

## Families celebrate Michigan Adoption Day

By Louise Nelle News-Review Staff  
Writer

Not often do balloons, cake and teddy bears make their way into a courtroom, let alone folks grinning from ear to ear.

But smiles could be found throughout the Emmet County Probate/Family Court Tuesday for the fifth annual Michigan Adoption Day as four Emmet county families adopted seven children.

Overseeing the adoptions was Judge Fred Mulhauser who said that Michigan Adoption Day recognizes the opportunity to adopt and promote the positive side of the situation.

"Michigan wants to highlight adoptions, so for the past several years they have had a special date for adoptions," Mulhauser said. "This is a special time of the year to highlight the value of adoption."

Although he has enjoyed participating in Michigan Adoption Day during the past five years, Mulhauser said the cases that stand out most in his mind are not always those taking place on this special day.

Rather, during his past 20 years serving as a probate judge the adoptions he remembers most are those in which the children have experienced tragic or unhappy lives. Because of adoption these children have a chance to move on with their lives with a new family.

One family participating on Tuesday was able to make such a difference in a child's life. The Koboski family of Petoskey — Jack and Kate with their daughters Anne, Kassie and Mary — adopted Tilly, 9, whose grandmother had died.

A few years ago, Kate said Tilly's grandfather — a family friend — felt that Tilly needed more people in her life so the two families joined together. Because the couple already had a full house, at first it was hard to adjust but they soon became one happy family.

"It's just been a good experience for us because we feel we have another daughter and grandfather," Kate said.

For four years Tilly lived with the Koboskis. She was never without someone to play with having two older sisters, Anne and Kassie, and a third, Mary, the same age.

Until Tuesday when Jack and Kate made the adoption official at the sound of the judge's gavel, it was hard to imagine that the loving, close-knit family had not always been together.

Not only have the Koboskis welcomed Tilly with open arms, but they are happy to be able to help a child in need.

"It's just nice to be able to help out somebody as far as the child and the grandfather because of the hardship they had with her grandmother dying," Jack said. "(Tilly) moved a lot when she was young, which was hard on her, but she's here for the long haul. It was a little bit of an adjustment, but after a while it came together. She adapted well."

Louise Nelle can be contacted at 439-9339, or [lnelle@petoskeynews.com](mailto:lnelle@petoskeynews.com).



**The Koboski family of Petoskey was one of four families participating in Michigan Adoption Day Tuesday when they adopted Tilly, 9, (front). Now, Tilly has three sisters (middle, from left) Mary, Anne and Kassie as well as new parents Kate and Jack. (Louise Nelle/News-Review)**