

# Distinguished Service Awards Presented

*A highlight of the recent Spring Program was the presentation of two Distinguished Service Awards. The 1987 Award was given to U.S. District Judge John W. Reynolds and the 1988 Award was given to Irvin B. Charne. Coincidentally these two men were not only in Law School together, graduating in 1949, but were also moot court partners. This Award is the highest that the Law School can make to its alumni or faculty. We salute these two truly distinguished graduates.*

## Presentation to U.S. District Judge John W. Reynolds

*The Distinguished Service Award was presented to U.S. District Judge John W. Reynolds by his long-time friend Leonard S. Zubrensky ('49). Mr. Zubrensky was legal counsel to then-Governor Reynolds in the 1960's. He practices in Milwaukee and is a nationally known speaker on the subject of Worker's Compensation. In addition, Len has completed 21 marathon runs.*

I have known John Reynolds for just about 40 years. We were in Law School together and I was his legal counsel for two years when he was Governor from 1962 to 1964. After he left the Governor's office he bought a house in Milwaukee but was unable to move in because the owner refused to leave and he and his family moved in with me and my wife for a couple of weeks until he could move into his new home.

And you really get to know somebody when you live in close quarters like that.

Later, John and I traveled to different parts of the world together on four separate occasions visiting about 20 countries, the last time being a two and a half week trip to Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil earlier this year, so I think I know him pretty well.



Before describing John's accomplishments, I would like to recall three vignettes to illustrate something about him other than his professional career.

The first illustrates his political acumen as well as mine, and took place when he was Attorney General. He called me late in 1959 to tell me he was asked by the Kennedy campaign staff to be the first statewide public official in the country to support John Kennedy for the presidency.

You will recall that Hubert Humphrey was running for president at that time and there was soon to be a presidential primary in Wisconsin. I told John that it would be political suicide to support Ken-

nedy over Humphrey; that a Catholic could never be elected President of the United States and that all the labor unions in Wisconsin were supporting Humphrey and that if he publicly supported Kennedy for President he would never amount to anything as long as he lived.

John was good enough to wait a couple of days and then called me back and said he appreciated my advice but that he was going to support Kennedy just the same.

You all know what happened. Kennedy was elected President and you can judge for yourself whether John has ever amounted to anything.

The second vignette took place when he was Governor and illustrates his firm grasp on reality.

I recognized early on that John was not very good at making public speeches to large groups and I arranged for him to take speech lessons at WHA once a week.

On the fifth week, I came into the office and John told me that he would not go to take any more lessons. It is true, that he did seem to get worse each week and I asked him why he refused to go. He said, "Leonard, my inability to make speeches unfortunately will more or less always be an albatross around your neck." Being the good sport that I was, I accepted his refusal to take any more lessons as final and besides, he was the Governor.

The third vignette is one that took place after he had assumed the bench as a United States District Judge. This story illustrates John's knack for long range planning. He and his wife Jane and my wife Ruth and I had just attended Jim Doyle's funeral. Following the services, we all went to the memorial union where a very nice assortment of food and drinks were served.

As we were driving to Milwaukee, John turned to me and said "Leonard, at my wake I would like very much to have draft beer served." I said "John, you have my word on it."

But now let me recite some of John's accomplishments which have led to his being presented the Distinguished Service Award.

John Reynolds was District Director for the Office of Price Stabilization for the northern 50 counties of Wisconsin in 1951 and 1952. As Attorney General he fought for reapportionment of the State's congressional and legislative districts, a fight that led to victory in 1964. He also fought artificial barriers against the sale of Wisconsin milk in other states, a boon to Wisconsin's billion dollar dairy industry.

While he was Governor, he created the first Governor's Council on the Arts. The council now has a full-time executive director and has established a solid program of grants and aids to performing artists.

He also created the first Governor's Commission on the Status of Women. The Commission was formed to investigate all aspects of the lives of women with a view to improving their status and widening their opportunity for full participation in the life of our times.

As Governor he proposed and presided over the enactment of the first homestead tax relief law in the country providing tax relief for low income homeowners and renters.

He successfully sponsored a state medical program which had the most liberal eligibility requirements in the nation, a four year term for state office holders, higher state school aids and property tax relief, he doubled the state student loan fund, successfully repealed sixteen selective sales taxes, appointed Nat Heffernan to the Wisconsin Supreme Court, and almost single-handedly won a fair reapportionment suit before the Supreme Court establishing the rule of one person, one vote.

In 1964, while Governor, he ran against George Wallace in the Wisconsin Democratic primary receiving more than a half million votes in the primary, more votes than has ever been cast for any other candidate in a presidential primary in Wisconsin before and since.

When John went on senior status on

September 1, 1986, the Milwaukee Sentinel described him as an "affable judge, known for his charm with jurors and witnesses, chronic tardiness, impatience with long winded attorneys and compassion for first time offenders involved in small scale crime."

When the article appeared in the newspaper, one of his young sons asked him what was meant by chronic tardiness and John replied "That means I'm not perfect."

His best known decision was his ruling in the Milwaukee School desegregation case in which he issued an order that resulted in widespread voluntary busing in Milwaukee which brought about substantial integration of the Milwaukee school system.

One of Judge Reynolds' most interesting decisions was to sentence a woman to only one day's probation for cashing her dead brother's Social Security checks.

Reynolds chastised federal prosecutors for bringing the case to court in the first place. The woman who was reportedly borderline retarded said she had told federal agents that the checks had just kept coming and she had cashed about \$7,000.00 worth over an 18 month period following her brother's death.

John called the case a farce and said the amount she took was comparatively small. The woman apologized, explaining that she had cared for her retarded brother for five years and had used some of her late brother's Social Security money to care for a 90 year old man.

Another well known case tried by Judge Reynolds was the Daniel Bell civil rights case. This case involved the shooting of a black man by a white policeman. It did not come to trial until many years after the shooting. The family of the deceased was awarded over a million dollars following a trial before John Reynolds. Many lawyers felt as I did, that the plaintiffs would not have been successful before any other judge in Milwaukee.

In 1975 he ruled in a case against the City of Milwaukee that the Milwaukee City Service Commission and the School Board had engaged in racial discrimination in the hiring of skilled tradesmen.

Reynolds ordered that hiring procedures be changed so that the number of blacks working in skilled craft positions for the City and the School Board be equal to the percentage of black residents

of the City. He ordered, that for every two vacancies which occurred in a skilled craft classification, that one qualified black person shall be appointed until such time as the percentage in that job classification equaled the percentage of blacks in the City population.

Racial hiring is appropriate in this case he said, because it appears to be the only possible means to provide relief for racial discrimination.

While campaigning for the office of Governor, he said the following after the State legislature had killed bills to outlaw housing discrimination:

"As an American, I am ashamed and hurt that we who preach democracy should be practicing bigotry. As a liberal I am enraged that the principles for which we all stand for have been trampled by a majority of the legislature, including some democrats as well as most republicans.

It is almost inconceivable to think of an America where people are not treated equally. The truth of the matter is that we have this problem not only in the southern part of this country but in Wisconsin itself.

In the past, Wisconsin has been a home for a great many people seeking opportunity, freedom and human dignity. Germans came here in large numbers during the 19th Century to escape the oppression in Europe. They were followed by the Irish, Scandinavians, Poles, Belgians and others.

In Wisconsin all these people found a home and made a great contribution to America. Today the Negro is coming to Wisconsin from the south. He too seeks a home.

His problem is greater than any other group. His skin is black—he is therefore a target to stares and bigotry. Our growing number of Negro citizens presents the toughest test in Wisconsin history for our belief in the equality of man.

We in Wisconsin have a great opportunity to demonstrate to the world that we really believe in the equality of man. This we can accomplish simply by seeing to it that all men are treated equally."

It is with a great deal of pleasure and pride that I present the Distinguished Service Award to a man who has more or less been an albatross around my neck for the past 40 years, one of the law school's most distinguished alumni, my very dear friend John W. Reynolds.

## Presentation to Irv Charne

*Howard Pollack ('73), a partner of Irv Charne, presented the Distinguished Service Award to Irv. Howard has served as both Chairman of the Board of Visitors and President of the Wisconsin Law Alumni Association.*

It is an honor for me to present the 1988 Distinguished Alumni Award to Irvin B. Charne. If it were not a requirement that the award recipient be at least 65 years old, I would say that the award was overdue.

Of course, I am not a detached observer of Irv's. Irv is my friend and mentor, and I am altogether biased in his favor. Despite this, I think I can convince you that Irv has earned the honor of this award.

First, let me put Irv's professional career in context. After serving in World War II, Irv came to Madison, married Merla, was John Reynolds' moot court partner, and in 1949 graduated here as a member of the Order of Coif. After law school, Irv returned to Milwaukee and became law clerk to Judge Robert Tehan. Later, he founded his own law firm and was a law partner of Tom Fairchild. While this was happening, along came sons Jim and David, and steadily Irv's law practice grew.

Irv's reputation also grew. Soon he was President of the Milwaukee Junior Bar Association, then a Governor of the State Bar of Wisconsin and President of the Seventh Circuit Bar Association. He served on judicial selection committees, legislative council committees, and Wisconsin's Court Reorganization Committee. He also was on the boards of the Center for Public Representation and Legal Action of Wisconsin.

Today Irv leads a firm of 33 lawyers. By appointment of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, he is Chairman of its Circuit Rules Committee. By appointment of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, he is a member of the Board of Attorneys Professional Responsibility, which he also chairs. Irv is also a member of the American Law Institute and a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation.

These honors, though, are not why Irv deserves today's award. They are merely symptoms of Irv's personal and professional qualities.

Irv treats all his clients with equal dignity, and he represents them all with the same quiet zeal.

Irv is a very bright, skillful lawyer. The rich and the powerful seek his advice. But he also represents those who are unpopular or who cannot afford a lawyer. Irv has represented a consortium of the largest banks in America seeking to recover \$900 million, and he has represented 90,000 school children suing to vindicate their civil rights. He has successfully represented two governors in court challenges to their creative use of their partial-veto power, and he appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee on behalf of the workers accused of being communists. He has defended Big Business and Big Labor, and he successfully litigated the first sex discrimination case in Wisconsin—against a large business and a labor union. Irv treats all his clients with equal dignity, and he represents them all with the same quiet zeal.

Irv represents such diverse clients because of his sense of professionalism: Being a lawyer is not just a job; it is a profession. Duty comes before money, and the need of all parties to be properly represented comes before everything else.

Irv has always been thankful for his education here, and he is an avid supporter of the Law School. He has been Chairman of the Board of Visitors and President of the Wisconsin Law Alumni Association. When the Law School embarked on its Fund Drive, Irv was chosen as the Drive's National Chairman.

Irv has given much to our profession. He epitomizes the public role lawyers can play. Irv loves being a lawyer, and this school—and the entire profession—loves him.

Irv, on behalf of the Wisconsin Law Alumni Association, I am proud to present you with the 1988 Distinguished Service Award.

