SOUTH HAVEN AREA SENIOR SERVICES - South Haven
269-637-3607 or shassinfo@i2k.com **NEEDS:** Heavy-duty paper shredder, portable fans, window AC. **THE BIG WISH:** A reliable van.

SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY - Benton Harbor 269-925-9077 or contact@smcaa.com **NEEDS:** Personal hygiene products for shelter clients, bath and dish towels for shelter, linens and blankets for shelter. **THE BIG WISH:** Brand new washer and dryer for use at shelter.

TRI-COUNTY HEAD START - Paw Paw
269-657-2581 or nmurton@tricountyhs.org **NEEDS:** Preschool age appropriate books, preschool literacy materials, preschool math materials. **THE BIG WISH:** Refrigerator.

VAN BUREN COUNTY UNITED WAY - Paw Paw
269-657-2410 or vbcuw@vbisd.org **NEEDS:** Chalk board/dry-erase board, cabinet in good condition. **THE BIG WISH:** Web site development.

YOUTH CLUB OF CASS COUNTY - Cassopolis
269-445-1601 or packey@epowerc.net **NEEDS:** Educational games, software, sports equipment (6-18 years), arts and crafts supplies, CDs for music and dance, tapes and DVDs for movie night (family themes, no violence).

2007 AGRICULTURE CENSUS. The Census of Agriculture, taken every five years, is a complete count of the U.S. farms and ranches and the people that operate them. It shows the nation the value and importance of agriculture and can help influence decisions that will shape the future of agriculture. Forms for the 2007 Census will be mailed to farms and ranches on December 28, 2007. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008 via mail, or online through a secure web site. For information call 1-800-727-9540.

CAPITOL NEWS

FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE 21ST MICHIGAN SENATE DISTRICT

DECEMBER 2007

ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

- **Winter Protection Plan**: protects qualifying seniors and low-income customers from winter shut-off. Contact your utility company.
- **State Emergency Relief Program**: helps low-income households meet an immediate need for help with home heating, electricity or energy-related home repairs. Contact your county's Department of Human Services office.
- **Weatherization Assistance Program**: provides free home energy conservation services to low-income homeowners and renters. For more information contact the Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency at (269) 925-9077.
- **Active Duty Shut-off Protection**: protects the family of military personnel called to full-time active duty by the President or Governor from utility shut-off. Contact your utility company.
- **Medical Emergency Protection**: protects customers with a qualifying, temporary medical emergency from energy shut-off for up to 21 days. Requires written documentation from a doctor. Contact your utility company.
- **The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW)**: provides assistance to low-income households and utility customers unable to pay due to an emergency. Call 1-800-866-THAW (8429).

STATE SENATOR

Ron Jelinek

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Lansing, MI 48909-7536
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WEBSITE: http://www.senate.mi.gov/jelinek

2007 WISH LIST. The Volunteer Center of Southwest Michigan has compiled a list of nonprofit agencies that are in need of materials and volunteers. Please take a look at those agencies listed below to find one where you could offer your assistance this Holiday Season. For a complete list or more information contact the Volunteer Center at (269) 683-5464.

ANIMAL AID OF SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN - St. Joseph
269-934-7729 or info@animalaidsw.org **NEEDS:** Kennels, crates and/or pet carriers, cat and dog food, straw and bedding. **THE BIG WISH:** New foster homes.

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN - Benton Harbor
269-925-8204 **NEEDS:** Meat products (ground beef), #10 cans of fruits and vegetables, instant potatoes. **THE BIG WISH:** New desk and file cabinet.

BERRIEN COUNTY COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN - St. Joseph
269-556-9640 or Jfaith@bccancouncil.org **NEEDS:** Card table with folding chairs, hand-held video games, new reception-area carpeting. **THE BIG WISH:** New digital video equipment.

BERRIEN COUNTY ISD EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DEPARTMENT - Berrien Springs
269-471-7725 or cvescola@remc11.k12.mi.us **NEEDS:** New and gently used books and toys for infants and toddlers. **THE BIG WISH:** Strollers for multiple children.

BERRIEN COUNTY TRIAL COURT FAMILY DIVISION - FOSTER CARE - St. Joseph 269-983-7111, ext. 8378 or www.berriencounty.org **NEEDS:** Backpacks with school supplies, games, hygiene products (make-up, hair supplies, socks, undergarments), winter outerwear (coats, hats, mittens, scarves). **THE BIG WISH:** Band instruments and sports equipment.

BIG BROTHERS - BIG SISTERS OF BERRIEN AND CASS, INC. - Niles 269-684-1100 or bbbsofbc@hotmail.com **NEEDS:** File server/computer network to link satellite office to main files, ink cartridges for existing computer printers, copy paper (white and colored).

BLOSSOMLAND LEARNING CENTER - Berrien Springs
269-473-2600 or pharper@remc11.k12.mi.us **NEEDS:** Office supplies, batteries, ink cartridges (HP 45/29/56), toys (ages 3-10 years), clay and glazes for art projects.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF BENTON HARBOR - Benton Harbor
269-926-8766 or bgclubrdd@parrett.net **NEEDS:** Game tables (billiards, ping-pong, foosball) and games, art supplies (canvas, paint, youth-sized white t-shirts, etc.), sports supplies (basketballs, baseballs, tennis balls). **THE BIG WISH:** 20+ passenger bus.

CASS COUNTY CASA, INC. - Cassopolis
269-445-4431 or casscocasa@yahoo.com **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** Advocates to speak for the best interests of children who are brought before the court for reasons of abuse or neglect. **NEEDS:** Ink cartridges for existing printers (Dell), gift cards from office supply stores, gas cards for volunteers. **THE BIG WISH:** Projector to use with Power Point presentations.

CASS COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING - Cassopolis
269-445-8110 or dproven@casscoa.org **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:** Meals on Wheels drivers, out-of-county medical transport drivers, home maintenance and lawn care, mentors. **NEEDS:** Copy machine for the HR/volunteer office, flat-screen monitor.

FERNWOOD BOTANICAL GARDEN & NATURE PRESERVE - Niles
269-695-6491 or director@remc11.k12.mi.us **NEEDS:** 5-gallon buckets with handles. **THE BIG WISH:** Golf cart for transporting visitors with disabilities.

GATEWAY, INC. - Berrien Springs
269-471-2897, ext. 33 or rcurneal@gatewayvro.com **NEEDS:** Computers for all direct-care staff, metal or coated picnic tables with wheelchair access, lockers for direct-care staff and consumers. **THE BIG WISH:** Van with wheelchair lift.

HELPING HANDS OF CASS COUNTY - Cassopolis
269-445-8104 or mdtompi@netzero.net **NEEDS:** Clothes hanging racks, plus-size clothing, maternity clothes, baby food, formula, diapers.

SHILY'S PROMISE YOUTH RANCH - Watervliet
269-876-0379 or krista@shilyspromise.org **NEEDS:** Color laser printer/copier, horse trailer (large enough to haul draft horses), grooming supplies (brushes, horse shampoo/detangler, hoof picks, etc.). **THE BIG WISH:** A farm tractor with implements.