



The Atkins Family

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Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

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Though the rainy season
is here, the construction
marches on!

Tropical Trees *by Emily*

Some days it's hard to believe how much construction progress has been made at the land in just a few short months! The kids and I aren't able to be there much, but each weekend we usually take the whole family over to swim, play in the sand, and just be outside. When we purchased the property in March, it already had lots of cashew trees, palm trees (the kind that make palm nuts), and quite a few small farroba trees (which is an African fruit used to make juice). Over the past few months, we have planted 6 mango trees, 12 lemon trees, and 25 date palms (which I actually sprouted from date pits). We are still looking to find some coconut trees, and we hope to plant papaya and banana as well. Next year we will graft some of the lemon trees to produce grapefruits, oranges, and tangerines. I can't tell you how fun it is to plant things that make the project land a beautiful, shady place and will provide food for our family and community.



Planting a mango tree!

The Big Swap *by Jason*

Last month, I had the opportunity to help with a big maintenance project at the WAVS vocational school. The school has been struggling for the last few years with very weak batteries powering the off-grid solar power system which provides all of the electricity for the school (and, until we build the new one, my workshop).

In our shipping container, WAVS sent 16,000 pounds of batteries to replace the set. The process of changing them was a little more involved than your average AA battery swap! The old batteries had corroded badly, making



In order to make a path from the bay door to where the batteries live in the back of my shop, I had to move a good chunk of my already-cramped shop into the bits of open space. I was glad to be able to put everything back in its place later!

moving them even more difficult than it already would've been given their weight. Fortunately, with some experience moving heavy machinery around in the shop, I had the right equipment available to be able to get the tons of batteries safely lifted up, moved out of the way, and the replacements set down.



With no way to move our electric forklift from our new land to the old shop, the swap had to be done with a good pinch bar, a pallet jack, and a chain fall!

After wiring the new batteries to the system, we noticed an immediate and huge improvement. The system had been shutting down frequently when heavy loads were turned on and often didn't stay on through the night before running out of power. Now, the system is working great! We're glad WAVS was able to find the grant to pay for the new batteries and we were able to find, send, and install them. Getting the school's system stable and squared away for years to come, before we leave to our new location, was a big relief.

Site Plan *by Jason*

Next month, we hope you'll take the 9 minutes to watch the video tour we're producing of our ministry's new 3-acre property. Though we are in the early stages of construction, laying groundwork for security and infrastructure, the overall plan is coming together beautifully!

Here is the site plan we've developed. The left side of the map (which is mostly south) will principally be quieter, calmer space; our house, the guesthouse, and the guest bungalows. The right side will house the new workshop and several support buildings (paint, a garage, and a small carpentry shop) eventually. The red block is land a friend of ours (who also works with us) purchased to build his house on. The blue block is buffer land to ensure our well has adequate distance from any sources of contamination uphill, and will likely be a playground for both our and the neighborhood kids.



Catch-up Q&A *by Jason*

We've had a lot changing since arriving here last December, and wanted to answer a few questions that are being asked, in case anyone missed a newsletter here or there!

Q: You were concerned you might not have a place to live after March. How did that work out?

A: The ownership of the house we live in was transferred from WAVS to the local pastor whose land the house is built on, as planned, in March. Though it took some time and care, we have a stable rental situation worked out with the pastor's family which will let us rent the house until our house at the new base is built and we're ready to move. We're really looking forward to that day, but are doing fine in the meantime.

Q: What about the workshop? Are you still at the vocational school?

A: Yes. The vocational school had offered us the option of renting the space the shop has been in, after we left the organization, which we will do until the new shop is built at the new base. As the space is pretty tight, we're excited about the day when we're able to move, but we're glad to have this space available in the meantime. Another concern had been that the future of the weak solar power system at the school was uncertain, but fortunately as WAVS found grant money to replace the batteries (see the front page), the power is now stable again.

Q: What's going on with the new place you're building?

A: We were incredibly blessed to be able to buy a 3-acre piece of undeveloped land which we're developing into a new base of operations for our ministry (see above). We hope for the site to eventually include a new, larger shop building, a house for our family, and several guest rooms to host other missionaries and guests needing a peaceful place to recharge. We're currently working on the groundwork there, including purchase documentation/taxes, water, a perimeter wall, limited electricity, and a storage building. As God continues to provide funding we'll be able to build the new workshop, our house, and the guest housing.

Q: What do travel plans look like?

A: We had originally planned to be in the US right now to enjoy the summer months with our families and supporters. However, we decided to push travel until (hopefully) the 4th quarter because we wouldn't be able to see many of you if we were there right now. Our hope is that things will improve enough that closer to October we'll be able to come back for three months and be free with hugs and smiles!



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