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# The Herald-Times

**The policy of this paper is to strive for accuracy.**  
*Like perfection, total accuracy may be unattainable;  
however, it will remain our primary goal and  
we will not feel satisfied until it is within our grasp.*

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## OUR OPINION

### PALS yields many benefits

**S**o many good causes seek financial support during the holiday season. Here's another one: PALS. The acronym stands for People & Animal Learning Services Inc. Its mission is to provide "high quality, safe, educational and fun therapeutic animal assisted activities such as therapeutic horseback riding" and more.

At a fund-raising breakfast Wednesday, person after person, on video and in front of those assembled, praised the positive impact PALS has on those who participate.

One of them was Steve Rice, whose 9-year-old son Alex enjoys riding "Cody." Steve Rice said the program affords Alex enjoyment, confidence and self-esteem.

Chris Holmes, a PALS staff instructor and a pediatrician, noted the physical benefits. "You can't duplicate the movement of a horse in a PT (physical therapy) clinic," she said.

Melinda Martin, who likes to ride "Patti," explained how the program has helped her. One way is through making memories.

"My best memory is participating in the Special Olympics," she said, proudly wearing her gold medal.

Though it is growing steadily, PALS doesn't have the widespread impact in terms of numbers served that some other programs have. But it's difficult to imagine a program being any more important than PALS to those it does serve.

For more information, contact executive director Fern Bonchek at 336-2798.