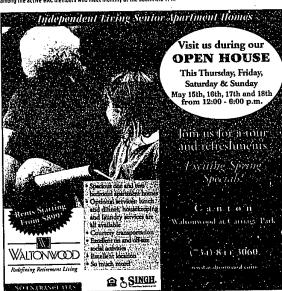
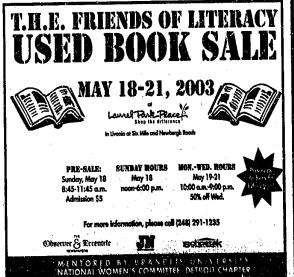


Women's Army Corps members Freida Williams of West Bloomfield, (seated, from left) and Barbara Becker of Plymouth, and Mary Baker of Northville, (standing, from left) Sandra Intorre of Alten Park and Kay Vartanian of Dearborn, are among the active WAC members who meet monthly at the Southfield VFW.





## WAC seeks members as 62nd year nears

BY MARY MCDONOUGH

Just like many other veterans organizations, the Women's Army Corps, or WAC, is now fighting a different kind of war — that of its own sur-

is now fighting a different kind of war – that of its own survival.

WAC Chapter 15, which meets monthly at the Southfield VPW, has only a handful of active members left a such it is reaching out to younger female veterans in all branches of the military to keep the organization going. "It's an opportunity to be of service to other veterans," said VAC chapter president Lt. Col. Freida Williams of West Bloomfield, a career military officer who is called on regularly to play Taps at military funerals. Williams said the members work closely with Detroit's VA. Hoapsilar, raising money for activities and supplies, hosting apring cannival, making visits with coffee and doughnuts and decorating a Christmas treatly ear. Dust are 518 a year and the group meets the second Saturday of the month for a polluck. The nationals holds a conference every year, where all the local chapters can get uggetter.

the rocal dispersion to the Army Women's Museum in Virginia. Williams said.

The WAC was a division of the army created in 1943, to

which all women were assigned, to provide additional support during World War II. From there, they would be assigned duties in mostly sec-retarial, clerk and communica-tions jobs. Unlike its precursor, the

Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, the WAC afforded women all the same military

womens Ausurary Army
Corps, the WAC afforded
women all the same military
benefits, pay and protection of
male soldlers. Through the
WAC, 150,000 women served
in World War II, including
overseas in the South Pacific
and European Theaters. The
organization was disbanded
when the army was integrated
in the 1970.

The assimilation of males
and females for basic training.
I still think it is a stupid idea,
said Barbara Becker of
Plymouth, a retired Master
Sergeant. Alt of of these
women come from no rules to
a long list of rules and they
can't take it. And diey don't
need the harassment of some
of these men.

The WAC insulated female
soldiers and protected them
from the type of sexual harassment that goes on today, said
from temporary to the war stories
over cookies and ite cream.
They spoke of days when
female soldiers are no
allowed to we for the soldiers
and the stories
were cookies and ite cream.
They spoke of days when
female soldiers are no
allowed to were
ilipstick in public.

Women have always been in
combat, they said, just not in

any official capacity until recently. There have been women in combat ever since the Revolutionary War, just not officially, said Williams. Every person at this table has been in situations where there has been a let of danger, said Mary Baker, who served as an army medic. When I was 18 years old, I wanted to be an army nurse so had. In 1943, 1st Sgt. Sandra Intorre worked as a cryptographer, helping decode messages about military operations. Her turn in the wat effort was short-lived however, because he had family living in Italy and as such, was considered a possible threat to national security. She was reassigned to the Pentagon and made the army a career, ultimately becoming a recruiter. The stories could go on foreve, but the numbers of those who served in the WAC, or even know what the WAC is continue to dwindle. "When you go to the convention, you see it, said Becker. Added fellow soldier Baker: That's why we need new blood."

The US Women's Amy Corps is hosting a Strad amy bit had you delt hand it gap bath any think public hand. All the many think public hand. All the many think public hand. All the many think public hand. All the most of telegraph An SS donation is required to all them and at lemale Amy veterans are invited.

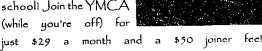
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