



The Atkins Family

Ministering in Guinea-Bissau

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Dear Friends,

We're Moving! *by Emily*

If you had asked me 10 years ago if I ever thought I would live in Africa, especially one of the five poorest countries in the world in Africa, I would have told you "no way!" And if you had asked me two years ago if I would leave the capital city of 400,000 to move out to a small town of around 14,000 I would have said the same thing! However, once again it seems that God has me outnumbered ☺



Using the chain fall to hoist the vertical bandsaw onto the moving truck

After eight years of living and working in Guinea-Bissau's capital city Bissau, we are moving out to the large village of Canchungo ("kahn-CHOON-goo" - It's a bit of a mouthful, but my mom remembers it by saying "can't you go").

Why the move? Well, last year we made a plan to expand our machine shop here in the Youth Center, but the Center desperately needs more classroom space to expand the English school. So when we got started building the expansion this year, the Youth Center leadership decided they didn't have the space. We moved several of the large machines out to a vocational school in Canchungo - and that helped with the crowding inside the shop - but Jason really needed all of his shop equipment in one place to be able to work efficiently and train interns.

Then leadership of West African Vocational Schools (WAVS), a Christian organization in Canchungo, proposed forming a partnership with Youth For Christ - giving us space for Jason's whole shop to move to Canchungo



A peaceful place - the missionary guest house in Canchungo where we are going to be living



Our street and our neighbor's houses in Canchungo

and letting us move into a missionary guest house in Canchungo too. As YFC missionaries, we will still be involved in teacher training and computer maintenance at the Youth Center in Bissau, but most of our time will be spent at the shop in Canchungo.

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The vocational school that will house Jason’s shop; his room is behind the big blue barn door on the far right.



The plasma table Jason built is set up, hooked up, and working in its new home.



Since we’re right next to a tidal river, there are giant snails everywhere. There are at least ten around this size on our veranda at all times (His shell is bigger than the palm of my hand).

Some things certainly will be more difficult in Canchungo. There aren't any import stores to buy things like yogurt, cereal, and butter; and the market is quite a bit smaller, so if the group of women who usually sell carrots don't come that day, then you don't have any carrots. There really aren't any paved roads, so in the rainy season the roads are more like creeks. The house where we will be living does have some solar panels and a water tank, so we will have electricity, but not as much as we've been used to in Bissau with the school's generator.

Even with all of that, we're really looking forward to the move. Jason's new shop has double as much floor space, and he's looking forward to working with the students at the vocational school. The house where we are going to be living is in a peaceful neighborhood, with a tidal river running next to it, and there are tons of children in the houses around us. The women have been so welcoming to me and I've already made friends with lots of them!

Since we're moving out of the Youth Center we need to buy a few big things, including a solar power inverter and a bed. I'm sure the adjustment will take a few months, but overall we think it will be great for our family and our ministry. We'll keep you posted on how it's all going.



The English teachers at the Youth Center in Bissau and I took a break from our training to take a group picture.

Challenging and Encouraging the Youth Center's English Teachers by Emily

The first week in September I had the privilege of teaching a week-long training conference to the ten Guinean English teachers at the Youth Center in Bissau. I gave them lots of new ideas and strategies for teaching pronunciation and vocabulary, we worked on summary writing and learning new words from context, and the teachers had time every day to ask questions about things in the curriculum that they are going to be teaching to their students this semester.

Squeezing in the Last Few Jobs in Bissau by Emily

continues here in Bissau. In between packing and trips out to Canchungo, Jason and his intern, Widafa have been working on lots of different projects, including making several lovely solar panel mounts for a missionary here in Bissau. Widafa is not going to be going out to Canchungo with us, and once we get the entire shop moved at the end of the month, Jason is going to be sad not to have him around. We're praying that he is able to find some new interns from the students at the WAVS welding school out in Canchungo.

Even though Jason's been moving equipment from the shop in Bissau out to the new shop in Canchungo truckload by truckload, work still



A beautiful solar panel, sitting on top of its new secure mount, waiting to be bolted down to the roof

Ebola Continues by Emily

The news on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa is not great. The virus is still spreading, and fear is spreading even faster. Because Ebola is only spread through direct contact, doctors, nurses, and hospital staff are in the greatest danger from the virus. The situation is currently the worst in Liberia. They still have a huge lack of even basic medical facilities because of their long civil war that ended in 2003. Before the outbreak there was only one doctor for every 100,000 people. Over 2,000 people (160 of them medical workers) have been infected there already.

We probably won't be in any immediate danger of catching Ebola itself. The problem is that with every clinic and hospital short-staffed because of infection and overwhelmed with Ebola patients, people are dying in childbirth, dying of malaria, and dying because of all kinds of other infections without the ability to seek treatment. This is what is leading to much of the fear and panic in the region; and if Ebola crosses the border into Guinea-Bissau – and the same sort of scarcity and panic sets in here – we might have to come home.

Please join us in praying for the end of this outbreak. If sick people could be quarantined and treated in medical facilities, if the medical staff at those facilities could have reliable access to running water, gloves, and bleach, and if the people who do die could be buried in the right way, this disease could be stopped easily. We are praying for those things and for the safety of all the brave men and women working at clinics and hospitals in this region.

Jason & Emily