



Bocce benefits troops

Members of the Italian American Police Society of New Jersey along with recruits from the Essex County Police Academy participated in the first annual "Operation Shoe Box" bocce tournament held at Colonial Park in Franklin Township, Somerset County.

The fundraiser helps the organization raise money to box and ship supplies to troops overseas. "Each box costs \$9 dollars just to ship. We need fundraisers like this to support our organization," stated founder Frank Valanzola.

Thirty teams from across the country participated. The two teams comprised of members of the Italian Amer-

ican Police Society, along with Team Captain Alfonso Imperiale and Michael Puzzo, placed third in this year's event. Somerset County Sheriff Frank Provenzano officiated the day long event with members of the Somerset County Sheriffs Office providing a color guard.

As the games went on during the day recruits from the Essex County Police Academy and family members of the Italian American Police Society volunteered their time to help pack more than 900 boxes for soldiers and Marines overseas.

Vincent Nardone, director of the Italian American Police Society, thanked his membership

for their involvement and contributions to this event. "Without the membership and the 35 recruits from the Essex County Police Academy we never would have been able to pack 900 boxes in one day. The recruits were amazing and provided a lot of help," Nardone said.

Director Nardone said that this is the first time the Society has participated in this type of event and is looking forward to next year's event. Anyone wishing to be involved in the next event sponsored by "Operation Shoe Box" in the summer, or has a family member they want a package sent to, can contact www.opshoeboxnj.org.

