

PRINT-ONLY
SUBSCRIBER-EXCLUSIVE SPECIAL EDITION

Recipes of the year

Chefs from USA TODAY's Restaurants of the Year share their signature recipes you'll love



LIMITED TIME OFFER
 BASEMENT WATERPROOFING
\$ 500 OFF
 OR
0% FINANCING
 Offer Ends March 31, 2026

Foundation Restoration

CALL TODAY:
877-MAKE-DRY
 foundationrest.com

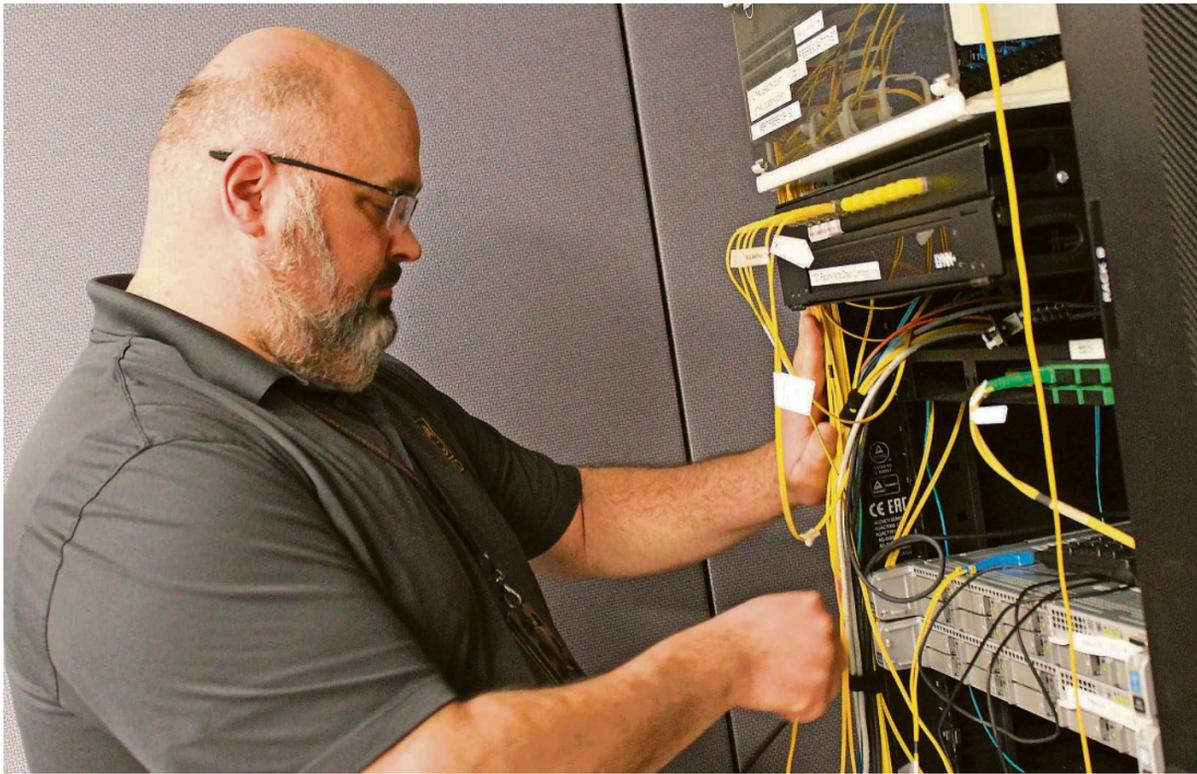
THE MONROE NEWS

W E E K E N D

SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2026 | MONROENEWS.COM

SINCE 1825 | MONROE, MICH. | PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

MONROE COUNTY ISD



Nicholas Hay of Monroe, Monroe County ISD director of information services, checks the fiber infrastructure that connects the school districts in Monroe County. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY REESE BOWLING

District chief addresses millage renewal

Lisa Vidaurri Bowling
The Monroe News
USA TODAY NETWORK

Dr. Stephen McNew, superintendent of the Monroe County Intermediate School District, wants voters to know the facts about the upcoming educational technology millage renewal election on

Tuesday, May 5, 2026.

This proposal will allow the intermediate school district to continue to levy a regional enhancement millage that will expire with the 2026 levy.

If renewed, 0.9866 mill for a period of five years, 2027-2031, will be levied to

See **MILLAGE RENEWAL**, Page 2A



When it comes to technology, Stephen McNew, Monroe County ISD superintendent, said, "Every student in the county has a device of some sort."

Monroe seniors: How to apply for new \$1K scholarships

Janis Reeser
The Monroe News
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Monroe Thrift Shop Association will award more than 25 scholarships to Monroe County high school graduating seniors this year, according to a community announcement.

Each scholarship is valued at \$1,000, and eligible students can come from any Monroe County high school or be home-schooled. Scholarship applications are available at each school's counselor's office and at the Thrift Shop, at 119 S. Monroe St.

The deadline for submitting applications is 4 p.m. April 1.

Applicants can mail their forms or deliver them in person to the Thrift Shop to ensure they meet the deadline. The Thrift Shop's hours of operation are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday through

See **SCHOLARSHIPS**, Page 2A

Regional opinion team champions local voices

Scott Atkinson
Holland Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - MICHIGAN

"The most fruitful and natural exercise for our minds is, in my opinion, conversation."

So said Michel De Montaigne, credited

with inventing what we now call the essay, in 1588.

It is that word, "conversation," that comes to mind when I think of the purpose of opinion writing. The Op-ed section of the paper is not just a place for sounding off. It is a place for introducing new ideas and fresh perspectives, a place

to build on and respond to what has already been said (or written).

It's a place for conversation.

It is with this in mind that I am honored to introduce the Center for Community Journalism — Michigan's regional

See **VOICES**, Page 2A

Serving your family with dignity and compassion

Rupp FUNERAL HOME, INC.
Since 1864

SERVICES WE OFFER...
 Custom Markers and Monuments
 Traditional Funeral Services
 Memorial Services Cremation Services
 Pre-Planning Anatomical Donations • Pet Cremation

OTHER Options...
 Audio and visual recording • Aftercare Memorial Jewelry
 Remembrance Items

The "Rupp Family" has been through changes, making sure one thing always remains the same... "Dedicated Service!"

PAYING TRIBUTE TO YOUR LOVED ONES

2345 S. Custer Rd., Monroe, MI 48161
 734.241.9300 • www.ruppfuneralhomeinc.com

MG-42709765

SPRING FORWARD

Daylight saving time began at 2 a.m. Sunday. Don't forget to set your clocks forward one hour. Now is also a good time to change the batteries in your smoke detectors.



Subscriber-only eNewspaper

The eNewspaper is an electronic copy of your print newspaper. Enjoy every page by going to monroenews.com/enewspaper or scan this code on your mobile device. You will also find late news and sports in the bonus sections. Check it out today!



Edition number 56
To subscribe
888-775-2709
©2026 \$4.00



QUICKLOOK

Suzanne Wisler
(734) 240-5746
swisler@monroenews.com

Scholarships

Continued from Page 1A

Saturday.
This story was created by Janis Reeser, jreeser@usatodayco.com with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Journalists were involved in every step of the information gathering, review, editing and publishing process. Learn more at <https://cm.usatoday.com/ethical-conduct/>.

Each scholarship is valued at \$1,000, and eligible students can come from any Monroe County high school or be home-schooled.



The Thrift Shop Association of Monroe is located at 119 S. Monroe St. in downtown Monroe. LISA VIDAURRI-BOWLING/ THE MONROE NEWS

Voices

Continued from Page 1A

opinion team. As part of the USA Today Co. Network, the CCJ — Michigan opinion team will focus on serving small communities like yours throughout the state. Our objective is to foster impactful discussions by providing new insights and perspectives on topics that matter most to you and your family, including cost of living, safety, children and schools.

As opinion columnists, our job isn't just to tell you what we or other people are thinking, or how you should think. It's to ask questions. Why are eggs, yet again, so expensive? What does the new education law passed by legislators in Lansing mean for our kids? That's the great part about being a journalist. All those questions we ask in our everyday lives, all those rhetorical *why's* and *how's* — well, we get to call the people in power up and ask those questions. That's the public service we're meant to provide. So the next time you find yourself muttering *why...* give us a shout. We might know from some report-



Atkinson Barbour McCauley

ing we've already done. Or maybe we need to make a phone call.

Meet our team

Byron McCauley joins us, most recently, from the Cincinnati Enquirer. Over his more than 30-year career, McCauley has written — and racked up several awards for — telling stories all over the country. Now based in Lansing, McCauley says he was drawn to the opinion page because it was where he always felt he could have the greatest impact.

"We get the opportunity to work with readers to set the agenda and then look for long-term solutions to challenging problems, he says. You can see his work here.

McCauley credits his work ethic and writing style from growing up on a farm in

Plain Dealing, Louisiana, where he learned "grit" and hard work by selling purple hull by the side of the road and corraling escaped cows before school started.

Byron once asked a local historian about the origin of the city's name and was told, "we deal plainly." Such is Byron's style — empathetic and illuminating, but also direct and to the point. With Byron, what you see — or read — is what you get.

Editorial assistant Kimberly Barbour is a career TV news anchor and reporter who plays the vital role of taking our content beyond the written word and into video.

She got her start as a producer in West Virginia, where she grew up, but you could argue her career really began as a kid in her father's log cabin general store where she was "the talker."

"I would sit by the door and talk to everybody that came in. I knew everybody's name," she says. "I just liked getting to hear people talk, and then someone told me I could make a job out of that."

Barbour has lived in Michigan for seven years now. She credits her youngest daughter, a Michigan native who Barbour

says entered the world saying "ope," with helping her learn more about the mitten state, such as showing her the delicacy that is ranch dressing paired with pepperoni pizza.

That leaves me, a lifetime Michigan resident who, like Byron and Kimberly, I grew up in a small town. Unlike Kimberly, I was not a talker, but I did like to listen and learned a thing or two about hard work from growing up in a construction family. For about 20 years now, I've been a Michigan-based journalist, reporting, writing and editing about Michigan's outdoors, arts, education, politics, food, pirates (really) and everything in between.

You'll be hearing from me on our opinion page, but I'd also like to hear from you — and yes, I really mean that. Tell us what you think we got right or wrong. Send those questions. My job is to keep a handle on what Michiganders in communities like yours care about most, and the best way for me to learn that is by, well, having a conversation.

You can reach out to me at satkinson@usatodayco.com or submit your own opinion.

Let's talk.

Millage renewal

Continued from Page 1A

provide operating funds to enhance other state and local funding for constituent district technology purposes and related expenses, according to the ballot language.

An informational sheet is being distributed to explain who is conducting the millage renewal election, why the election is countywide, how the money will be used and how the funds are distributed.

McNew said as required by state law, the boards of education for nine public school districts, the Monroe County ISD and two charter schools in Monroe County have requested that the ISD conduct an election to seek renewal of the county-wide millage for educational technology supporting K-12 curriculum goals.

"It is a renewal request so property taxes will not increase," McNew said. "The proposal renews a 0.9866 mill levy for five years, equal to 0.9866 cents per \$1,000 of taxable home value. So, if you have a house that is worth \$100,000, you would pay \$98.66 a year. This is our sixth renewal."

When it comes to technology, McNew said "every student in the county has a device of some sort."

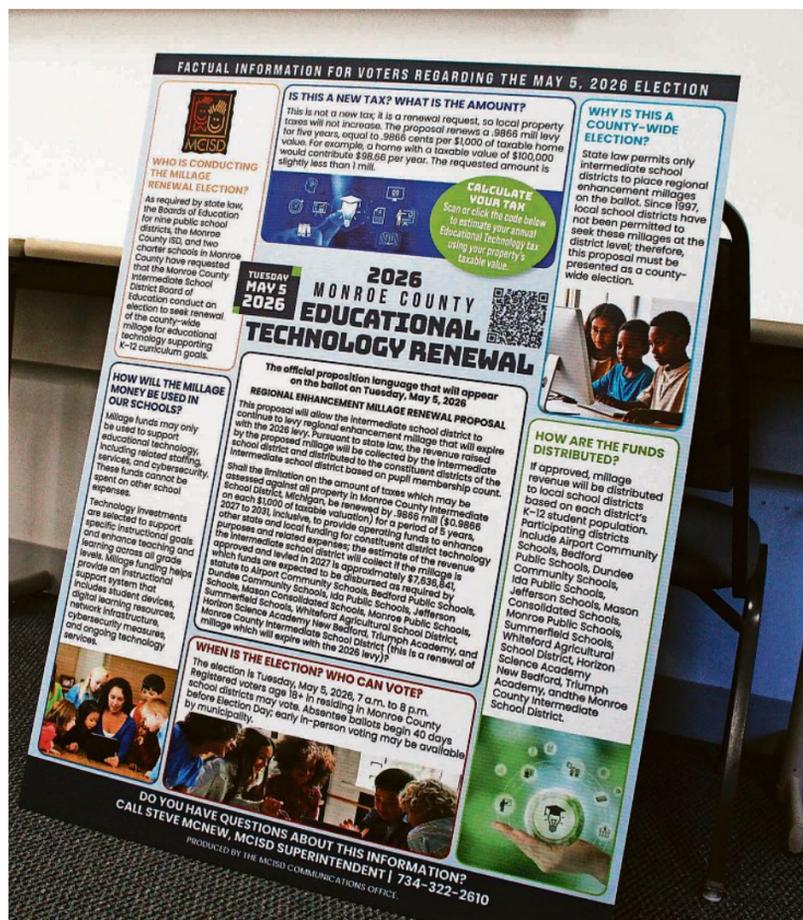
"We learned the importance of that during COVID because we went to remote learning," he said. "It wasn't difficult to make happen, flip the switch on that modality of learning as it was on other parts of the state because we have this enhancement millage."

Why is the election county-wide?

State law permits only intermediate school districts to place regional enhancement millages on the ballot.

How the money will be used?

Millage funds may only be used to



This poster about the 2026 Monroe County Educational Technology Renewal explains who is conducting the millage renewal election, why the election is countywide, how the money will be used and how the funds are distributed.

PROVIDED BY REESE BOWLING

support educational technology, including related staffing, services and cybersecurity. These funds cannot be spent on other school expenses.

"We have been blessed since 1997 with the millage and those funds which brings in almost \$8 million dollars a year for technology," McNew said. "Which amounts to about \$389 per student. So, it's very significant. To take that away all

of a sudden would be devastating. I'm not sure the local districts could sustain. They don't have it built in their general fund and I can tell you we would be in a world of hurt."

How are funds distributed?

If approved, millage revenue will be distributed to local school districts based

on each district's K-12 student population. Participating districts include Airport Community Schools, Bedford Public Schools, Dundee Community Schools, Ida Public Schools, Jefferson Schools, Mason Consolidated Schools, Monroe Public Schools, Summerfield Schools, Whiteford Agricultural School District, Horizon Science Academy New Bedford, Triumph Academy and the Monroe County Intermediate School District.

How to calculate your tax

The ISD has an estimated millage calculator posted on its website. McNew said homeowners will need to use the taxable value of the property and not the State Equalized Value (SEV).

What happens if the renewal does not pass?

"Like I said previously, it would be devastating. With technology, everything is on a schedule. We know desktop and laptop computers are only going to last so long. Every year, we have technology plans where we know that we're recycling machines and updating our infrastructure," McNew said. "Every student in the county has access to a device. Some have tablets. Some have iPads. Some have laptops."

Need more information?

"We are so appreciative of the community and their support for not only the enhancement millage but for public education," he added. "It's amazing to watch kids use the technology and see how teachers have embraced it. The schools partner very well together. That's the secret. If anyone has questions about the millage and needs more information, they can call me."

McNew can be reached at 734-241-2610 or send an email to stephen.mcnew@monroeisd.us.

— Contact reporter Lisa Vidaurri-Bowling at lvidaurribowling@gannett.com.

THE MONROE NEWS

Customer service

To view our most recent disclosures and important information regarding your subscription, please visit aboutyoursubscription.monroenews.com. Contact The Monroe News for questions or to report issues at 734-242-1100.

Operating hours are:

- Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Saturday: Closed
- Sunday: Closed

Full access print and digital subscriptions

Subscribe and save today by visiting monroenews.com.

Contact us

Customer Service	734-242-1100
Newsroom	734-242-1100
Advertising	734-242-1100
Obituaries	monroenewsobits@gannett.com
Classifieds	GannettClassifieds@gannett.com

Postal information

The Monroe News, is published daily excluding Saturday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving (observed), Christmas Day (observed) and New Year's Day (observed) by Gannett Media Corp, 23 E. Front St., Suite 103, Monroe, MI 48161. Periodicals postage paid at Monroe, MI and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send all UAA to CFS. (See DMM 507.1.5.2); **NON-POSTAL ONE AND MILITARY FACILITIES:** Please send address corrections too The Monroe News, 401 W. Main St. #600 Louisville, KY 40202.