

433 MEDICAL GROUP

MISSION

LINEAGE

433 Medical Group established and activated in the Reserve, 1 Aug 1992

STATIONS

Kelly AFB (later, Kelly Fld Annex, Lackland AFB), TX, 1 Aug 1992

ASSIGNMENTS

433 Airlift Wing, 1 Aug 1992

COMMANDERS

Col Geoffrey Morrison

Col William A. Blanchette November 2010

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

12 Sep 2000-11 Sep 2002

1 Sep 2004-31 Aug 2006

1 Jan 2007-31 Dec 2008

EMBLEM

Group will use the wing emblem with the group designation in the scroll.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

With only half their medical team and less than three days to see patients, Air Force Reservists from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, still managed to care for more than 2,000 people during a medical training exercise in Peru. A 19-person team from Air Force Reserve Command's 433rd Medical Group treated patients in the Ayacucho region Aug. 1-7 as part of New Horizons-Peru 2008. New Horizons is a long-term, U.S. Southern Command sponsored program to bring humanitarian assistance to Latin and Caribbean nations. The team included doctors, a dentist, an optometrist, dental technicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacy technicians and an administrator. Members provided general medical care and diagnoses; dentistry, optometry and pharmaceutical services; and public health education in Mollepata, Carmen Alto and Quinua over the course of six days. Although the Reservists are no strangers to medical training exercises in Guatemala, Honduras, Belize and the Dominican Republic, they were not originally scheduled to be a part of this year's New Horizons exercise. They learned in June that they would be going to Peru to replace Soldiers who had to pull out of the exercise because of a last-minute deployment. The Reservists not only had to scramble to meet the tight schedule, but they had to do so without their entire team. "It's been a challenge because if you plan for a certain number of people and days and then they're cut, you have to improvise," said Lt. Col. Diana Flores, lead planner and international health specialist. "This unit, with only half its manning, is doing very well." The short-handed medical team saw 2,373 patients in six days. "The 433rd MDG team amazed me with the number of patients they saw despite only having a fraction of their team," said Maj. Matt Joganich, task force commander. Despite the challenges, the Reservists gained invaluable training, Colonel Flores said. "New Horizons put the team in a contingency, deployment-type situation, living out of tents, sleeping on cots and sleeping bags," she said. Team members practiced "field medicine, using their basic raw skills as providers to take care of patients." 2008

1992 During August, the 433d Logistics Support Squadron received assignment to the 433d Logistics Group, the 433d Missions Support Squadron received assignment to the 433d Support Group and the 433d Medical Squadron received assignment to the 433d Medical Group. The Headquarters, 433d Tactical Airlift Group inactivated on 14 April 1959, with a new designation of Headquarters, 433d Operations Group located at Kelly AFB and assigned to the 433d Airlift Wing effective 31 August 1992. The Headquarters, 433d Maintenance and Supply Group disbanded on 27 September 1984, with a new designation of Headquarters, 433d Logistics Group located at Kelly AFB and assigned to the 433d Airlift Wing. The 43d Aerial Port Squadron and 75th Aerial Port Squadron inactivated effective 1 August. On the same date the 73d Aerial Port Squadron, Carswell AFB, Texas, experienced the reassignment to the 301st Operations Group.

The last medical unit to see the results of the special order was the 433d USAF Clinic which became the 433d Medical Squadron with command and control to the 433d Medical Group.

1997

Members of the 433d Medical Squadron deployed during the summer to the remote mountains of Honduras in support of a medical humanitarian operation called Joint Task Force Bravo. As the

medical team moved from village to village in the Santa Barbara region, hundreds of patients flocked from miles around, sometimes arriving dehydrated from walking as many as twenty miles. They came with hopes of receiving care from the Staff Sgt. Robert Elizondo, medical services specialist, 433rd skilled medical team for themselves and their families.

Thirty members from the squadron volunteered for the operation providing needed attention to the Honduran villagers including dental care, immunizations, and family practice treatment. Medical treatment is not easy for the villagers to come by, according to Major Mary Wooldridge, assistant chief nurse at the 433d Medical Squadron. "We treated a variety of conditions such as lice infestations, upper respiratory conditions, new and old wounds, malnutrition, ear and throat disorders and skin infections," she said. "We tried to treat those who needed immediate care first," added First Lieutenant Maria Irizarry, a clinical nurse at the medical squadron whose bilingual skills became a valuable asset during triage of the patients.

The villagers were also badly in need of dental care. "We extracted more than 700 teeth in two weeks," said Major Steve R. Pina one of only two dentists providing care. The dentists and their assistants also passed out toothbrushes and provided preventive counseling to the villagers. The field environment in which all this medical attention occurred was anything but ideal. The team often worked in schoolhouses, or even in the open air, with no electricity and little sanitation. "Although the facilities were primitive, we were all so busy most of the time, we never even noticed the inconveniences," said Pina.

Also unusual was working in a truly joint environment with members of the U.S. Army, as well as the Honduran military. "This was the first time most of us had worked in this type of environment. We recognized that our styles are different but we learned to respect that," said Wooldridge. "After a few days everything just clicked, and we all started working together," added SSgt Debra Terry, dental assistant and X-ray technician at the medical squadron.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.
Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.
Unit history. *Kelly AFB, TX, Heritage of Service, Seventy-Five Years of Military Aviation at Kelly Air Force Base, 1916-1991*. Office of History, San Antonio Air Logistics Center. Kelly AFB, TX. 1991.