We're here tonight to pay tribute to a very special person on a very special occasion. That person, of course, is Norb Berg -- self-described champion of lost causes, dumb animals and females in distress.

We're also honored to have with us Governor Rudy Perpich. And before I begin my remarks, I'm going to ask him to say a few words. Governor ....

Almost immediately after the local newspapers reported Norb's retirement, hundreds of cards and letters began pouring into Corporate Headquarters. They paint a poignant picture of a sensitive, caring man who, as Senator Dave Durenberger aptly put it, is "Control Data to thousands of us."

I'll read you excerpts from some of those cards and letters a little later. But, first, let me tell you a few things about Norb that you're not likely to hear anywhere else.
We all have grown to respect Norb's intelligence. But I doubt many of you know that Norb was his high school valedictorian. Curiously, though, it seems he couldn't read a speed limit sign. In one six-week period, he had three car accidents, totaling the car in each case.

In college, the caring trait we all know so well began to emerge. Norb quickly sensed a deprived group among his school mates and set about to remedy their condition by providing appropriate ID cards to those under the legal drinking age. Never one to leave a problem solution to chance, on school dance nights he sold pints of booze from the trunk of his car after midnight, for likewise appropriate prices.

Pragmatism was also a trait he showed early on. Not knowing how to get out of a particular romantic relationship, he simply switched colleges for a semester.

We all know how competitive Norb is. In earlier years that "competitiveness" could more accurately be described as "combativeness." He joined the Army the day after he got into a bar fight. Did that end Norb's bar-fighting days? Of course not. When he got married several years later, his wedding pictures had to be taken with Marilyn's ring hand concealing Norb's hand that had been cut in a scuffle the week before.
Norb never lost the energy and creativity that characterized his youth. In fact, it can be argued that Norb has never lost his youth.

One letter to Norb after the announcement of his retirement in the Minneapolis Star Tribune began: "I was truly surprised when I saw your high school graduation picture on the front page of today's Star Tribune Marketplace section."

Over the years, Norb has channeled this unique combination of energy, creativity, and youthful zeal into caring for others.

It has been said that "a man (or woman) can be no bigger than the number of people for whom he (or she) genuinely cares."

Based on that premise, it's hard to think of anybody bigger than Norb Berg.

He is a man who once demonstrated how deeply he is committed to his family by announcing in the middle of a Control Data board meeting that he was leaving to see one of his sons play a football game. It should be no surprise, then, that Norb and Marilyn raised four fine young men — Mitchell, Kevin, Tony and Paul — who are with us tonight.
Norb's caring for Control Data and its people is manifested in a long list of creative, caring and pragmatic programs.

In a letter to Control Data employees announcing Norb's retirement, I wrote that Norb "leaves behind a legacy to innovation in human resource management unmatched in American corporate history."

I did not exaggerate.

Most of you know the story of how -- under Norb's direction -- Control Data introduced the Employee Advisory Resource -- EAR, as it is commonly known. The concept has proven so effective that 150 companies now have employee assistance programs offering aid to nearly 250,000 employees and their families.

You also probably know of Norb's role in leading Control Data to become the first major U.S. employer to implement flexible work hours.

I'm not about to start a description of all the innovative ideas, policies, and projects that Norb has brought over these 29 years to the people of Control Data -- we would truly be here all night.
But I do want to mention one more. In 1967, Norb began working to provide a recreation area for Control Data employees. He not only headed the team that selected a site on the St. Croix river near Afton, he devised a plan that funded park improvements with revenues produced by recycling waste from Control Data's Twin Cities facilities. Today, among the many amenities at Control Data Recreation Area is a conference cottage. As of tonight I'm pleased to announce that facility will be the N. R. Berg Conference Center — a permanent tribute to Norb's creativity and vision on behalf of all of us.

I know that Norb takes great pride in Control Data programs like the Recreation Facility, EAR and so on. But his energy and innovation is just as vibrant and caring in the community at large.

If you were to ask him about all of his corporate and community initiatives and which he's proudest of, he probably would cite one that's not very well known.

The program is one that encourages taxi drivers to be alert to needy runaway youth and empowers the drivers to take these young people to homes for help. In Minneapolis, it pays the fare for runaways youth to be taken to The Bridge for Runaway Youth. In Los Angeles, where the program has been replicated, cab drivers take youths to Children of the Night facilities.
Hundreds of young people have found help when they most needed help. And the cost to Control Data has been only a few thousand dollars.

I single out this idea because — typical of Norb's ideas — it's a simple, creative, common-sense approach to a problem. It also exemplifies the depth and breadth of his caring.

Norb's caring knows no boundaries. On the wall of his Headquarters office is a painting of a wildlife scene given to him by his long-time hunting and fishing partner, Bud Grant. (We're privileged to have Bud with us tonight.) Anyway, the painting is inscribed with this message to Norb: "A friend of the birds and animals as well as mankind."

On a shelf a few feet from the painting is a half-inch long screw encased in clear plastic and mounted on a wood block. Engraved on the block is this story of how Norb and the screw crossed paths:

"Like the Good Samaritan, Norb Berg stopped at the roadside to help a stranger. After feeding him and giving him money and fresh bedding, he went on his way. At the next stop, he got a flat tire."

The story concludes: "As the Lord says, 'No good deed goes unpunished.'"
There are countless stories of Norb helping strangers and people down on their luck.

One story involves another of Norb's fishing and hunting companions who is here tonight — Dennis Anderson, outdoor editor for the St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch.

Norb and Dennis were deer hunting. Dennis wasn't having any luck so Norb took Dennis to a spot where he'd shot a buck the day before. "You sit right here," Norb said. "I've got a feeling a deer will come your way." Sure enough, one did and Dennis' luck changed.

There are few things in this world more sacred to Norb than hunting and fishing. But his passion is not directed toward a simplistic goal of shooting or catching something. It's directed more at the experience itself and sharing it with his family and his friends.

He's equally determined that others have the opportunity to enjoy the same outdoor experiences.

Norb is a founder and currently national chairman of an organization called Pheasants Forever. At a time when the pheasant population was declining because of a loss of habitat, Norb helped form an organization to solve the problem. Pheasants Forever is now a national organization with some 40,000 members.
Caring. If there's one theme that runs through the cards and letters I mentioned earlier, it's Norb's deep sense of caring. Let me read a few comments from some of the letters Norb received from Control Data employees.

One executive -- a woman -- wrote:

"It is my dream that someday my own little girl will stumble into a place where someone will do for her what you have done for me. Coach her. Teach her. Advocate for her. Catch her when she's falling, laugh with her, cry with her, share with her, hope with her."

A Human Resources manager wrote:

"...you were always there, as a sort of foundation. That pervasive presence gave me a joy that I was part of something special."

From another employee:

"Many, many times over the years, I have seen you invest a great deal of your personal time and energy into individuals. It always gave me a sense of reassurance that you would invest in me, too. When the time came that I needed it, it proved to be true because you were there when I needed help."
Of the many letters from former Control Data employees, these two caught my attention.

The first begins: "What a magnificent accomplishment, what a wonderful career. And the most remarkable thing of all, the more you accomplished, the more success you personally achieved, the more sensitive you became to those less fortunate."

The second letter goes like this:

"It would be oversimplifying to say that you gave me a set of values. First of all we both got our values from the same place, a deep faith in God... But you, Norb, have a way of translating those values into the business world and finding applications of them that are practical business solutions."

Here's a sampling of other comments.

From the president of Saint John's University, Norb's alma mater:

"...you have become well known but without any implication of seeking recognition for its own sake. In my book that adds to your stature."
From another executive:

"...you've proven to me and, doubtless many others, that high ethics, social concern and good citizenship are not incongruous with high corporate growth and profitability."

And even one from an IBM executive:

"When I mentioned your name to our Manager of Management Development, he asked whether your retirement plans might include management consulting or speaking engagements."

I could go on but I think you get the picture.

(PAUSE)

And now we have another announcement to make. But to make it, I'm going to call on Bill Halamandaris, director of The Caring Institute, a private, non-profit organization in Washington, D.C.

Bill...

(HALAMANDARIS TO ANNOUNCE THAT BERG IS ONE OF 10 PEOPLE WHO WILL RECEIVE THE INSTITUTE'S CARING AWARDS THIS FALL.)

Thank you, Bill.
All of us in this room — and countless more outside of it — believe that The Caring Institute has made an outstanding choice in Norb Berg.

I've talked a lot tonight about Norb and Control Data, Norb and the community, Norb and pheasants, fish and deer, but I haven't talked about Norb and me — and I want to do that now.

(No, Norb, Baker made me promise that I would not tell the story of my beloved 1950 Plymouth station wagon — God rest its little engine — so I won't. Besides we don't want these nice people to know what a penny pinching, miserly guy you really are).

I will never really understand why I have been so fortunate in life. I only know that to live is to grow, and to grow is to learn. And you learn from the world around you — the earth, the plants, the animals — and the people. I have been blessed with wonderful people who cared and tried to help me learn — my parents, a high school math teacher; I've had the privilege of working for the greatest business leader of our time — Bill Norris, and the help of many friends and colleagues. And I have the best wife a man could conceivably imagine. Thanks to all of them I have learned and grown and lived. But without Norb Berg's caring and tutoring for over a quarter of a century, their efforts may well have been vain.
So Norb — thank you -- thank you for your counsel, thank you for your humor, thank you for helping me to learn and to live -- thank you for your friendship.

Now, I'm going to ask Norb and Marilyn to join me so we can toast their future success and happiness.

TOAST TO MARILYN

When it comes to awards, there should be one for Marilyn Berg. As Norb is quick to point out, she took care of the home front. The term "front" I use advisedly. Any woman who manages the lives of five men has known perils beyond any shooting war. These five great people are a tribute to Marilyn's strength of character and great will. Marilyn is the caring behind the caring. Marilyn, we salute you.

AND TO NORB

Norb's unflinching loyalty and unequivocal attention to the good of Control Data will persevere as a model for all Control Data employees to follow. In fact, it wouldn't be a bad idea if every Control Data employee measured his or her relative worth and value added to the Company, by what Norb Berg has contributed. Norb, we salute you, and ....
"May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rain fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hands."

We're not going to let Norb and Marilyn get away without a few reminders of this evening.

(PRESENT GIFTS TO MARILYN AND NORB. COMMENTS, RE LABS & NRB'S "TOYS". AND THEN ASK NORB TO SAY A FEW WORDS).

Thank you, Norb. As Senator Durenberger says: "You are Control Data to thousands of us -- your friends and beneficiaries."