

PEPPER POD

SitRep



Note from Sandra

This summer, with the help of our fierce women veteran network, we will be taking on two huge projects: building an outdoor classroom



and kicking off a Connect-Hers Homelessness 4-year pilot project. Both are extremely different, yet both will give us an opportunity to team up with amazing, big-hearted women veterans to continue building and growing our support network. The outdoor classroom will be a brave space for women from the veteran community to come and grow, strengthen their ties to one another, and THRIVE. The Connect-Hers project will enable our strong women veteran community to support vulnerable sisters-in-arms who are experiencing or at risk to experience homelessness by connecting them to the resources they need. It will be a summer where compassion meets action, a summer of beginnings, creativity, and teamwork.

Sharpen your saws, ladies!

Sandra

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Call for BuildHERs!

The ground-breaking for the outdoor classroom is fast approaching and with that comes an exciting new opportunity for women veterans.

The Pepper Pod is seeking a team of BuildHERs to help with the preparation of the site, some limited construction work such as staining and nailing some boards for the back wall, and landscaping of the outdoor classroom.

We'll supply each BuildHER with training, safety equipment, tools, and Advil to support their hard work. There is a short window of time to get the work completed before the busy fall programming schedule begins.

- Phase 1 - Tentative June 5-6
- Phase 2 - A few days in mid-August

Think you have it in you to be a BuildHER?

Register here: <https://pepperpod.ca/event-calendar/buildhers/>
Questions? Email Cathy@PepperPod.ca



ELLE-vation Awards

You know amazing women. Let's celebrate them! Nominate them for the Pepper Pod ELLE-vation Award.

Let's celebrate women who lift up other women, who cheer them on, who champion their beliefs. Let's celebrate women who make a difference for other women.

Nominate a serving or retired CAF or RCMP woman today!

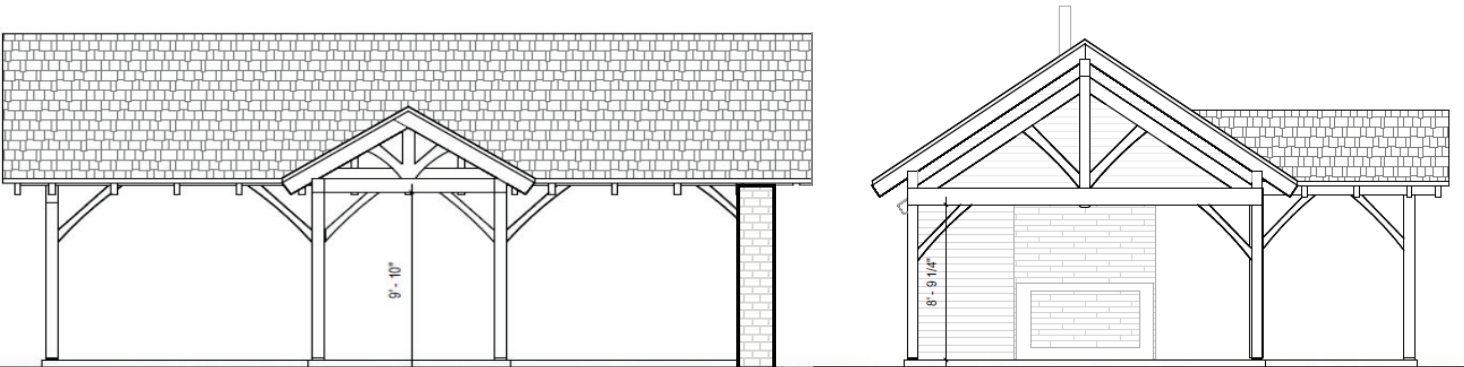
Nomination Deadline = 22 June 2024

Go to: <https://pepperpod.ca/strong-women/elle-vation/>

Outdoor Classroom Update

Groundbreaking is just around the corner for the Pepper Pod's new outdoor classroom, and it's going to be huge! Soon our wellness workshops, dragon boat dry land training, perhaps a little yoga and Lifeshop 2 participants will all be sheltered under the 18' canopy of a timber frame gazebo. Surrounded by the lush maple and oak trees, it will feel like being in the forest. Oh yeah, WE WILL BE!

Thank you to the **Canadian Legacy Project, the Leacross Foundation, Boeing Canada, and the Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund** for making this possible. We are going to make magic in that classroom!





SMSRC Counsellors Visit

It is always heartwarming to connect with people who support the wellbeing of the same people we do.

We were pleased to welcome counsellors from the Sexual Misconduct Support and Resource Centre to the Pepper Pod in May. Information was shared about the programs we offer and how women can be referred to the Pepper Pod.

There was an in-depth conversation about synergy and shared themes of healing. Of course, no specifics were discussed, and confidentiality was respected by all parties. The visit was an opportunity to learn more about both organizations and our shared vision to support women who have served.



Sam Sharpe Breakfast

For almost a century, the legacy of LCol Sam Sharpe was overshadowed by the mental health challenges he faced after WWI. Thanks to the efforts of Senator Roméo Dallaire and Erin O'Toole 10 years ago, Sam Sharpe's legacy is now one of hope and healing as he was honoured for the 10th Annual Sam Sharpe Breakfast for Mental Health in Uniformed Service.

Captain (Ret'd) Mary Ann Barber gave a riveting keynote about her time in uniform, her 3 tours to Afghanistan and the toll her service took on her mental health. The presentation was real, raw, powerful and impactful.

Also speaking were The Honourable Bill Blair, Minister of Department of National Defence, The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada, The Honourable Rebecca Patterson, Senator for Ontario, MP Alex Ruff and General Wayne Eyre, Chief of Defence Staff.

Thank you to the event sponsor Wounded Warriors Canada and their Executive Director, Scott Maxwell, for making the event possible.



Battle of the Atlantic Gala

Cathy had the honour of attending the spectacular Battle of the Atlantic Gala and enjoying the traditions of the Navy, a speech by The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada, the naval toast of the day, and other great presentations.

Thanks to Commodore (Ret'd) Mark Watson for the generous ticket and LCol (Ret'd) Brook Bangsboll for the escort & engaging conversation.



P.S.

Thanks also to Wild & Free Hair Boutique for the fabulous updo. Taking it down was another story! If anyone needs silver bobby pins, Cathy has you covered.



The Respect Forum



On 16 May 2024, the Respect Forum held a gathering at Ottawa City Hall and we were joined by Mayor Mark Sutcliffe and City Counsellor David Hill (Ward 3 Barrhaven-West.)

Sandra and Cathy enjoyed meeting representatives from many different veteran supporting organizations.

Also in attendance were members from Veterans Affairs Canada, Veterans' House Canada, OSSIS, the Westboro Legion, CAF Transition Group - Groupe de transition des FAC, Veterans for LIFE Foundation, and many more.

We're excited about developing these new connections and look forward to working together.

<https://respectcanada.org/>

Registration Open

Online registration is open for the Pepper Pod programs listed below.

- Lifeshop™ I
- Lifeshop™ II
- SUP Ladies – Stand Up Paddleboarding

We'll be offering Lifeshops™ in the following locations within the next year (2024/25).

- **Gagetown** (English) – in Fredricton
- **Montreal/Quebec City** (French) – at the Pepper Pod
- **Ottawa** (English) – at the Pepper Pod
- **Ottawa** (French) – at the Pepper Pod
- **Petawawa/ North Bay** (English) – at the Pepper Pod
- **Kingston/Trenton** (English) – at the Pepper Pod
- **Borden** (English) – at the Pepper Pod
- **Comox/ Esquimalt** (English) – on Vancouver Island

The Pepper Pod has several waitlists across Canada, and because we don't want women to wait indefinitely, we are only opening registration for these locations at this time. We plan to host additional sessions in the future, and we'll open registration for those locations once the Lifeshops™ are scheduled.

Please note that we anticipate still having wait lists for some areas of the country and we appreciate your patience while we work to serve as many women as possible.

Go to pepperpod.ca to register!





National Pepper Pod Picnic Day

Registration is still open for those who would like to join us in-person for National Pepper Pod Picnic Day, at Lac Leamy on Sunday, 9 June 2024. Bring a friend and a dish to share.

We'll be joining other Pepper Pod tribes across Canada who will be gathering on the same day and we'll share our photos online.

Be part of the growing women veterans' community!

Register here: <https://pepperpod.ca/event-calendar/national-pepper-pod-picnic-day/picnic-day-registration/>

P.S. For tribes outside the Ottawa/Gatineau area, if you registered for a picnic box, they will be arriving soon 😊

SUP Ladies?!? Stand Up Paddleboarding

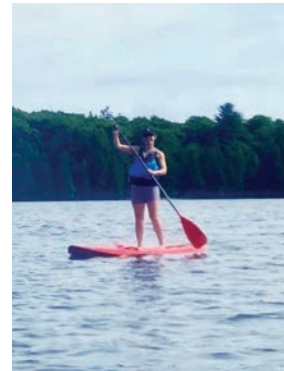
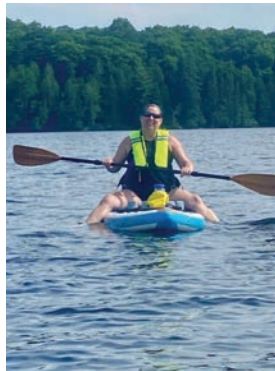
Friday is the last day to register for SUP Ladies?!? Stand Up Paddleboarding.

- **6 July 2024**
- 8:30 am – 1:30 pm
- Paddle & Lunch
- Bring your own board

Kayaks are welcome too!

Register here:

<https://pepperpod.ca/event-calendar/sup-ladies-paddleboarding/>



Dragon Boat Practice Dates



Dragon boat practice will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays in June - on the water for 6:15 pm.

June 4, 6, 11, 13, 18 and 20, 2024 at the Rideau Canoe Club (804 Hog's Back Rd., Ottawa.)

Please be sure to arrive 20 minutes before the practice begins to get your paddle, lifejacket and to warm up.

Paddles Up!

Dragon Boat Dry Land Meeting

This year is off to a crazy-fun start! The Pepper Pod Paddlers met on 5 May 2024 to map out the plan for the dragon boat season.

They unveiled the hard-won trophy from 2 years ago, showed off the shirts, and sized the life jackets. We'll have 6 grueling practices, and hopefully bring home some hardware again this year!

A big thank you to Meghan, our returning coach. Another big thank you to Meg, our team trainer, from Bellefleur Physiotherapy and Bellefleur Fitness. They have generously given their time and talent to help get our team ready for race weekend.

Paddles Up!



Summer Programming Pause

Pepper Pod Block Leave!

The past few months have been an incredible phase of growth, connection, and expansion at the Pepper Pod. It's a lot of work and we absolutely love it! So, our team will be recharging its batteries and exercising self-care from 8-26 July 2024.

Please know that email responses may be delayed because we're really going to take a break. We'll come back full of ideas, and ready to continue serving the women's veteran community.

(...except for the outdoor classroom project, we'll still be building that while "on leave" 😊)



Lifeshop™ Grad in Action

**Lisa Cyr, Owner Café Félin
Ma Langue au Chat**

Café Ma Langue Aux Chats is a feline café in Quebec City where time literally stands still. Owner of the café since 2019, Lisa Cyr completed more than 10 years in the Canadian Armed Forces and is now a veteran. In buying the café, she chose to continue her service to our country with a particular mission: to accompany, support and, above all, help veterans with pet therapy.

In short, she has a love for the little furballs and the customers who love them just as much! A place to put on your list when you visit Quebec City's Lowertown next time!

LISA CYR

Owner Café Félin Ma Langue aux Chats

<https://cafemalangueauxchats.ca/>



UPCOMING AT THE PEPPER POD

1 Jun	Royal Canadian Air Force Centennial Ball
4 Jun	Dragon Boat Practice
6 Jun	Dragon Boat Practice
9 Jun	National Pepper Pod Picnic Day!
11 Jun	Dragon Boat Practice
13 Jun	Dragon Boat Practice
14 Jun	General Dynamic's Work Party
15 Jun	Navy Bike Ride & 5 km Run
18 Jun	Dragon Boat Practice
20 Jun	Dragon Boat Practice
21-23 Jun	Ottawa Dragon Boat Festival – Race Weekend
6 Jul	SUP Ladies?! Stand Up Paddleboarding at Meech Lake
8- 26 July	Pepper Pod Block Leave
29 Aug	Women's Wellness Day
22 Sep	Army Run



If you'd like to learn more about the Pepper Pod, visit our website at www.PepperPod.ca

Instagram

https://www.instagram.com/le_thepepperpod/

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pepperpod.ca>

LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/pepper-pod/>

Long live strong women!

HIGHLIGHTING OUR PARTNERS



BELLEFLEUR PHYSIO & BELLEFLEUR FITNESS

Shout out to Bellefleur Physiotherapy for their incredible support to the Pepper Pod Paddlers Dragon Boat Team! Meg, from Bellefleur Fitness, has designed a pre-race training program and recipe options for the team and we're tracking it all on an app. We even have a leader board to see who's working out the most. The biggest coup though, was when Meg convinced Cathy to be in the workout videos on the app... not sure we'll be sharing those publicly!

Bellefleur Physio and Bellefleur Fitness have been huge supporters of the Pepper Pod and we are incredibly grateful. Check them out at their Rockland, Orleans and Beachwood locations!

<https://bellefleurphysio.com/>

Can't join us?

Why not donate to support our mission?

DONATE HERE

We need your help to maintain this centre and to keep developing our programs. We want to grow intelligently, diversify our services, and keep the retreat centre beautiful.