



## Ministry Newsletter

July 2021

### The Atlas Mission and Vision Unfold More Each Day



Since May the outreach ministry of Atlas of the Lakes Area has been underway, serving clients and making contacts with organizations to establish relationships that will cooperatively benefit the less fortunate in our community. It has been a slow but significant roll out of the ministry while also continuing to build the structure of the organization.

I have been able to work with several people, many of whom are dealing with housing difficulties relating to the pandemic. They may have no place to live, have unattainable housing costs, are delinquent in their rent, or face possible eviction. There are government programs designed to help in these situations which are often difficult to navigate and the rules often eliminate those who really need the assistance. I have found that working with the homeless is very time consuming, as we guide them to help themselves. Specific problems of each client are as diverse as the individuals are unique. Some of the cases provide temporary hope which fades while others maintain the hope for improved lives in the future. Hope is perhaps the main thing Atlas has to offer to those who are struggling.

Our community is blessed with diversified helping agencies whose job it is to assist a wide range of clients. My networking interactions with the helping organization of the Lakes Area have, without fail, demonstrated renewed hope as we looked together for creative solutions to people's dilemmas. Such discussions regularly reveal new cooperative ways to better help clients.

Perhaps the most urgent, unresolved problem in the Iowa Great Lakes Area is the nearly non-existent availability of emergency housing for people who find themselves homeless. There are no local facilities that provide such housing in the Lakes Area. Atlas' quick solution to encountered homelessness is to provide a night's motel room until we work with them on a better solution. Often that solution is to provide transportation to a homeless shelter, all of which are about 100 miles from Spirit Lake. This is not a good solution but is usually the only one available. If there are children involved, even that doesn't work. This is a serious problem.

Recently the situation with a homeless mother with five children gave rise to an experiment for emergency housing. A local church camp and two area Atlas offices had been working on a cooperative off-season emergency housing venture. The program was developed, proposed to the camp board, and approved. Together we learned things that will contribute to the successful implementation of the program in the future. Attempts by Atlas to help clients have led to cooperation with other agencies in ways that will better serve the needs of many in the future.

Both working directly with clients and developing better solutions have proven to be time consuming, leading to the realization that it is time to acquire needed staff to provide mentoring and growth to the referrals that come to Atlas. As the ministry unfolds and grows, the need for hiring staff who have a heart for helping others and possess the diverse skills needed has become the top ministry expansion priority.

### Our Mission:

Changed Lives Through  
Christian Love and  
Advocacy

### Our Vision:

Fostering Community  
Awareness, Concern, and  
Response to the Needs of  
Area Residents

### Atlas Board

Neil Heiser  
President  
Roland Schmidt  
Vice President  
Sandy Krout  
Treasurer  
Jennifer Hesebeck  
Nancy Payne  
Nancy Johnson

### Atlas Staff

Dave Butterworth  
Executive Director

### Donate:

By mail: PO Box 201  
Arnolds Park, IA 51331  
or online at :  
[www.lakesatlas.com](http://www.lakesatlas.com)

### Newsletter:

If you would prefer a  
mailed copy of the  
Newsletter or if you  
would like to be taken  
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please notify us at  
[lakesatlas@gmail.com](mailto:lakesatlas@gmail.com)

### Lakes Area Email

[lakesatlas@gmail.com](mailto:lakesatlas@gmail.com)

### Visit our Webpage:

[www.lakesatlas.com](http://www.lakesatlas.com)

### Thank You:

For your Prayers, Ministry,  
and Financial Support

## The Atlas Story is Now Available Online

For an amateur to create a webpage is quite an undertaking. We had planned to have the webpage done by a volunteer but that did not work out. So, I decided to try my hand at doing the modification myself. I found it to be challenging at every step but also found that it was possible. I have long believed that a poorly maintained webpage is worse than having no webpage at all. The big blessing of creating this myself is that I now know enough about the process that I can easily maintain the page and make regular additions in the form of a blog, posting of newsletters, and other regular happenings or information as they occur.

The web address is [www.lakesatlas.com](http://www.lakesatlas.com) and I encourage you to take a peek when you get the chance. The Atlas story is extremely complex and difficult to share fully. The site has been designed so that the gist of the ministry can be understood by skimming the section titles on the pages. It also is designed to provide in-depth information to anyone who wants to dig deeper. We welcome all to learn about Atlas of the Lakes Area and come and talk with us for a fuller understanding of this ministry to the unseen and less fortunate of the area.

## Building a Growing and Diverse Board of Directors

In the past few months, we have been building the Atlas of the Lakes Area Board of Directors to be a diverse group from all around the Iowa Great Lakes. In addition to Okoboji, Milford, and Spirit Lake, current board members are from Lake Park, Estherville, and Jackson, MN. Others currently considering board service are from Arnolds Park and Fostoria. We truly represent the Great Lakes Area and will better serve the broader community because of it. You can learn more about the current board members in the "About" section of the Webpage. **If you would be interested in the possibility of serving with us on the Atlas Board of Directors, please call me to discuss the opportunity.**

## Financial Support for Staffing Needed

To this point, the financial needs of Atlas have always been provided before the needs arose. Due to generous in-kind donations, the office remodeling, equipping, and furnishing were accomplished well below the initial budget. Our basic monthly overhead expenses are modest and are covered for several months. The largest portion of ministry expense will always be staff salaries and related payroll expenses. To date I have served in a voluntary capacity so we have had no payroll costs. The significant need of adding paid staff changes that need going forward as we begin the search for expanded ministry staffing.

We merely present this need for your consideration. If you are being led to support the Atlas staffing portion of the Atlas ministry, we trust God to provide the needed funding through you. If you prefer to support the actual financial needs of clients your donations will be placed in a separate benevolence account for that purpose. We sincerely appreciate each one who is willing to partner with us in this way.

Donations can be made through Pay Pal or by credit card at [www.lakesatlas.com](http://www.lakesatlas.com) or by check mailed to Atlas, PO Box 201, Arnolds Park, IA 51331. Any donation: one time, monthly, large, or small are truly appreciated.

### **Prayer Requests for Atlas:**

- Please pray that God will provide His candidates for the staff interview process, and use job applicants to determine the positions to be filled first.
- Please pray for opportunities to share the ministry of Atlas with individuals, churches, and agencies and that these conversations will be fruitful in building the Atlas ministry partnership team.
- Please pray that clients encountered will honestly assess their situations and truly seek improved lives.