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Games begin on Sept. 15 and continue on Saturdays through Oct. 13 on the new Miracle League field, located at the L.C. Bird High School Sports Complex, 10301 Courthouse Rd. Players are asked to make a \$35 donation

to the organization.

The Miracle League's custom-designed field is made from cushioned synthetic turf that allows children in wheelchairs and walkers to glide unrestricted to their positions without fear of injury. Players are assisted by volunteer buddies.

To learn more about fall registration or volunteer opportunities, please contact Greg Curtis, 279-0521, or Mike Loving, 639-9587. Visit www.miracleleagueofrichmond.com for more information on the Miracle League of Richmond Chapter.



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June when Martin wrote a letter to friends and supporters saying that three majors and several captains and lieutenants had left the department "in recent years over concerns for the kinds of things they were being exposed to and asked to do... Other things are of such a nature, I would prefer they never make the news."

In the letter Martin endorsed Republican Garland Stafford for sheriff. Stafford had previously retired from the department as a major.

"Some of the things I've heard I have learned are true, some are not and some are not determinable," said Martin.

Prior to the primary, most elected Chesterfield officials endorsed Proffitt, including Davenport, Lt. Col. Jim Bourque (retired from the county police department), four county supervisors and two School Board members. Ten sheriffs from surrounding jurisdictions in the Richmond metro - some of them Democrats - also endorsed Proffitt. Republican Proffitt won the primary and is running against Democrat Anthony "Perry" DeMay and Independents Kendrick A. Hall and Steven A. Neal this November.

When former Sheriff Clarence G. Williams Jr. retired earlier this year, he tapped Proffitt to serve as interim sheriff until the November election. The appointment gives Proffitt an advantage in the election since he'll be the incumbent.

Shortly after Proffitt's swearing-in ceremony, Martin called for a special election - a request which was ultimately denied by a Chesterfield Circuit Court judge.

Martin says 17 persons from the Sheriff's Office, the Chesterfield Police Department and the business community have contacted him to express concerns about activities that took place under Williams' and Proffitt's leadership.

"It's not appropriate for me to detail those conversations," said Martin. "I can't be the source of any accusations because I don't have any firsthand knowledge."

Proffitt countered, "If you're part of the government and hear something wrong, you should report it. It should have been taken to the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office. Senator Martin's letter has demoralized the Sheriff's Office."

In response to Martin's June letter, Proffitt sent a certified letter to Martin dated July 18 "requesting a meeting" with Martin and seeking a response for a meeting date by July 31. Proffitt's letter copied five state legislators, Davenport, Williams, Board of Supervisors Chairman Kelly Miller and was also supplied to some members of the media including this newspaper.

Martin didn't respond by the letter deadline and said he doesn't intend to meet with Proffitt. "It's odd that he would send out a letter to the press on a subject that could be a potential problem," replied Martin.

"If Dennis or I thought we had something to hide, we certainly wouldn't be sending Martin

a letter and copying the Commonwealth's Attorney," replied Williams. "And we wouldn't send it to the media. Steve needs to stop spreading rumors that hurt the Sheriff's Office."

Williams acknowledged that in February of 2002 Deputy David Hix and several jail inmates performed work at the home of "a distant relative" following a winter storm. The relative was a participant in the Seniors' Touch program, which provides assistance to about 20 elderly persons in the county following bad weather. Williams said the relative was housebound because of her age and health.

"I told [the deputy] to remove the trees from her driveway, but he took it upon himself to do more," explained Williams. That included shoveling the sidewalk, putting down salt and hauling away some downed shrubbery. Hix has worked for the Sheriff's Office twice, but is currently employed in the private sector.

Martin declined to provide any names and phone numbers of the 17 persons he had talked with, but said he would ask some of them to contact this newspaper.

The only person who responded was Fred Pennington, a former deputy, who said he and several inmates performed some work at Eppington Plantation about eight years ago that he believes was improper. The 44-acre plantation with a Thomas Jefferson connection will one day become a county park.

Pennington is unsure how anyone might have benefited from the work at Eppington. The grounds there are maintained by both Sheriff's Office crews and the Chesterfield's Parks and Recreation Department.

"I don't know how anyone could have benefited," said Mike Golden, director of Parks and Recreation. He has headed Parks and Recreation for the past 14 years.

Pennington is also unhappy that Williams and Proffitt brought people into the Sheriff's Office, leapfrogging personnel who were climbing the ladder within the department. That complaint was also voiced by others prior to Proffitt's victory in the Republican primary last June.

Years ago, Proffitt had worked for Williams while both were in the Chesterfield Police Department, and in 1996, Williams recruited him to join the Sheriff's Office. Proffitt was a captain in the police department and became a captain in the Sheriff's Office.

None of the other persons Martin said had contacted him called this newspaper to tell their stories.

"We went public because Dennis [Proffitt] had to address the rumors and innuendos being spread by Martin," said Susan Craven, a political consultant in Proffitt's campaign to be an elected sheriff. "The rumors and innuendos need to stop."

Miller, who was copied on Proffitt's letter, said he doesn't know much about the matter. "Anyway, I stay out of the press on intra-party matters," the Republican supervisor said.

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