

# UNITED STATES BOCCE FEDERATION QUARTERLY



JANUARY 2022

## LETTER FROM THE USBF PRESIDENT

Greetings to all USBF Members and Directors,

For the USBF, the year 2021 was an improvement over 2020. Our very successful national tournament was held this past November in Saint Louis at the Italia America Bocce Club, with over 150 players participating in various events and modalities during the course of six days. I want to personally thank the Saint Louis Club for showing their professionalism in hosting, once again, an event of this magnitude. Their warm welcome made us all feel it was worth the effort to travel from the far corners of the country to be there.



**USBF Punta Raffa Volo  
Women's Doubles Gold:**  
Teresa Passaglia and Margaret  
Shindelus



**USBF Punta Raffa Volo  
Mixed Doubles Gold:**  
Diane Kelly and Paolo Pro



**USBF Punta Raffa Volo  
Men's Doubles Gold:**  
Nick Imo and Greg Della Croce

The National Tournament for next year has been awarded to the Methuen Sons of Italy in Methuen MA. They have previously hosted the nationals, as well as a Pan American friendly. Once their club finalizes their schedule of 2022 events, they will be able to set the date for the national tournament. We will send out notification through the website and email. Mark your calendar and join me in anticipating another opportunity to compete and, hopefully, follow the progress of the tournament on the USBF website.



Currently, the board is working on changes to the website and our membership application system that should help us increase the number of clubs and individual members. The website, combined with your person-to-person conversations, may be our best method of communicating with current and future members. It can showcase the USBF's efforts to promote our sport.

On the international front, there have been several events for Volo which we were able to participate in since we incorporated the previous federation back into the fold of the USBF. We were able to send a team consisting of two men and one woman to the Volo championships held in Italy as well as a young man, 15 years old, to the under 21 championships in France. The former Confédération Mondiale des Sports de Boules

(CMSB) has finally been replaced with a new federation called Fédération Internationale de Pétanque et Jeu Provençal (FIPJP). Their strength is in pétanque but they have placed all the other modalities under their umbrella. Currently the only international event that is scheduled is a Pan American singles to be held in Brazil sometime either April or May of 2022. There is also another event, by invitation only, scheduled for July 2022 at the Palazzo di Bocce near Detroit Michigan. It is a repeat of the tournament they held in 2019.

I want to thank all the members for their support and encourage them to continue to help the USBF accomplish our goals. COVID had a major effect on our membership, both Individual and Club. As a result, our income was also severely reduced by the pandemic, but the expenses continued. The USBF Board has dedicated its efforts to increase membership. In order to achieve financial stability, the Board voted to restructure the fees for Clubs and Individuals, in order to reward Clubs for increasing their membership. Please refer to the *Membership Campaign* article below for more detailed information. If you are a member of a Club, ask how you can help your Club increase its membership.

Hopefully 2022 will be an even better year for everyone. I hope everyone has a safe and healthy New Year. We share the common interest of our sport but in the long run the biggest benefit is the friends that we make while we are playing the game.

Sincerely and with much appreciation,

*Danny Passaglia*  
USBF President

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## **The 2022 USBF Membership Campaign begins now!**

### **Why should you join USBF?**

Your membership dues support a cause you believe in, the promotion of a game you love and want to share with others.

Your USBF Membership support is directed to the promotion of Bocce in the U.S. through education about the sport of Bocce, sponsorship of competitive Bocce and charity related events, promotion of Bocce as an Olympic sport and support to U.S. players representing USBF in International competitions.



As a member, you can:

- Help the USBF encourage bocce as a fun activity for all ages and skill levels, including Seniors, Special Olympics participants, students and professional athletes.
- Play in USBF tournaments to improve your skills through competition. Local clubs affiliated with the USBF can organize and advertise tournaments open to USBF members throughout the country.

- Find calendars for USBF club tournaments, tournament results, and photographs of activities and events at [www.USBF.us](http://www.USBF.us) and [Facebook@USBocceFederation](https://www.facebook.com/USBocceFederation).
- Find and share information about everything bocce—players, equipment, courts, and events in different sectors of the US and abroad—in the USBF electronic newsletters, which contain articles by members and updates from the USBF President.
- Become a world class player and represent the USA at international events. The USBF provides a path and mentoring to achieve that elite player level.

If you want to promote Bocce as a sport and the fellowship that Bocce brings to players of all ages and abilities, please encourage others to become members of the USBF.

**Join now at [www.USBF.us](http://www.USBF.us) or your USBF Member Club**

*Laura de La Rosa contributed to this article*

## **USBF Wall of Honor Recipient - Danny Passaglia**

President Danny Passaglia was inducted to the USBF Wall of Honor at the closing ceremonies of the 2022 USBF National Tournament in St. Louis, Missouri. Vice President, Lio Gionnatti, presented the award along with Robert Della Croce and Joe Quartarone. Danny was surprised by the induction, which was approved by the USBF Board of Directors without his knowledge. He was also very surprised and humbled by the congratulatory video messages from both the President of the Canadian Federation, Albert Guererra, and the President of the International Bocce Federation, Mutlu Turkman, that were played at the induction ceremony. It was fitting to receive the honor at the Italia American Bocce Club where Danny is a long time member with a crowd of 150 banquet attendees.

Congratulations Danny and welcome to the USBF Wall of Honor!



## **MIDWESTERN SECTOR**

**USBF 2021 National Championship**  
Italia-America Bocce Club, St. Louis, Missouri

The [Italia-American Bocce Club](https://www.italia-american-bocce.com) (IABC) of St. Louis, MO, hosted the 42nd United States Bocce Federation National Championships November 1-5, 2021.

Under normal non-pandemic conditions the annual tournament is held in late June at select venues around the country. (Spoiler Alert: Boston, June 2022!) This pandemic year shifted the date to early November for a one time only post Halloween event, which happened to coincide with the Bocce Club's 14th Annual Aldo Della Croce Tournament, a money event that brought teams from California for the first time.



For those not familiar with the Nationals format, it is typically several Bocce tournaments over 4 or 5 days. For example, a player can play in Open Division 4 on 4 for medals, Mixed Doubles PRV for medals, Men's and Women's Doubles PRV and Singles PRV and then the Open 4 on 4 money tournament. You can enter one event or as many events as you like. Each event requires a separate entry form. Truly a bocce marathon and if you have not done it, try it at least once!!! At conclusion of the week, you will be exhausted but you won't be sorry. The Nationals' bring out the best and friendliest people in the bocce community. Next summer in Boston/Methuen the lobster rolls alone will make the trip a memorable event. And so will the new people you will meet.



**Gold Medal Winners Open:** Jim Summers, Joe Grippi, Rich Richardson, David R. Zona



**Silver Medal Open:** Tom Drago, Tim Moore, Nick Imo, Leigh Borage



**Women's Precision Raffa:** Bronze Medal - Lauren McDermott; Gold Medal - Jolene Kramer; Silver Medal - Margaret Shindelus



**Men's Singles:** Bronze: Frank Pisciotta Jr., Dario Bernardi (not shown); Silver: Miles Russell; Gold: Greg Della Croce

## National Tournament Results for 2021

### **USBF Open Championship**

Gold: A local team, ROLLERCOASTERS

Jim Summers, Joe Grippi, Rich Robertson and David R. Zona

Silver: A local team, GUIDO'S

Sponsored by an excellent neighborhood restaurant

Tom Drago, Leigh Borage, Nick Imo and Tim Moore

Bronze: (2 teams)

SCOTTS VALLEY MONTONI, from California

Paolo Pro, Ken Gorny, Alan Knox, and Brian Peterson CAPE CORAL B.C.

Teresa Passaglia (FL), Jeff O'Heir (NY), Margaret Shindelus (CA) and Brad Thayer (NY)

### **USBF Punta Raffa Volo Men's Singles**

Gold: Greg Della Croce, St Louis

(As winner is eligible to play World Tournament in Brazil, 2022)

Silver: Miles Russell, Chicago

Bronze: Dario Bernardi, Pleasanton, CA and Frank Pisciotta Jr. Kansas City, MO

### **USBF Punta Raffa Volo Men's Doubles**

Gold: STL Greg Della Croce and Nick Imo

Silver: Highland, IL., Maurizio Perrelli and Miles Russell

Bronze winners (2 teams)

Defending Champion TEAM PRO – Paolo Pro and Alan Knox (CA)

NY AMERICAN BOCCE CLUB #1 - Brad Thayer and Jeff O'Heir

### **USBF Punta Raffa Volo Women's Doubles**

Gold: Teresa Passaglia (FL) and Margaret Shindelus (CA)

Silver: Laura Bohdan and Leah Benner STL

Bronze winners (2 teams): MIDWEST COAST: Lisa Watson and Cherie Galimberti

HIGHWOOD: Amy Lazzaretti and Lauren McDermott

### **USBF Punta Raffa Volo Mixed Doubles**

Gold: PROS Paolo Pro and Diane Kelly (San Jose, CA)

Silver: AMERICAN BOCCE COMPANY Lisa Watson (CA) and Andy Zimmer (IL)

Bronze winners (2 teams):

TANGLEWOOD TWO (Felton, CA) Ken Gorny and Cynthia Dzendzel

BERNARDI/SHINDELUS (CA)- Dario Bernardi and Margaret Shindelus

### **Men's Precision Raffa Shooting**

Gold: Ron Farotto Silver: Miles Russell Bronze: Vito Buisante

### **Women's Raffa Shooting**

Gold: Jolene Kramer Silver: Margaret Shindelus Bronze: Lauren McDermott

*Jerry South, Alan Knox and Ken Gorny. contributed to this article*

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## **American Bocce Company 2021 Open**

Palazzo di Bocce, September 9-11, 2021

### **BANG! CRUNCH! KABOOM! BAM! WHAM! POW!**

A Batman comic?? No, the long missed sounds of a large indoor bocce tournament, back in full regalia thanks to [American Bocce Company](#) (ABC). Held September 9-11, hosted by [Palazzo di Bocce](#), Lake Orion, Michigan, Chicago's ABC produced their first large scale open national tournament.



And the Palace of Bocce was the perfect venue. Check the ABC webpage

[www.americanbocce.com](http://www.americanbocce.com) to discover more about their efforts to promote bocce and join to receive updates.



**In brief: Great tournament. Great venue. Wonderful people. A promising future for the sport we love.**

Christened the ABC 2021 Open, the event featured two tournaments running concurrently: A 16 team Gold division for experienced players and a Silver division of 18 teams for beginning and social players. Teams in both divisions were guaranteed 6 or 7 games, making the long trip for East and West coast teams more attractive. The Gold division attracted many of the Midwest's strongest teams, including the winners: Palazzo di Bocce's home team of Jose Botto, Lio Gianotti, Hunter Callero and Natale Scala; and second place finishers, American Sons of Columbus from Kansas City, John Liberto, brothers Chris and Joe Cardello, and Greg Della Croce. First in Silver division was the Bocce Bros from Youngstown, Ohio and second place went to Glutes Inc., Chicago.

Two bocce obsessed West Coast teams braved the airlines, airports, etc., to make the trip: City of Trees team of Lisa Watson, Emi Fujii, Joanne Lopez and Michael Mathis; and Scotts Valley Montoni members Alan Knox, Diane Kelley, Paolo Pro, and Ken Gorny, USFB Western Sector President. We all had a great time and won enough games between us to look forward to next year's event. Playing different teams from across the country, and making new friends along the way, is the best part of bocce. And especially rewarding was sharing skills and information with the Silver teams. Lisa's City of Trees team took the 208 Bocce team from Boise, Idaho under tutelage, and helped them win their first ever tournament game and finish tied for 3rd in consolation. Like many Silver teams, the 208 Bocce team put their toes in tournament waters and came out hooked.

ABC Founder, Alex Gara and his crew possess a youthful enthusiasm for bocce that is highly contagious. If you played in Vegas you won't be surprised to hear this. They brought this joy and energy to Detroit, along with their organization skills, dedication to running a first rate tournament, and sense of joy. Making it fun for everyone, including spectators.

For ABC's first national tournament, they hit a home run, a rare accomplishment in the field of special events. The future is bright for this group of entrepreneurs and bocce enthusiasts. It appears the future is bright for all bocce players, young and old. What about the courts? Almost forgot! Moderately fast, straight with multiple lines to the pallino, a pointers dream; and conducive to sticking shots, especially if you're Jose Botto.

Nice bar, good food and after parties received great reviews (past our bedtimes so no first hand knowledge). Check with Will Kesler and Theresa Robarge. ABC management is already in talks for next year. If interested in updates, join their website at address listed above.

## **SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

**Gold Division**, from left to right feature Leo Gianotti, USBF Vice President, Jose Botto, silver medalist 2016 World Championships, Hunter Gallero and Natale Scala were a formidable team. Jose and Leo have been teammates on several teams competing in past world championships. Natale is a recognized championship player and Hunter, an outstanding young competitor has been mentored by Jose for several

years.



**Placing second**, the American Sons of Columbus from Kansas City and St. Louis are Chris Cardello, Greg Della Croce, Joe Cardello and John Liberto. John is the President of the the USBF Midwest Sector, and Greg, from St. Louis serves as Vice President of the Midwest Sector. All of these guys compete regularly in sector and national championships.



**The winner of the Silver Division** was the Youngstown-Columbus team: from left to right, Dante Lovell, Carmen Marinucci, John Pinco and Paul Cugini. Several Silver teams had never competed in a major tournament, and this group of younger players had the opportunity to spread their wings and gain confidence.



*Jerry South, Alan Knox and Ken Gorny. contributed to this article*

## 14th Annual Aldo Della Croce Tournament November 5-7, 2021

The [Italia-American Bocce Club](#) (IABC) hosted their 14th annual tournament on November 5-7, 2021. This year 25 teams participated in the Giampiero Division (mixed men and women), and 11 teams participated in the Laura Division (women only). Teams participated from California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan and Missouri.

The California Laura Division team of Diane Kelly, Joanne Lopez, Cynthia Dzendzel and Jolene Kramer, better known as California Roll, played the best finals match of the tournament taking first place money from the local defending champions Lucky Ladies. Finishing undefeated against strong local competition the final score of 12-10 was a tribute to the skill of pointing/lagging



Winners of the Laura Division of the Aldo Della Croce Tournament: Diane Kelly, Cynthia Dzendzel, Jolene Kramer, Joanne Lopez

The Giampiero Division was won by Highwood Bocce out of Illinois, led by Lio Gianotti, with Jorge Moreno, Miles Russell and Mauizio Perrelli. Finishing second Cape Coral B.C. team of Teresa and Danny Passagila, Brad Thayer and Margaret Shindelus.

Two teams received 3rd place payouts: Scotts Valley Montoni and American Bocce Company.



Aldo Della Croce Giampiero Division Winners and Second Place Group  
Picture: Lio Gianotti, Margaret Shindelus, Mauizio Perrelli, Brad Thayer, Teresa Passagila, Jorge Moreno, Danny Passagila, and Miles Russell

demonstrated by both teams to the very last point. The California Roll shared a \$1,000 first prize.

*Alan Knox* contributed to this article

## WESTERN SECTOR

### From the Western Sector President

Happy New Year!

Things are definitely looking up for 2022. In the second half of 2021, the courts were cautiously reopened and bocce fever came roaring back. League play and tournaments were finally restarted after the Covid restrictions were reduced and then lifted for most outdoor venues. Social activities at the Clubs and on the courts were wholeheartedly welcomed as friends reunited after the long hiatus caused by the pandemic. Although we must still remain vigilant to prevent outbreaks, by following the common sense procedures repeatedly outlined by the CDC and utilizing the available vaccines we can safely return to the courts and Clubs.

We have started informal discussions with the for-profit ABC (American Bocce Company). The ABC hosted the successful tournament held at the Palazzo di Bocce in September, 2021. The intent is to see how we can work together for our mutual benefit as we both promote bocce.

The Western Sector will start compiling its USBF-sanctioned tournament schedule in early January for 2022. Ron Jacobs will continue to be the contact for the development and maintenance of the schedule. Ron will be sending out a notice detailing the information required to have a tournament added to the WS schedule. As a reminder, any tournament on the schedule will require all participants in the tournament to have a current USBF membership card as well as a Club Certificate for the tournament host.

Please remember, the membership card does not just allow entry into these tournaments. It is a means to promote the game that we all love and want to share with others. Think of it as a contribution to a cause that you believe in.

As most of you know, the USBF is an all-volunteer organization. This organization is only what the members make it. I urge you to volunteer your time, ideas and energy to help promote the joy of bocce.

The various committees can use your help. When you join one, you will have the opportunity to submit information or articles to let other clubs and Sectors of the USBF know what you are doing to promote bocce in your area.

Happy New Year,  
*Ken Gorny*

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## Festa Italian Seattle Bocce Tournament

### September 25 & 26, 2021

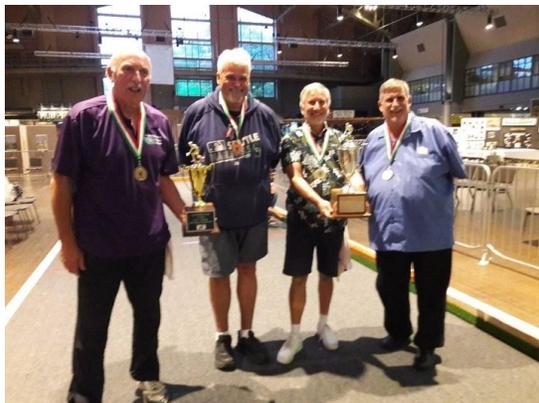
The first bocce tournament held in two years in Seattle, Washington was held September 25 & 26, 2021. The tournament took place at Seattle Center, home of the world's famous Space Needle. The temporary courts were located in the food pavilion allowing more exposure to the spectators. The Saturday portion of the event was the recreational division.



Teams included experience players pairing up with new players to expose them to tournament bocce. The first-place team was Lord of the Bocces. The team members Christopher Caligiuri, Daniel Henry, Rob Peterson, and Phoebe Naguitt. The Seattle Center was turning off the lights as the tournament ended up play at 8 pm.

**First Place Recreational:** Lord of the Bocces - Christopher Caligiuri, Daniel Henry, Rob Peterson, and Phoebe Naguitt

The Sunday Competitive tourney consisted of teams from Oregon and Washington battling. Westside, a perennial contender and winner of the tourney ran over the competition going undefeated in the tournament. The team members were Greg Singleton, Scott Henry, Clem Zipp, and Pat Henry. Bocce Bonanza gained second place, the last prize money position. The team members were Christopher Caligiuri, Ed Johansen, Paul Volpone, and Gerry DiPietro. A great day as part of Seattle Italiana Festa.



**First Place:** Westside - Greg Singleton, Scott Henry, Clem Zipp, and Pat Henry



**Second Place:** Bocce Bonanza - Christopher Caligiuri, Ed Johansen, Paul Volpone, and Gerry

*Brad Cotton contributed to this article*

## Special Olympics Northern California Bocce Bash 2021 October 21, 2021

The atmosphere was infused with excitement, pre-game jitters, and nervous chatter. Could it be a building full of bocce players just before a tournament?

Yes! It happened October 21, 2021, at [Campo di Bocce](#), Los Gatos, and for an excellent cause. [The Special Olympics of Northern California](#) (SONC), hosted a Bocce Bash to raise funds for their athletes. In collaboration with major sponsors, Campo Di Bocce & Tom Albanese, Dome Construction, Shamrock Office Solutions and Chari Rose Collection, 16 teams battled for victory in an inclusive format.



Steve Mariucci with Athletes getting ready for a big game

SONC's Tyler Krochmal, Sr. Manager PR & Communications explains why bocce is an inclusive (unified) event. "Bocce is one of our more popular sports in Special Olympics because it allows all athletes, regardless of ability or limitations, to compete and enjoy the game. It's also a great sport to bring people with and without disabilities together because of the social nature of the game and the pretty even physical playing field (compared to basketball, for example). Our Special Olympic players are very skilled—and the Special Olympics Athlete Team even won the entire tournament at the Bocce Bash in 2019!"

Hosting a Special Olympic fund raiser is a win/win for all involved. Special Olympics are experts at organizing fund raising events, and USBF provides the Bocce knowledge. The 16 teams raised \$13,000 for Special Olympic Athletes. Attending this event were the Mayor and Vice Mayor of Los Gatos, State Senator Bob Wieckowski, State Senator Dave Cortese, and a representative from office of California Assembly member Ash Kalra. Celebrity participants included Steve Mariucci, former Coach of the Detroit Lions and SF 49ers who organizes a top tier charity bocce tournament every year and plays with an inclusive team during his tournament. Also playing was San Jose Earthquakes starting goalie JT Marcinkowski.



JT Marcinkowski with Experienced Athlete

He was a popular photo opportunity with all the athletes and partners, demonstrating a genuine warmth throughout the evening. Referees for the tournament were USBF member volunteers: Western Sector Officers Ken Gorny - President, Marsha Jones - Treasurer, Marianne Schmidt - Secretary, Mike Schmidt, Joanne Lopez, Gary Scardina, Brian Peterson and Alan Knox.



San Jose Earthquakes Bocce Team



Athletes enjoying the evening

Next newsletter edition we will highlight the Carmel, Indiana 2021 Unified (inclusive) Bocce High School State Tournament, where 15 High School programs competed for the title of State Champ.

Fund raising tournaments introduce Bocce to local, county and state politicians, critical to funding decisions concerning recreational activities (including bocce) in your city, county and state. If you are not already working with the local area Special Olympics, contact them to see if you can work together to build the bocce community and raise funds for a very good cause.



*Alan Knox contributed to this article*

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## **MARIN BOCCE MIXED DOUBLES TOURNAMENT**

October 9, 2021

Twenty teams battled in [Marin Bocce Federation's](#) third doubles tournament of the season. This time it was guy/gal pairs. Earlier this year, Marin offered men's doubles, followed by women's doubles.

It was a mild autumn day. The courts were fast but not like July when the sun creates an absorbed heat that grows during the day. A local player called the courts "Goldilock courts, not too fast, not too slow." Among the 20 teams, Stockton, Livermore, Scott Valley, Nevada City, Monterey and Martinez were represented. And a duo from Huntington Beach Bocce made the journey from southern California.

The competition was intense. Many of the games lasted over an hour and were won or lost by a point. But Diana Pelligrini, tournament director kept the players moving, and by mid-afternoon the finals were underway.



Manny and Lydia Romano



Ron and Jo Ann Jacobs

Manny and Lydia Romano and Ron And Jo Ann Jacobs duked it out for first place. These usual suspects have appeared in so many tournaments finals. And what a match! Manny and Lydia were a well-oiled bocce machine throughout the tournament and they won the first-place prize money. Following Ron and Jo Ann in third place were the Nevada City players Stefano Landini and Diana Carolan who prevailed over a spirited team of Bob Kennedy and Laura De La Rosa from Stockton and Sacramento, respectively. . .



Stefano Landini and Diana Carolan



Bob Kennedy and Laura De La Rosa

Doubles competition is gaining popularity in the Bay Area. It's easier to put together a team, the games seem to move faster and the skill levels of the players is demanding. The pairs play both ends of the courts, so there's a bit of adjusting required. Further, doubles offer women more opportunities to raise skill levels. Doubles are way to go!!

*[Jerry South](#), [Alan Knox](#) and [Ken Gorny](#). contributed to this article*

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## ROMANO LOTTI HONORED

Wall of Honor recipient Romano Lotti is honored at the Italian Athletic Club in

Stockton, California, during their Christmas party celebration December 20th, 2021. Former Western Sector President, Ron Jacobs, presented the Plaque to Romano's family.

In 2002, the Italian Athletic Club Bocce Team won Gold Medals in all three of the team events at the National Championship. The successful team went on to represent the United States at the World Bocce Championships in Passo Fundo, Brazil.



From left to right: Carla Lotti, Romano's wife, Ron Jacobs, Romano's daughter Sandra Haight and Sandra's husband, Jack



From left to right, (first row) Ron Jacobs and Romano Lotti; (second row) Alberico Leonardi, Rick Wagstaff, and David Canclini. They were all inducted into the Stockton Athletic Hall of Fame in November 2007.

Romano immigrated from Livorno, Italy in 1967. He was a cook and boxer in the navy, a skilled trap shooter, a National and World Champion Bocce player and an Inductee in the Stockton Athletic Hall of Fame. In addition, he also participated in World Championships held in Monte Carlo, France, Monaco and Chicago.

Romano was not only a great player, he was a great person and loved by all who knew him. He was always teaching new players to play with respect, fair play and sportsmanship on and off the court. He was one of the leaders of a group to teach the sport to young people and had 25 to 30 children meet once a week for lessons.

Among his many achievements on the courts, he is also noted for saying "**Short is no good**" when a lagger came up short of his target. When Romano would say it in his unique way, it would always bring smiles and happiness to all.

David Canclini submitted the nomination to the USBF to have Romano selected for the National "Wall of Honor". Unfortunately, David died earlier this year and was not able to present the plaque to Romano.



**Romano Lotti**

Ron has recently submitted David's nomination for the USBF Wall of Honor in hopes that David's accomplishments, both on and off the courts, can be recognized, as well.

*[Ron Jacobs](#) and [Ken Gorny](#) contributed to this article*

## EASTERN SECTOR

East Coast US Bocce Federation clubs and individual members were busy during 2021. From Massachusetts through New York and the Mid-Atlantic States of Delaware and North Carolina, down to South Florida, people played in regional and national bocce tournaments and local leagues. In addition, they worked on growing the game with programs for the city residents and nonprofits groups. Hundreds of people in the Eastern Sector raised money for nonprofits in charity events.

**Welcome NEW Member Clubs in the Eastern Sector!**

- New Hyde Park Bocce Club on Long Island in NY
- [Asheville Bocce Club](#) in NC
- Global Bocce in Florida

Thank you for joining. We are always available to help you with leagues, tournaments and special programs while you grow your organizations.

The Methuen Sons of Italy, only 30 miles outside Boston, has once again been selected as the host of the 2022 US National Bocce Championships. The all week event will most likely be in the 3rd week of June. Specific dates will be announced soon. Previous championships in Boston were in 2015 and 2019. In 2019, over 130 players on 100 teams participated in 7 events over the course of 7 days. As the tournament director, I welcome anyone with questions to reach out to me to answer questions.



Some of the top placing players in the 2021 U.S. Nationals are East Coast USBF members. Congratulations to 2021 Women's Doubles Gold Medalists, Teresa Passaglia and Margaret Shindelus. Both are exceptional players with a history of medaling in the US Nationals. We welcome the high-skill level Teresa brings to the East Coast after moving from the Midwest to Florida a couple years ago. Margaret, her teammate and a longtime friend of ours, lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. U.S. Nationals "rookies" Leah Benner and Laura Bohdan, who are from Key West, Florida, won the Silver in the Women's Doubles.

2nd Place Women's Doubles, Punto Raffa Volo Laura Bohdan and Leah Benner (Key West, FL)

Even though they are used to playing on clay and this was their first time playing on synthetic Bocce courts, one could not tell as they pointed incredibly well and made the necessary raffa shots to secure 2nd place.

Brad Thayer and Jeff O'Heir, from Huntington, NY on Long Island are members of the USBF organizations American Bocce Club and Yonkers/Mount Vernon Bocce Club in the NYC Metro area. Brad is a bocce fanatic and is also a member of the Methuen Sons of Italy which is 200 miles from his home. They have been competing for less than 10 years, however they are some of the top players on the East Coast. Brad and Jeff teamed up with Teresa Passaglia (FL) and Margaret Shindelus (CA) to win the bronze in the Open Bocce event (4 people / team) and the 2 guys also won the bronze in Men's Doubles of the international game, Punto Raffa Volo.



Brad Thayer and Jeff O'Heir, Huntington, NY



Brad Thayer NY, Teresa Passaglia FL, Margaret Shindelus CA, Jeff O'Heir NY

The American Bocce Club in Huntington, NY (USBF member club) was back in action in 2021 with 32 teams playing 3 local leagues on 4 nights from the spring into the fall. When I recently caught up with Peter Rabito, my good friend and president of the club, he filled

me in on all the bocce excitement from NY. This year their individual membership grew by 13% to 145 USBF members and several of them participated in tournaments outside of NY, in addition to Jeff and Brad who played in the 2021 US Nationals held at the Italia-America Bocce Club in St. Louis in November. (4) 4-person teams from the NY area (representing the Yonkers/Mount Vernon Club and Am. Bocce Club) participated in the ABCOpen21 bocce tournament at the Palazzo di Bocce in Michigan in September. Besides the regular crew of players who are almost all over 50 years, New York sent a few players in their 20s and 30s. It's fantastic to know younger people are playing bocce and becoming addicted.



Mount Vernon/Yonkers Bocce Club and American Bocce Club members

Peter's club continued its relationship with Special Olympics New York for its 11th season. Members trained 30 athletes over a 12-week program preparing them for Regional and State tournaments. He also started a very successful 7-week bocce training program for 24 residents (plus a 10-person reserve list). Town officials asked him to organize it again in the Spring of 2022 because of its popularity.



Santo Crocco, Angelo LaMorte with TOB Parks Commissioner Celeste Kusmierski and Babylon resident Rocco

In October 2021, American Bocce Club and USBF members, Santo Crocco and Angelo LaMorte, with assistance from Peter, started the Babylon Bocce Club on Long Island, NY. He stated, "After a meeting, the Town of Babylon officials were receptive to adding 2 courts next Spring (2022) to the existing pair at Tanner Park. Santo and Angelo have done a wonderful job in promoting the sport of bocce and have recruited nearly 50 members already. The Babylon Bocce Club will be joining the USBF as a member club."



Babylon Bocce Club's first Tournament at Tanner Park. Town of Babylon Deputy Supervisor Tony Martinez (Blue vest) next to Santo Crocco and Angelo LaMorte

Despite the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Methuen Sons of Italy, USBF member club and 2-time host of USBF Nationals, was active during 2021 with league play resuming and hosting several bocce tournaments, many being charity fundraisers. For years, the Methuen SOI and various tournament directors have demonstrated their commitment to helping the community by running/organizing or hosting charity tournaments and the members are extremely generous with financial donations and their time playing and volunteering. Some notable events are listed below.



### **Methuen Sons of Italy College Scholarship**

**Tournament:** Organized in June by Lodge 902 leaders Pio Frittitta, Armand Buonanno and John Bonanno, with the help of others and many sponsors, were able to raise enough money to award (5) \$1,000 scholarships to deserving High School Students who have a familial connection to the Lodge. Team "Good in the Hood" from NH, made up of Ralph Bagarella, Derek Riddell and Frank Labadini, along with Brad Thayer from NY won the gold.

Caption: 1st Place - Good in the Hood - Methuen Sons of Italy Scholarship Tournament - Left to right: Frank Labadini, Derek Riddell, Ralph Bagarella, Brad Thayer

**Dante Alighieri / Italian Heritage Month Tournament:** Also Methuen SOI Lodge event led by officers took in just about \$5000 in conjunction with other activities raising another \$5000. During the fall there was an Italian Heritage breakfast and presentation of the history of Italians in Lawrence, MA as well as a ceremony and tree planting honoring the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dante Alighieri's death. He is considered the father of the Italian language.

**St. Jude's Cancer Research Hospital:** \$4,000 was raised at this September tournament, auction and raffle was held in Methuen and organized by member Joe Scuderi and assisted by Joe Quartarone, Gina Neve, Bobby Bonanno, Carmela Pagnoni, the Cuna family and Vinny Ruggieri.

For the event, international and national bocce player Linda Fay made chocolate covered Oreos with chocolate pumpkins on them for everyone and first place went to Team Bellini, made up by USBF members



Team Bellini – 1<sup>st</sup> Place of St. Jude’s Charity Bocce Tournament: Left to right John Burley, Vinny Ruggieri, Carl Campbell, Vince Tersigni

There was an advanced division and social bocce division. Joe Scuderi is one of the sweetest, most genuine guys I know and said, “It’s heartbreaking to me to see children and their parents going through misery. It’s important that we walk hand in hand with Jesus for us to have hope and to stand up for these children.” He’s looking forward to being even more successful next year.

Vinny Ruggieri, Carl Campbell, John Burley and Vince Tersigni.



Linda Fay, Pan Am Bocce Player



1st Place – Team Bellini - Mario Pagnoni Scholarship Tournament: Carl Campbell, Vince Tersigni, Carmela Pagnoni, Vinny Ruggieri, John Burley

**Mario Pagnoni Scholarship**

**Tournament:** This event was organized by Bill Bryant and Carmela Pagnoni and held at the SOI. Approximately \$4000 was raised and was awarded to 2 Methuen High School Student Athletes in honor of my dear friend and author of The Joy of Bocce, Mario Pagnoni, who died a few years ago. The champion team of this 28-team tournament was again, Team Bellini.

**Frank Mastrocola Bocce Tournament for the Ersilia Cup:** The Kiwanis Club of Everett, MA selected the Methuen bocce facility to run its 3rd annual tournament. Several thousand dollars were raised for scholarships and domestic violence charities. It was fitting that national bocce players and USBF members Giuseppe and Carmine Matarazzo won the cup that honors their mom. Other teammates included Brad Thayer of NY and Mike Anderton from MA.



1st Place – Frank Mastrocola Bocce Tournament for the Ersilia Cup: Giuseppe Matarazzo, Mike Anderton, Carmine Matarazzo, Brad Thayer



The Matarazzo Family

**Kiwanis Club of Methuen Bocce Tournament:** This tournament is organized by Lodge officers Eileen and Larry Giordano who are instrumental in raising money for children in the Merrimack Valley. They ran this tournament at the lodge and netted about \$2500 for charities including a summer basketball program in partnership with Mann Inc. and the police department and a bike helmet safety program.

A couple **other noble charity bocce tournaments** in the East are notable, but I was not able to attend. The Carm Strong Tournament in Youngstown, Ohio, led by Darren Landis and the Cassese MVR family, raised approximately \$10,000 for a scholarship and the majority each year goes to pancreatic cancer research. The Franklin Square Bocce Tournament on Long Island in NY netted about \$6000. The money was donated by the 125 guests/players that attended the yearly event hosted by Mike Lisi and his generous family and was given to an extremely sick young girl waiting for heart and liver transplants.

**The Merrimack Valley in Massachusetts is known for having a level high of female bocce participation** in local leagues and club, regional and national events at the Methuen SOI. Over the years it has run ladies' bocce events and this past October, the SOI hosted another one organized by Gina Neve, the lodge VP. Often the women enter their own teams, however this time it was a "luck of the draw" selection for teammates. She explained that more advanced players were partnered with randomly chosen average and novice players. In fact, "7 or 8 ladies never stepped on a bocce court before, and what made it awesome is that 2 of them were on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place teams and asked me, 'Gina, when are you going to do that again? We had a blast.' Thank you to the guys who supported us...Jim "Soup" who helped with the brackets and the refs Ron

Demers, Lenny Christopher, Jim Famolare and John Bellino.” Since the 2021 event was a success, complete with a 50/50 and a pointing skill competition, Gina coordinated another event for January 9, 2022 and all 40 positions were filled within a couple days. With an uptick in Covid cases, the event has been postponed until March and will be open to even more teams.



1st Place – 2021 Fall Ladies Bocce Tournament (Methuen SOI) Sheila Sacchetti, Lorainne Derosa, Lisa Labadini, Kathy Sallesse



2nd Place – 2021 Fall Ladies Bocce Tournament (Methuen SOI) Mary Ellen Ronan, Regina Clifford, Ruth Raimondo, Mil Levesque

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**Global Bocce organized the Delaware High Stakes Bocce Tournament** over the summer playing by USBF Rules and all players were USBF members. Then in the fall, Global Bocce launched a **beginner’s program on Miami Beach**. The Delaware event was the 1st annual and pulled players from 10 different states. The date for next summer’s tournament will be in August.

The new program at the beach has been extremely successful so far, attracting mostly people in their 20s to 50s, as well as some children and seniors. Not only do we have participants from many spots in the USA, NYC, Boston, Birmingham, San Diego, Hawaii and Cleveland, but also those native to countries from all over the world including Canada, Mexico, Russia, Cuba, Jordan, Poland, Italy, Spain, France, Denmark, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela and Colombia.



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**Escape the cold, play bocce in the warm weather...**If people are looking to ditch their hats and snow boots this winter to play bocce, they head to the sunshine of **Cape Coral, Florida** (4-person teams) for a high stakes tournament hosted by East Coast Vice President Joe Quartarone (JoeBocce@gmail.com) and the Cape Coral Bocce Club in February. Or catch a flight to Las Vegas and hit the courts, slots and tables. This tournament is hosted by East Coast President, Guy DeSantis (YonkersBocce@aol.com), with Frank DeSantis, Mike Pennino and Theresa Robarge.



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*Joe Quartarone contributed to this article*

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