations, and further stated, "*I don't know why she's accused me of any of this.*" Prior to concluding his interview, Harris said the domestic violence allegations were nothing more than his wife's attempt to get him counseling for his anger and an effort to take the blame away from her for their failed marriage.
- **Deputy Harris has a pattern of making threats to do violence.** Jessie Harris told Detective Hartsell that following an argument before they were married, Harris had once threatened her by putting a knife to her throat and saying, "*I ought to fucking slit your throat.*" Last September, Jessie reported that following an argument, she told him she was going to call 911 and Deputy Harris told her, "*Let me make something clear to you. If you call and they take my job, I'm going to give them a reason to put me in jail.*" Harris' ex-wife Angela Wood described how Harris would "*emotionally and verbally threaten her which included name calling and threats...,*" and described how Harris threatened her with a gun and "*told her that he could do things to her and people wouldn't know what happened.*" Deputy Edenfield told Detective Hartsell he heard Deputy Harris threaten to "*put a bullet*" in his wife's head, and that if he found another man's car parked at her house, "*he would go to the house and only [REDACTED] would leave alive.*" Amanda Edenfield heard a voice mail message on Jessie Harris' cell phone from Deputy Harris and "*she could hear things being broken in the background and H. Harris said, 'This is what is going to happen to you.'*"
- **Deputy Harris has a history of verbal altercations and physical violence.** As recently as December 19, 2008, Deputy Harris was off duty at a Jaguar's football game in Jacksonville when he became involved in two separate verbal altercations with an unknown subject. Prior to Harris' employment, he committed battery on a 61 year old male victim, who reportedly did nothing more than flash his vehicle lights at Harris. In an official police report of the incident, Harris got in a verbal

altercation with the victim and then pushed the victim causing him to strike his head on his truck. When the victim tried to get away from Harris and call police, Harris followed the subject to a convenience store and again got in a verbal argument with him, before pushing the victim a second time causing him to fall. In another incident documented in a police report, Harris was listed as a suspect in a criminal mischief case. The victim also reported that as he drove past Harris who was standing in a parking lot, Harris "*began to scream and threaten him*" then ran towards his vehicle threatening, "I'm going to kick your ass."

2.) The investigation determined Deputy Harris, while on duty, failed to devote his entire time and attention to duty on December 24, 2008. The facts supporting this conclusion are as follows:

- While on duty and uninvited, Deputy Harris intentionally went to the residence where his wife was staying.
- At the time, Deputy Harris' wife had filed for divorce and he and his wife were unofficially separated and had agreed to live at separate locations.
- Deputy Harris entered the residence and confronted his wife about who she was calling on her cell phone and who was calling her.
- As things became heated, Jessie Harris told Deputy Harris to leave the residence, but he refused to do so.
- By refusing to leave, Deputy Harris initiated a domestic disturbance with his wife while officially on duty. She eventually fled the residence in such urgency she did not dress herself or her daughter.
- Jessie Harris called Sgt. Noble for help, and he responded to the residence where he observed Deputy Harris in uniform and "*pacing around like a wildcat.*"

3.) Deputy Harris was found to be untruthful in his Internal Affairs interview when asked about the off duty incident at the Jaguar's football game. The facts supporting this conclusion are as follows:

- Deputy Harris denied under oath he became involved in any type of verbal or physical altercation with anyone while at the game.

- Deputy Zufelt accompanied Deputy Harris to the game and testified that he witnessed Harris become involved in two separate verbal altercations; the first while sitting next to him in the stands, and the second incident while they were both walking out to the parking lot of the stadium.

4.) The investigation determined Deputy Harris violated a direct order from Chief of Staff Joel Bolante. The facts supporting this conclusion are as follows:

- When the Administrative Investigation was initiated, Deputy Harris was given a direct order in writing by Chief Bolante not to discuss the case with anyone other than his attorney or the investigator assigned to the case.
- Deputy Harris signed the written order acknowledging that he understood the contents of the order.
- Deputy Harris was interviewed by Internal Affairs on February 6, 2009. At the conclusion of his interview, Deputy Harris was reminded on the record that the investigation was still open and information involving the internal investigation or the case in general was to remain confidential while the investigation remained open, and he could be subjected to disciplinary action if it was determined he was talking to anyone about this case while it remained open. Deputy Harris acknowledged on the record that he understood.
- After the interview, Deputy Harris requested and received a copy of the digital recorded interview of Detective Hartsell interviewing Jessie Harris about the allegations. At the time he was given a copy of the CD, the recording of the interview was a part of the open Internal Affairs investigation.
- On February 9, 2009, while the Internal Investigation was still open and active, Victim Advocate Anna Gibson received a call from Jessie Harris. She informed Gibson that a roommate of Deputy Harris named Chrissy or Christy, had called her and told her how Harris had listened to her entire taped interview with Detective Hartsell. Gibson relayed how this created a fear in Jessie Harris of retribution by Deputy Harris.
- Deputy Harris and Jessie Harris have a mutual friend named Chrissy Jenkins. Jenkins was the roommate of Deputy Harris. According to Deputy Harris, Jenkins relayed information about child custody issues between him and his wife Jesse, while the no contact order from Capt. Messenger was in affect.

- Only Deputy Harris and his attorney knew about the CD copy and the contents being his wife's interview with Detective Hartsell.

5.) Illegal use of drugs by Deputy Harris. On February 26, 2009, Sgt. Sue Tree notified Internal Affairs the test results of Deputy Harris' urinalysis drug screening were negative for steroid usage. Although the results were negative, the investigation determined it could not completely prove or disprove Deputy Harris utilized illegal steroids while employed at the Sheriff's Office. The facts supporting this conclusion are as follows:

- Jessie Harris reported that in the past 10 years, she actually injected Harris with steroids he obtained without a prescription.
- Deputy Edenfield reported he had knowledge of Deputy Harris using steroids and said he was actually told by Deputy Harris that his steroid supplier had been arrested a few months ago.
- Deputy Harris admitted in his Internal Affairs interview he used steroids illegally in 2003 or 2004 while he was employed as a fireman. According to his SJSO application, Harris noted his illegal use of steroids was by injection and began in March 2002 and "stopped" in April 2002.
- Deputy Harris has a history of anger and aggressive behavior. According to information from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), "*Case reports and small studies indicate that anabolic steroids, when used in high doses, increase irritability and aggression.*"

NOTE: The investigation found statements and information to indicate the possibility of at least 4 Sheriff's Office personnel above the first line supervisory level (3 Lieutenants and 1 Captain) may have had prior knowledge of Deputy Harris' behavior, two months before the incident on December 24, 2008. Further Administrative Investigation is recommended regarding this issue.

Therefore, based on the information obtained from both the criminal and the administrative investigation, the following violations of policy were determined regarding the conduct of Deputy Halford Harris II:

Policy 26.1.72 – “*Commission of a criminal act in violation of a county, state or federal statute,*” to wit: Domestic Battery, the finding is **SUSTAINED**.

Policy 26.1.86 – “*Conduct unbecoming an officer,*” to wit: Making threats to commit acts of violence, the finding is **SUSTAINED**.

Policy 26.1.5 – “*Employees, while on duty, shall devote their whole time and attention to duty,*” the finding is **SUSTAINED**.

Policy 26.1.2 – “*All employees shall speak the truth at all times and under all circumstances,*” the finding is **SUSTAINED**.

Policy 26.1.87 – *Insubordination: (bullet #1) Neglect to obey any proper, legal order of a superior officer,*” the finding is **SUSTAINED**.

Policy 26.6.3 – “*In order to maintain the integrity of the SJSO and ensure public safety, the Sheriff requires that all employees shall not: (bullet #3) Sell, purchase, transfer, use, or possess illegal drugs or drugs obtained illegally,*” the finding is **NOT SUSTAINED**.