

.....Continue from page 7

Joseph was born three months premature on Easter Sunday, April 15, 2001. He spent the first six weeks of his life in NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit). He was born at 27 weeks, a health thriving baby who weighed two times the usual size of a baby born this early. Four weeks after birth Joseph was diagnosed with NEC (Necrotizing Enterocolitis) and had intestinal surgery, at the same time he was also diagnosed with PVL (Periventricular Leukomalasia) this appeared on head ultrasound and is the cause of his Cerebral palsy (CP).



Joseph received initial therapies through early intervention (EI). He attended pre-school at the Center for Disability Services, a CP of NYS Affiliate, where he was part of a program called "NOVE" (Movement Opportunities via Education). Joseph made many advances with early therapy and while at the center where he participated in traditional therapies along with swimming. He now attends elementary school in Greenville, Greene County. He is in a self-contained classroom with a 1:1 aide and moves into the mainstream regular classroom for several subjects. Joseph enjoys extracurricular activities outside school. He participates in the after school activities club, where he does community and social activities and the chess club. He has done Hippotherapy (therapeutic horseback riding) for many years as well, and recently discovered skiing. Joseph was the telethon representative for the center of Disability Services in 2005. He has appeared on You-Tube signing at a local event with a trio. His nickname in school is "the mayor" or "the governor" because he knows most everyone or most everyone knows who he is or knows him.



Joseph is a happy, social young man who enjoys riding his ATV and fishing with his dad and playing with his dog Gabby. He loves to read, loves school, playing with his Wii and spending time with

his family. I would like to introduce his Mother, Catherine, who has agreed to say a few words.



My last and most important award this afternoon is to name the New York State Elks Association CP Person of the Year. This award is given to the recipient for their Commitment, Dedication and Caring to the Major Projects program. I received many recommendations for this award but one stood out. Her district for the past two years has exceeded \$20.00 per capita. This year is was \$23.52. All 7 Lodges in the district made over \$10.00 per capita, one Lodge made over

\$20.00 per capita, three Lodges made over \$30.00 per capita and one Lodges made over \$50.00 per capita. She is an innovator, an organizer and devoted to our program. Please honor Judy Meier from the South District and Mount Vernon-Yonkers Lodge # 707.



State Project: New York State Elks Association

Home Service Program of the UCP Association of NY State

The Home Service Program, concentrating on individuals with Cerebral Palsy, is a collection of 27 Home Service Directors and the vans that the directors use to provide individualized services to adults and children with disabilities and their families in their home communities. Since inception, the program has grown to encompass every county of New York State. The staff provide referrals for appropriate evaluation and program services, advocacy, counseling, follow-up and program development.

