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Henry J. Nowak '93 and
Diane H. Nowak '91.



Daniel A. Spitzer '93, left, Dean Boyer, center, and
Hon. John T. Curtin '49.

Words to the Wise

*Watching the language at the
annual Law Review dinner*

The most frustrating, and perhaps the most powerful, tool in the lawyer's arsenal — the written word — got its due respect at this year's *Buffalo Law Review* dinner.

U.S. District Judge John T. Curtin, who was honored in recognition of his 25th year as a federal judge, was the keynote speaker at the March 29th dinner. He quoted Francis Bacon: "Reading makes us a full man, conversation makes us a ready man, and writing will make us an exact person. That is just as true today as it was many years ago."

The dinner culminated what Dean Barry B. Boyer called "an extraordinarily successful year" for the *Law Review*, the oldest of the half-dozen legal journals published at the Law School.

"Law reviews are a model of training for the profession," he said, "of learning how to think, how to write, and how to produce something under enormous pressures."

Boyer also praised the *Law Review* as a forum for communication among legal scholars. "It is our window on the larger professional and scholarly world," he said. "Thank you for providing the avenue through which a lot of us like to speak to our professional colleagues."

Professor R. Nils Olsen Jr., who has appeared before the federal bench in a multitude of cases, introduced Judge Curtin as a jurist of compassion and fairness.

Curtin, with the wry humor that has characterized his tenure on the bench, noted: "I had a number of ambitions in life which I will never realize. One is to win a marathon. Another is, I would like to be able to sing like Pavarotti. (My wife knows that I have the same enthusiasm, but no talent, and will never get to that level.) And I'd like to be able to write with the lucid and careful skill of a Judge Hand, or with the great eloquence of a Judge Cardozo.

"Writing is something which all of us hold dear. I continue to do my best, but I know I will never reach those levels."

Praising the student-edited *Law Review* as

invaluable for honing writing and editing skills, Curtin referred to a mutual-funds tax case that once came before him. Persuaded by a well-written brief, he ruled for the plaintiff — a ruling that stood up through appeals and before the U.S. Supreme Court.

“I think probably good writers are like golfers,” he said. “There’s never a happy one.

“You write something, and when you look at what you’ve written a week or two or a year later, you say, oh, I left this out, I put too much in, I should have changed the words, that word really doesn’t ring true.

“That’s the goal we search for, and we continue to search for it. We’ll probably never reach the goal, but it’s something to try to do.”

Curtin, who presided over the landmark desegregation of Buffalo’s public school system in the 1960s, then turned out an impassioned plea for support of the community’s schools. He referred to a biography of President Harry Truman he was reading, which noted that Truman’s excellent public-school education and the inspiration of a good librarian “carried him through” some hard times on the family farm.

“We can’t go back to those days,” Curtin acknowledged, “and the problems that our schools face today are much more difficult and complex than those in Independence, Mo., when Harry Truman was in school.

“But the important thing is that attention was paid, and we can urge our state leaders and our community leaders that more financial attention be paid to schools to make them first-rate.”

Beyond financial resources, he said, we must encourage private endeavors to improve the schools. Specifically, he pointed to the importance of parent-teacher cooperation: “I believe the schools are strongest that have the greatest parental involvement.

“In the years to come, education will be the touchstone of a good life,” Curtin said. “If we fail to educate our young people properly, it’s going to be difficult for everyone in this country to accomplish what we want to.” ■



Josh Kimerling '94, left, Arthur A. Edwards '94, and Paul J. DeRosa '93



Left to right: Gary B. Storm '93, Marissa K. Briggs '93, Christopher M. Marks '93 and Daniel A. Spitzer '93.