

Adoptions create 4 new families

By Jil Schult,
 Staff
 Writer

GAYLORD — Five area children received a gift of love this holiday season when four families opened their hearts and homes through adoption.

Michigan Adoption Day on Nov. 20 was designed to raise awareness of the many children who are still waiting for adoption.



Demarco Jay Saph, 4, sits on the lap of his mom, Kathryn Saph, and next to his dad, Jay Saph, on Michigan Adoption Day. (HT - Bill Serveny)

"It's an awesome experience and every year it gets bigger and bigger," said Julie Chudzinski, Otsego County probate register. "Our court feels privileged to take part in this event each year."

Jay and Kathryn Saph were looking into adoption when they met 4-year-old Demarco Jay (Saph).

"His biological mom came to our church and his foster parents came to our church," said Kathryn Saph. "We always wanted to adopt."

Demarco visited the Saph home beginning in late October 2006. They began the adoption process in December 2006 and by June, the Saph family had full custody of the preschooler.

"This was our first Thanksgiving with him," Kathryn Saph added. "Having holidays with kids makes holidays more fun and exciting. He's a gift from God, that's for sure."

Gary and Dorothy Wilson have had guardianship of their grandson, 10-year-old Jacob David Staub Wilson, since he was 4 years old.

For the Wilsons, Michigan Adoption Day was a formality. In their minds, Jacob has been their son for six years.

"He's a good kid," said Dorothy Wilson. "A typical boy."

Wilson can't imagine anyone else raising her grandson.

"I wouldn't have it any other way," she said of the adoption. "You take care of your own."

The Wilsons moved from Gaylord to Grandville in October.

Megan Skyler Caddell, 4, and Ashley Nicole Caddell, 6, joined the home of David and Tammie Caddell, who already had four children.

"I have a 23-, 21-, 16-, 11-year-old and now 6 and 4," said Tammie Caddell. "I go to four schools every day."

Her older children help with the younger ones.

"They're just awesome," said Caddell. "I don't know what I'd do without them."

"It's doable to get a child out of foster care," she added.

"It's the best thing in the whole world that's ever happened to me," said Jessica Lee Hill of the adoption of 4-year-old Kurtis Dillon Hill.

Kurtis has lived with Hill for the past three years.

"It's a great Christmas present," said Hill. "My dreams came true — he made my family complete."

Hill is thankful for the help from Rick Marshall, Department of Human Services (DHS) adoption specialist. He helped to finalize all five adoptions.

"All four families were a pleasure and honor to work with," said Marshall.

"I recommended that all five of the adoptions take place without reservation — with great confidence and optimism that they would serve the best long-time interest of each of those children and their entire families," Marshall added.

Working with adoption for the past 26 years, Marshall covers cases in Otsego, Crawford, Montmorency and Oscoda counties.

In Otsego County, Probate Judge Michael Cooper participated in Michigan Adoption Day.

According to Marshall, they're always looking for potential adoptive families.

— Contact Jil Schult at 748-4518 or jil@gaylordheraldtimes.com.