



HAPPENINGS of PORT ST. JOHN Inc.

Weekly Edition
September 18, 2026

A New Baby At Brevard Zoo!

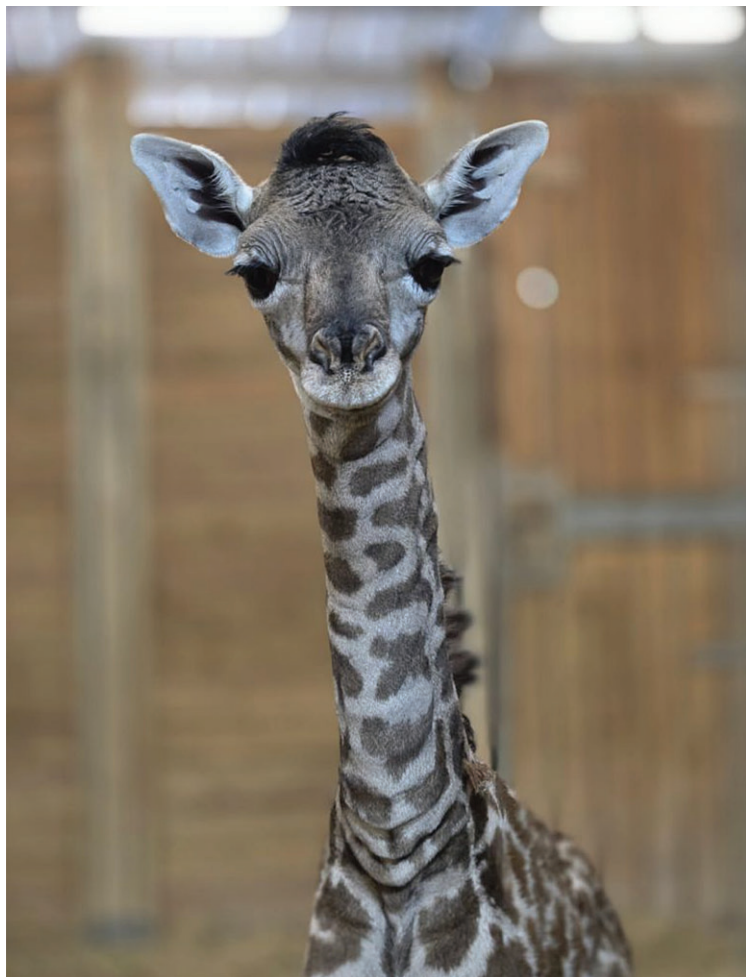


Photo credits - Brevard Zoo

On Wednesday, September 16, a nearly 6-foot-tall bundle of joy arrived at Brevard Zoo! An 119-pound female giraffe calf was born to 12-year-old mother, Kumi, and 6-year-old father, Mapenzi. This is the first giraffe born at Brevard Zoo since Mapenzi's birth in 2020! Zoo supporters Mark and Nancy Tomassone are proud to name the calf "Gail" in honor of Nancy's mother.

The birth took place in the Zoo's behind-the-scenes Africa Barn. The rest of the giraffe herd was able to be nearby and the Zoo's other female giraffes, Tisa (who is also pregnant) and Aurora, were able to be in an adjacent stall to Kumi. Gail stood for the first time just 30 minutes after birth.

Gail was examined by the Zoo's veterinary team

and appears to be doing well. Both mom and baby are remaining in the behind-the-scenes Africa Barn for the time being to bond. The comfort of Kumi and Gail will guide timing for introductions to the rest of the giraffe herd and to the Zoo's public-facing giraffe habitat.

Gail's arrival is good news for the Masai giraffe subspecies, which is considered endangered and is threatened by habitat loss, poaching, disease and more in Tanzania and Kenya. Kumi and Mapenzi were paired up according to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Species Survival Plan for Masai giraffes. This program ensures there is a healthy, genetically diverse safeguard population in AZA-accredited organizations.

See more photos and get more information about Gail and other Zoo events at brevardzoo.org.



Gail and mom, Kumi.

Parrish Healthcare Orthopedic Surgeon Tyler Tantillo, DO, Earns Board Certification



Parrish Healthcare fellowship-trained hand and upper-extremity orthopedic surgeon Tyler Tantillo, DO, has earned Board Certification in Orthopedic Surgery from the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery—a distinguished professional milestone recognizing his expertise, commitment to clinical excellence and dedication to patient-centered orthopedic care.

Dr. Tantillo specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of conditions affecting the hand, wrist, elbow and upper extremity. He provides both surgical and nonsurgical treatment options designed to help patients restore function, relieve pain and return to the activities they enjoy.

Dr. Tantillo's clinical interests include hand and finger arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, cubital tunnel syndrome, fractures, tendon and nerve injuries, trigger finger, sports-related injuries and work-related conditions affecting the upper extremities. He also specializes in the treatment of wrist arthritis and reconstructive procedures involving the hand, wrist and elbow.

In addition to traditional surgical techniques, Dr. Tantillo offers minimally invasive and wide-awake procedures for selected hand conditions. When

appropriate, he utilizes Wide Awake Local Anesthesia No Tourniquet (WALANT) techniques, allowing many procedures to be performed without general anesthesia and potentially helping patients recover more quickly and return to their daily activities sooner.

Dr. Tantillo earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine in Middletown, New York, where he graduated as Valedictorian and received Summa Cum Laude honors. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency training at the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell in Huntington, New York. He subsequently completed advanced fellowship training in Hand and Upper Extremity Surgery at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, where he received specialized training in the treatment of complex disorders of the hand, wrist and elbow.

Dr. Tantillo is currently accepting new patients at two convenient locations: Parrish Healthcare Center in Port St. John, 5005 Port St. John Parkway, Suite 2200, and Parrish Healthcare Center in Titus Landing, 250 Harrison Street, Titusville.

For more information about Dr. Tyler Tantillo, please visit parrishhealthcare.com/tantillo. To schedule an appointment, call 321-268-6868.

2026 Manufacturing Job Fair

Wednesday, October 14 • 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Manufacturing isn't just about making things—it's about shaping the future. Celebrate Manufacturing



Month at the Aerospace & Defense Training Center, 1415 Chaffee Dr., Titusville to explore the many opportunities in this thriving industry.

The event is FREE! Walk-ins are welcome or you can register to speed your entrance at www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-manufacturing-job-fair-tickets-2000993123297?aff=odcleoeventsincollection.

With an estimated 3.8 million new manufacturing workers needed in the U.S. over the next decade*, there's never been a better time to explore a career in modern manufacturing. Our Manufacturing Job Fair connects job seekers with employers and real-world opportunities that can open the door to a rewarding career in this growing industry.

Find more employment opportunities at:
careersourcebfv.com/calendar/job-seeker-events/

**Source: The Manufacturing Institute*

What to Know About Landscaping With A Septic System

Conventional septic systems have been widely used in the US since the 1940's. In Florida, nearly 1 in 3 households depends on a septic system. UF/IFAS researchers estimate more than 2.5 million systems are in use across the state.

The basic components of a septic system include the underground tank and a drain/leach field. They are designed from a public health perspective, and as long as they are properly sited and maintained (placed in adequate soils with proper setbacks from the water table), they typically do an excellent job of removing pathogens and protecting human health. In Florida, this setback from the water table means that the septic drain field may be level with the surrounding landscape or raised up as a mound above it.

One thing to note is that even though they do an excellent job removing pathogens, they do not always do an excellent job of removing nutrients. A conventional septic tank removes only about 30 percent of the nitrogen that flows into it. That means even a well-maintained system will become a source of excess nitrogen to the surrounding soil and can leach to groundwater.

Furthermore, failing septic systems can easily contaminate groundwater, private and public supply wells, and regional water bodies. Proper maintenance is critical to prevent systems from failing. Part of that revolves around landscaping. So what plants can be placed on and around a drain field? After all, roots in the ground are a requirement to reduce erosion and help soak up extra water and nutrients in the area.

Simple turfgrass is the most common landscaping over drain fields. On most lawns, septic fields covered with turfgrass is dotted with native moisture loving "weeds" such as dollarweed, violets and dichondra.

If you cannot or do not want to plant turf, other plants can be used, but there are some factors to consider when selecting plants for your site

- Avoid plants with deep taproots such as sunshine mimosa, bamboo, pampas grass, etc.
- Do not choose plants that require supplemental fertilizer or irrigation
- Do not plant vegetables or fruits
- Avoid planting woody plants, shrubs and trees around the drain field. Tree roots can grow 2-3x the diameter of the mature width of the canopy
- The drain field needs sun to perform optimally, so do not shade the area heavily with trees and shrubs- even planted at a distance. The use of shallow rooted water-loving herbaceous plants such as aster, blue stem grass, plumbago, pink muhly grass, yarrow, coreopsis, river oats, iris, columbine, phlox, liatris, gaillardia, black eyed susans, spiderwort, cardinal flower, cast iron plant, perennial peanut, milkweed or frogfruit are good



native and Florida-Friendly alternatives

- Skip planting things that will need repeated division over time to reduce the risk of damaging the septic field

Drain field pipes can be just a few inches beneath the soil and 18-36" wide, with pipes 8 to 10 feet apart. Here are some more things to avoid when landscaping on or near a septic drain field:

- Adding more soil to the area
- Tilling the area for planting
- Mulching any of the drain field area (plastic, bark, rock, or any type of mulch)
- Using landscape fabric
- Digging with shovels or tools below 6" in depth
- Irrigating within 10'
- Driving vehicles or heavy machinery over the area
- Neighboring trees too close to the system?

Barriers of various types have been designed to deflect roots. They are typically installed vertically in the soil to a depth of at least 2' with the intent of directing roots to grow deeper into the soil, or to grow in another direction. They need to run the entire length of the drain field. To install a root barrier, some of the tree roots may need to be cut. Just as a landowner can trim limbs that overhang their property line, they can also trim roots of a neighboring tree. Be sensitive to the tree and make minimal, clean cuts to ensure the least amount of harm is done.

Caring for a property with a septic system comes with great responsibility and some limitations. There are a lot of factors to consider, but with some careful planning this area of your landscape could become a beautiful feature full of flowers and aesthetic appeal.

Thank you to Duval County Master Gardener Volunteer, Stephanie Means.

Resources for additional information:

- programs.ifas.ufl.edu/septic-systems/
- ask.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/SS687

Fox Lake Boat Ramp Closure

The boat ramp and dock at Fox Lake Park in Titusville will be closed to the public beginning Monday, September 21. The closure is due to the demolition and replacement of the existing dock. The project is expected to be completed by the end of December and signage has been posted at the park. During this time, the public will still have access to the canoe/kayak launch, which will remain open.

Fox Lake Park is located at 4400 Fox Lake Road, Titusville. For questions regarding the project, call the North Area Parks Operations Office at 321-264-5105.

Space Coast Weavers & Fiber Artists

Susan Crenshaw will present a program on Handmade Brooms at the September 26 meeting, 10 a.m. at the Merritt Island Public Library, 1195 N Courtenay Pkwy.

Although most brooms now are made in a factory, for thousands of years they were handmade in every country and culture. Early brooms, made from twigs and grasses, were designed for domestic use but they also carried with them the artistry of the maker. Today, traditional brooms are crafted using natural fibers, such as straw, grass and even “broomcorn,” a type of sorghum that provides durable bristles.



Susan Crenshaw will demonstrate the craft of broom construction and show examples of brooms she has made. Susan says, “I began making brooms after discovering a class in Clifton Forge, Virginia, taught by an Appalachian craftsman. I quickly fell in love with the traditional craft and took a refresher class in mid-2025 to build my skills. I enjoy selecting, sanding and oiling broomsticks, but wrapping each broom is my favorite part—I cannot stop until it is finished, which means I have no unfinished brooms (projects) laying around. I value working with natural materials like broomcorn, preserving Appalachian tradition and creating useful, beautiful objects. In the future, I hope to learn advanced weaving, braiding and ways to incorporate colored broomcorn and other creative elements.”

The goal of the Space Coast Weavers & Fiber Artists is to explore all fiber arts. Individuals have shared weaving, basket making, spinning, dyeing, rug hooking and more.

Meetings are free and open to the public. For more information, call Jeanie McCormack, 321-266-1610, or visit spacecoastweaversandfiberartists.org/.



Parrish Healthcare Open Interviews

Parrish Healthcare hosts open interviews every Tuesday, 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Parrish Medical Center, 951 N. Washington Ave., Titusville.

• Registered Nurses (RN)

- Emergency Department, Med/Surg & Operating Room
- Charge Nurses
- Cardiovascular Invasive Specialist
- Rapid Response
- Discharge
- Labor & Delivery

• Medical Technologists

- CT/MRI
- Radiology

• Certified Surgical Scrub Technicians

• Surgical Scrub Techs

• Nursing Assistants

• Medical Assistants

• Cardiovascular Invasive Specialist (CVIS)

• Paramedics

• Pharmacists

• EMTs

• Surgical First Assistant

For additional information regarding open positions within Parrish Healthcare, please visit parrishhealthcare.com/careers.

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Be a Parrish Care Partner!**

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