

CENTRAL GARDEN & PET CO
 Form 3
 December 17, 2007

FORM 3 UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

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INITIAL STATEMENT OF 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 * | | | 2. Date of Event Requiring Statement | 3. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol | |
| Â HARBERT MANAGEMENT CORP | | | (Month/Day/Year) | CENTRAL GARDEN & PET CO [CENT] | |
| (Last) | (First) | (Middle) | 12/05/2007 | | |
| ONE RIVERCHASE PARKWAY SOUTH,Â | | | 4. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer | | 5. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year) |
| (Street) | | | (Check all applicable) | | |
| BIRMINGHAM,Â ALÂ 35244 | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Director <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10% Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Other (give title below) (specify below) | | 6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line) <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by More than One Reporting Person |
| (City) | (State) | (Zip) | | | |

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 4) | 2. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned (Instr. 4) | 3. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5) | 4. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5) |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Common Stock | 2,200,000 <u>(1)</u> <u>(2)</u> | I | By Harbinger Capital Partners Master Fund I, Ltd. |
| Common Stock | 1,100,000 <u>(3)</u> | I | By Harbinger Capital Partners Special Situations Fund, L.P. |

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

SEC 1473 (7-02)

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Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned (e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

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| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 4) | 2. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 4) | 4. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 5. Ownership Form of Derivative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 5) | 6. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 5) |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| | Date Exercisable | Expiration Date | Title | Amount or Number of Shares | |

Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address | Relationships | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------|---------|-------|
| | Director | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| HARBERT MANAGEMENT CORP ONE RIVERCHASE PARKWAY SOUTH BIRMINGHAM, AL 35244 | ^ | ^ X | ^ | ^ |
| FALCONE PHILIP 555 MADISON AVE 16TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10022 | ^ | ^ X | ^ | ^ |
| HARBERT RAYMOND J ONE RIVERCHASE PARKWAY SOUTH BIRMINGHAM, AL 35244 | ^ | ^ X | ^ | ^ |
| LUCE MICHAEL D ONE RIVERCHASE PARKWAY SOUTH BIRMINGHAM, AL 35244 | ^ | ^ X | ^ | ^ |

Signatures

| | |
|---|------------|
| Harbert Management Corporation, By: /s/ William R. Lucas, Jr. | 12/17/2007 |
| __Signature of Reporting Person | Date |
| /s/ Philip Falcone | 12/17/2007 |
| __Signature of Reporting Person | Date |
| /s/ Raymond J. Harbert | 12/17/2007 |
| __Signature of Reporting Person | Date |
| /s/ Michael D. Luce | 12/17/2007 |
| __Signature of Reporting Person | Date |

Explanation of Responses:

- * If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 5(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) These securities are owned by Harbinger Capital Partners Master Fund I, Ltd. (the "Master Fund").
 - (2) These securities may be deemed to be beneficially owned by Harbinger Capital Partners Offshore Manager, L.L.C. ("Harbinger Management"), the investment manager of the Master Fund, HMC Investors, L.L.C., its managing member ("HMC Investors"), Harbert Management Corporation ("HMC"), the managing member of HMC Investors, Philip Falcone, a shareholder of HMC and the portfolio manager of the Master Fund, Raymond J. Harbert, a shareholder of HMC, and Michael D. Luce, a shareholder of HMC. Each such

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Reporting Person disclaims beneficial ownership of the reported securities except to the extent of his or its pecuniary interest therein, and this report shall not be deemed an admission that such Reporting Person is the beneficial owner of the securities for purposes of Section 16 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or for any other purpose.

- (3) These securities are owned by Harbinger Capital Partners Special Situations Fund, L.P. (the "Special Situations Fund"). These securities may be deemed to be beneficially owned by HMC, Philip Falcone, Raymond J. Harbert and Michael Luce. HMC wholly owns the managing member of the Special Situations Fund's general partner. Philip Falcone is the portfolio manager of the Special Situations Fund and is a shareholder of HMC. Raymond J. Harbert and Michael D. Luce are shareholders of HMC. Each such Reporting Person disclaims beneficial ownership of the reported securities except to the extent of his or its pecuniary interest therein, and this report shall not be deemed an admission that such Reporting Person is the beneficial owner of the securities for purposes of Section 16 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or for any other purpose.

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.