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Bipartisan crowd shows affection for John Drew

By Joe Kimball
Staff Writer

It was a politician's dream, the fund-raising party held Tuesday night for John Drew, the former St. Paul City Council member.

There were Independent-Republicans and DFLers, and some developers who walk both sides of the political fence. There were people who could afford the \$50 per ticket, and people who didn't have that much. Drew told them they could come anyway.

"I wish I could have a fund-raiser like this," said Council President Jim Scheibel. "We all would like to be able to say: 'Everyone likes me.'"

Several hundred people attended the party to help Drew overcome a recent run of bad luck. He ran for state treasurer in 1986, and was narrowly defeated. Then he ran for reelection to his council seat last

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Staff Photo by Duane Braley

St. Paul Mayor George Latimer presented an award to John Drew on behalf of himself and the City Council Tuesday night at the Holiday Inn Town Square in St. Paul. With Drew was his wife, Mary.

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November and again was narrowly defeated. A week later he suffered a heart attack while climbing the stairs to his City Hall office.

A group of Drew's friends organized the fund-raiser to raise \$6,000 to pay the campaign debt left from the treasurer's race. The money will be turned over to his campaign committee.

"I like John Drew as a person," said Sherman Rutzick, a developer. "He never voted for me, but he agonized over the fact that he wasn't voting for me."

There were City Council members at the party, and Highland Park residents. Lots of city employees came. Police Chief William McCutcheon was there, and so was Minneapolis City Council Member Dennis Schulstad.

Drew was surprised at the turnout. "I thought with the weather, people might not come," he said.

And he appreciated the support of those who were present, and those who've sent him cards and letters over the past two months. "People I don't even know have written to me," he said. "I know it's not fortunate to have a heart attack, but I've got to say that people have been very thoughtful to me."

Mayor George Latimer presented Drew with a plaque, honoring his work on the council, and said: "I've never known anyone, in or out of politics, so free of meanness."

And Drew, after thanking everyone for their support and kindness, said he especially wanted to thank his aide, Andrea Albrecht. "We both need jobs," he joked. "She told me to say that."