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## **Sarasota County libraries and Baltimore Orioles team up to promote reading**

For the second consecutive year, Sarasota County libraries and the Baltimore Orioles are teaming up to promote reading through the Orioles Big League Reader program. Children who sign up for the program and read three or more books in the month of February will receive a reserved grandstand ticket to the Wednesday, March 14, Orioles versus Pittsburgh Pirates game.

Last season, over 100 Sarasota-area children completed the program and were eligible to receive a free ticket to an Orioles spring training game. March 14 is also "Kids Run the Bases Day." Following the game, all kids 14 and under will be invited onto the field to take their turn running the bases.

"Just like rounding the bases in a ballgame, each time a child reads a book they advance further on the road to success." said Sarabeth Kalajian, general manager, Sarasota County library system.

During the month of February, children ages 6 and up who read three or more books from any of the nine Sarasota County public libraries will receive a Home Run Reading Card. Upon reading the books and returning them to the library, a library staff member will initial their reading card, which is good for a reserved grandstand ticket to the March 14 game at Ed Smith Stadium.

"The Orioles are excited to once again partner with Sarasota County libraries to promote a love of both reading and baseball among area youth," said Orioles Director of Florida Operations Laura Williams. "Last year's program was a great success and we look forward to rewarding even more youth who embrace reading this spring."

The Baltimore Orioles spring training season begins at Ed Smith Stadium on Monday, March 5, when the Orioles take on the Pittsburgh Pirates at 7:05 p.m.

For more information, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask about the Big League Reader program.

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