

PRESS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Middle District of Florida

PAUL I. PEREZ UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

400 North Tampa Street Suite 3200 Tampa, Florida 33602 813/274-6000 813/274-6300 (Fax) 300 North Hogan Street Suite 700 Jacksonville, Florida 32201 904/301-6300 904/301-6310 (Fax) 80 North Hughey Avenue, Room 201 Orlando, Florida 32801 407/648-7500 407/648-7643 (Fax) 2110 First Street, Suite 3-137 Fort Myers, Florida 33901 239/461-2200 239/461-2219 (fax)

Contact: Steve Cole ♦ Public Affairs Specialist ♦ 813/274-6352

For Immediate Release

December 19, 2003

HUSBAND AND WIFE ENTER GUILTY PLEAS TO FEDERAL FIREARMS VIOLATIONS

Orlando, Florida - United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced that TERRY VANCE MORRISON, JR., 26, of Orlando, and his wife, SUSAN VANGORDON MORRISON, 31, of Lynn Haven, Florida, each pleaded guilty to a federal grand jury indictment alleging violations of federal firearms laws. Terry Morrison pleaded guilty to a felony count of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon (Count One); Susan Morrison pleaded guilty to a felony count of knowingly making a false statement with respect to information required to be kept in the records of a federal firearms licensee (Count Two). As to Count One, Terry Morrison faces a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, 3 years of supervised release and a special assessment of \$100. With regard to Count Two, Susan Morrison faces a term of up to 5 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, 3 years of supervised release and a special assessment of \$100. A federal grand jury returned the indictment against the couple on September 24, 2003.

According to the plea agreements, Susan Morrison purchased at least 31 firearms from an Osceola County gun dealer between May 3, 2001 and February 27, 2002. During each of the transactions, Susan Morrison falsely stated on the federal firearms transaction record forms that she was purchasing the firearms for herself. A subsequent investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF") revealed that, after each purchase, Susan Morrison turned control of the firearms over to her husband, Terry-a convicted felon on active felony probation with the State of Florida. As a previously convicted felon, Terry Morrison was prohibited from possessing firearms under federal law. Nonetheless, Terry Morrison had selected the firearms and had provided the money for each of the purchases. ATF agents later recovered 32 firearms, including pistols, rifles and shotguns, from Terry Morrison's locked unit at a storage facility.

This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative. United States Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials and calling our effort "Project Safe Neighborhoods - Operation HALT the Violence!" The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert E. Bodnar, Jr. A sentencing hearing will be held before the Honorable Anne C. Conway, United States District Judge, on March 17, 2004.