



Greetings from the Beastmasters,

During the month of July, the Beastmasters continued getting better at performing our assigned missions. Lieutenant Kraus and Staff Sergeant Lindsay have been working so hard and doing so many jobs that we decided to spread the love around and give them some help. As a result, we created a third platoon to handle the route security mission. Lieutenant Kobyra is the platoon commander and Staff Sergeant Hodnett is the platoon sergeant, while Sergeant Foster and Sergeant Gibson take on squad leader duties. After only a few days, you would have thought that these four had been working together for years as they have really hit the ground

running and have made significant impacts on that mission. On a lighter note, Lance Corporal Brown, who is also a Third Platoon member, has finally said goodbye to his mustache. The time and effort needed to maintain the mustache's sheen and overall magnificence could not be sustained due to operational tempo. As such, Brown re-dedicated himself to mission accomplishment and shaved. The mustache will be missed.

On the artillery side of the house, First Platoon had the opportunity to demonstrate its proficiency on the howitzers multiple times this month. On several occasions, Sergeant Lewandowski and the Marines in the fire direction center, Sergeant Ahlin and Gun 1, and Corporal Morales and Gun 2 showed the local infantry units that when the going gets tough, there is only one name you need to remember for fire support needs... BEASTMASTERS. In fact, after each mission, I call the unit that received our help and ask for feedback for the Marines. Every time I call I get the same response, "that was AWESOME!" On a related note, the dancing that resulted from our first mission fired in June has been replaced by a certain confident swagger. Beastmaster artillery is in business and business is good.

On the counter insurgency front, Second Platoon has been doing an outstanding job in the Shorshurak area. They provide security, build infrastructure like bridges and most recently, have continued making progress with our squad of Afghan Uniformed Police. Lieutenant Montani and Staff Sergeant Labaran have worked incessantly to make independent patrol base Mahafiz a better place to live for the Marines of Second Platoon who are working so hard for mission accomplishment. Morale has definitely improved due to new shower facilities and an upgraded gym. The improved morale has spilled over into performance as relationships with the local populace continue to improve. Once again, the Beastmasters demonstrate flexibility and adaptability in accomplishing any mission assigned.

Each Beastmaster here has each family member there in mind during the long hours and hot days. Your support, letters, care packages, e-mails and thoughts keep us going and sustain our determination. We want to make you proud and show you all just how special it is to be part of the Beastmaster family.



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Battalion Information Line
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Option 932

American Red Cross
1-877-272-7337

Military One Source
1-800-342-9647

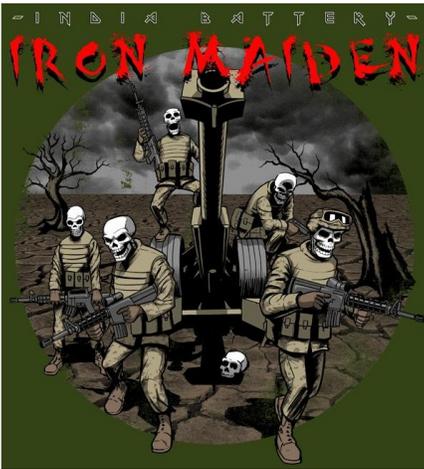
www.militaryonesource.com

Tricare/Triwest
1-888-874-9378

**Naval Hospital
Camp Pendleton**
(760) 725-HELP (4357)
(appointments)

**Navy/Marine Corps
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(760) 725-5537

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Greetings friends and family of India Battery. As always, I am happy to report that we are one month closer to coming home. Your Marines and Sailors have been extremely busy with a multitude of tasks over the past month. The Battery has finally completed the entire relieve in place process with the British Marines and have now assumed complete responsibility for the Kajaki area of operations. After taking over, the Marines first task at hand was to get the base cleaned up and suitable for the standards of living that Marines are expected to maintain. We have spent countless hours pulling weeds, trimming trees and sweeping floors, in an effort to maintain a respectable quality of life as well as diminishing the possibility of spreading germs and bacteria. Due to the Marines due diligence and hard work, the base looks phenomenal and we have had zero cases of sickness related to unsanitary conditions; a difficult feat in an austere combat zone.

As we do at the beginning of every month, we took pleasure in promoting our deserving Marines to their next higher rank. This month we promoted Lance Corporals Beam, Dick and Villarreal to Corporal, and Private First Class Nunez to Lance Corporal. We also took pleasure in presenting the following Marines with their highly deserved Good Conduct Medals: Corporals Ayala, Arriola, Chastain, Coates, Foss, Frye, Garcia, S., McDaniel, Needham, Simpson and Lance Corporal Dehoyos. Congratulations to these fine Marines who have upheld the high standards expected of a United States Marine for the past three years. Additionally during this month, we welcomed the addition of the 1/11 Police Mentor Team to the India Battery family who will maintain a close relationship with the Afghanistan National Police force in the Kajaki district. We also detached a small number of Marines with critical Military Occupational Specialties to help supplement to demanding requirements of the Battalion on and around Fiddlers Green.

Your Marines performance during this month has been beyond expectations. As with all Marines, they have stepped up to the plate and met the challenges of combat head on and with a vigor that is hard to describe. The common motto "Every Marine a Rifleman" is an understatement for Battery I. Your Marines have been assigned truly uncommon tasks they have never done and never dreamed of doing. Almost every Marine aboard FOB Zeebrugge is either standing guard on one of our observation posts or standing guard within the FOB and conducting routine security patrols in the Kajaki area of operations. Additionally, many of them have received training and are now proficient at the firing of 81mm Mortars and routinely shoot them in direct support of our Marines on the ground. We have Marines who have received training on the 50 caliber sniper rifle and have engaged numerous targets in support of combat operations during the month of July alone. Lastly, our Marines have been trained to fire the Javelin weapons system which will provide devastating direct fire support for our Marines on the ground. Your Marine may not be shooting artillery at the moment, but they're firing everything else; and doing a fine job of it as well. We also have Marines trained as Improvised Explosive Device Detection Dog Handlers. These dogs are awesome and are saving Marines and Sailors lives every day. Additionally, our Navy Corpsmen have performed exceptionally well and have been tested just as hard as our Marines have. They were directly responsible for saving the lives of four Afghan Nationals who were the unfortunate victims of an IED blast outside of their village. In an otherwise state of chaos, our Corpsmen took control of the situation and immediately provided life saving steps and advanced medical care prior to an aircraft taking them to the nearest hospital.

I know that mail has been a hot topic for everyone back home. Trust me it's even more frustrating for your Marines and Sailors. We receive mail delivery around every 10 days or so and when we do it's usually around six to eight pallets worth. India Battery is in a unique situation from every other unit in Afghanistan in that our location cannot be driven to. That means that everything has to be flown in via helicopter. Myself and the Battery Gunny are in constant contact with the postal section at Camp Leatherneck, and they are doing the best they can to get the mail to us as quickly as possible. Please be patient and understand the situation that we are in.



Your Marines and Sailors are showing the diversity and determination that have defined our Corps for the past 234 years. There will come a day when the Marines who fought at Kajaki will be immortalized in the pages of Marine Corps history and studied by recruits and candidates alike. Trust in your Marines individual abilities and the indomitable spirit of Battery I; together we are making a difference and taking the fight to the enemy.

Semper Fidelis.



Families of Lima Battery,

We are approaching the halfway point of our deployment and have established a solid routine. The Battery as a whole has dealt expertly with a variety of challenges. The days have been long and hot, but everyone finds ways to pass the time. When not manning the howitzers or standing watch, most Marines find time to watch movies, play spades or dominoes, or work out.

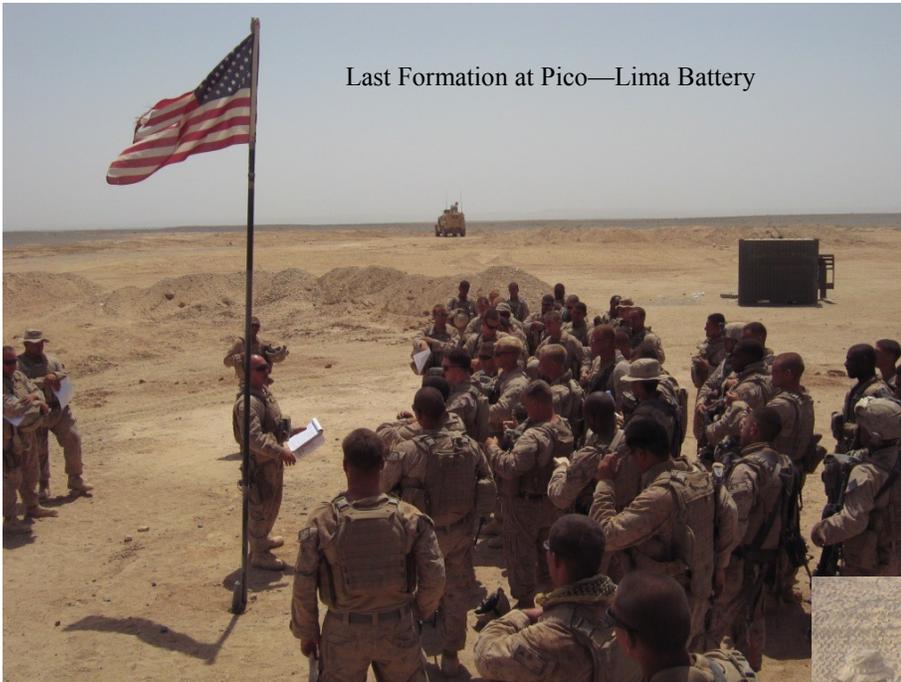
The platoon at FOB Edinburgh continues to support elements of the 2d Marine Regiment as they hold ground against the enemy. The plan in the near future is to give them the assets they need to be more mobile and expand their ability to provide fire support. While the gains are sometimes slow and incremental, the living conditions are slowly improving. Hopefully by the time you read this we have received the air conditioners for the Marine's living areas.

The platoon at COP Payne did an outstanding job of executing their move. Their new home provides them access to many amenities that make life a little easier. Currently they are operating outside of the confines of the COP in support of maneuver forces from 1st Marine Regiment and 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance. The platoon should be out in the field for about a month, so if you don't hear from them as frequently that is why.

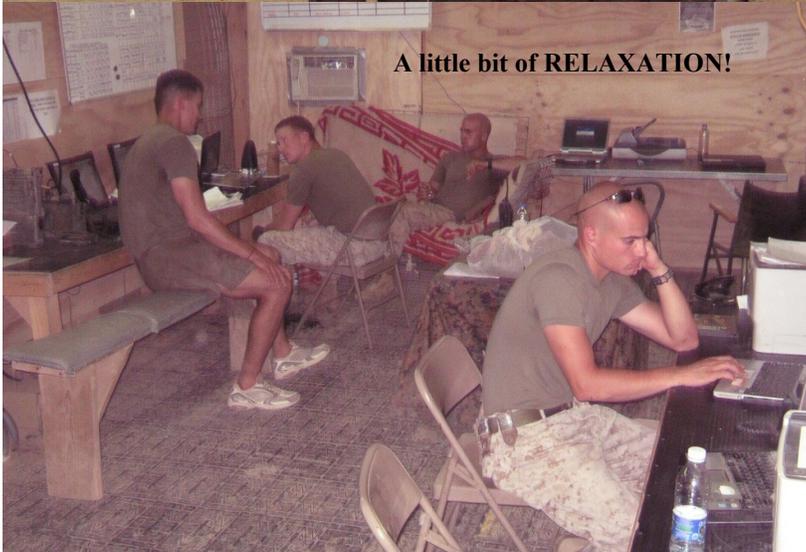
Since we've deployed we've had several new additions to the Lima Battery family. Congratulations to all of those new families, I've talked to lots of proud fathers and seen many pictures of beautiful babies.

Sincerely,

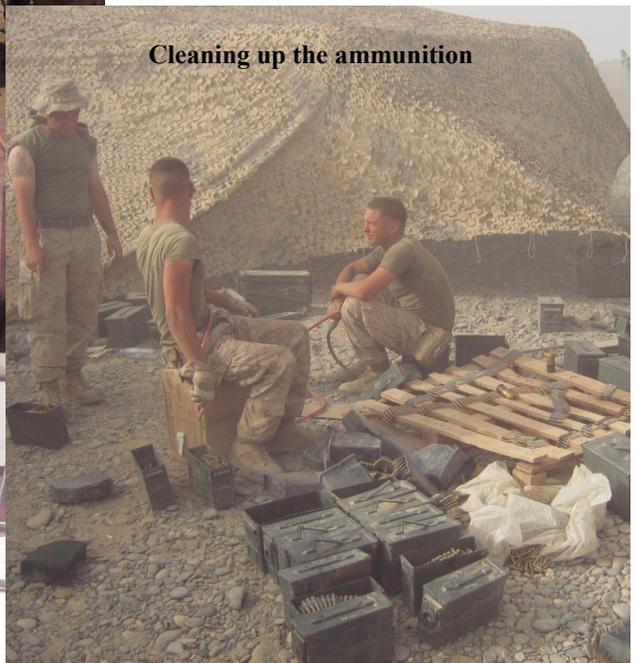
Capt Taylor N. Young



Last Formation at Pico—Lima Battery



A little bit of RELAXATION!



Cleaning up the ammunition