

# THE 108<sup>TH</sup> GRIFFON ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Dear Griffon Association Members,

In so many ways the Griffon Association had a fantastic 2024, except as regards membership, which only remains stable in the 170-180 area. For the future, I am personally worried that as the existing membership ages our ability to continue to do good work slowly suffers. Most of our losses this past year were the result of deaths of members, including one of our greatest supporters and founding members, MG (Ret) George Goldsmith who unexpectedly passed this past fall. Your board has proposed some changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, which have been approved by the membership. I will say more about this later in this report, but to implement them we will still need support from our existing membership.

I wanted to highlight the membership issue first because it is our greatest challenge, and potentially our greatest weakness. But now let me highlight our successes.

Scholarships: Again, we were very pleased to see applicants of continuing high quality, but we were disappointed that the number of applicants was small. We did give 3 scholarships in this cycle, one for the fall semester 2024 and 2 for the spring semester 2025 in a total amount of \$7,500.00. We sent to all the membership several weeks ago a copy of the scholarship application for Fall 2025, and we sent a copy to the Training Command for distribution to all units. With the closing of Knight Communications and loss of the Griffon Newspaper, we must count on our membership, the Command's Hqs and our nearly completed new website and Facebook page to get the word out to potential applicants.

Picnic: COL (Retired) Tony Clark, with his ESGR and Ft Jackson contacts was able to set up a tour of Ft Jackson in October for about 20 of our members, which included lunch at the NCO Club, as well as visits to a number of training sites and the Reception units. Many changes at Ft Jackson not only as to facilities but also training methodology and better preparing new Soldiers for the rigors of Basic Training.

Golf Tournament: We had excellent results from our 2024 Golf Tournament despite it being held the Monday after the Hurricane hit western North Carolina and at a new location, Olde Sycamore Country Club. Despite some glitches because of both aforementioned, we had our best year ever, netting \$23,712.34. This was a result of several things – significantly reduced costs at the new location, continuing strong support from our major sponsors, a slightly increased entry fee from \$108 to \$125, finding a lunch sponsor who provided our lunch meal at a significantly reduced cost and then set that off by contributing as a hole and bronze sponsor and continuing good support from golfers, many of which have supported us from the very beginning.

108<sup>th</sup> Training Command Support: Because of our success with the golf tournament last year and the two years before we were able to donate \$5,000 to the Training Command to defray the costs for lower ranking Soldiers to attend the 108<sup>th</sup> Dining Out and \$3,000 to take care of 108<sup>th</sup> Soldiers' expenses for participation in the USARC Best Squad Competition at Ft Knox.

Soldier & Veteran Support: The Board did not have any requests from Soldiers for grants to assist with duty related injuries creating financial hardship last year, but continued our targeted support of organizations that assist Soldiers and Veterans to include Purple Heart Homes (\$500.00), the Charlotte Airport USO (\$1,000.00), Veterans' Restoration Quarters (\$2,000.00) and the Iredell County

Veterans Council (\$2,000.00). Lastly, we contributed \$500.00 to the Columbia, SC airport USO in memory of MG(Retired) Goldsmith who was an early and constant supporter of that organization.

Lastly, and back to membership, at the Annual meeting in 2023 in conjunction with the picnic, we passed and then implemented in 2024, new membership rules to help with recruitment of new members. Rather than limiting membership to current and former members of the 108<sup>th</sup> Training Command/Division, we will now expand membership eligibility to the levels allowed by IRS rules for 501(c)19 organizations. This will open up membership to all current or former members of the United States Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard and Space Force) who have honorably served, and to a limited degree spouses, widows, widowers and lineal descendants of current or former members of the United States Armed Forces, and cadets in university ROTC programs and to an even more limited degree civilians who have an interest in our efforts to support members of the Armed Forces of the United States. To get a more detailed explanation of this new membership criteria, take a look at our new and improved website, which should be fully operational shortly. Lastly, we plan to give first year free memberships to the DS of the Year winners and the Best Squad winners in hopes that those fantastic Soldiers will stay with us for the long term.

Looking forward to 2024:

Griffon Association Scholarship applications are due by April 1, 2024. A copy of the application was previously sent to the membership. If you did not get that or have misplaced your copy, contact MG (Ret) McCartney at [skip@shelby.net](mailto:skip@shelby.net). You can also find it and download it from our new website.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Soldiers and Families Golf tournament is scheduled for the 29<sup>th</sup> of September, 2025 at Olde Sycamore Country Club in Charlotte, NC. We will be sending out Player registration forms and tournament sponsorship forms in the next couple of months. These will also be available on our website. For any golfers who have not been able to attend in the past, we invite you to join us and encourage you to bring a team this year. Even if you are not a golfer, but know some folks who are golfers, pass the information along to them and encourage them to participate with us. We are also always in need of help from non-golfers for registration, etc.

The Annual Picnic will be held in the fall of 2025. More information and how to sign up will be shared in a few months. We hope you will join us for some great food and an opportunity to reconnect with other Griffon members and friends.

In closing, I would like to personally thank you and assure you that your support makes the difference.

HOOAH!!

Charles E. McCartney, Jr.  
MG, USA, Retired  
President

“Be A Patriot- Help A Soldier”