

Entered By: William D Merritt, On 11/08/2004 9:14:23 AM

Title: Atty Dennis Sossaman / Sgt. Merritt

<<Entered By: William D Merritt (m5546), 11/08/2004 9:14:36 AM >>

At 0845 hrs, writer spoke with Atty. Dennis Sossaman about the case. Mr. Sossaman can be reached at [REDACTED]. He stated he was representing Shelia Braswell in a divorce proceeding against Vern Braswell. Mr. Sossaman stated the case was filed on June 15, 2004 in Circuit Ct. Div. 3 under docket # 003443-04.

At 0935 hrs, a request was placed with Det. C. Chambers of the SCSD to have Vern Braswell's telephone calls monitored and recorded.

At 1030 hrs, writer listened to the 911 tape that was recorded when Vern Braswell telephoned the police on 11-5-04. The tape was tagged in the property room after it was reviewed.

At 1300 hrs, writer telephoned and spoke with Ms. Melanie Carr of T.L.C. Staffbuilders [REDACTED] Rd.. # [REDACTED]. Shelia Braswell worked for the company as a physical therapist prior to her death. Ms. Carr stated Mrs. Braswell had been with the company for about four months. Ms. Carr stated she did not know of any problems between Mr. and Mrs. Braswell. She did state that Mrs. Braswell complained of "not feeling well" during the week of October 23-29. Ms. Carr stated she later learned that Mrs. Braswell was having her monthly period during this time. I asked Ms. Carr if she could check Mrs. Braswell's attendance history with the company to see if there had been a pattern of absences due to illness. I gave Ms. Carr my office telephone number and asked her to call me if she learned anything new.

At 1315 hrs, writer telephoned [REDACTED] and left a message for Karen Taylor-Gatewood to call the homicide office.

At 1440 hrs, writer received a telephone call from Melanie Carr, who stated she checked her records and discovered that Mrs. Braswell had not missed a day of work due to illness since beginning employment in August 2004.

At 1445 hrs, writer telephoned [REDACTED] and spoke with Madeline Payton of Homechoice Healthcare 2606 Corporate Ave. #201. Ms. Payton confirmed Shelia Braswell worked for the company prior to leaving the company for T.L.C. Staffbuilders. Ms. Payton stated Mrs. Braswell did not miss any days of work due to illness while she was with the company. Ms. Payton added that Mrs. Braswell was an extremely dedicated employee and never took any vacation time while she was employed with the company. Ms. Payton stated the only time Mrs. Braswell took off work was when she was hospitalized with her "paralysis." When asked about the illness, Ms. Payton stated there were rumors that Mrs. Braswell had been poisoned. Ms. Payton stated Shelia Patrick ([REDACTED]) and Yvetta Hassell ([REDACTED]) are friends of Mrs. Braswell who are employed at Arlington Developmental Center.

At 1525 hrs, writer telephoned Arlington Developmental Center ([REDACTED]) and left messages for Ms. Patrick and Ms. Hassell to call the homicide office.

At 1530 hrs, writer spoke with Karen Taylor-Gatewood about the case. Ms. Taylor-Gatewood can be reached at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. She currently resides at [REDACTED] in Memphis.

Ms. Taylor Gatewood stated she last spoke with Shelia Braswell between 6 and 7 pm. on Thursday, November 4th between 6:30 and 7:00 pm. She stated they talked about Mrs. Braswell's lotion and body creme business. She stated Mrs. Braswell seemed upbeat and was not complaining about and problems with Mr. Braswell.

When asked, Ms. Taylor-Gatewood stated she was familiar with the marital problems between Mr. and Mrs. Braswell. She stated Mrs. Braswell had filed for divorce but recently stated that she and Mr. Braswell were attempting to work through their problems. She stated Mrs. Braswell filed for divorce after she discovered that Mr. Braswell was having an affair. Ms. Taylor-Gatewood stated the female's name was Christy. She did not know Christy's last name.

Ms. Taylor-Gatewood knew about Shelia Braswell's hospitalization for the episode of temporary paralysis she experienced in December 2003. She stated Mrs. Braswell told her about her magnesium and potassium levels being lower than normal. Ms. Taylor-Gatewood also stated that Mrs. Braswell told her that additional tests showed elevated levels of amphetamines in her blood. Mrs. Braswell told Ms. Taylor-Gatewood that she had no idea how the amphetamines showed up in her blood.

Ms. Taylor-Gatewood added that Mrs. Braswell mentioned a second episode of paralysis that she experienced this past summer. Mrs. Braswell mentioned that she and Mr. Braswell were in the bathtub and that she was drinking a vodka based cocktail that was provided by Mr. Braswell. Mrs. Braswell stated after she drank the cocktail, she began having difficulty breathing. Ms. Taylor-Gatewood stated Mrs. Braswell told her she laid on the bed and began feeling better a short time later.

Ms. Taylor-Gatewood mentioned that she knew Mr. Braswell had been addicted to crack and alcohol at one time. She also stated she knew of an incident where Mr. Braswell assaulted Mrs. Braswell while the two of them lived in Millington. Ms. Taylor-Gatewood stated the assault occurred several years ago before the Braswell's children were born.

Ms. Taylor-Gatewood stated she would come to the homicide office next week when she was off work to give a statement about the case.

End of supplement.

Entered By: William D Merritt, On 11/15/2004 8:45:46 AM  
Edited By: William D Merritt, On 03/07/2005 9:34:49 AM

Title: Witness Info / Sgt. Merritt

<<Entered By: William D Merritt (m5546), 11/15/2004 9:06:19 AM >>

At 0835 hrs, writer spoke with Kristi Pesche about the case. Mrs. Pesche resides at [REDACTED], and can be reached at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. She stated she and Mrs. Braswell worked together in 2001. Mrs. Pesche stated she knew that Shelia Braswell had been hospitalized for the potassium and temporary paralysis disorders late last year. Mrs. Pesche stated she knew of no personal problems between Vern and Shelia Braswell. I gave Mrs. Pesche my office telephone number and asked her to call me if she learned anything else.

+ At 0850 hrs, writer telephoned and left a message for Karen Taylor Gatewood to call the homicide office.

At 0855 hrs, writer telephoned and spoke with Pearline Washburn about the case. She is the mother of Shelia Braswell. Mrs. Washburn agreed to meet with me today at 11:00 am so a statement could be obtained from her regarding the incident.

At 0920 hrs, writer spoke with Sharonda Smith about the case. Ms. Smith resides at [REDACTED] and can be reached at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] extension 127.

Ms. Smith stated she last spoke with Shelia Braswell on 11-4-04 between 11 and 11:30 pm. She stated Shelia did not mention if Vern was at the house at the time. Ms. Smith stated she did speak with Angela Snyder ([REDACTED]) who told her Vern was not at the house when she (Ms. Snyder) was at the house later that evening.

Sharonda Smith was familiar with the divorce proceedings that Shelia Braswell initiated. She stated Shelia told her about the drug problem Vern experienced early in their marriage.

Ms. Smith mentioned that Shelia Braswell told her that Vern liked "rough sex." When asked to elaborate, Ms. Smith stated Shelia told her Vern liked [REDACTED] sex. Sharonda Smith stated Shelia told her that she (Shelia) did not like [REDACTED] sex because it was painful. When asked, Sheronda Smith stated Shelia Braswell never mentioned anything about Vern choking her during their sexual encounters.

Ms. Smith added that she, Shelia and Vern attended a work related seminar in North Carolina three to four years ago. She stated the hotel where the seminar was held was having some type of S&M bondage convention. Ms. Smith stated that Vern was looking at the S&M displays and went as far as to show her some of the devices that were on display.

At 11:00 am, writer met with Pearline Washburn and obtained a tape recorded statement from her about the incident. A transcribed copy of the statement is included in the file. The tape was tagged in the property room.

At 1225 hrs, writer went to Dr. Tena Williamson's office located at 2900 Kirby Parkway #14 ph. # [REDACTED] to obtain the medical records of Shelia Braswell. A copy of the medical release form that had been signed by Vern Braswell was given to the receptionist, who stated a copy of Mrs. Braswell's file would be ready tomorrow.

At 1305 hrs, writer went to Baptist East in an attempt to obtain a copy of Mrs. Braswell's medical records from her hospitalization in December 2004. Records employees Cynthia McGeorge and Laura Waterbury (redacted) stated they would have to get further approval before the records could be released. A copy of the medical release form signed by Mr. Braswell was left with the records office.

+ At 1455 hrs, writer spoke with Karen Taylor Gatewood about the case. Ms. Taylor-Gatewood agreed to come to the homicide office on 11-17-04 @ 9:00 am to give a statement about the case.

At 1510 hrs, Sgt. Justice stated Vern Braswell's girlfriend was possibly a FB named Kristie Woods DOB 8-2-81 SSN of (redacted)

End of supplement.

Entered By: William D Merritt, On 11/17/2004 9:12:38 AM

Title: Karen Taylor interview / Sgt. Merritt

<<Entered By: William D Merritt (m5546), 11/17/2004 9:24:08 AM >>

At 0745 hrs, writer spoke with Sgt. A. Kjellan #4672 about the case. Sgt. Kjellan was one of the "A" shift felony response investigators that was on the scene when Mrs. Braswell was discovered in the bathtub. Sgt. Kjellan stated he checked the premises and did not detect any sign of forced entry to the doors or windows of the residence.

At 0840 hrs, Sgt. Justice was directed to contact the M.F.D. to determine the fire stations where paramedic M. Hamm and EMT K. Moore worked. Sgt. Justice stated M. Hamm was assigned to Engine 10 and K. Moore was assigned to engine 44 ph. # [REDACTED]

At 0905 hrs, writer telephoned 872-4092 and left a message for Brian James to call the homicide office. Mr. James and Vern Braswell are friends. Mr. James was at the Braswell family residence when the police arrived on 11-5-04.

At 0915 hrs, writer received a telephone call from Madra Harden. Ms. Harden stated she would be available to give a statement tomorrow at 11:00 am.

At 0925 hrs, writer telephoned [REDACTED] and spoke with Rhonda Hubbert about the case. Mrs. Hubbert is the wife of James R. Hubbert of 8160 Creekside Circle N. Mrs. Hubbert stated her husband went to the Braswell residence after seeing the ambulance that morning.

When asked, Mrs. Hubbert described the Braswells as good neighbors. She stated her family had dinner and attended cookouts at the Braswell residence. I gave Mrs. Hubbert my office telephone number and asked her to have her husband call when he returned home from work.

At 0945 hrs, Karen Tylor arrived at the homicide office. A typewritten statement was obtained from Mrs. Taylor about her knowledge of this case. Mrs. Taylor's signed statement is included in the file.

At 1210 hrs, writer spoke with James R. Hubbert about the case. Mr. Hubbert can be reached at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Mr. Hubbert confirmed he went next door and removed the Braswell's children when the ambulance arrived at [REDACTED] on 11-5-04. Mr. Hubbert stated he did not see Shelia Braswell's body when he entered the residence.

Mr. Hubbert stated the only individuals that were there when he entered the residence were the paramedics and Mr. Braswell. Mr. Hubbert stated Mr. Braswell was visibly upset and made the statement "what am I and the boys going to do without my wife?" Mr. Hubbert stated he spoke very briefly later with Mr. Braswell, who only mentioned that Shelia was cramping and had gone to the bathtub. When asked, Mr. Hubbert stated the Braswell's were very good neighbors.

At 1415 hrs, writer met with Sharonda Smith and obtained a tape recorded statement from her regarding her knowledge of this case. A transcribed copy of her statement is included in the file. The tape was tagged in the property room.

End of supplement.