

In keeping with the theme of the evening, a bright red Dodge Viper and a red carpet greeted attendees as they arrived for what has become the premier fund raising effort for the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History —the museum's third annual Casino Royale night. The event drew a record crowd Friday night to Cross Creek Country Club, with more than 230 people signed up to participate. Looking over the crowd, museum Director Edwards said he was pleased with the event. "It's been great so far," he said. "We've had just a tremendous turnout, with more people attending this year than last." Edwards said it looked like attendees, decked out in tuxedos and evening gowns, were getting into the spirit of the event. "That's the great thing about this fund raiser," he said. "We tried to make this a fun evening for those who attend, from the great food and great ambience to the casino-style gambling where they can win bragging rights." He said that while the numbers haven't been tallied, the event was on track to surpass last year's \$25,000 take. "That money is critical to help with our annual operations and programming throughout the year," he said. And for attendee Tom Webb, who was decked out in a tuxedo and sipping on a glass of wine, the evening was less about gambling and more about helping support the local museum. "We wanted to come out and support such a worthy cause," he said. "The museum is very important to the community, and we need to have such a first-class facility in Mount Airy." But Webb noted that there's nothing wrong with having a good time while supporting a worthy cause. "It's also a chance to have a little bit of fun," he said. "There's good food, good fellowship and a chance to share some good wine." Gaming for the evening featured craps, roulette and blackjack, and attendees also had the opportunity to purchase a draw-down ticket with the chance to win a \$6,000 prize. And those in attendance also had the chance to bid on multiple donations at the silent auction, with prizes ranging from vacation packages to consumer electronics like an iPad. Looking over the crowd laughing and trying to beat the odds, Edwards said he was indebted to the committee that put the event together. "I owe all the credit to them," he said. "Without their volunteer efforts, this wouldn't have been possible."