

The PALS Post

PALS NAMED UWCS MEMBER AGENCY

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We have exciting news!

PALS was recently approved as a new member agency of United Way Community Services (UWCS) of Monroe County. Along with current members and another new agency, Indiana Legal Services, PALS successfully completed a rigorous certification process designed to assure fiscal and programmatic accountability. UWCS membership will increase our visibility and credibility, networking, media and training opportunities, and allow us to fully participate in the UWCS campaign each fall. We look forward to partnering with UWCS and the other member agencies to serve our community. Sincere thanks to all of the volunteers involved in this important certification process!

For more exciting news on PALS fundraising efforts, be sure to read page 4.



DID YOU KNOW?

PALS is a North America Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) Premier Accredited Center.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Refer people to PALS.
- Volunteer in lessons
- Volunteer in marketing/fundraising efforts
- Make a financial donation*
- Donate a horse, tack, or equipment.*
- Sponsor a horse and/or a rider.

*All donations are tax-deductible.

PALS FEATURED RIDER—IAN

-JULIA BEBEAU, PALS VOLUNTEER



Ian riding in the PALS Fun Show

From the beginning, Ian and PALS have grown together. And, while Ian may not be able to fly, he has certainly found his wings through therapeutic horseback riding. Ian was one of PALS' first riders in the summer of 2000. A physical therapist at his elementary school, who was also a PALS volunteer, suggested that Ian's mom explore the new program as an extracurricular activity for him. As with most PALS students, Ian came with no riding experience at all. He started with the basics--*posture, balance, use of the reins*--riding Beau, then Sonny, and now Patti.

Now 11 years old, Ian has participated in three PALS Horse Shows, demonstrating dressage (which involves remembering and executing a sequence of moves about the arena: *Walk on! Whoa! Weaving poles and barrels, two-point*). A high point for any rider, it is especially significant for Ian whose learning is challenged by autism. As at PALS, he's been able to navigate his way through regular classes at Childs Elementary School with some one-on-one assistance.

Achievements that come through therapeutic riding often carry over to other areas of a rider's experience. Early on, his mom recalls, Ian was able to master a two-wheeled bike. He had struggled to find the balance and strength needed to shed the training wheels; then, shortly after he began PALS, Ian was on a roll, riding his bike as well as a horse. Ian's mother notes that horseback riding is a good option for students like him: his disability makes participation in the usual team sports difficult, yet his abilities rule out events like Special Olympics.

(see RIDER, p5)

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Fern Bonchek is the Founder and Executive Director of People and Animal Learning Services, Inc. (PALS). Twenty-nine years old, Fern has a B.A. degree in Psychology with a specialization in Human & Animal Interactions from the Union Institute and is a NARHA Advanced Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor. Fern serves as the chair of the Higher Education Committee of NARHA and is an adjunct instructor at Indiana University in the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER).

Welcome to the summer edition of the PALS Post. In this issue you will learn about a PALS Rider, a PALS Volunteer, and discover new PALS upcoming events!!!!

PALS is off to a great start this year! Our first ever winter session, was a great success with forty riders participating. In addition, we have forty riders in our summer session plus twelve riders from the National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) Camp. We also have many riders preparing for the Special Olympic Indiana Equestrian Exhibition, scheduled for Saturday, September 11, 2004 at Saint Mary of the Woods College near Terre Haute, IN.

This summer PALS partnered with Indiana University's NYSP Camp. The NYSP camp was for at-risk youth from Bloomington and Monroe County. The NYSP Camp

riders rode on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. from June 25th - July 16th. This was a great opportunity for PALS to start its pilot program for at-risk youth, and we plan to continue this program in the future.

Our biggest and most exciting news is that PALS was recently approved as a United Way Community Services (UWCS) of Monroe County member agency. UWCS membership will increase our visibility and credibility, networking, media and training opportunities, and allow us to fully participate in the UWCS campaign each fall. Thanks to all those who helped prepare PALS for this certification process!

PALS also has Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credits. NAP tax credits allow Indiana state tax payers to give their state taxes to

PALS instead to the state!!!!

In addition, PALS also recently received our first large foundation grant from the New York based Josephine Bay Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation. The grant is for PALS to design and implement a curriculum for using equine assisted activities with at-risk youth on a national level.

Please stop by the barn on Mondays from 1-7, Tuesdays 2-7, or Thursdays 2-7 to see the PALS riders in action. And, don't forget about our 4th Annual PALS Fun Show which is scheduled for Saturday, October 9, 2004.

Hope to see you at the barn soon!

-Fern Bonchek,
Executive Director

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT: JANET RAUSCHER

-VIRGINIA VASQUEZ, PALS VOLUNTEER

Bloomington, Indiana: Sunny, a therapy horse, and his owner Janet Rauscher, an invaluable volunteer. Janet came to Bloomington to study the history of art and serve as an associate instructor at Indiana University on the PhD track. She learned about PALS before she moved and decided it would be a good place for Sunny, who had been a therapy horse before she acquired him. She moved from Atlanta in August, Sunny arrived in October, and she began volunteering with him this spring.

April Hardisty, who has worked with PALS for three years and is currently a Volunteer Shift Coordinator (VSC) for Monday evenings, nominated Janet for the volunteer highlight. When asked what PALS was looking for in a volunteer nomination, she listed good attendance, work ethic, motivation, and interaction skills. Though she has only worked with her for one session, April has seen these qualities in Janet, adding, "She is extremely kind, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable. We are blessed to have her on Monday nights."

This spring, Janet volunteered Monday evenings as a horse leader, often leading her own horse Sunny in lessons. What she likes best about PALS is that "everyone from Fern to the instructors to the volunteers seems to love their job and is happy to be at PALS." According to April, Janet shows the same dedication she admires: "Janet is very helpful on Monday afternoons and evenings."



Janet warming up Holly for the day's lessons.

See **VOLUNTEER**, p5

SAVE THE DATE!

PALS Fourth Annual Fun Show

*Saturday, October 9th
Tentatively Scheduled for 9 a.m – 5 p.m.*



Each year we look forward to seeing our riders show off their horsemanship skills. The show will include demonstrations in dressage, equitation, and obstacle course navigation. So mark your calendars, get ready for a fabulous show!

We need people to help out at the event - there are still plenty of opportunities to participate:

- Set-up for the event
- Bring refreshments
- Assist with finding event sponsors
- Help the day of the event
- Invite your friends and family

Please contact Fern at pals@indiana.edu or 812-336-2798 for more information.



PALS is pleased to announce our first

Holiday Fundraising Breakfast

Wednesday, December 1st
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.



Yes, that's right! 7:30 in the morning! Start your day with us as we celebrate the highlights of 2004 and look forward to the opportunities PALS has in 2005 to impact the lives of children and adults with disabilities. Of course, we couldn't call it breakfast without coffee, tea, fresh fruit, and scones...

This one hour program will include an invitation to pledge financial support to PALS.
For more information contact Cindy Hosea 812-336-6701 or cmhosea@yahoo.com

SESSION DATES:

- **Therapeutic Riding/Able Bodied Lessons (10 weeks): June 21 - August 27**
- Make-Up Lessons and New Student Assessments: August 30 - September 3
- *Closed: September 6—17*
- **Therapeutic Riding/Able Bodied Lessons (10 weeks): September 20 - December 3**
- *Closed: November 22 - November 26*
- Make-Up Lessons: November 29 - December 2

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Equestrian Special Olympics: September 11, 2004 Saint Mary of the Woods College - Saint Mary of the Woods, IN
- Fourth Annual PALS Fun Show: October 9, 2004 Ellington Stables - Bloomington, IN
- Holiday Breakfast: December 1, 2004 Christian Student Fellowship—Bloomington, IN

PALS RIDER ATTENDS HOOSIER HORSE FAIR

-DEE STANTON, PALS VOLUNTEER



Cheryl rides Patti at the Hoosier Horse Fair on April 3rd.

Horses, Horses, Horses! The IHC Hoosier Horse Fair took place at the State Fairgrounds in Indianapolis on April 2nd, 3rd and 4th. Therapeutic riding centers from around Indiana participated in the Hoosier Horse Fair, demonstrating the importance of therapeutic riding as an integral part of a person's therapeutic plan. The therapeutic riding demonstrations included a driving presentation, jumping presentation and English Equitation. For the English Equitation demonstration, PALS was proud to present Cheryl and her mount Patti. Cheryl has been riding at PALS for two years. Cheryl's coach Chris put her through paces of reining Patti to designated areas in the arena. Smiling as she executed her patterns with a good degree of skill, Cheryl was able to rein Patti in a circle, reverse, ride off-lead and even trotted. Patti, was cool, calm and enjoyed her time in the spotlight.

The Horse Fair offered a variety of interesting exhibitions demonstrations all day every day. At the Breed Exhibition, there were Belgians, Quarter Horses, Appaloosas, donkeys, mules, dressage horses and stallions of various breeds. It was interesting to see the therapy horse included in the category of working horses.

In addition, there were plenty of opportunities to eat fair food and buy everything equine. In short, The Hoosier Horse Fair was a success for the equine enthusiast and a good time was had by all—especially Cheryl and Patti!

PALS RECEIVES GRANT FOR PILOT PROGRAM

-FERN BONCHEK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In May 2004, PALS received a \$10,000 grant from the New York based Josephine Bay Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation, Inc. This national demonstration grant is for the PALS staff to design and implement a model curriculum for using equine assisted activities with at-risk youth. The model at-risk youth curriculum will be made available to therapeutic riding programs and universities and colleges throughout the United States. The therapeutic riding programs would use the PALS curriculum to create at-risk youth programs. The universities and colleges would use the curriculum to expand their therapeutic riding courses to more effectively train future therapeutic riding instructors in serving at-risk youth.

This is PALS first grant from a national foundation and a huge step forward in the future of the PALS program.

PALS GRANTED NAP CREDITS FOR 2004

-AMY RANSFORD, PALS VOLUNTEER

Again for 2004, PALS has been given the opportunity to participate in the state-funded NAP, Neighborhood Assistance Program. For every \$100 you contribute to PALS, your out of pocket cost could be as little as \$15 for individuals and \$11 for corporations. This huge savings is because you will receive a state tax credit that reduces your Indiana state tax bill by one-half of the amount donated and if you itemize on your federal income tax return you will receive up to an additional 34% deduction on your federal income tax return. NAP's 50% tax credits may be utilized by **individuals** and/or **corporations** who pay Indiana income tax. In addition to the tax break you receive, **PALS** receives much needed monies to expand therapeutic riding services—a win-win situation!

Tax credits are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please respond quickly to ensure that your donation qualifies for tax credits. For more information about PALS or questions, please call 812-336-2798; for additional information about the NAP program, contact the Community Development Division of the Indiana Department of Commerce at 1-800-824-2476 or at www.indianacommerce.com.

Remember that NAP credits earned by December 31, 2004 will be applied against your 2004 tax return and NAP credits earned by June 10, 2005 will be applied against your 2005 tax return.

MEET THE PALS INSTRUCTORS, STABLE MANAGERS AND VSCs

PALS INSTRUCTORS

Fern Bonchek—Staff
 Holly Gorman—Staff
 Chris Holmes—Staff
 Bruce Moffitt—Volunteer
 Cathy Wrigley—Volunteer
 Barb Bonchek—Volunteer
 Jennifer Lung—Volunteer
 Deirdre Stanton—Volunteer

VOLUNTEER STABLE MANAGERS

Peggy Cantrell—Thursday & Monday afternoons
 Jan Gavin—Monday evening & Tuesday morning
 Amy Lifton—Thursday evening
 Amy Ransford—Tuesday evening

VOLUNTEER SHIFT COORDINATORS (VSCs)

Peggy Cantrell—Thursday afternoon
 Susie Carter—Thursday evening
 Jan Gavin—Tuesday afternoon/evening
 April Hardisty—Monday evening
 Laura Ruchti—Monday afternoon

To read bios on our instructors, visit our website at www.palstherapy.org

RIDER: Ian wows volunteers and instructors with his skills.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Moreover, riding is an activity that he can enjoy throughout his life.

The attention and encouragement of Ian's sidewalkers and instructor, Chris Holmes, invite Ian's best. Chris says that teaching Ian has been a joy, noting his improvement in paying attention as well as basic riding skills. As Ian and Patti trotted in a recent lesson, his instructor's enthusiasm rang across the arena, "Awesome posting, Ian!"

Those who work with Ian at PALS speak of his readiness to learn and ask questions. Apart from horses, Ian is especially interested in birds. Sidewalkers Ashley and Amanda say, "He teaches us a lot!", as he offers a mini-lesson on birds as they circle the arena or take a trail ride together.

Ian displays that same energy for learning in his empathy for other riders and his sensitivity to his horse. Chris Holmes says, "He's a very tactful rider," which shows as he, in fact, rides a horse that requires a sensitive rider. Looking ahead, Chris' goal for Ian is to continue improvement in horsemanship and independent riding. For some time now, he has been able to ride Patti off the lead rope; in time, his instructor will have him trot off lead. Despite the inspiration of Ian's beloved birds, neither Ian nor Patti is likely to fly. Still, with PALS, Ian will surely go far!



Ian receives a much deserved trophy for his participation in the 3rd Annual PALS Fun Show.

VOLUNTEER: Janet is a dedicated, motivated, fantastic volunteer.

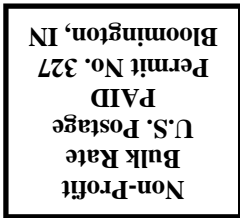
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When our stable manager and I are busy, we don't have to worry if a horse isn't ready to go. She has experience and does well with the horses. She is very dependable."

Janet currently lives in Bloomington with her dog, Mickey, as she completes her studies. In addition to her work with PALS, she enjoys hiking, camping and traveling. Her favorite part of volunteering is the riders. Janet said, "Their enthusiasm is infectious! It's especially wonderful to see the progress that they make from week to week." When asked if she plans to continue with PALS, she responded, "I'm sure that I'll volunteer with PALS as long as I'm in Bloomington!"

Interested in volunteering with PALS?

New volunteers are always welcome and needed. If you want to make a difference in the lives of many individuals, spend time with amazing equines and meet some great new friends then contact PALS at: pals@indiana.edu or call the office at 812-336-2798!



HOW YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT PALS

Financial Donations

In order for PALS to continue this good work, your financial support is needed. If you are interested in improving the lives of PALS participants through a financial donation, please fill out the form below and mail to PALS or call Fern Bonchek at 812-336-2798 or email pals@indiana.edu. Donations are tax deductible.

Yes, I want to support PALS with a tax-deductible donation of:

- _____ \$35—The cost of one therapeutic riding lesson
- _____ \$175—The cost of one month board for a therapy horse
- _____ \$350—The cost of 10 therapeutic riding lessons
- _____ \$1050—The cost of one year of therapeutic riding lessons
- _____ Other—Your gift will be used where it is needed most

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

In-kind Donations

PALS is still in need of new or gently used items as well as financial support. Please call Fern at 812-336-2798, or email pals@indiana.edu if you would like to make a donation to PALS.

New/gently used items needed:

- Rainbow reins
- Brushes, Currycombs, hoof picks, tail combs
- English bridles
- English saddles
- Girth
- Halters
- Lead ropes
- Plastic water and feed-buckets
- Saddle pads (soft and gel)

- Snaffle bits
- Therapeutic riding surcingle
- Arthrosoothe
- Cordless drill
- Laptop computer(s)

Larger Items:

- Truck
- Horse trailer
- Sponsorship of horses
- Reliable horses