

The  
**Phillie Phanatic's**  
**SPRING TRAINING**



By Tom Burgoyne  
Illustrated by Len Epstein



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Manufactured in the United States

Written by Tom Burgoyne  
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**Phillies™**





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The Phillie Phanatic and his best friend, Lefty the Cat, stared out the window at the falling snow and sighed. "Look at all that snow. When is it going to be baseball season?" Lefty asked.





"The baseball season doesn't start for a couple of months," the mascot of the Phillies replied. "I wish it started tomorrow," Lefty said.





The Phanatic's eyes brightened. "I have an idea, Lefty. How would you like to go to spring training with me?"  
"What's spring training?" asked the curious cat.





"Spring training is the time when the Phillies travel to Clearwater, Florida, to get ready for the baseball season. I go to spring training every year because it helps me get warmed up, too," the Phanatic explained.  
"If it means getting warmed up, count me in!" Lefty joked.





The next day, the Phanatic connected a slick-looking sidecar to his trusty red four-wheeler. It's a long drive to Florida and he wanted Lefty to be comfortable.





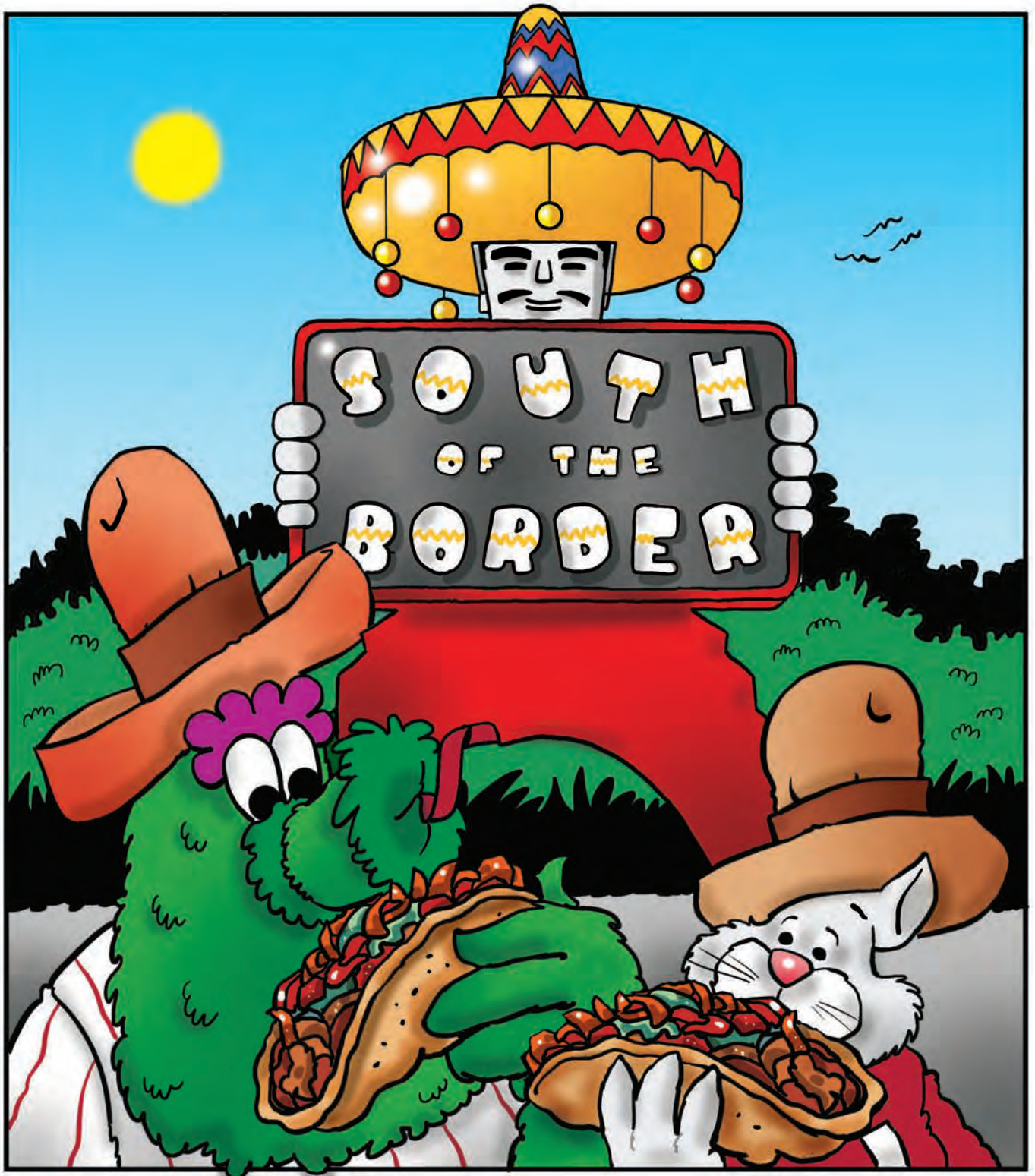
The Phanatic's mom, Phoebe, gave her son a hug. "Be careful on your trip, Phanatic, and take good care of Lefty," she said. "I will, Mom, and don't worry, I'll be back in time for Opening Day when the real baseball season begins."





Before long, the two best buddies were cruising down the road on their way to Florida. They drove through Delaware and Maryland and got excited when they passed through the nation's capital - Washington D.C.





They motored their way through two more beautiful states - Virginia and North Carolina. When they entered South Carolina, the two adventurers stopped at a fun rest area called South of the Border. They bought sombreros and ate tacos for lunch.





The weather warmed up as the Phanatic and his friend cruised through Georgia. Lefty perked up his nose and said, "Hey, Phanatic, I smell oranges."  
"Do you know what that means, Lefty? We're in Florida!"  
the Phanatic exclaimed.





After driving through much of Florida, the Phanatic and Lefty entered the City of Clearwater - the Spring Training Home of the Philadelphia Phillies. Suddenly, they heard a voice from above. "Yo, Phanatic, welcome back to Clearwater!"





The Phanatic and Lefty looked up. A huge pelican was gliding over them. The Phanatic recognized his old friend. "Lefty, this is Perry the Pelican. He lives at the beach." Lefty responded, "Nice to meet you, Perry. I've never been to the beach before." "Follow me!" Perry yelled.





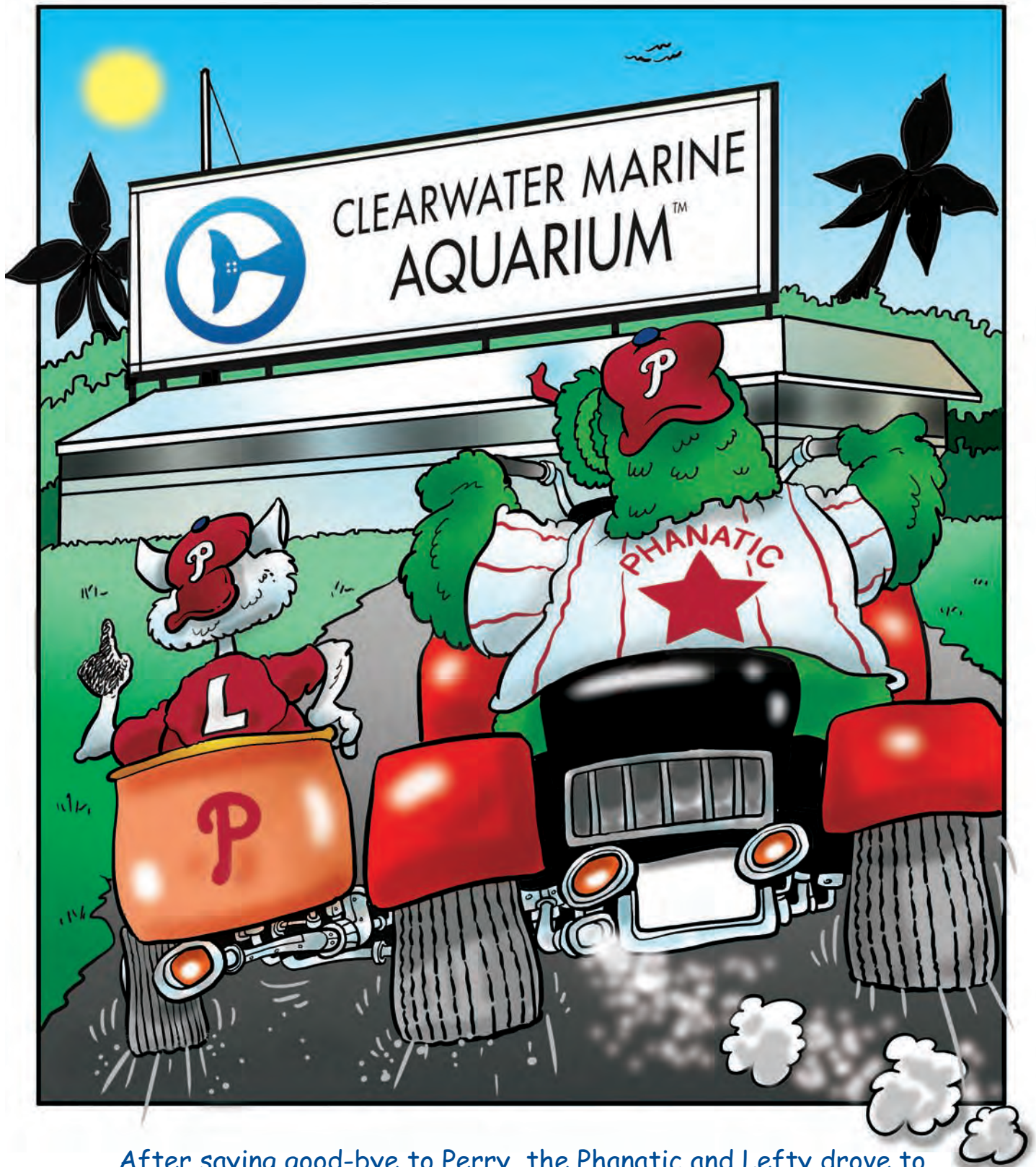
The three friends arrived at the beach. Lefty looked out over the white sand beach to the sparkling water and said, "This is beautiful, Perry. Look how blue the ocean is." "That's not the ocean, Lefty. That's the Gulf of Mexico," said Perry.





Lefty swam in the water as the Phanatic played in the sand. "I wonder if it's still snowing back home," Lefty asked the Phanatic. The two laughed under the warmth of the Florida sun.





After saying good-bye to Perry, the Phanatic and Lefty drove to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium to visit another friend.





There was a big water tank inside the aquarium. As they got closer to it, a dolphin leaped from the water and yelled, "Hey, Phanatic, long time, no see!"





Lefty recognized the playful dolphin right away and exclaimed, "Is that Winter the Dolphin? I've seen him in the movies!" "That's him," the Phanatic replied. "He's a big Phillies fan, too."





They walked over to the edge of the huge tank. Winter lost his tail in an accident and now wears a brace that helps him swim.





"Winter, this is my friend Lefty. He's never been to spring training before so I'm showing him around," the Phanatic said. Winter replied, "Thanks for coming to visit, guys. Go Phillies!"





At the end of the day, the Phanatic and his friend watched the sunset from a long dock called Pier 60.





People gather there every night to watch the sun go down.  
Everyone cheered as the sun disappeared into the water.





The Phanatic and Lefty woke up early the next day to go to the ballpark. On the way, they stopped at a restaurant that's popular with Phillies fans called Lenny's to eat a big breakfast.





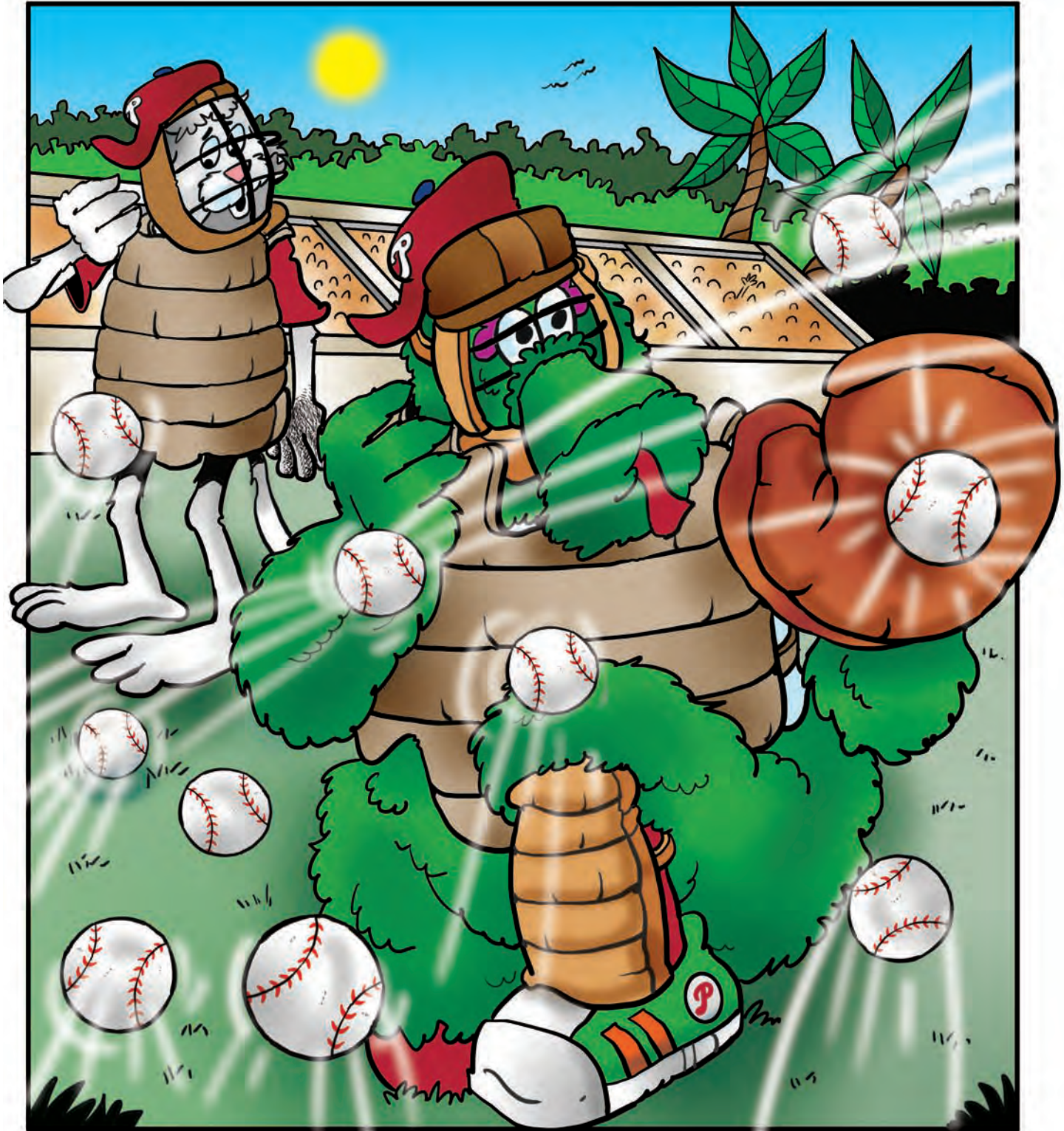
After breakfast, they drove to the ballpark. The Phanatic pointed and said, "There it is, Lefty, Bright House Field. That's where the Phillies play their spring training games." "It's awesome!" Lefty said.





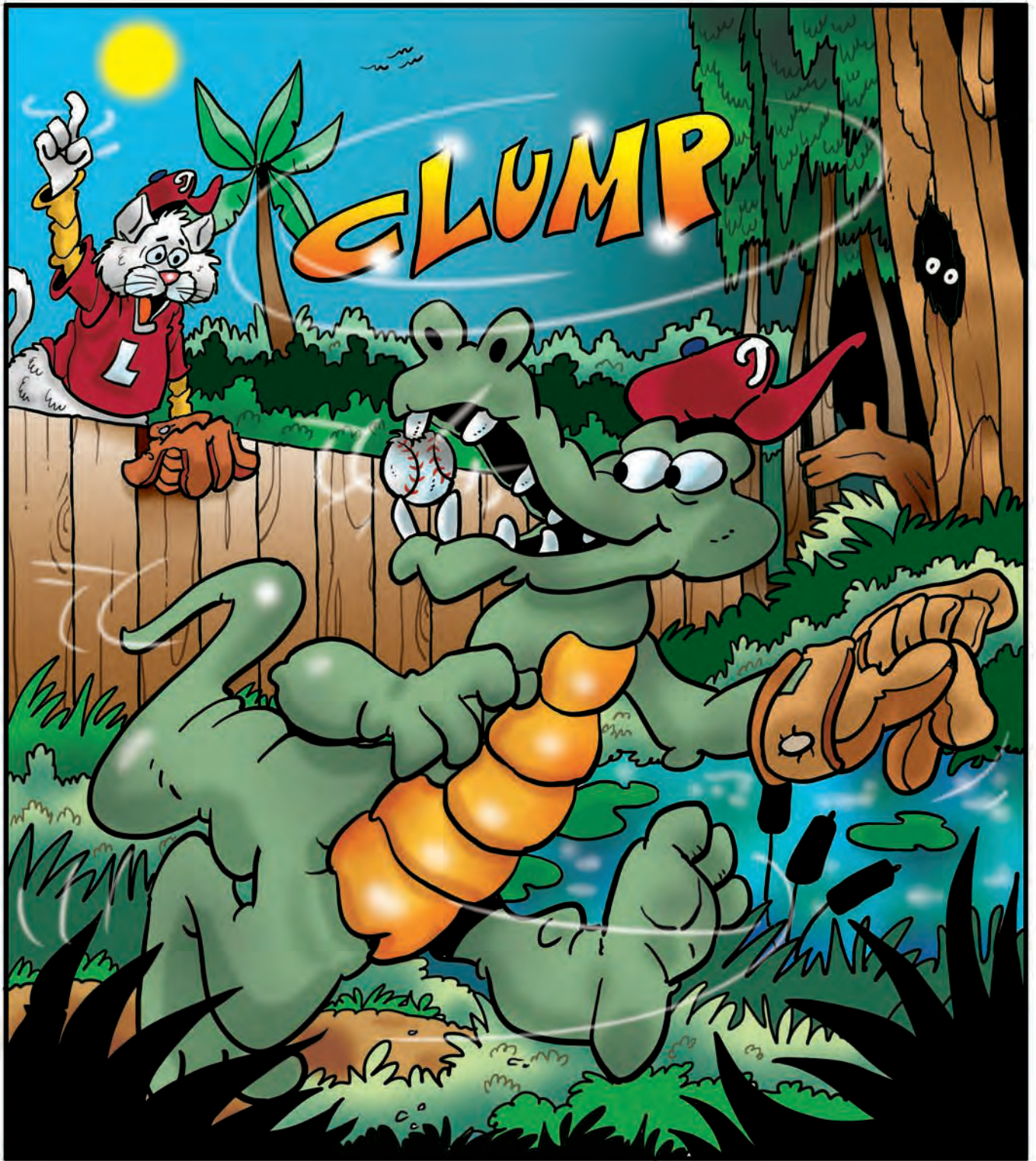
Spring training is a time for the players to get in shape. The Phanatic and Lefty joined the players on the field to exercise.





Pitchers need to get their arms loose during spring training. The Phanatic and Lefty put on catcher's equipment and caught pitches with their big catcher's mitts.





During batting practice, some of the Phillies players hit home runs over the right field fence and into the swamp. "Nice catch!" Lefty called out to one of the friendly alligators who lives nearby.





The gates at the ballpark opened and people of all ages streamed through the turnstiles. "Look at all the Phillies fans. It feels like we're back in Philadelphia," Lefty said. "Fans of the Phillies travel to Florida every year for spring training," the mascot said.





Just before the game started, the players from both teams were introduced and the national anthem was played. The Phillie Phanatic stood behind home plate for the ceremony.





Looking out at the beautiful field, he smelled the fresh green grass and watched the palm trees sway in the breeze. "I love Phillies spring training," he thought to himself.





Spring training is a time for the Phanatic to get ready for the regular season. He got into shape by running up and down the aisles, getting the crowd to cheer louder and louder.





He made some of the Phillies fans feel like they were home by delivering cheesesteaks to their seats.





The Phanatic dressed up in a new pirate's costume that he had made just for spring training. The crowd laughed when "Green Beard Phanatic" danced with the third base umpire.





The Phanatic had his favorite toy - his world famous hot dog launcher - shipped to Bright House Field so he could shoot hot dogs to the hungry Phillies fans. Look at those hot dogs fly!





After the Phillies won the game, Lefty said to the Phanatic, "I know that this was only a practice game but you look like you'll be ready when the real baseball season starts back home on Opening Day."





Before traveling back to Philadelphia, Lefty turned to the Phanatic and asked, "Can we come back again next year?" "You got it, pal," the Phanatic replied as they drove off to watch another beautiful Florida sunset.



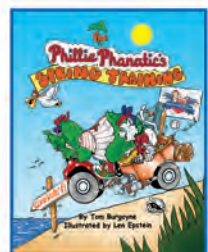
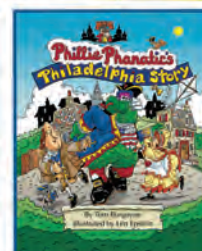
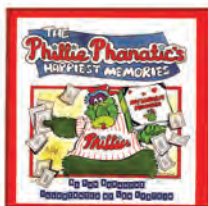




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Spring training is the time of year when the Phillies prepare for the upcoming baseball season. The Phillie Phanatic needs to get ready, too. He has to learn new dance moves, practice leading cheers and make sure his hot dog launcher is tuned up for the regular season.

The Phanatic invites his friend, Lefty the Cat, on a scenic journey from chilly Philadelphia to sunny Clearwater, Florida - the Spring Training Home of the Philadelphia Phillies. The Phanatic feels right at home with all the Phillies fans who also made the trip to Clearwater to enjoy baseball under the warmth of the Florida sun!

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