

Across borders — IBEW Local 48 retirees volunteer in Peru

Three men spend two weeks helping to install a transformer, power conditioner, and 120-volt receptacle at a health clinic

Three retired members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48 recently returned from a two-week humanitarian trip with the Portland based non-profit Health Bridges International, Inc. (HBI). Their mission: To literally brighten the lives of those living in Lima, Peru.

Bob Palandech and two long-time friends, Bruce Zimmerman and Jeff Hawkins put their years of electrical experience and skills to work by assisting local Peruvian electricians to repair electrical equipment at a center HBI helps maintain just south of Lima, as well as a clinic high in the Andes mountains.

Palandech said the power system in Peru is different than in the U.S. The standard voltage receptacle is wired at 220 volts. "Power fluctuation and inconsistency is common in Peru," he said.

The three men helped install a transformer, power conditioner, and 120-volt receptacle at a health clinic to supply power for the American-donated medical equipment.



Retired IBEW Local 48 electricians Bruce Zimmerman, Bob Palandech and Jeff Hawkins traveled with a local humanitarian group to brighten the lives of residents in Lima, Peru.

They also assisted with basic electrical tasks, including replacing light bulbs, lamp sockets, receptacles, and light switches. Common tasks for a trained electrician, but Palandech said the electrical equipment is substandard, thus needing repair more often.

"I'm glad I can put my skills to work. HBI has provided me the opportunity to use my craft to help those less fortunate," said Palandech. "Throughout my years as an IBEW member, I've volunteered at the Grotto and other events, but my involvement

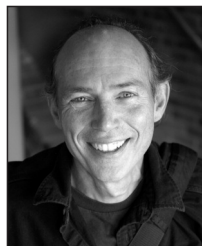
with HBI has been the most rewarding."

For the past four years, Palandech, a former Local 48 president, has teamed up with HBI to help with construction and medical services in third world communities. The focus of HBI is planning and implementing programs and projects that support community based development.

Palandech, Zimmerman and Hawkins were among 25 volunteers who traveled to Peru for two weeks last June.



James Coon



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