



The Atkins Family

Ministering in Guinea-Bissau

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Our friend Bill Bennett and the family.

Up and Running by Emily

This past month Bill Bennett, a good friend of ours from Michigan, came out and helped Jason get the surface grinder, mill, lathe, vertical bandsaw, horizontal bandsaw, sheet metal slitter, and drill press that arrived in the container hooked up and working in our shop. His expertise and willingness to pitch in was a huge encouragement to Jason. He also took a trip with us out to the village of Canchungo to help wire up the equipment that came in our shipping container for the new welding school there.



Strategizing in the shop.



Assembling the hammer mill that came in the container for the water filter factory.

The welding program in Canchungo is part of a Christian organization called WAVS (West African Vocational Schools) and it joins with the sewing, auto mechanics, English, French, and computer programs that they've already got going on at the school. While we were there Jason and Bill taught a few classes introducing the welding students to the new welders, lathe, drill press, bench and foot shears, and punch.



This pallet jack broke as we were unloading the container and we couldn't get spare parts here. So Bill had a custom hose made the next day and brought it with him and they got the pallet jack working again.



Fixing up a sheet metal slitter from the 1970s for our machine shop.

WAVS has asked Jason to teach classes on metal fabrication and on basic equipment safety a few days each month. We are excited about this opportunity because there is really only room for one or two interns to work together with Jason in the little shop where he's working in the Youth Center. Teaching a few classes at WAVS will give him the chance to pass some of his skills on and will be a huge help to their fledgling welding program.



The newly hooked up surface grinder is making the sparks fly!

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The house that WAVS is renting in Canchungo (across the street from their current school) for their new welding program.



One of the welding classrooms (inside the house) at WAVS.

## A New Government by Emily

Many of you were praying for the presidential and parliamentary elections a few weeks ago. Praise the Lord, the voting process went well with an amazing voter turnout of almost 90%! Because there were 13 presidential candidates the top guy only got 41% of the vote with the second guy coming in at 21%. To win the presidency a candidate has to receive 50% of the vote, so the top two will have a run off in a few weeks.



Jason teaching the welding students how to read the punch force chart.

The elections of this month came two **years** and a day after the 2012 coup. You would think that the reason these elections finally happened was that the people of Guinea-Bissau finally said 'enough is enough, this is a democracy and we want to control our own government.' However, in reality the elections were brought about because 50% of the federal budget of Guinea-Bissau comes from foreign aid and nearly all of that was cut off after the coup in 2012. The country is literally bankrupt and since there was absolutely nothing left to take, the military-led provisional government stepped aside.

We know that God is a God of love and of justice, and Christianity is a religion of hope. But, most of the people in Guinea-Bissau have never experienced that hope first hand. Over 90% of the people are either Muslims or Animists and both Islam and Animism are religions of fear and fatalism. Because of this it's hard for people to believe that systems can change or that power can be used with integrity. It seems that the concept of servant leadership is unique to a Christian worldview.



Campaign posters on a warehouse downtown.

We are glad that the country is one step closer to having a representative government and we're all looking forward to the possible end of the blatant corruption that has led to two years of sporadic salary payments of government workers and large scale embezzlement of government funds. However, **lasting** change in Guinea-Bissau is going to come one person at a time as people are introduced to the hope found in the life and resurrection of Christ.

Jason + Emily