



# The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah,  
Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,  
West Africa

June 2025

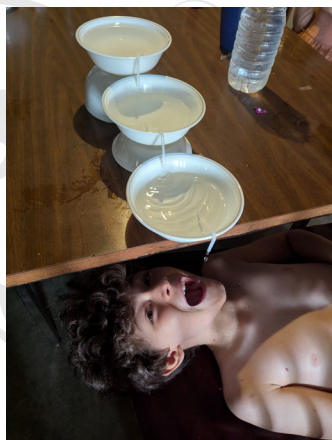
Enjoying summer  
break!

## Summer Plans *by Emily*

School's out! Savannah finished 8th grade, Nathaniel 6th, and Miriam 3rd, and they are ready for a break. Our summer break will only be 5 weeks, but the kids have big plans.

Miriam has been crocheting adorable little stuffed animals and change purses, and then happily giving them away to family and friends. She has also been my kitchen assistant, learning all kinds of cooking skills.

Pretty much every time I turn around Nathaniel has either set up something elaborate or taken something apart completely (good thing we had a second umbrella!). And I'm pretty sure he's blazing through an entire audio book every day.



*Nathaniel's siphon-fed unlimited water dispensing machine.*

About a month and a half ago we surprised Savannah with the news that she would be spending her summer in the U.S. Following our normal schedule, none of us would have been in the U.S. until next summer. However, Jason's grandfather, Don Atkins, passed away earlier this year, and his extended family decided to have a memorial service in mid-July, which Jason made plans to attend. Last year good friends of ours offered to pay for Savannah's plane ticket to the States this summer so that she could attend Simpson Park Camp, but we didn't think she was ready to make that trip on her own at 14. When the memorial service was scheduled for the first weekend of Camp, we decided to let Savannah go with Jason.

*Jason and Savannah on their trip which involved motorcycles, vans, this overnight boat, three flights, and a train!*



*A braided bread wreath Miriam made with very minimal help.*



## Living The Dream *by Jason*

This month we reached a milestone in the new site's construction that has been five years in the making and which I've been chomping at the bit to accomplish for the last several years. From very early in the construction, we've powered the whole site with a temporarily-installed, cut-down version of the solar system that will eventually run everything. The first "building" on the site was the shipping container that brought all of the solar equipment over in 2020. The temporary system has been set up inside that container, with 12 solar panels on top of the container, ever since. We've added more panels to the system as shop roof has been built, but the system has remained essentially unchanged since then, a hodge-podge of ad-hoc wiring and components laying on a shelf in the container.

A messy hodge-podge was, of course, not what I was dreaming of for the system that would power the shop and our household for years to come! Additionally, though the temporary system is providing enough power to run construction (even a good amount of (cont'd)



*The temporary power setup served us well for five years, but wasn't exactly a finished setup and wasn't safe for others to be around.*

## Living The Dream (cont'd) by Jason

... welding), it isn't providing all of the kinds of power that we eventually need. The final system will provide both 400 and 230 volt three-phase, in addition to the 230v single-phase European power it currently generates. The three-phase



*The permanent installation is still in-process, but is already much cleaner and is now providing the three-phase power we need!*

power requires more components be installed, which were included in 2020 but didn't have a good place to be set up. That power is critical moving forward, however, as almost all of the larger shop equipment requires it.

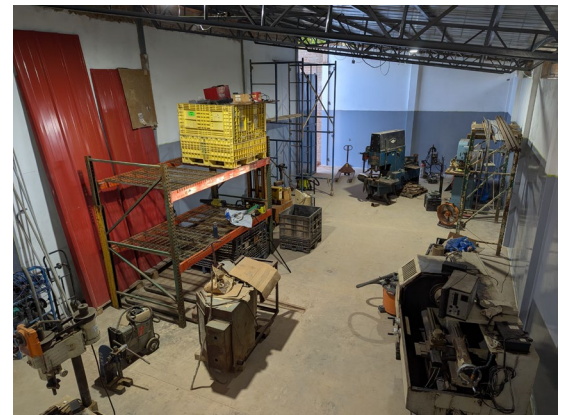
So, finally having roofed and finished painting the storage room where the full system's electronics were meant to live permanently, as well as sealing it from outside dust, this month I was able to get it set up enough to generate three-phase power for the first time! The system install is still ongoing, is still a bit of a tangle of temporary wires, and still doesn't include half of the solar panels the final system will draw from, but we now have three-phase power being generated! This is a huge step toward being able to move the shop from the old school location over into the new building, as now the equipment will be able to be used in the new shop once it's brought over. The rainy season's arrival, of course, complicates moving heavy equipment over right now, but it's another step!

Thank you all again for your generous support over the years that has allowed us to reach this milestone!

## Looking Good! by Jason

What a difference a month (and plaster and paint) can make! The machining room in the new shop that we've been working to cover and close up (about a quarter of the shop's total floorspace) is now plastered, painted, lockable with a big door, and we're beginning to run electrical and hooking up machines! As we continue to work to finish the rest of the shop, we're also squeezing welding and fabrication equipment in that won't eventually live here, so this is still a bit temporary, but doesn't it look great? It's such a huge relief to finally have a place to house these sensitive machines that's protected from the rain and dust of Guinea-Bissau!

The finished walls also pave the way for the electrical installation which will be run in external conduit. The first several outlet groups are installed and it sure makes working easier not tripping over a tangle of extension cords run everywhere! This also allowed us to run our first connection to power the CNC lathe that recently arrived, which will be a huge boost to the complexity of parts we can make and expand the needs we're able to meet.



*In late May we were finishing the roof over this section, and a month later with the plaster and paint done, the space is starting to look like a great place to work!*



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