

DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC  
 Form 4  
 September 23, 2005

**FORM 4** UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION  
 Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person \*  
 Lewis William M Jr

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol  
 DARDEN RESTAURANTS INC [DRI]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer  
 (Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)  
 5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE, P.O. BOX 593330  
 (Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)  
 09/21/2005

Director  10% Owner  
 Officer (give title below)  Other (specify below)

ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)  
 Form filed by One Reporting Person  
 Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                                 |                                      |                                                    |                                | (A) or (D) Code V Amount (D) Price                                |                                                                                               |                                                          |                                   |
| Common Stock                    |                                      |                                                    |                                |                                                                   | 0                                                                                             | D                                                        |                                   |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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SEC 1474 (9-02)

**Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

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| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Securities (Instr. 3 and 4) | 8. Amount or Number of Shares |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Stock Option (Right to Buy)                | \$ 28.715                                              | 09/21/2005                           |                                                    | A                              | 3,000                                                                                   | 09/21/2006 09/21/2015                                    | Common Stock                                                  | 3,000                         |
| Phantom Stock Units                        | (1)                                                    | 09/21/2005                           |                                                    | A                              | 3,483                                                                                   | (2) (2)                                                  | Common Stock                                                  | 3,483                         |

## Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address                                                             | Relationships |           |         |       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|
|                                                                                            | Director      | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| Lewis William M Jr<br>5900 LAKE ELLENOR DRIVE<br>P.O. BOX 593330<br>ORLANDO, FL 32859-3330 | X             |           |         |       |

## Signatures

Douglas E. Wentz, Attorney-in-fact for WILLIAM M. LEWIS, JR., 5900 Lake Ellenor Drive, P.O. Box 593330, Orlando, FL 32859-3330

09/23/2005

\_\_Signature of Reporting Person

Date

## Explanation of Responses:

- \* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).
- \*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. See 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

(1) The actual conversion rate is 1-for-1.

The Reporting Person elected to defer all of the annual Director's grant under the Darden Restaurants, Inc. Compensation Plan for (2) Non-Employee Directors, to be paid out in Darden Restaurants, Inc. common stock upon the reporting person's termination of board service.

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, see Instruction 6 for procedure. Potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB number.