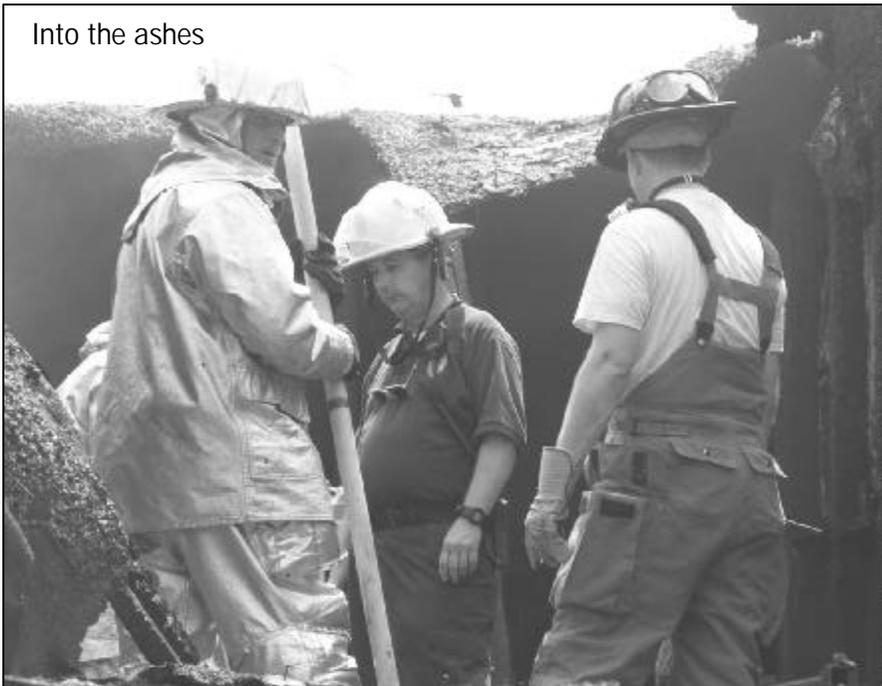


## IN THE NEWS

Into the ashes



Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier

**Senior Airman Christopher Reed (left), 437th Civil Engineer Fire Prevention Flight, looks around at what's left of the Donaree Village Apartments in North Charleston. The base fire department responded to the blaze, along with several local fire departments, as part of the Mutual Aid Agreement between CAFB and the City of North Charleston.**

## Staff sergeant results to be released July 19

The Air Force plans to release the list of its newest staff sergeant promotees July 19 (July 20 for those units across the international date-line). This year's release comes a month earlier than last year's staff sergeant promotion list.

Air Force Personnel Center officials cite several reasons for this year's earlier release. Many will recall that last year the Air Force was in the midst of Operation ALLIED FORCE, and had numerous airmen deployed.

"The late August release date last year accommodated those who were deployed and gave many of them an opportunity to return and test," center officials said. "We have also pledged to our customers worldwide that we will continue to strive for sooner promotion releases rather than later."

This year, partly because of reduced testing windows, AFPC was able to get most of the tests for staff sergeant eligibles processed and scored sooner. There are approximately 40,000 eligibles this year.

The promotion quota has not been determined yet, so the exact promotion percentage is not known at this time. "We are confident that percentages for all ranks, including staff sergeant will remain at or above TOPCAP objectives for the foreseeable future," center officials added. (AFPN)

## Free VFW membership available for active duty, reservists

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi  
437th AW Public Affairs

As today's generation of World War II and Korean War era veterans dwindle and the number of people with military experience or background decreases in our society, so has active membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of United States.

To counteract this trend, the VFW is offering a free one-year membership in the VFW to all active duty military members, Reservists and National Guard members under a new program called the Military Initiative Program, or MIP for short. The \$20 annual membership fee is waived for eligible members. The purpose of this initiative is to make military personnel aware of the VFW, their status as veterans and their eligibility to join the organization.

Membership in the VFW includes a one-year subscription to the VFW magazine, the official publication of the VFW. To be eligible for membership, the military member must have received a campaign medal or ribbon or served in Korea for more than 30 consecutive or 60 or more non-consecutive days. Membership in the national organization also allows members to join thousands of VFW posts throughout the world. Those posts may have separate fees to join.

Some people may have an inaccurate picture of what the VFW does.

"The VFW works very hard to obtain and retain veterans' benefits and entitlements, improve the GI Bill, adequately fund V. A. hospitals, care for needy veterans, their widows and children, provide college scholar-

ships for high school students, fund cancer aid and research, and many other charitable programs," said Gerald Pothier, Immediate Past State Commander, VFW of the U.S.

Without an active membership, the VFW could fade as the voice of the American veteran.

"We travel to Washington, D.C. twice a year to speak face to face with our United States Senators and Representatives about veterans' issues," Pothier said. "When we do, they look at our national membership numbers. The more members we have in the VFW, the more Congress pays attention to us. So your membership is important to us, to you and to the future veterans of America."

"We've been around for nearly 101 years helping veterans and the active forces. We want to continue doing the same but we need a strong membership to be effective on Capitol Hill," he added.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States came into existence in 1914 as a result of the merger of three separate Foreign Service organizations that had the same ideals and similar requirements for membership.

"Although you can join the VFW on line at their web site, we don't get credit for it," he said. "Please join the VFW through a local post in South Carolina. I would be glad to provide you with the contact information for the VFW post nearest to you."

Pothier also agreed to speak at unit commander's calls or other briefings on base to talk about the benefits of joining the VFW. For information, contact Pothier at 761-1301 or log on at <http://www.vfw.org>.



Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith

## Stocking up

**Senior Airman William Knight, 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron, stocks up on supplies at the newly renovated and reopened Base Service Store. The service store, Hazardous Material Pharmacy and Individual Equipment Issue section have been contracted out to Industries for the Blind, Inc. - Milwaukee and are no longer run by the 437th Supply Squadron. The service store is having a grand opening tentatively scheduled for July 28.**