

## *May, 2019 Newsletter of the Lake Superior Freethinkers*

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First Sunday - Radisson Hotel

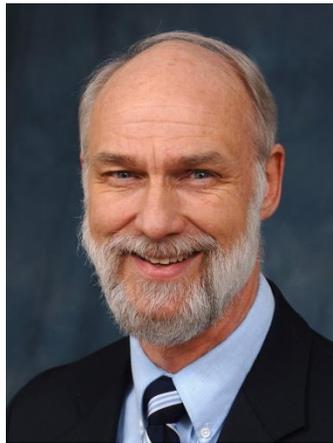
9:00 AM Social – 9:30 Breakfast - 10:00 Presentation

**Free** and open to the public.

Jan Resberg, Chair/President 715-919-0513

Sue Anderson, Social Director 218-728-1361

### PROGRAM



Dr. Denny Falk will speak on

“Thinking Critically about Global Challenges”

Dr. Falk will present an overview of two models for thinking critically. The **CARS Checklist**, a variety of criteria to ascertain the Credibility, Accuracy, Reasonableness and Support for information - and the **Logic Model from the Foundation for Critical Thinking**, which encourages the thinker to examine intellectual standards such as clarity, accuracy, and precision while examining elements of thought such as assumptions, point of view, and purpose. Each model will be used to examine a currently relevant global issue.

Dr. Falk is Distinguished Global Professor Emeritus at the U of MN Duluth, where he taught for 40 years in the Dept. of Social Work. He received a doctorate in Educational Psychology from the U of MN and besides teaching “Global Issues” for 30 years, developed online courses on Global Challenges, which included significant content on critical thinking.



## AZ Atheist Lawmaker Gives Invocation, Gets Mocked by Christian Colleague

<https://friendlyatheist.patheos.com/2019/02/13/az-atheist-lawmaker-gives-invocation-then-gets-mocked-by-christian-colleague>

In 2017, Arizona **State Rep. Athena Salman**, an openly atheist legislator, delivered an invocation to open up the day's session. It was a **perfectly respectful speech**, referring to "the humanity that resides within each and every person here." Yet it offended Republicans who insisted all invocations needed to invoke a "Higher Power." One Republican was even given permission to deliver his own prayer to effectively "correct" the one Salman gave.

It was disrespectful, rude, and a reminder that Republicans care more about Christian superiority than religious freedom.

## Texas judge disciplined after claiming God told him defendant was innocent

<https://www.chron.com/news/local/crime/article/Texas-judge-disciplined-after-claiming-God-told-13664417.php>

A Comal County district court judge received a public warning after he told the jury to keep deliberating over a defendant they convicted because God told him she was innocent.

Judge Jack Robison reported himself to the Texas Commission on Judicial Conduct after the outburst on Jan. 12, 2018, according to the committee's disciplinary document.

Robison presided over the trial of Gloria Romero Perez, who was charged with continuous sex trafficking and the sale or purchase of a child.

When Robison was informed the jury reached a guilty verdict, he told them her conviction would be a miscarriage of justice and asked them to keep deliberating.

"The judge later apologized to the jury, and said something to the effect of, 'When God tells me I gotta do something, I gotta do it,'" officials wrote in the report.



## How some religions are using robots to connect with the faithful - WSJ

Gabriele Trovato is worried. Or that's what he confesses to SanTO, one of his religion-inspired robots. Just shy of 17 inches tall, SanTO resembles those small figurines of saints often found in Catholic homes—except with a computer, microphone, sensors and a facial recognition-enabled camera. As Mr. Trovato touches and speaks to the machine, its deep, echoing voice responds with a Bible quote: "From the Gospel according to Matthew," it says, "do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Mr. Trovato, a roboticist at Japan's Waseda University, designed SanTO to provide comfort and assistance to the elderly. Interactive, social robots like [ElliQ, a robot companion for seniors](#), or [Sony's Aibo robot dog](#) are increasingly seen as a means to alleviate loneliness, entertain and provide information. But they can do better at making users comfortable with the technology, Mr. Trovato said, by incorporating cultural touchstones including religious features.

At the same time, a handful of religious institutions are using robots to converse with visitors and share doctrine. They are not meant to replace religious leaders, but they can make religious information more accessible or spur attendance to places of worship. "Religion has evolved through history, from oral tradition to written tradition to press and mass media. So it's very reasonable to think that AI and robotics will help religion to spread out more," Mr. Trovato said.

## Our Calendar

**Happy Hour** - first Thursday from 4 - 6 pm at Mexico Lindo in the Fitger's complex.

Host - Tom Patten.

**"LSF Social"** (dinner and conversation) - third Wednesday at the Green Mill

Host - Sue Anderson.

**Planning Committee** - third Sunday from 10 am to 12 noon at Toasty's on Superior St.

Everyone is welcome. Chairman - Jan Resberg