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Berrien County committed to assist vets

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ST. JOSEPH—Berrien County continues to show its commitment to servicing Veterans by providing a full time Veterans Affairs office. Out of 83 counties in the State of Michigan, only 66 maintain an office for veterans; Berrien County is one of the 30 counties that offer services on a full time basis.

The Berrien County office is staffed by an Administrator and an assistant. Daily, they assist veterans with completing forms, providing information on services to veterans, and with planning transportation to the VA Hospital. The Veterans Services Administrator, Dan Stice also goes mobile, visiting Senior Centers in South County monthly and making the county's services available at veterans' organizations such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Primarily, Stice says, he assists veterans with processing claims and upgrading claims as their needs change.

In partnering with the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Berrien County Veterans Service office has been instrumental in helping local veterans with several services including: The Transitional Residential Center for homeless veterans in Niles; The VA Medical Clinic located in Benton Harbor; and the DAV van shuttle to and from the VA Hospital in Battle Creek.

This is just one more way that the leadership of Berrien County government continues to show its commitment to the veterans of Berrien County; honoring all of their sacrifices by servicing them.

It was recently announced by the University of De-

troit Mercy School of Law that a new mobile law office is coming soon to Southwest Michigan. Through a grant provided by the State of Michigan, the University is creating a freestanding veterans clinic and will tour across the State of Michigan to provide legal assistance and representation to thousands of low-income veterans throughout Michigan. The grant will allow the school to expand the much needed veterans' assistance outreach to other areas of the state in addition to Southeastern Michigan.

The University of Detroit Mercy School of Law is the only law school in the country with a Mobile Law Office, a 27-foot recreational vehicle that has been outfitted as a law office. During the past year through the mobile law office, volunteer attorneys and law students have counseled and assisted over 800 people. The Mobile Law Office will be at the South County Building, 1205 N. Front St., Niles on Thursday, March 27, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. It will be at the VA Clinic, 115 Main St., Benton Harbor on Friday, March 28, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

According to the Michigan Department of Veterans Affairs, there were over 14,000 veterans living in Berrien County in fiscal year 2006. In addition, there were over 17,000 in surrounding Cass, Van Buren and St. Joseph Counties in fiscal year 2006.

If you have any questions for Berrien County's Veterans Affairs office, please contact Dan Stice at 269-983-7111, ext. 8118