

# LOCAL NEWS

TALK TO US:  
Barbara Krolak, city editor  
Phones: (734) 240-5776  
E-mail: barb@monroenews.com

## She loves gadgets, but needs one like 'Jetsons' Rosie the Robot

The internet of things was a wonky concept for the tech savvy only a few short years ago. Experts said it was where technology was headed.

The idea was that "smart tech" would spread. It started with smart phones. Do you remember when all you used a smart phone for was sending a text or taking a picture? Now we've all got everything from an app to manage money to an app that helps you stay focused. Essentially the internet, which had



Rebecca Regnier

been confined to our desk at work or our laps on the couch, was suddenly in our hands all the time, the minute we got our smart phones.

It was only a small step until we got "smart everything else." The internet of things, as the tech experts called it, is a reality.

Smart refrigerators tell you what's inside and what you need to buy at the grocery store. Smart thermostats let you control the temperature of your home with your app. Smart garage door openers go up with the touch of a button. Oh wait, that's what they've always done, scratch that.

I like gadgets, and I considered getting smart stuff. Especially the smart security cameras. Every single day I see someone's home security camera capture a video of a thief at the porch! It's practically an epidemic! Maybe there's someone at all of our doors?

So far, my house is still dumb. The only way I know when we need to get more food is when I physically shake the empty orange juice container that has been returned to the shelf.

My thermostat isn't smart. It is, however, the battle ground upon which the marital war over the correct temperature is constantly waged. We manually turn that gauge four degrees one way and then the other so much that if it was connected to the internet, I am certain we would break said internet.

I have decided that of all the options for the "internet of things" or "smart" home stuff, what I really need, where I really need help, the internet hasn't gone there yet. Technology isn't quite ready to out-smart our messes.

I need a "smart drawer organizer." This device would just take 15% of the stuff out of the drawer and vaporize it or donate it or toss it, no questions asked. It needs to happen once a month.

I need something to fold laundry and then put it in my now unstuffed drawers. They had a "smart" tech like that in the Jetsons, and her name was Rosie the Robot. I think. However, I haven't seen an app for that.

I need a "smart garbage disposal gauge" that blares a message like, "ENOUGH!"

We face these issues over and over with the things in our home.

Moreover, truly I can't deal with any more passwords, not one more. I bet they all need passwords. Plus, I don't want my appliances connecting to each other and then ganging up against me to stage a coup.

So, for now, my home will remain dumb as a box of rocks. I will keep my appliances in the dark for our safety and our home in slight disarray.

They do say ignorance is bliss.



Rebecca Regnier is a television journalist. Visit her online at [www.rebeccaregnier.com](http://www.rebeccaregnier.com).

## COLLEGIATE FACELIFT



— Monroe News photos by TOM HAWLEY

Workers with Brencal Contractors from Warren remove precast concrete panels and the brick piers from the north side of the Life Sciences Building Wednesday at Monroe County Community College. The 8,000-pound masonry panels are being removed and will be replaced with a modern facade system to provide shade, college officials said. The panels — 30 on the south side facing the center of the campus and 20 on the north side — also were shade protection. The work began earlier this month. This is the beginning of campus-wide renovations being funded by a five-year, .85-mill levy that voters approved in November.



## Kids Power Wheels demo derby Tuesday night at fair

Registrations are still being accepted for a Kids Power Wheels demolition derby to be held during the regular derby show at the Monroe County Fair Tuesday night.

There will be contests in two age groups — for children 3-5 and 6-10 — during the 6 p.m. show in the fair grandstand.

Contestants must bring their own power wheels' vehicle between 3 and 6 p.m. Tuesday at the derby pit gate. Parents of the riders can buy a fair admission ticket and a derby grandstand ticket to watch their children compete on the track.

The event was held for the first time last year and drew 30 participants, said Shalene Williams from ARCA, which sponsors the contest. Each child competing will get a trophy, she said.

To register, parents can call ARCA at 847-6726.

## Appellate court upholds robber's sentence

BY RAY KISONAS  
rayk@monroenews.com

The Michigan Court of Appeals upheld the conviction and sentence of a man who broke into a Monroe home two years ago and shot the father while terrorizing the rest of the family.

Dontreau V. Robinson, now 22, was convicted of armed robbery, first-degree home invasion and assault with intent to murder and received a prison term of 30 to 80 years. He was one of three armed men who broke into a family home in the 600 block of W. Fifth St. on Jan. 9, 2015.



DONTREAU V. ROBINSON

During the break-in Robinson and another suspect opened fire and shot the victim in the side of his torso and in the arm. The victim's wife, who had been upstairs with their two young daughters, came down to see what was happening when she

and her husband were grabbed and subdued.

According to court records, the robbers stole about \$200 in cash, a video game system and other items including a safe, which was their intended target. While the victim was bleeding from his gunshot wounds, the men forced the couple into the bathroom and tried to tie the bathroom door closed. They then left.

"(The wife) ensured that the children were safe, and (the father) was able to make it to a neighbor's home to call 911," court documents said. "Thankfully, (she) and the children were, generally speaking in light of the circumstances, unharmed, and (the father) was able to receive the necessary medical treatment."

After Robinson's arrest the victim identified him as one of the assailants and recognized him as his brother's former roommate.

"There is no question," the victim was quoted in the court's 7-page ruling. "I know it was him."

In his appeal, Robinson challenged up to six different aspects of the case and trial, including his ultimate conviction and sentence. The three-judge appellate panel overruled the challenges and affirmed the results of the case heard in Monroe County Circuit Court.

Among his arguments, Robinson claimed that there was insufficient evidence to prove he was one of the perpetrators and that the court should not have admitted as evidence a Facebook video of the defendant displaying the weapons used to commit the offense. The judges disagreed on all his arguments.

"... Defendant specifically argues that the Facebook video was irrelevant and unfairly prejudicial," the judges said in their ruling. "... We conclude that the Facebook video was relevant and not unfairly prejudicial."

In another argument, Robinson claimed that there was insufficient evidence to prove that he intended to murder the victim during the robbery even

though the father was shot twice. Again, the judges disagreed.

"After shooting him, defendant stood over him, holding him at gunpoint, for several minutes," the judges said. "Therefore, we conclude that there was sufficient evidence to support the jury's conclusion that defendant intended to kill (the victim)."

The victim eventually recovered from his wounds. Robinson is serving his time at the St. Louis Correctional Facility in northern Michigan. His earliest release date is 2045.

His two accomplices were never captured. Lt. Derek Lindsay of the Monroe Police Department, the agency that investigated the case, said Robinson was from the Ypsilanti area and he believes the two others are from there also.

Lindsay said the two other armed burglars were never identified and Robinson did not cooperate during the investigation.

"He wouldn't talk," Lindsay said.

## Railroad crossings to close in area for repairs

BY DEAN COUSINO  
dean@monroenews.com

The Norfolk-Southern, CSX and Canadian National (Grand Trunk) Railways will be closing the following rail crossings in Monroe County for maintenance and repairs:

### Monday

The Norfolk-Southern crossing on County Line Road between Milwaukee and Cone Roads in

Milan Township will be closed until Tuesday. The detour route for motorists is to use Kneffin Road in nearby Lenawee County to Main St. to Smith Road, said Janeen Abar, safety director for the Monroe County Road Commission.

### Monday

The Norfolk-Southern crossings on Cone Road between Far and County Line Roads, on Far Road between Cone and Welch

Roads and on Welch between Far and Dennison Roads will close until Wednesday. The detour route for these closures will be County Line to Redman Road to Platt Road, Abar said.

The CSX crossings on Hurd Road between Telegraph (US-24) and Reinhardt Roads and on Stumpmier Road between Telegraph and Heiss Roads in Frenchtown Township will be closed until Aug. 10. The detour

for Hurd is to use Telegraph to LaSalle Road to Reinhardt. The detour for Stumpmier is Telegraph to Heiss.

Local residents and businesses will be allowed access to their properties in the area, she said.

The Canadian National crossing on Sandy Creek Road between Spaulding and Yax Roads in Frenchtown will close until Aug. 4. The detour is Cole Road to Spaulding to Vivian Road to Yax.

## Michigan governor signs tax breaks for companies adding jobs

ROCHESTER HILLS, Mich. (AP) — Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder has signed legislation to allow qualified companies that create hundreds or thousands of Michigan jobs to receive tax incentives.

The Republican on Wednesday signed the "Good Jobs" package of bills at an industrial property in the Detroit suburb of Rochester Hills. His office says the

law is designed to help diversify Michigan's economy and attract new, large-scale employers.

Snyder says Michigan "needs to set the stage to grow entirely new industries."

The legislation came six years after Snyder and fellow Republicans replaced such breaks with a scaled-back economic development program.

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