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# BODY & SOUL

The Herald News

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**Valerie Brew-Parrish**  
Disability Matters

## Smooth sailing in sight

**K**im Liddell of Joliet is a woman on the go.

She travels to her job at the DuPage Center for Independent Living in Glen Ellyn three times a week. Liddell is not able to drive herself to work due to a condition known as Usher Syndrome.

This is a hereditary condition that results in both hearing loss and a progressive loss of vision from retinitis pigmentosa (RP).

Liddell wears two hearing aids and began to lose her vision when she reached the age of 20. Coordinating her travel from her home in Joliet to her job in Glen Ellyn is quite a feat. Liddell uses Para Transit in both Will County and DuPage County to get to work.

"In October of 2004, when I began my job as a personal assistant coordinator, I worked closely with PACE to make traveling between counties viable. It was a challenge at first, but now everything goes smoothly," Liddell says.

A personal assistant coordinator works with consumers who need to hire personal assistants. "I am responsible for teaching consumers the skills to recruit, interview, hire, train, manage and fire their personal assistants. I also help to recruit and provide orientation to persons wanting to work as personal assistants and refer them to consumers."

"In both instances, our Center for Independent Living emphasizes the role of the consumer as the employer, and the personal assistant as the employee," Liddell said.

Liddell has been married to Alex Liddell for 20 years. They share their home with their two daughters, two dogs and two cats.

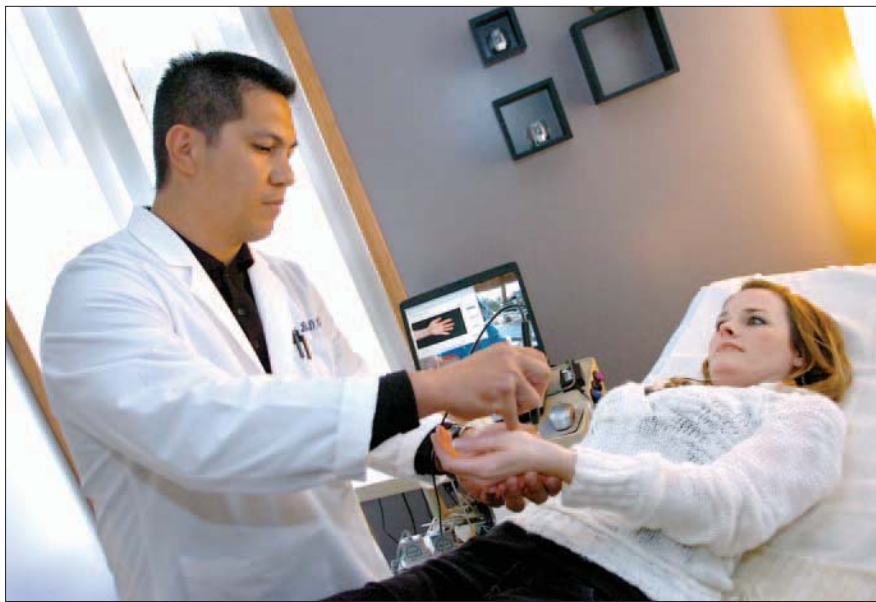
Liddell said she believes that one of the most pressing issues affecting those with disabilities is to implement the Olmstead Act in Illinois. The Supreme Court ruled in 1999 that people with disabilities have a right to live in their communities with supports, rather than to be forced into institutions.

People should be given the freedom of choice. Liddell advises people with disabilities to adhere to this philosophy: "Never let anyone tell you that you can't do something. Remember the old saying, 'where there is a will, there is a way.' Most people are stronger than they realize."

For additional information on Usher Syndrome, contact The National Center for the Study and Treatment of Ushers Syndrome, Boys Town National Research Hospital, 5555 N. 30th St., Omaha, Neb. 68131, (402) 498-6511, [www.boys-townhospital.org](http://www.boys-townhospital.org).

Contact Valerie Brew-Parrish at: [Val4info@comcast.net](mailto:Val4info@comcast.net).

# A healthy balance



LIZ WILKINSON ALLEN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Dr. Fred Ratio does a computerized acupuncture assessment on Genea Browne of Plainfield at Riverview Chiropractic in Plainfield. The computer program tells Ratio where Browne may need acupuncture, which is then done with needles, electrical stimulation or laser. Browne says it helps her headaches and gives her increased energy.**

## Acupuncture treatment seeks out body's energy pathways for pain relief

**By Dawn Aulet**  
STAFF WRITER

Genea Browne of Plainfield may have been single-handedly keeping the pain relief companies in business.

"I was taking like eight Aleve a day. For about four years, I was doing that," said Browne, 32.

She had headaches every day, and while she said they only turned into migraines once per month, she could not really get through the day without some kind of medication.

Then she met Dr. Fred Ratio, a chiropractor who runs Riverview Chiropractic in Plainfield.

For the first year or so, Ratio treated her with chiropractic adjustments and nutritional supplements. While things were getting better, she still had the occasional headache and her menstrual cycle was not as regular as she would like. So Ratio decided to try acupuncture.

Ratio has performed acupuncture in his Plainfield office for nine years. He uses a computer program called electro-meridian imaging to assess patients.

"This has totally changed the way I look at acupuncture," he said. To use the system, Ratio has his patients hold a metal grounding rod, while he applies a moist-tipped sensor that reads skin conductivity at the specific acupuncture points. The points correlate to invisible energy lines on the human body called meridians. The human body has 12 meridians that are used in acupuncture, he said.

The EMI program determines the sta-



LIZ WILKINSON ALLEN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Ratio performs acupuncture on Browne with a laser at Riverview Chiropractic in Plainfield.**

tus of each of the meridians and produces a detailed graph. Meridians can be too high or too low or they can be split, where the imbalance differs from the left to the right side of the body.

"Acupuncture is all about creating balance in the body," Ratio said. "These meridians identify energetic imbalances that contribute to negative health conditions and help us provide the most effective treatment possible for our patients."

Acupuncture has been around for thousands of years, but the ability to gauge meridians has improved greatly with computer technology.

Browne now goes for acupuncture once a week. She said that is a maintenance schedule for her.

"It's maintenance because I dropped it down to every other week there for a while, and I could tell a difference," she said. "The headaches came back. My cycle was a lot worse."

### What it involves

At the initial appointment, Ratio assesses the patient to see if acupuncture is the best therapy.

If acupuncture is chosen, he then sits the patient in the back of his office, near the computer. The patient holds on to a metal ground, and Ratio places the sensor on each of the 12 assessment points. The computer then interprets the corresponding energy pathway as too high, too low, split or balanced.

"With the use of the EMI system, we can provide analysis and documentation of energy levels of the acupuncture meridians," Ratio said.

That documentation tells Ratio where to apply pressure, and his training tells him how to make those points more active or less active.

For example, the spleen meridian begins on the foot and runs straight up the inside of the leg, up to the chest. In doing that, it passes over the spleen.

Once the points are assessed and one or more is found not to be in balance, Ratio talks to the patient to find what treatment modality is best.

◆ Turn to **BALANCE, E4**

### Flower power

Radiation Therapy Center of Morris joins American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days to bring some spring sunshine to cancer patients.

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### Class of '07

Joliet Junior College student Bonnie Major-Morrow was only two courses away from obtaining her associate degree when she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. JJC helped her achieve her dream March 2.

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### Plus

■ Surgeon presents latest treatments for severe heart burn and acid reflux  
Page E3



Dawn Kwack, M.A.  
Audiologist - CCCA

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PETER HOFFMAN/SUN-TIMES NEWS GROUP  
Children sign through the song 'Jesus Loves Me' during Sunday services at Oswego Prairie United Methodist Church.

# Oswego Prairie United Methodist

**Name:** Oswego Prairie United Methodist Church.  
**Address:** 1217 Wolf's Crossing Road, Oswego, 60543.

**Religious affiliation:** United Methodist.

**Neighborhood:** Oswego-Montgomery area.

**Size and character of congregation:** Church has 157 members and averages 90 in worship on Sunday mornings. The membership consists of some of the oldest and newest members of the Oswego community and area.

**Pastor:** The Rev. Keck N. Mowry.

**Schedule of services:** Traditional service is 9 a.m. Sunday at the church; contemporary service is 10:30 a.m. Sunday at Churchill Elementary, 520 Secretariat Lane, Oswego.

**Biggest turnout:** Nearly 400 people, parents and children attended the Fall Family Festival at Churchill Elementary School.

**Biggest wish-list item:** That more people will discover the church beneath the neon cross.

**Biggest issue facing the church:** Expanding to a new location and reaching out to all the new neighbors.

**Most memorable service:** Youth mission trip celebration services.

**Proudest moment:** Winning a second consecutive church softball championship. Prairie has a

long history of love of softball. **A volunteer you would like to highlight:** Mary D'Amico, senior at Oswego East High School who has led our youth through her personal faith, dedication, example and optimism. She has organized and inspired youth to do great and small things. She has directed numerous fund-raisers, such as a successful rummage sale. She inspires Christian faith in young and old alike.

**Most prized treasure:** The neon cross on top of the church that shines in the dark of the night.

**In one sentence, what makes your church special:** Prairie is historically a family farm church that is rooted in the community and history of the area, giving it the roots to grow and reach out to a rapidly growing community searching for a genuine church family experience.

**Year the church was built:** The congregation was formed in the 1840s. The church was built in 1909.

**Contact person:** Mowry, pastor@thepairie.org.

—Sun-Times News Group

If you would like to see your church featured, contact features editor Jan Larsen at (815)729-6047 or jarlarsen@scn1.com

# At cancer benefit, bald is in

Joliet church to host fund-raiser for curing childhood cancers

By Denise M. Baran-Unland  
SPECIAL TO THE HERALD NEWS

Annette Cap, 42, of Frankfort is a 10-year Hodgkin's disease survivor. Five years ago, her son, Patrick Harvey, 13, lost a good friend to a neuroblastoma, a common childhood tumor that manifests itself in the nervous system outside the brain.

Both mother and son are serious about raising money to help cancer victims and often have participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

On Sunday, they will team together again to have their heads shaved as part of the St. Baldrick's fund-raiser for childhood cancers. The event will begin about 12:30 p.m. at First Assembly of God, 1741 Essington Road, Joliet.

The St. Baldrick's Foundation's mission is to raise awareness and funds to cure childhood cancers. Since it began in 1999, the foundation has had events in 10 countries and 42 U.S. states. More than 26,000 people have offered their heads to be shaved, raising more than \$20 million, according to www.stbaldricks.org.

Neither Annette nor Patrick belongs to First Assembly of God. But when Patrick learned about the fund-raiser, he just knew he had to participate. He hopes to raise \$1,500, Annette said.

"He hasn't had a haircut since the end of football season, just because he didn't want to have it cut," Annette said. "I thought he should have it styled. So he made a deal with me and said he would do this to get his hair cut. Then his buddies wouldn't join with him. So he asked me to do it with him because he didn't want to do it alone."

**Joliet event**

For the past two years that First Assembly of God has offered this event, coordinator Rusty Schelling, 54, the church's building manager, was its only participant. This year, in addition to Schelling, four other men, three women and two young boys also will go bald for the cause. A barber from the church will donate his services.

Anyone interested in joining them should call Schelling at (815) 436-8200, ext. 2244, for more information and pledge sheets. The church has not set an official goal for money it would like to raise.

"One woman did set a goal of \$5,000, and she is well on her way to attaining that," Schelling said. Schelling himself said he has raised about \$1,500 an event in the past.

The public is invited to watch the trimming. There will be a table set up for donations, or one may donate online at www.stbaldricks.org. The church's ID number,



SUBMITTED PHOTO  
Jodi Emilio from Jodi's Barbershop in Romeoville shaves Rusty Schelling's head at last year's St. Baldrick's fund-raiser. Schelling is the building manager of First Assembly of God in Joliet.

**Shave your head**

**What:** St. Baldrick's fund-raiser.

**When:** 12:30 p.m. Sunday.

**Where:** First Assembly of God, 1741 Essington Road, Joliet.

**For more information:** Call Rusty Schelling at (815) 436-8200, ext. 2244.

if used, is E-29. For more information about the St. Baldrick's fund-raiser, visit the Web site or call the organization at (888) 899-BALD.

One of the participating women is Melody Minor, 43, of Plainfield, a First Assembly of God member and school bus driver. She has compassion for sick children, but medical conditions keep her from participating in the traditional walkathons that help them.

When she learned about the St. Baldrick's event, Minor knew she could do this one, though it required shaving her full head of hair.

"This is really stepping out of my comfort zone, but if it can help to save a child's life, then it is worth it," Minor said. "I'm

also going to be donating my hair to Locks of Love so I'm having as much shaved off as I can."

Locks of Love is a nonprofit organization that provides hair pieces to disadvantaged children under age 18 who have long-term hair loss because of a medical condition. For more information about donating hair, visit www.locksoflove.org.

**Getting involved**

Schelling learned about the St. Baldrick's fund-raiser three years ago while watching a television news segment. A staff member had just gone bald and explained his reason for it on the show. Schelling was immediately impressed and wanted to know how he could get involved in what he called one of the fastest-growing fund-raisers in the United States.

"Cancer is the No. 1 killer of children — 160,000 are diagnosed with it every year," Schelling said. "We should do whatever we can to help. It's no problem getting my head shaved. It's not like they're asking for a kidney. There's no problem in doing it. It's not life-threatening. It's just me stepping outside of the boat. I shaved it right down to the skin."

Like Minor, Schelling is donating his several inches of hair to Locks of Love. "I haven't had a haircut since November," he said. "My hair is now the longest it has ever been in my life."

**BALANCE**

From page E1

**Not just needles**

"Some people have a fear of needles," Ratio said.

So he has a number of options, including cold laser, electric stimulation, where an electrical lead is hooked up to a rubber electrode, or a teishien, a spring-loaded, mechanical stimulator. "Laser is very effective," he said.

Browne uses a laser right now.

The ultimate goal is to have someone completely in balance, which can take a short amount of time.

Naperville resident Rosie Holley is feeling a lot better and she has only had six acupuncture treatments. The 70-year-old has been a patient for only about three weeks.

"Energetically, she is completely in balance, but I will still use general healing points on her," Ratio said. "Also I am working structurally with her, so I still have some work to do there." Holley suffers from arthritis and fibromyalgia. "I think I am seeing progress," she said. "I am feeling some difference."

Today, she can put both her hands behind her back, which she said she has not been able to do for 42 years.

Even though she was afraid of acupuncture because she said she thought it would hurt, she was willing to try.

"I was in such bad shape and I could go to (prescription) pain management and I don't want that," she said. "I am a cancer survivor, and I only have one kidney."

Once she decided to try acupuncture, she said she was pleasantly surprised.

"I was shocked. It doesn't hurt," she said.

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