

# Geneva, South Sudan same at heart



## VIEWS

Wendi Dwyer

This summer at the International Lions Club Convention in Hamburg, Germany, Geneva was recognized for sponsoring the newest nation in the world to join the Lions Club – South Sudan.

Most people are aware of the local Geneva Lions providing assistance to sight and hearing-impaired individuals, supporting local food pantries and promoting other good work around the Fox Valley. But they may not know that the Geneva Lions are part of a global community with members in 208 nations.

By helping South Sudan charter a new club, the Geneva Lions have connected the Juba Host Lions, as they are called, to mentors around the world. As a Geneva Lion, I was eager to help my friends in South Sudan become a part of this global family.

As the executive director of Lost Boys Rebuilding Southern Sudan (LBRSS), I travel to South Sudan. LBRSS is a 501(c)(3) organization made up of Lost Boys of Sudan and American professionals. We are dedicated to helping equip South Sudan for a healthier and more peaceful future by teaching people how to read and write. Visit [www.RebuildingSouthernSudan.org](http://www.RebuildingSouthernSudan.org) to learn more.

While I was in Juba, South Sudan, in March, I helped organize the Juba Host Lions Club. I asked the members why they were determined to start a Lions Club in South Sudan.

One young teacher named Samuel had a response that inspires me. He said he became a Lion for the same reason he became a teacher. It was because of something someone told him when he was very young. The person said that if he wanted to plan for the next year, he should plant greens. If he wanted to plan for the next five years, he should plant mangoes. But if he wanted to prepare



Photo provided

South Sudan becomes the 208th nation to join Lions Club International at a convention in Hamburg, Germany in July. Pictured from left are Wendi Dwyer of the Geneva Lions Club; Dr. Dodzi Anono Kolman of the Juba Host Lions Club; past International Director Manoj Shah of the Nairobi Lions Club; and Lions Club International President Wayne Madden.

## On the Web

Visit [www.genevalionsclub.org](http://www.genevalionsclub.org) to view a video of Geneva Lion Wendi Dwyer and the new club from Juba, South Sudan, at the International Lions Convention in Hamburg, Germany. The Geneva Lions Club meets at noon Mondays at Riverside Receptions, 35 N. River Lane, Geneva. The club currently is accepting new members.

the next hundred years, he should teach a child. Samuel said he believes that Lions Club International will teach his nation the skills it needs to serve one another for the next 100 years.

In Geneva, we have been greatly blessed by those who came before us. They have taught us well. We live in a community where serving is a way of life and people help one another. This is not unlike many communities in South Sudan.

The biggest difference is that we in Geneva have received the education and experiences necessary to set up

the systems that strengthen our community.

South Sudan was systematically denied access to education while under the rule of Sudan. Today, only one out of 10 women and only three out of 10 men in South Sudan can read and write.

Lions Club International is committed to raising the literacy rate around the world. It recently announced a 10-year Reading Action Program, or R.A.P. The Literacy At The Well program developed by LBRSS has aligned the two organizations.

Through our Literacy At The Well program, we at LBRSS recruit, train and hire teachers to teach reading and writing lessons to women and girls as they wait in long lines for water at wells. Our learners bring home the lessons they learn at the well to their families. This program is cost efficient and effective. It costs only \$4,000 a year to sponsor a village. This covers the teacher's training, annual salary and supplies.

The shared goal of Lions

Club International and LBRSS is to equip the citizens of South Sudan with the reading, writing and language skills needed to build a new nation.

This fall, we are planning a communitywide event that will further connect the citizens of Geneva with South Sudan. We have a lot to learn from one another. Look for a second column on the fall effort next month.

As a member with a foot in both communities, I am humbled by citizens in both Geneva and South Sudan who selflessly serve others. On the surface, it may appear that South Sudan and Geneva are very different, but in our hearts, we are very much the same.

*Wendi Dwyer is lives in Geneva with her husband, Tim, and their four children. She is the executive director of Lost Boys Rebuilding Southern Sudan and also is an active member of the Geneva Lions Club. Contact her at [editorial@kcchronicle.com](mailto:editorial@kcchronicle.com).*

## CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

Accuracy is important to the Kane County Chronicle, and we want to correct mistakes promptly. Please call errors to our attention by phone, 630-845-5355; email, [editorial@kcchronicle.com](mailto:editorial@kcchronicle.com).

## DID YOU WIN?

### Illinois Lottery

**Pick 3 Midday:** 0-6-5  
**Pick 3 Evening:** 6-0-5  
**Pick 4 Midday:** 3-4-1-6  
**Pick 4 Evening:** 8-3-8-7  
**Lucky Day Lotto Midday:** 8-12-20-24-32  
**Lucky Day Lotto Evening:** 2-22-26-28-35  
**Lotto jackpot:** \$5.7 million

### Mega Millions

**Est. jackpot:** \$43 million

### Powerball

**Est. jackpot:** \$50 million

## ► CHECK OUT OUR BLOGS

Visit [KCChronicle.com](http://KCChronicle.com) and view a selection of blogs that are available, or go directly to [www.kcchronicle.com/blogs](http://www.kcchronicle.com/blogs).

• **Into the Storm** is a blog written by Elburn-based storm chaser Brad Hruza.

• **Mystery Diner** is a blog written by a Kane County Chronicle employee. The diner visits a different restaurant each week and then reports on the experience.

**MORANO'S Pizzeria**

**FREE PIZZA**

Free 12" Pizza with the Purchase of Any 18" Pizza

Can not be combined with any other offers or coupons. Expires August 31, 2013

417 Hamilton St • Geneva, IL 60134  
**630-232-4455**

★ WHEATON...LEGENDARY-MASSIVE ★

**ALL-NIGHT FLEA MARKET**

**SAT. AUG. 17th • (4PM-4AM)/\$7**

(COUNTY FARM & MANCHESTER)

• DuPage County Fairgrounds •  
**WHEATON, IL • 715-526-9769**  
[www.zurkopromotions.com](http://www.zurkopromotions.com)  
**Tour Buses & New Vendors Welcome!**  
**MEET "GRIZZLEY ADAMS" • LIVE BANDS!**