



# DULUTHINK

NEWSLETTER OF THE LAKE SUPERIOR FREETHINKERS

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Join us Sunday December 3rd at 10am at the Hillside Community Center,  
12 East 4th St., for a presentation by Rod Froseth on

# JOURNEY FROM JESUS TO ATHEISM *and beyond* See page 2

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# JOURNEY FROM JESUS TO ATHEISM *and beyond*

**T**ry to escape from a life devoted to Jesus. It is at the same time like stepping from a precipice and navigating a leaky rowboat at sea. You know you are leaving but don't know where you are going, and you're quite sure that you'll never get there. In this presentation "Journey from Jesus...", I'll spin some tales and relate my short list of Life Lessons from my wandering from the faith that took me to a former Soviet country, to the inner city, and finally to become a sex educator. Did God drive me from faith to sex education? Am I an Atheist? Or something else? I'll try to be honest.



## ROD FROSETH

As an ordained Pentecostal minister, Rod Froseth established a church in Salt Lake City, UT, served on a church staff in the Twin Cities, and led a community development team in Bashkortostan and Moscow, Russia. Once leaving the ministry, he ran an inner-city career development program serving people in recovery in St. Paul. Currently, Rod is a sexuality educator when he is not hiking, skiing, or biking Minnesota trails.



L A K E  
S U P E R I O R  
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# LSF Partners with One Roof with a year end donation

**Please join us in matching a \$1,000 grant from FFRF  
for LSF's partnership with One Roof Community Housing.**

BOTH One Roof Community Housing and LSF are non-profit organizations and donations are tax deductible. Donors should make checks out to either One Roof Community Housing OR Lake Superior Freethinkers. Checks to LSF that are intended as matching funds should have "Matching funds" or "Community Partner Grant" on the face of the check.

Checks should be mailed to Charles Gessert at 4929 Lester River Road, Duluth, 55804-3021, and should be mailed to arrive before Monday, December 18.

**This is a great opportunity to strengthen our relationship with our hosts/landlords!**



JOIN US FOR  
**HAPPY HOUR**

**4:00-6:00 pm Thursday, December 7th  
at Mexico Lindo, Fitger's Brewery Complex**

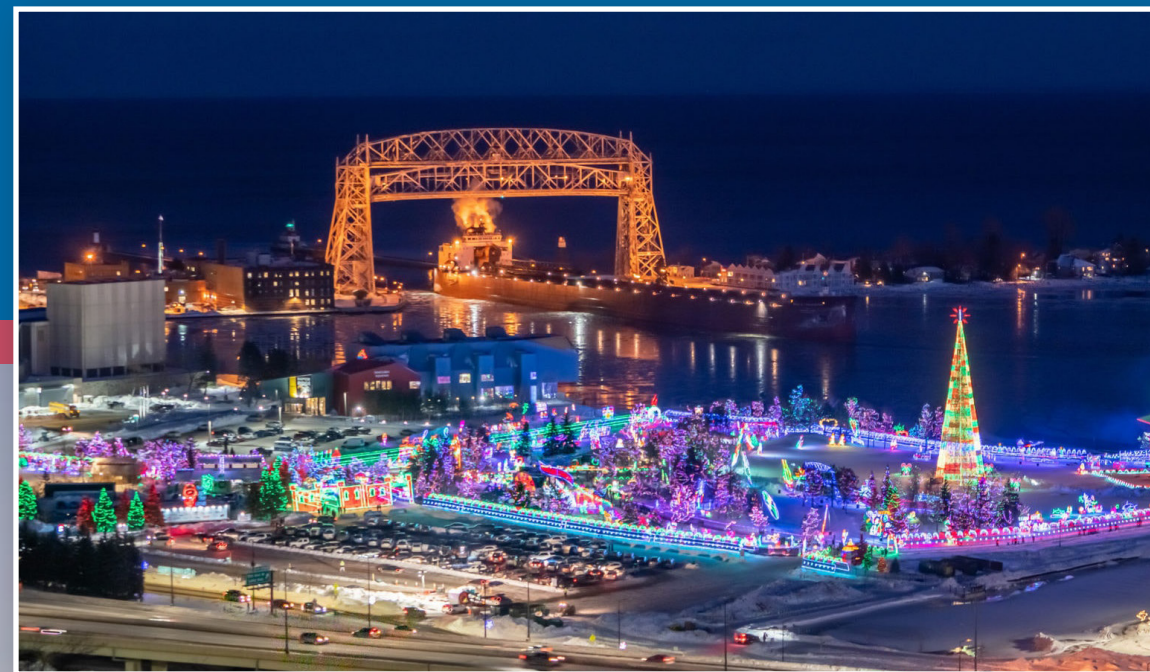
Meet your new favorite freethinkers at our old haunt: Mexico Lindo within the Fitger's Complex. We'll be there from 4:00 pm until 6:00 pm to share stories, questions, and TexMex food choices or just some half-priced drinks. The server will validate your parking and we will validate (some of) your unusual ideas.





# DECEMBER SOCIAL DINNER

Join us Wednesday December 20th at 5:30pm for LSF's Social Dinner at the revolving *Harbor 360 Restaurant* on top of the Radisson Hotel overlooking Bentleyville



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H A R B O R  
3 6 0



# Julian Scheer



**J**ulian Weisel Scheer, who kept God off a plaque left on the moon in 1969, was born in Richmond, Va., to Hilda (Knopf) and George Scheer. He served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II and after the war entered the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, graduating in 1950 with a degree in journalism and communications.

After working for a decade as a Charlotte News reporter, Scheer started working as a consultant for NASA at the end of the Mercury program in 1962 to create an organizational framework for NASA's public relations efforts. In early 1963 he became NASA's assistant administrator for public affairs. He strived to make the public more aware of the program while making flight technicians and astronauts more available for interviews. "The program was really a battle in the Cold War, and Julian Scheer was one of its generals," astronaut Frank Borman later said. (Washington Post, Sept. 3, 2001)

In preparation for the historic Apollo 11 mission in July 1969 with commander Neil Armstrong, command module pilot Michael Collins and lunar module pilot Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, Scheer helped craft the message on a plaque that would be attached to a leg of the lunar module's descent stage, which would land and remain in an area of the moon called the Sea of Tranquility.

Scheer drafted the text for the plaque as a member of NASA's Committee on Symbolic Activities for the First Lunar Landing. It said: "HERE MEN FROM THE PLANET EARTH FIRST SET FOOT UPON THE MOON. JULY 1969, A.D. WE CAME IN PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND. President Nixon's and the astronauts' names and signatures were under the statement.

According to several accounts, including Scheer's, Nixon wanted God mentioned. Rocket Men: The Epic Story of the First Men on the Moon by Craig Nelson (2009), recounts Scheer telling Nixon aide Peter Flanigan at the

White House in early June that not everyone worships the same god after Flanigan tried to insert "under God" after "We came in peace," with Nixon initialing his approval of the change.

That flew in the face of Scheer's wish that the plaque should make a universal statement: "Peter [Scheer said], there is no universal god." Flanigan: "Dammit, Julian, the president wants that change. The president is big on God. ... Billy Graham is here nearly every Sunday. The president wants God on the plaque!"

Scheer, in a 1989 column he wrote for the Orlando Sentinel, said NASA administrator Thomas Paine asked him on the way back from the White House what he was going to do. "The plaque has been put on the spacecraft and checked out," Scheer replied. "I guess the answer is nothing." Paine answered, "I didn't hear that."

William Safire, a speechwriter for Nixon and Vice President Spiro Agnew at the time, later wrote in his New York Times column (July 17, 1989) about reviewing the inscription submitted by NASA: "We left 'July 1969 A.D.' intact because it was a shrewd way of sneaking God in [certainly not NASA's intent]: the use of the initials for anno Domini, 'in the year of our Lord,' would tell space travelers eons hence that earthlings in 1969 had a religious bent; piously, we made sure that a Bible with both Testaments was included in the spacecraft's cargo." Safire also suggested "came in peace" should replace the original "come" and it was.

After the successful Apollo 11 mission, Scheer was awarded NASA's highest award, the Distinguished Service Medal, and led the crew on tours around the world. He left NASA in 1971 to manage the campaign for Terry Sanford (D-N.C) for the presidency but remained a consultant to the space program and was a trustee of the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum.

*SCHEER: "What about the people on earth who do not worship our God, Buddhists, Muslims and ..."*

*FLANIGAN: "Damn it, Julian, the president is big on God!"*