

PEPPER POD

# SitRep



## Welcome Francine!

We are thrilled to welcome Francine Harding to the Pepper Pod Team. She is an experienced veteran and has a wealth of knowledge to bring to the table.

With a background in administration, logistics and policy & procedures, we are so pleased to have her onboard. Francine will be assisting with admin and more importantly, the monumental task of keeping Sandra and Cathy organized! Oh, and Gunther loves her already!

You may have met her at the Spring Work Party or the Picnic and she officially starts in July. We can't wait to have her in our forest!



HAPPY  
PRIDE  
MONTH!

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# 2023 RCAF Ball

The 2023 RCAF Ball was held on June 3rd at the Infinity Convention Centre and The Pepper Pod's Cathy Priestman was the Mistress of Ceremonies.

It was an incredible night with HCol Loreena McKinnett singing "Oh Canada". Speeches were given by the LGen Eric Kenny, Comd RCAF and Col Jeremy Hansen, Canadian Space Agency astronaut and Artemis II crew member.

The evening was full of energy, passion, tradition.... and dancing thanks to Jet Stream, the incredible RCAF Band. It was a fantastic way to fly into the centennial year for the Royal Canadian Air Force!

Thank you to the 2023 RCAF Ball planning committee for donating an honourarium to the Pepper Pod.

**Photo Credits: Richard Lawrence Photography - except for the selfie ;)**





## Lifeshop™ II Launches!



The Lifeshop™ program was designed to give women veterans a tribe with whom they can navigate life's challenges. Since its inception in 2018, over 250 women have graduated from Lifeshop™ I with rave reviews — and they've been asking for more!

Welcome to Lifeshop™ II, where you're invited to discover what sets your soul on fire and lean into your passion.

After a year of intensive development, we're pleased to announce this brand-new retreat for women have completed Lifeshop™ I.

Congratulations to our newest tribe – the inaugural crew from Lifeshop™ II!

Thank you to **True Patriot Love** and the **Captain Nichola Goddard Foundation**, for supporting the development of this program.

## New Program – Beyond Trauma



Beyond Trauma is a transformational one-day retreat for women who have experienced sexual trauma and is offered in a private, safe and confidential manner. The program is open to women serving in the Canadian Armed Forces as well as women veterans. Beyond Trauma provides tools to help participants in healing trauma, building connections and growing relationships.

The program offers groups of 8-10 women the opportunity to continue their journeys together following the retreat. They celebrate successes, have each other's back, reduce feelings of isolation and build a community of well-being and support.

If you feel like Beyond Trauma may be a good fit for you and you'd like more info, check out our FAQs below.

- **Who can apply for the program?**

Women serving in the Canadian Armed Forces and veteran women.

- **Where is the program held?**

Beyond Trauma is offered at the Pepper Pod in Chelsea, QC., 15 minutes from downtown Ottawa. The program is also offered at select locations across Canada and you can find these locations on the Pepper Pod calendar.

- **How long is Beyond Trauma?**

Beyond Trauma is a 1-day program with a facilitated follow-up session a few weeks later. The follow-up session is coordinated with the group and lasts a few hours.

- **How much does Beyond Trauma cost?**

The program itself is free and includes meals, refreshments, materials and supplies.

- **Is Beyond Trauma right for me?**

Although Beyond Trauma is beneficial for many people, it is not a substitute for medical or psychiatric treatment and will not cure or alleviate mental illness. If you are going through a crisis, are feeling unstable or unwell, and/or are experiencing a serious mental health event or illness (e.g., major depression, acute anxiety, psychiatric disorder), Beyond Trauma is not for you at this time. As a non-profit organization, we are not equipped to provide medical or psychiatric treatment to participants needing that type of care.

It should be noted that this retreat is not a religious gathering, nor is it therapy.

- **How do I sign-up?**

Registration will open in the coming weeks with bookings beginning in September 2023.



## Top Women in Defence

Well, talk about hanging out with the cool kids... a few Pepper Pod graduates were highlighted at the Esprit de Corps' Breaking Down the Barricades: Top Women in Defence 2023 Ceremony.

This event showcased women who have demonstrated a positive difference in the world of defence. We were given a tiny glimpse into their stories and accomplishments, and it is obvious that they are all inspirational and remarkable women.

Congratulations to all our sister-in-arms!

*Julia Scouten, President of WiDS, cyber security expert and Lifeshop graduate. Colonel (Ret'd) Telah Morrison was unable to attend the event but was honoured in absentia. She is also a Lifeshop graduate.*



## CANSEC

Who can pass up an opportunity to see fancy new toys?

The Pepper Pod team was invited to visit some of the latest technology at CANSEC and while Sandra was drooling over all the khaki stuff, Cathy talked "payload" and "air dominance" with Lockheed Martin's team.

We weren't allowed to take pictures of the cool stuff ...but we did sneak one in of the cool kids: (WiDS)

## She Shed - Seeking More Vendors



We're always looking for neat new ideas for the She Shed and with more exciting events coming in August, we'd love to find some new vendors to add to our already fabulous line-up.

We currently have a great collection of:

- Handmade soap
- Handmade candles
- Vases and candle holders
- Fresh, dried herbs
- Note cards
- Herb Lover's Agendas
- Aurelius Fine Oils & Vinegars
- Aurelius Spice Mixes
- Maple Syrup
- Jewelry
- Quilts
- ... and fun Pepper Pod branded items.

If you are a veteran owned business, or know one, who might be a good fit for the She Shed, please contact [Cathy@PepperPod.ca](mailto:Cathy@PepperPod.ca)

## Viva Italia!

The Pepper Pod team was invited by Leonardo Inc. and IDS North America to attend the Festa della Repubblica, the celebration of Italy's National Day, held at the Canadian Museum of History.

Who can refuse such a lovely invitation and warm people, especially when accompanied by cannoli and tiramisu?





## Summer Work Party

It's time for some clean, summer fun.



The Pepper Pod is hosting a summer work party and lunch on Sunday, August 13 (10:00 am – 3:00 pm.)

We have some fallen trees to deal with, a bit of landscaping and some general maintenance.

If you'd like to pitch-in outside or assist with lunch, we'd love to hear from you.

***Sign-up opens soon.***

## Army Run Reminder

The Pepper Pod has a team registered for the Army Run. You can join the Pepper Pod and run/walk or stroll at your own pace. We'll have a common meeting area to gather, rehydrate and tell tales. And haggle over Ibuprofen?

To join the Pepper Pod Army Run Team – follow the link below and register. The team opt-in is near the bottom of the form.

**Team Name: Le/The Pepper Pod.**  
**Team Code: "Pepper2023"**

More info to follow as the big day approaches.



**[REGISTER HERE](#)**



## SUP Ladies?! Stand UP Paddleboarding

SUP Ladies?

Join us for a morning of stand up paddleboarding on Meech Lake followed by lunch at the Pepper Pod, Saturday, July 8, 2023.

Deadline to register is June 30th and we'll send out the detailed plan via email to everyone who signs up.



We'd like to extend a sincere thank you to our event sponsor, the Legion. Their generous support makes this event possible.

**[REGISTER HERE.](#)**







## Pepper Pod Block Leave!

**Wow, that was a busy spring! On the heels of a busy fall and winter too!**

**So** fulfilling. **So** inspiring. **So** many incredible experiences.

And so... The Pepper Pod Team will be recharging its batteries and exercising self-care from 24 July to 7 August 2023.

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.

### SAVE THESE DATES!

**8 July**

SUP Ladies?!  
(Stand Up Paddleboarding)

**13 August**

Summer Work Party

**30 August**

Menopause Cooking Workshop

**9 September**

Dinner in Our Forest

**17 September**

Army Run

## HIGHLIGHTING OUR PARTNERS

### LEONARDO CANADA



Leonardo Canada has been a strong supporter of the Pepper Pod from the moment they found out about us. The CEO of Leonardo Canada, Francesco Norante has visited the Pepper Pod and shared numerous invitations for us to attend special events. We look forward to working with Leonardo in the future.

### THE LEGION

The Legion plays a role in the lives of so many veterans and we are thrilled to receive their support for our upcoming Stand Up Paddleboarding event. It's a pleasure to partner with an organization with such similar goals and values. Thank you for your commitment to the Pepper Pod and we look forward to many more opportunities together.



### ARE YOU A LIFESHOP™ GRAD?

We'd love to share your thoughts with our readers.

*Send us a little blurb on what the retreat meant to you.*

*[Cathy@PepperPod.ca](mailto:Cathy@PepperPod.ca)  
or [Gunther@PepperPod.ca](mailto:Gunther@PepperPod.ca)  
(He loves to receive email!)*



# National Pepper Pod Picnic Day!



**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.

