



The Atkins Family

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Foundation, Pillars, and a Roof by Jason

It's hard for us to imagine our drinking water giving us diarrhea several times a month, but that is a reality for many Guinean families. Cholera outbreaks each year kill kids needlessly - the remedy is rest, and lots of clean water. Unfortunately, if your well is what made you sick, drinking lots of water only makes things worse.

Progress continues on the drinking water filter factory as we push for an April 20 completion date. The team of masons has poured the foundation and is working on the slab, in preparation for pouring the steel-reinforced concrete pillars one at a time.

With the design work on the roof system done (and approved by a U.S. engineer) our shop is beginning to fabricate the roof trusses. Our hope is that near the beginning of April we will be finished with the trusses at the same time the masons complete the pillars. Once all of that happens, we'll truck the trusses out to the site, weld the sections together, and start setting them! That process is likely to get a little exciting, since it will need to be done with ropes, scaffolding, and patience, but I'm confident we'll get it done and have a nice shady spot to work by the time Richard (the American chemist leading the project) and Kai (the Canadian ceramics expert) get here to build the kiln that will fire the filters and begin production in mid-April. We can't wait to see that first batch of filters finished and ready to go to families whose contaminated well water has been making them chronically sick!

We appreciate your continued prayer for safety and speed as we push to try to make our deadline so everything is ready when Kai and Richard arrive to start the next phase of the project.

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The welding students working on a roof truss and a shelf for the filter factory



One of the roof trusses for the drinking water filter factory



Jason showing the kids how the filter factory shelves are coming together

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Sarah by Emily

Most of the time visitors from the U.S. come to work with Jason. They spend their days getting grubby in the shop, sitting around a laptop designing tools and buildings, or going from one meeting to the next with Jason translating for them. A few weeks ago we had a different kind of visitor; a dear friend from college, who I hadn't seen since our wedding in 2004, came to visit me.

Instead of working with steel, Sarah spent her time having long talks with me while I cooked and took care of the kids, and getting to know several of our Guinean friends and neighbors. She helped me figure out what the next phase of my ministry in Canchungo could look like and I'm excited to branch out into some of the new directions we dreamed about, including starting a women's Bible study group with our pastor's wife at our church.

Friends and family who visit us, email us, and pray for us, encourage us more than they will ever know!

Never A Dull Day by Jason

It's been a busy month and seems likely to keep getting busier as we get closer to our trip to the U.S. in June. As I've been working in the shop, trying to finish projects and broom work out to make space for new jobs, I've recently been struck by just how great the shop has become. Sure, it's still pretty cramped, new dust coats everything each morning, and we have to be really careful about what electricity we use at what time of day because of the solar power system - but as we've been doing a lot of very different jobs recently, I'm thankful for all of the capabilities that we now have.

Work varies each day a great deal. One day I welded a chunk that broke off of the cast aluminum engine head of our church's truck after an unfortunate meeting with a big tree (an aluminum welding capability that very few shops around here have) and the next day I was using our computer-controlled cutting table to cut scrapyard steel plate into brackets for the roof trusses for the filter factory (a machine that is unique in Guinea-Bissau). As we have gotten more machines powered up and learned their capabilities, the shop has gotten ever more capable of going from imagination to finished product in short order. I think I may share a gene with a great Israeli-born inventor named Dan Gelbart who says he has a "genetic mutation which causes an obsessive desire to build things." The shop has become a great place to exercise that part of the way God made me to help the work He's doing in Guinea-Bissau. I even whipped up the fire pit in the picture below on a free weekend and in the past three weeks we've had fires with Brazilians, Indonesians, Americans, and Guineans gathered around it!

Thanks to all who have supported us with love, logistics, finances, and prayer to make this happen. The shop is a unique thing in Guinea-Bissau and we pray it will continue to be used to help build God's kingdom for many years.

Jason + Emily



Our friend Sarah who we hadn't seen since she was a bridesmaid in our wedding in 2004



Sarah loved getting to know our friends. These are our neighbors.



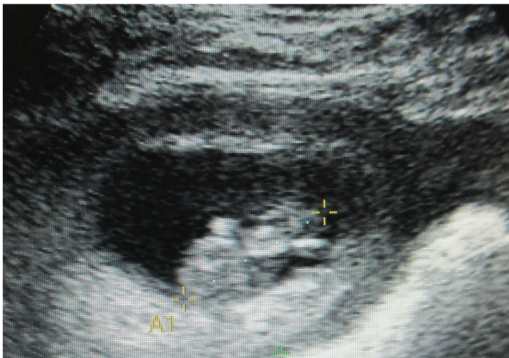
Good friends from Bissau came out to Canchungo to stay with us for several days.



The cast aluminum engine Jason welded back together



The fire pit Jason designed



The tiniest member of the Atkins family, coming in October!