

## **North Shore Lodge Supports Pythian Servicemen and Veterans Committee**

May 16, 2010

On Sunday, May 16, 2010, North Shore Lodge #824 held a fundraiser event honoring Tony Mercado as Man of the Year. All the proceeds from the event including the raffle were donated to the Humanitarian Fund to support the Servicemen and Veterans Committee program to pay for postage of packages being sent to our soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world.

At right is a picture of some of the attendees. From left to right: Grand Webmaster Past Chancellor Izhak Sirota, Grand Master At-Arms Craig Shink, Grand Secretary Irving Kleiman, Grand Vice Chancellor Michael Sukenick, Man of the Year Tony Mercado, Grand Chancellor Jerome Bernzweig, Past Grand Chancellor Alan Greenberg, Grand Prelate Robert Kaufman, Grand Advocate/Past Assistant to the Chief Deputy Grand Chancellor Ron Degen, Esq.



The Servicemen and Veterans Committee was originally set up to provide support and visitations to VA hospitals where simple gifts and good cheer would bring comfort to injured – many permanently disabled -- members of our armed forces. At a visitation to the Castlepoint VA Hospital in Beacon, NY, Pythians donated coffee makers and set up a social room for permanently disabled vets who live on premises.

In 2006, a New York Pythian and former Marine recognized that our service personnel in the middle east battle zones were not getting access to basic personal care products like shampoo, razor blades, snack foods, books, etc. and started soliciting products to send over.

It currently costs \$12.95 to ship one box via USPS. Since setting up, the Servicemen and Veterans Committee has raised enough money and material to box and ship about 900 boxes per year totaling over 5,000 individual packages to service men and women currently serving tours in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The New York Grand Lodge has established itself as one of the few organizations that regularly sends packages to our sons and daughters fighting overseas.