



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JANUARY 30, 2018**

## **Pirates, local officials kick off 50 years in Bradenton during Feb. 12 press conference at Downtown Central Library**

*Local fans can loan Pirates, MLB memorabilia to library exhibit celebrating Pirates' golden anniversary in Manatee County*

Bradenton, FL – The Pittsburgh Pirates, the City of Bradenton, Manatee County, and the Manatee County Public Library System have announced plans to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Pirates baseball in Bradenton. Bradenton has hosted the team since 1969 and the Pirates maintain a year-round presence in the local community.

Representatives from the Pirates, Bradenton, and Manatee County will hold a press conference on Monday, February 12 at 5:30 p.m. at the Downtown Central Library to coincide with the launch of a new traveling exhibit, "Baseball in Manatee County: 50 Years of Pittsburgh Pirates Spring Training". The exhibit will include baseball history as far back as the 1920s, with the primary focus being the half century the Pirates have called Bradenton home. A reception to open the exhibit will be held following the press conference.

Community members with memorabilia relating to the long history of baseball in Bradenton, especially the Pirates, are encouraged to submit them to the libraries for temporary display. Selected memorabilia will be on loan temporarily as we display it in our 50 Years of Pirates Spring Training exhibit throughout county libraries in 2018. Please contact [david.breakfield@mymanatee.org](mailto:david.breakfield@mymanatee.org) with photos and info about your memorabilia.

The traveling display will be available to be viewed at several libraries throughout Manatee County in 2018:

- Downtown Central Library- February
- Braden River Library- March
- Island Library- May
- South Manatee Library- June
- Rocky Bluff Library- July
- Palmetto Library- August

The Pirates are assembling a pop-up museum exhibit inside LECOM Park for fans of the Pirates and Bradenton Marauders to enjoy during games. The exhibit will include multimedia displays to highlight the deep roots the Pirates have in Bradenton and Manatee County. Access to the pop-up museum will require a game ticket to regularly scheduled Pirates Spring Training and Bradenton Marauders games.

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Manatee County will honor the milestone anniversary of Pirates Spring Training on Tuesday, February 13. A proclamation will be issued at the Board of County Commissioners Meeting recognizing the partnership between the Pirates and the local communities.

The annual Pirates Pep Rally on Old Main Street in downtown Bradenton will be held on Saturday, February 17 from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Live music from The Yesterdayze will be provided. Organized autograph sessions with current and former Pirates players will take place on the street.

LECOM Park will host 16 Pirates Spring Training games in 2018, starting with a visit from the New York Yankees on Saturday, February 24 at 1:05 p.m. The Bradenton Marauders will play 70 home games at LECOM Park from April through August. The Marauders are the High-A affiliate of the Pirates and have called Bradenton home since 2010.

Learn more about Pittsburgh Pirates Spring Training and the Bradenton Marauders at [www.Pirates.com/Spring](http://www.Pirates.com/Spring) and [www.BradentonMarauders.com](http://www.BradentonMarauders.com).

For more information on Manatee County Public Library System, visit [mymanatee.org/library](http://mymanatee.org/library).

The City of Bradenton is online at [www.CityofBradenton.com](http://www.CityofBradenton.com).

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