

I'm sure his Army instructors must have thought that they had an easy drop out in Captain Wawrzyniak. They must have been quite surprised a month later when he left Jump School not only with jump wings on his chest, but with the IRON MIKE trophy in his fist—graduating number one in his class. Stan's logic was that he should graduate at the top of his class from these demanding schools because he was older and more experienced than his cohorts. That was typical Wawrzyniak logic.

In July, 1965 then Major Wawrzyniak embarked for Vietnam where he served in the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment where he was awarded two Bronze Stars and his fourth Purple Heart.

His accomplishments did not end with his career in the military. Perhaps his proudest legacy from his post-Marine Corps history were the strong relationships he had with his wife Adaline, his daughters, Bernadette and Paula, and sons Michael, Andrew and Stanley. With a career that although distinguished, would have strained even the strongest of family ties, Stanley took the time to mend the relationships that were most important to him.

Shortly after his retirement and until the time of his death LtCol Wawrzyniak's two youngest sons were living in the Swansboro, North Carolina area and working in the building trades. Stan went to work as a foreman with the same contractor who employed his sons. This gave him the opportunity to accomplish two things that were very important to him. First he was able to work side by side with his sons and re-build his relationships with them that had suffered during his long service related separations. Second he was able to build homes. For a man whose entire life had been spent at war in foreign countries, the sense of accomplishment he felt from building homes was enormous. The fact that he did it side by side with his sons made it doubly important to him.

LtCol Stanley Wawrzyniak's nature can be described by the quote from perhaps the most famous of all Marines, General Chesty Puller: "The real rewards of military service are not the medals you wear on your chest. The real rewards are the looks in the eyes of men who have served with you, men who understand the nature of your service, men who have observed your actions in the most stressful of conditions and have seen the depth of your character."

It is my honor to have such men and women serving in the United States Marine Corps, and residing in my district. Stanley Wawrzyniak is a man who is sorely missed, and greatly appreciated.

MAKING COMMUNITIES MORE LIVABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BALLENGER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, my goal in Congress is for the Federal Government to be a better partner with State and local governments, the pri-

vate sector and individual citizens to make our communities more livable. This issue is moving to the center of the American political scene in part because of the attention that has been given to this by the administration, Vice President GORE in particular, but even more important because of the large grassroots pressure that has been building around the country as evidenced by over 240 local and State initiatives in the last election. This is just the tip of the iceberg.

Part of the evidence of this growing movement for livable communities has been the attention that has been given by the national media. One of the best and most prominently featured articles was on the front page of the Sunday Washington Post this weekend which cited the new citizens, the new economy, and the new issues that are part of a new and growing awareness in the State of California.

Yet despite this characterization of all this being new, quality of life is truly one of our oldest and most enduring issues. But whether it is a new emerging issue or one of timeless political concern, it is time for Congress to address livability now. We need to get beyond the soundbite focus that are driven by partisan politics catering to narrow special interests. It seems, sadly, to dominate our activities here.

So far this month we have had some of the worst of examples, where Americans concerned by violence on our schoolgrounds saw us respond by attempting to weaken our gun safety laws and by posting the 10 Commandments in school yards, something that is not going to inspire much confidence in the minds of most American families.

We do not have to make up issues or shy away from real problems. There are simple, common-sense approaches for dealing with livable communities.

In the area of gun violence, we can approach it the same way that we have reduced auto deaths and injury on our roads. We can make a huge difference in the three-quarter million Americans who have been killed by gun violence since 1960. An American government that has been able to take action to childproof aspirin bottles and cigarette lighters ought to be ashamed that there are more product safety protections for toy guns than for real guns. We can start by simply passing the legislation already approved by the United States Senate to close the gun show loophole and make it harder for children to get their hands on guns.

We can make strides to make our communities more livable dealing with the built environment. All the time and money the Federal Government spends on physical infrastructure can be planned regionally and coordinated with our State, local and private partners.

We can make the problems of air quality and traffic congestion better,

not simply throwing money at them and in some cases actually making them worse. We can help manage the entire water cycle rather than have a flood insurance program that pays people to live where God does not want them despite being flooded out repeatedly. Most important, we can have the Federal Government practice what we preach, where we locate Federal buildings, how we manage our land.

We could even take the radical step of having the Post Office obey local land use laws, zoning codes and work with local communities across the country before they make locational decisions that can have a devastating impact on Main Street America.

Making our communities more livable is everybody's job, and it ought to start with Congress doing our part. We will feel better, and America will be better for our efforts.

ELIMINATE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I represent a very, very diverse district, a series of communities on the south side of Chicago and the south suburbs, Cook and Will Counties, industrial communities like Joliet and a lot of suburban towns, as well as cornfields and grain elevators. The folks back home have a pretty clear message even in such a diverse district. They want us to meet our challenges and work together and come up with solutions.

That is why they are so proud of what this Congress has accomplished in the last 4½ years, with balancing the budget for the first time in 28 years, cutting taxes for the middle class for the first time in 16 years, reforming welfare for the first time in a generation, and taming the tax collector by reforming the IRS for the first time ever. Those are real accomplishments and folks say, "Well, that's pretty good, but that's history. What are we going to do next?"

Well, this Congress and this Republican House have several very, very important goals. We want to strengthen and make our schools not only better but safer, we want to strengthen Social Security by locking away 100 percent Social Security revenues for Social Security. We want to pay down the national debt. And, of course, we want to continue working to lower taxes for the middle class and for working families. This year as we work to lower taxes and to lower the tax burden for middle-class families, I believe that the approach we should take is to address the unfairness in the tax code, because when I listen to the folks back home, whether in the union hall or the VFW,