

# He's worth all the red tape

By SHERRY KAHAN

ent, a wire saying "I have a boy for you." "I called everyone to tell them about it," Mrs. LaPointe laughed as she sat in her Redford living room with a 22-pound bundle of boy on her lap. But there was still an Andes mountain of paperwork to complete before the adoption could be completed and the child claimed.

Actually, what they had to do was work through the forms in a folder about four inches thick, and Mrs. LaPointe decided to give up her job in the mail department at the Ford Motor Co. to deal with all the red tape.

A home study was initiated with the Michigan Department of Social Services. The LaPointes had high praise for the social worker who took them through that phase of the process.

Birth certificates had to be obtained from the state and a marriage license located.

Then documents had to be translated and authenticated at the Colombian consulate in Southfield, at a cost of \$500. A home visit cost \$300.

The LaPointes then engaged attorneys here and in Colombia. As the adoption approval came closer, they purchased tickets to go to South America and pick up their son.

**THEY ESTIMATED** that the various costs of investigation and travel came to about \$3,000.

"I have always wanted to have children," was the way Mrs. LaPointe put it.

Finally the couple was airborne, flying between two Andes mountains to drop into Medellin, where the Loudons had their mission.

More travel was ahead, this time on the ground to the town of Rio Negro to an orphanage helping with the adoption procedure. And there they sat down to wait nervously for the foster family that was bringing their future son over the mountains.

"When they arrived, his foster mother hugged me and we both started to cry," Mrs. LaPointe remem-

bered. "I grabbed hold of Ryan."

"I hardly got a chance to hold him," her husband put in.

"I didn't want to let go," she said.

"It was the most emotional part of the whole thing," said LaPointe.

On the return trip, they recalled, "the baby took it better than we did; nothing fazed him."

He didn't fuss, they said, even when all three of them were locked on a bus by Miami customs officials when more red tape was untangled.

Actually, the paperwork isn't over even now and forms still are being filled out and mailed.

"AT ONE TIME the red tape was so discouraging, they seem to make it so hard for you, that I asked if it was worth it," said Mrs. LaPointe.

"But I wanted this child so badly there was no stopping us."

"These children are so much wanted. We have to go way out of our way, but they mean so much."

Friends they made along the way also mean a lot.

There is a strong tie between the people who adopt," she said. "They are so friendly, we become a big happy family. And you can't believe the number of people I've met through the telephone while asking for information."

Her husband added that they, having gone the route, now stand ready to help others who want to adopt.

"We would like to let people know the ropes," he said. "When we were trying to get started, we didn't know where to go. Without the help of the people who had done it before us, adoption would not have gone so smoothly."

The LaPointes can be reached at 937-0898, and they will be glad to share their knowledge with other would-be adoptive parents.



Ryan James LaPointe traveled all the way from Colombia to bring joy to the lives of his adoptive parents, Daniel and Alice LaPointe. (Staff photo by Bob Woodring.)

## Try these intercountry agencies to find child

Following is a summary of intercountry adoption agencies. Fees vary widely as do transportation costs and agency requirements.

**COLOMBIAN-AMERICAN FRIENDS, INC.** — P.O. Box 553, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Country: Colombia.

This fee includes lawyer, legal expenses, transla-

tions and authentications. Expect to stay two weeks in Colombia.

**AMERICANS FOR INTERNATIONAL AID AND ADOPTION (A.I.A.A.):** 947 Dowling, Bloomfield Hills, Mich. 48013. Phone: 645-2211. Country: Korea.

**HOLT ADOPTION PROGRAM, INC.** — P.O.

Box 2420, Eugene, Oregon 97402. Phone: (503) 687-2202. Countries: Korea, Philippines, Thailand.

**WORLD FAMILY ADOPTIONS, LTD.** — 4906 W. Fond du lac, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216. Phone: (414) 445-8125. Country: Korea.

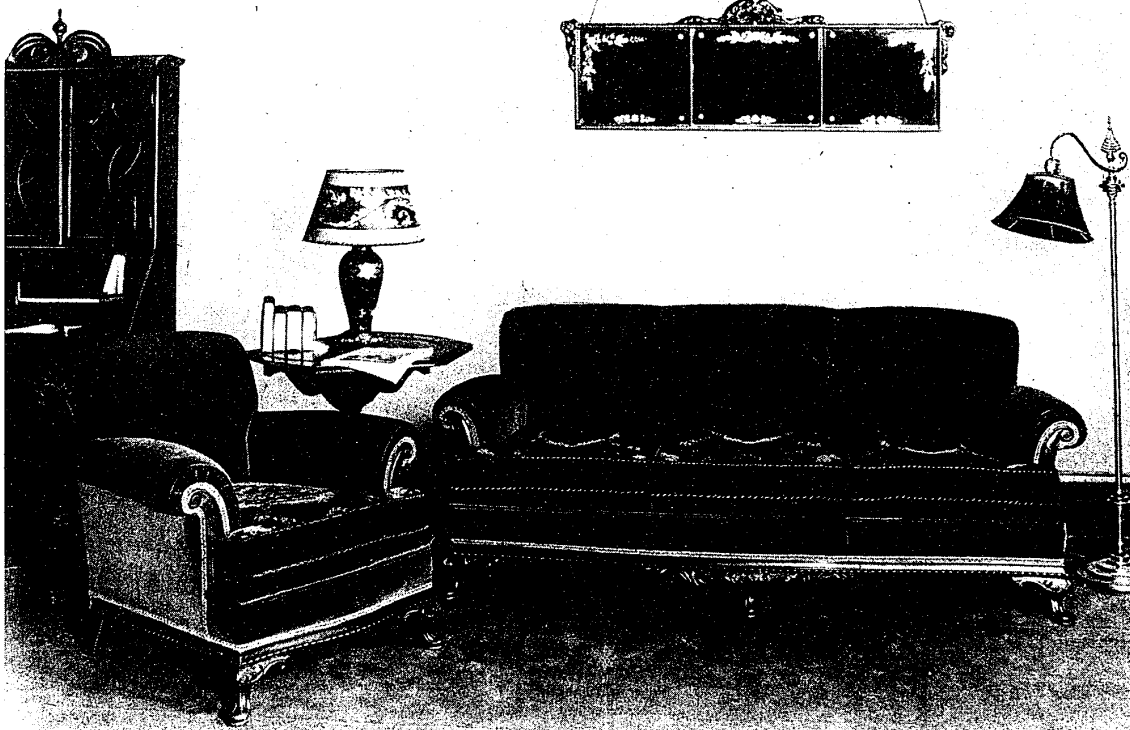
**KUAN-YIN FOUNDATION, INC.** — Barlankar,

RR 1, Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7R 3K4. Phone: (416) 678-7945. Country: India.

**DILLON FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES, INC.** (formerly Livingston Adoption Agency), 2525 East Twenty-First St., Tulsa, Oklahoma 74114. Phone: (918) 749-8531. Country: Korea.

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The fear of cancer is often fatal.



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