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## MY FAVORITE RIDE

### Moll, Walter become fast PALS at Ellington Stables

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By Laura Lane  
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331-4362 | llane@heraldt.com

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Tom Moll's disabilities prevent him from getting a license to drive a car or truck, but no one can keep him from traveling via horseback.

You'll find him aboard Walter, a 5-year-old quarter horse with the gentleness and slow stride of an old nag. And giant, sweet brown eyes.

Walter is one of 10 horses stabled at PALS, Bloomington's People & Animal Learning Services organization. "He's a good boy," said Moll, a 47-year-old Brown County man. For the past year, he has come every week for a riding lesson at PALS, housed at Ellington Stables on That Road.

"Turn toward the number six," riding teacher Taryn Lyman instructed during a recent lesson. "Very good. Now, reins to your pocket." Moll shifted the leather straps that direction, and Walter turned accordingly.

Moll caught the equestrian bug last summer when he ventured to Arkansas for a vacation at a dude ranch. While some of the 30 camp participants were expert riders, he had never been around horses. Riding was a new challenge that made his legs and backside sore.

Since his riding skills were limited, Moll rode his horse up and down a driveway while other campers trotted and cantered in arenas and along trails.

Moll returned and told his sister, Nonie Daniels, that he wanted to learn more. She looked around for someplace that offered lessons and discovered PALS equine-assisted therapy, which caters to people living with disabilities.

"He started here that fall," Daniels said. "We went to a tack shop down by Bedford to get him those boots and a cowboy hat."

Last Christmas, he wanted one thing: fancy black cowboy boots, for special occasions.

Moll's dedication to riding has paid off. He recently won a first-place medal at the Special Olympics and has raised enough money through pledges to support PALS that he is to receive a special award today at PALS' 10th Annual Fun Show.

Admission to the event, where PALS riders will compete and show their skills, is free. It will be at PALS headquarters on That Road.

Look for Moll and Walter, who before long may gallop away from the barn on their own.

*Got a story to tell about a car or truck? Call 812-331-4362, send an e-mail to [lane@heraldt.com](mailto:lane@heraldt.com) or a letter to My Favorite Ride, P.O. Box 909, Bloomington, IN 47402.*



Tom Moll sits atop Walter, a 5-year-old quarter horse, at the Ellington Stables on That Road. Moll recently won an equestrian gold medal at the Special Olympics. LAURA LANE | Herald-Times

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