

## STATEMENT SUMMARY

**Name:** Jordis Ferguson

**Significance to Beach's Clemency Application:** Beach claims she was at least present at the scene of Kim Nees's murder, witnessed the murder and may have participated in the murder.

### **Summary of March 21, 2007 Tape Recorded Statement**

#### ***Relationship with Kim and/or Beach***

Jordis knew Beach because they went to school together. (6.) She was 16 at the time of Kim's murder. (6.) Her sister played basketball with Kim. From what she knew, Kim was a really good girl. Jordis never partied with her. (13.) She learned about Kim's homicide the morning of June 16, 1979. She and her sister went to the train bridge to check it out. (4.)

#### ***Recollection of Activities on June 15, 1979***

Jordis had a baby in 1978. In 1979 she was dating Bear Jones who worked at Westland's Gas Station. She lived at 314 C Street East in Poplar and may have been home the entire evening. Bear usually worked at the gas station until midnight, so she might have walked there to visit him. When she did that, he would walk her home and sometimes hang out at her house for awhile. She was not out partying that evening. (3.)

#### ***Centurion Ministries' Accusations***

Jordis denies being at the scene of Kim's murder or knowing anything about it. She states there is no way 10-year-old Calvin Lester could have seen her there because she was not there. She now knows Calvin as an adult, because they have fought fires together. He has never said anything to her about Kim's homicide or his recollection that he saw her at the murder scene. (13.) She did not hang out with Sissy and Maude because they were older than her. Occasionally she might have hung out with Joanne Jackson, but not very often. (6.)

### *Assessment of Centurion Ministries' Investigation*

When Centurion Ministries investigators first approached Jordis, they were nice, then they started telling her they had a witness who saw her at the murder scene. They also told her they had a bloody palm print and hair evidence. Her response is: "Yeah, and so, you know. It ain't me. You know, I got nothing to hide." She further elaborated that she wants this to be over because, "I been having to live with people in this town 'cause the, the town talks, you know, and these people look at you like, you know, they believe these people. Oh yeah, she might have been part of that murder, you know. And they look at you just kind of funny, you know. And I've got this look for 25 years." (9.) Jordis further stated, "people look at you like that, and you know you didn't do it, but they still look at you like that. It's--you know, I just--it's just a bad feeling that you just want to go away for the day because people are right there hounding you all the time, trying to make you say stuff, but, you know, I, I ain't gonna admit to nothing I never done." (10.)

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

INTERVIEW

State v. Beach

Jordis Ferguson

March 21, 2007

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CASE NO: STATE V. BEACH  
DATE: March 21, 2007  
TIME: 6:07 p.m.  
AGENT: Ward J. McKay  
LOCATION: Transitional Living Unit, Poplar, MT  
PRESENT: Agent McKay (WM), Jordis Ferguson (JF),  
Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Tammy Plubell (TP),  
AAG Mike Wellenstein (MW), Roosevelt County Deputy Sheriff  
Richie McDonald (RM)  
INTERVIEWEE: Jordis Ferguson

WM: This is Agent Ward J. McKay of the Montana Division of Criminal Investigation. The date is March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007; time is approximately 1807 hours. The purpose of this recording is to document a conversation with Jordis Ferguson, spelling first name J-O-R-D-I-S.

JF: Yes.

WM: Ferguson is F-E-R-G-U-S-O-N.

JF: Yes.

WM: The location of this interview is at the Transitional Living Unit in Poplar, Montana. Also present during this conversation is Tammy Plubell and Mike Wellenstein of the Attorney General's Office and Roosevelt County Deputy Sheriff Richie McDonald. Jordis, would you state your complete name, please?

JF: Jordis Fay Ferguson, age 44.

WM: Okay, what's your date of birth, Jordis?

JF: 01-16-62.

WM: And your social security?

JF: ██████████

WM: Jordis, do you reside in Poplar, Montana?

JF: Yes, I do.

WM: Did you reside here in 1978?

JF: Yes, I did.

WM: '79 – have you lived here since?

JF: No, I moved to Havre from 1996 to two thou... January 2001.

WM: Okay. Um, do you recall where you were in June – on June 15<sup>th</sup> – it was a Friday night – June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1979?

JF: I can't remember the date but I remember when this happened that yeah, I was home.

WM: Okay. And where was home at that time?

JF: Um, 314 C Street East.

WM: In Poplar?

JF: Yes. Pretty sure about the address.

WM: And in relationship to the school, where would that have been – the high school?

JF: It's the, uh, east water tower – south of the east water tower; one block west.

WM: Okay. And when you say you were home, had you been out earlier in the evening?

JF: No. No, not the – well, I might have walked to the, um, Westland gas station. My boyfriend used to work there - um, my ex, uh, old boyfriend Bear Jones. And he worked there till 12 and after that, he'd come and visit me after that.

WM: Okay, he – may he have come and visited you that night?

JF: I'm not sure, 'cause it's been such a long time. I mean I'm not sure but I, I know I was home and...

WM: Okay.

JF: ... I wasn't out drinking or whatever. I just, I just had a baby in '78 so...

WM: Okay. So, uh, in any event, you were home.

JF: Oh, yeah.

WM: And, and Bear could have been around but you don't know for sure now.

JF: Yeah yeah. But he used to come down after he worked from – at Westland at 12 and come down to see me, or I'd go visit him till 12 and he'd walk me all the way home. Then he'd come all the way back up to the – he lived by the high school.

WM: Okay. And had you been home all evening except possibly to walk to his place of work?

JF: Yeah. Yeah.

WM: Or had you been out cruising or anything that night?

JF: No, I didn't cruise. I was – no, I didn't cruise.

WM: Because you had a baby at home.

JF: No. Yeah, I had a baby. It was either with me or her dad – the baby.

WM: Okay. Now when did you find out about the Kim Nees homicide?

JF: It was that morning. Um, I stayed downstairs. My bed is kind of like – was at an angle in the corner. And that's all I can remember was my sister Ava Ferguson coming into the house and she was telling Mom, "Mom, guess what?" and my mom said what. "They just found Kim Nees dead." And my mom said, "What?" and she said, "Let's – should we go?" or "Down at the train bridge. Should we go see?" or something, and I just jumped up, ran upstairs, and then we all went. We all went down there; we crossed the bridge. Right after you, right after you cross the bridge, there used to be a, a road that way. We just went up that – went down that road south to the tracks; we parked. Me and my sister Ava and, um, I don't know who else was there. There's a lot of people there that we walked across the tracks on the train bridge and then we looked down and you can just see her down there. They didn't have her covered up then or nothing.

*Bear and they  
walked into town about  
8 or 9:30 or heard about Kim*

WM: So you and other people were standing on the train bridge.

JF: Yeah. Look – yeah.

WM: And...

JF: 'Cause it – we – they wouldn't let no one down that way so we just all come this way and then everybody was just looking down that way.

WM: Were the cops there, around the vehicle and stuff?

JF: Yeah. Well, we – I didn't even notice the vehicle. I just, I just noticed seeing her down there, you know, and that was it.

WM: Where was she at, in the river?

JF: I d... her head was on the – in the river like, I suppose, like – I couldn't really see, either. I just – just the thought.

WM: Oh, like her, like her feet were closer to the bank?

JF: Yeah, I suppose. Just like this maybe – her – this is her head.

WM: Yes.

JF: And she was just kind of like this. Like if this is the water, kind of just like this maybe.

WM: Yeah. Like her head's more out in the water and her feet by the bank.

JF: Yeah, not really. Her head wasn't really in the water 'cause you could still see her, you could still see her head. When you looked at her, you could still see her head and stuff but...

WM: Okay. And who were you with there by the...?

JF: My sister Ava Ferguson.

WM: Yes.

JF: And Christian probably she was going by, 'cause I think she was married to Porky Christian then.

WM: Okay. Uh, what did you do after you looked around there a little bit?

JF: We didn't even, we didn't even look. We just looked at her and I thought we just left. That was it I mean.

WM: What time of day was that?

JF: It was in the morning, 'cause Ava was up early. I mean 'cause I was still sleeping, so it had to be in the morning early. I couldn't tell you what time 'cause like I said, I just got up when I heard, when I heard my m... uh, Ava telling my mom that, you know. I – it just, it just amazed me, too, so I just got up and ran upstairs, and I think I even left in my pajamas or something but we just left and went to go look – just being nosey, I suppose, or, you know...

WM: Curious.

JF: Yeah, more than likely, just – yeah.

WM: Did you, uh – about that – how old were you at that time?

JF: Sixteen.

WM: Did you ever cruise around with, uh, like Maude or Sissy?

JF: No, they, no, they – I – no, they, no, they weren't in – like, like Joanne Jackson said, you know, I wasn't part of their group. I mean...

WM: They were a little older.

JF: Yeah, my sister Connie's age.

WM: Okay. Um, what about Joanne – did you run with Joanne?

JF: I hung with her once in awhile but not really either. She was more with, with those guys – with those people, too, I mean.

WM: Okay.

JF: 'Cause I, I was – I played basketball. My - I played basketball; I, I started J... um, varsity ever since I was a freshman, and I wasn't a smart person but I knew I had to get C's just to, you know, be in basketball, you know. And I, I barely made C's but I did it, though. And then I quit, I quit high school like two weeks before I was supposed to graduate and that was dumbest thing I done, I suppose.

WM: Did, did law enforcement ever come and talk to you about anything regarding this case?

JF: No. No. Nope.

WM: Did you know Barry Beach?

JF: Yeah, he was my classmate.

WM: Um, did you know that he killed her in any way?

JF: Huh uh (negative), no.

WM: Uh, did you know of anybody else being involved in the homicide?

JF: Huh uh (negative). I, I, I didn't. I just heard all the rumors that's been flying around this town for 25 years, you know, and they just don't know who it is and, you know, I wish they'd find them, too, just to put this to rest and let her rest, too. I mean it's, it's too long.

WM: Do you have any reason to believe that Barry Beach did not commit this crime?

JF: No, not that I've heard. I don't know, I've – but I've heard, um, stories, too, you know, about the bloody towel being on his fence and then burning his clothes and stuff like that – I heard those rumors – in a boxcar. And then I heard that he ended up doing something to some girls in Louisiana and then he admitted to this, I guess. And I don't know why...

WM: Yeah

JF: ... who would even admit something like this - I mean if you...

WM: Right.

JF: ... (unintelligible).

WM: Right. I... it'd be – would you ever admit to anything...

JF: No.

WM: ... that you didn't do?

JF: No. Nope. Nope. I mean I can't even stand jail, you know, so like I said, you can't – you do the crime; you do the time. I can't do the time, you know, so I can't, I can't...

WM: You won't do the crime.

JF: Nuh uh (negative). No. And I just – and Bear Jones used to tell me that all the time 'cause Bear – he can do the time, you know. He's locked up. And he just said that he'll, he'll sell meth again when he gets out again, you know, and they'll lock him up again and he'll just do it again. I mean...

WM: Now speaking of Bear, did you ever have a conversation with Bear about this?

JF: Oh, yeah, he's told me stuff. I mean like I said, that letter that he wrote me was just – you start – 'cause when he was 16, he was a wrestler; he was the top of his cla... I mean he was our class president. And, um, I don't know if I should say this on thing but I...

WM: You can say whatever you want to.

JF: I popped his cherry when he was 16.

WM: Oh.

JF: And then – so ever since then, you know, he's always been right there or whatever, you know. Then after I had his baby and stuff, you know, it was just – but then that's what he said – he just told me to start writing to him, you know, or else I'd - "You best start writing back to me or else I got somebody that will place you at the murder" or do something, and I kind of thought he meant – who he, who he meant, I don't know, 'cause when he's just on meth, there was a lot of girls out there that was doing him favors for the drug or something. 'Cause I'd come back from Havre, you know, and my girl would want to go see him. I'd have to go in his house and clean up his house of everything around there before I'd let her stay there with him. And then, and then I was there dropping her off and all these girls, you know, coming in and it was - he's just a drug dealer; he's been all his life. I don't think he - you know, he ain't gonna change.

WM: When, when Bear wrote you that letter – I haven't seen the letter, by the way, but...

JF: Uh huh.

WM: ... we seen an excerpt from the letter that – it was like the first couple of words of the letter and the last couple of words of the letter, but we don't know what was in between.

JF: Uh huh.

WM: So was, uh, was Bear like threatening you in some way?

JF: Yeah. Yeah, just so I could write to him, you know.

WM: And so he was mad that, that you weren't writing to him.

JF: Writing to him, yeah. He thought that I have to write to him or something, you know, and that's why I never wrote to him. I mean even after I got that letter from him, I didn't write to him, 'cause I – you know, say whatever you want 'cause I ain't got nothing to hide, you know. So I never did write to him. I mean I just – you know, I been – I don't know. He just – I don't know why he'd say something like that, too, but he, he used to threaten me with a lot of stuff.

WM: How many times did those Centurion Ministries people come to see you?

JF: Over the past 25 years, I would say – in Havre, they found me; out at Riverside, they found me; they found me at my house up here. Five; maybe more times.

WM: How did they treat you?

JF: Like they were nice and they were trying to find out things, you know, and then, then they started telling me about yeah, "There was this, um, ten-year-old that was sitting on top of the hill and he said he seen you down there; he was hiding behind some bushes." And I was thinking yeah, right, you know.

WM: Well...

JF: How did they see me when I wasn't even there, you know? And then Joanne Jackson comes to me and they tell her the same story, too, about this ten-year-old. So you know they're just trying to – I don't know.

WM: Did you always tell them the same story?

JF: Yeah. Yeah.

WM: But they were trying to...

JF: Make me...

WM: ... say, "We heard something..."

JF: Yeah.

WM: ... and now you gotta tell us more."

JF: Yeah. Yeah. "Well, we found a bloody palm print on this thing and hair." "Yeah, and so, you know. It ain't me. You know, I got nothing to hide." And I kept telling them that I hope they do find – so, you know, like I, like I said, this has been over my back for the past 25 years and I been having to live with people in this town 'cause the, the town talks, you know, and these people look at you like, you know, they believe these people. Oh, yeah, she might have been part of that murder, you know. And they look at you just kind of funny, you know. And I've got this look for 25 years. And like I said, I'm just – hope this gets over because I'm – so they don't have to look at me like this no longer.

WM: Well, we hope it gets over, too.

JF: Because, uh...

WM: It'll be over soon.

JF: ... I'm old now – 44 years old – and this has been happening since what - I was 16; 17. I mean people looking at me like this. It's, it's not a good feeling to have

people look at you like that, and you know you didn't do it, but they still look at you like that. It's – you know, I just – it's just a bad feeling that you just want to go away for the day because people are right there hounding you all the time; trying to make you say stuff but, you know, I, I ain't gonna admit to nothing I never done. You know, that's what Barry Beach done. How come – why, why would someone like that admit something so drastic like that?

WM: If he didn't do it.

JF: Yeah. Yeah, exactly. I mean my gosh, you have – he'd have to be out of his mind or something even, you know, admit to something like that. (Cell phone rings) That was my – this is my boy. Logan. Oh, okay, hold on. This is my boy Logan.

WM: Yes.

JF: I told you that he saw - he seen that letter, too...

TP: Uh huh.

JF: ... that I gave these people.

TP: Uh huh.

JF: 'Cause I said, "Someday," you know, "I might need to you to tell someone that you seen this letter, too."

TP: Uh huh.

WM: It's okay. We don't need to talk to Logan.

JF: Okay. All right. Logan, I'll call you later, okay? Okay, bye.

WM: But we don't – we appreciate that but we don't have to give him a call.

JF: Okay. Because like I told him, you know, when those people were right at my house, I seen this letter and I told Logan, "Logan, look at this letter, you know. Some day you might have to say you seen this letter, 'cause I'm gonna give it to these people," you know.

WM: Did they give you a copy of that letter?

JF: No. They said they were gonna send it back to me.

TP: And they never did.

JF: Nope. That's why I had Logan look, that's why I had Logan look at it. 'Cause I said, "Logan, some day, you know, I might need you. Look at this letter," you know, and he, he read it, too. He was young, too, but I – you know, I was trying to get somebody to kind of ... see, you know, that it was, it was there.

WM: You said that these guys from – were they always men that came and seen you?

JF: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yep, they – yep, yep. Like I was out at Riverside when they come out there, too. You know, I was, my husband was, (Cell phone ringing)um - got drunk so he was still sleeping, and we went fishing down by the river. I caught some fish and he was trying to – he showed me the night before how to try to filet. (unintelligible) sitting there trying to filet a fish, you know, and I ended up with just a little piece of meat. But they were there, you know, and they were trying to ask me – "Well, yeah, we found all this," you know, and I'm thinking good, you know, and "Do you remember?" "I don't remember nothing. I wasn't there, you know. How can you ask me to..."

WM: Did they g...

JF: ... remember something when I wasn't even there?"

WM: Did they get pushy with you at times?

JF: Yep. That's – yep. But then they always took it because I nev... I knew I didn't do nothing, you know.

WM: Well, and that's, that's okay. But...

JF: Yeah, so I felt like – you know, I felt like just really cussing them out sometimes, you know, but then I think well, that's probably gonna make me look bad or they're gonna say something or - I don't got nothing to hide from anybody so, you know, I just let them say whatever they're gonna say, you know, and...

WM: Okay. Does anybody have any questions?

TP: No.

WM: Jordis, is there anything that we haven't talked about that you think might be important to go on tape here?

JF: I don't know. Joanne might have told you – if mean if Joanne told you anything. I mean she just didn't want to say stuff, too, because, um, she said that she knows how it feels when people look at you funny. And I told her the same – that's how I feel, too, but...

WM: We talked to...

JF: Like I said, Sissy Atkinson – I, I worked cleaning apartments at Combs' apartments when she li... when she lived there. And, um, and I was cleaning an apartment and she walked by, asked if I had a cigarette. I gave her a cigarette like that, and she was just out of it. And she was just saying "I just feel like killing myself." Oh...Oh you know, what's so bad, you know. I mean life's not that bad that you're gonna kill yourself, you know. Joanne told me that Maude, too – Maude was, Maude was – see, I never drank with these girls; I don't know how they were. But Joanne said that Maude was really crazy or funny or something when she was drunk. Like I said, I've never drank with these girls before. But like I said, I don't know – the – then Joanne telling me about Kim – I mean Pam. Why aren't they talking to Pam? You know, two weeks before Kim died, P... Joanne said that Pam was wanting her sister dead, you know, and who would do that – your own sister? I mean I get mad at my sister sometime, but I wouldn't wish them dead.

WM: Well...

JF: I just wish this would be over, you know, just...

WM: Well, with, with a little luck, in another month it'll be over.

JF: I hope so, 'cause, uh, you know, like I said, these people that looked at me so funny all these years, you know, I just want to look at them and just...

WM: It's hurtful, isn't it?

JF: Yeah. Especially when you haven't done nothing. You know, that's the worst, but then. You just want to, you know – you ain't got nothing to hide anyway but, you know, all, all these years it's built up, you know. Now I'm old, you know, and...

WM: You're not old.

RM: (unintelligible) I'm 49 and I'm not old.

JF: I just want to, you know, I just want to...

TP: Your old? I'm old and I don't want to be old.

JF: I'm just – I just want to, I just want to, you know, raise my grandkids now. I got grandkids now, you know, and when this all started, I was just having my first baby. And I have six kids already so, now I'm old with my grandkids and this is still over my, my head. I, I really want it over, too.

WM: With a little luck, your name'll be cleared.

JF: I hope so 'cause like I said – but I, I just want them to find who done it, too, you know, 'cause she was a good girl. I mean that poor, what I knew of her, you know, she was, she was a good, really good girl. But I – like I said, I never partied with her, you know, I – my sister played basketball with me, too, but she played basketball with Kim and us. I was more with Brenda Granbois; Jamie Cassen – you know, that was - you know, those were my classmates. But like I say, I just w...

RM: There is just, just one thing I have – at that time, did you, did you know Calvin Lester then?

JF: Huh uh (negative).

RM: (unintelligible)

JF: (unintelligible) huh uh (negative)

RM: They lived in an area known as the, the hill.

JF: Uh huh (affirmative).

RM: And...

JF: 'Cause we live – we, we lived on the hill when that – when the hill was first up there, when there was green grass all over, we lived up there. But see I don't even, I don't even know Calvin's mom. I mean maybe if I – they told me her mom.

RM: If he would come up to you back then – ten-year-old boy - would he have even known who you were?

JF: Nuh uh (negative). Nope, but the only way I started knowing him lately is 'cause I've been firefighting since I been – I lied about my age when I was 17, to go firefighting. And I been firefighting all this time and that's where I met him, that he just turned of age, you know, and I ended up being on his crew and everything. But like today, you know, we still – he says hi to me and all this, you know, and we went to the (unintelligible) Treatment Center and I seen him there and I was teasing him about his block of cheese that he – you know, about the block of gold he took or stole or whatever; if it was worth it and stuff.

WM: Did he ever tell you that he seen you there that night?

JF: No. Nope. You know, I mean, nope.

WM: Okay.

JF: I was just thinking the friend that I was with him, out on the fire line or something, you know, but – or - but no, he never to this day – so he still says hi to me and everything, you know, but I never knew him back then ‘cause he was probably too young. I mean...

WM: Why do you think he'd ever say anything bad against you?

JF: I don't know. You know, I'm gonna ask him that some day. I'll see him again next – you know, it's fire season coming up again; I'll see him again, you know. I'm just gonna ask him why. I'm pretty sure he'll probably tell me the truth why or something but like I said, Joanne said that, you know, those Centurion people told her the same story, too. You know, some ten-year-old seen her down there, too, you know. I didn't know this guy; I wasn't even - I lived on the other side of town, you know; I just – I don't know why either but I'm pretty sure I'll find out why.

WM: Okay, the time now is approximately 7 – or excuse me, 1830 hours. This will conclude the conversation with Jordis Ferguson.