



## MARCH NEWSLETTER

### MARCH Highlights

1. Monthly Message from BIA General Manager, Jamie Pritchard
2. BIA Annual General Meeting - March 26th @ 6:30pm
3. Holiday Retail Act - For Easter
4. Ten Bucks Back 2024 - Update
5. New Business - IG Financial, KDB Law, Bradshaw Collective
6. BIA Coffee Club - March 27th @ 8:45am @ Coles & Keys

### MONTHLY MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER



March is upon us and I am hoping that the 4 letter word is all but behind us. My mind is in Spring mode with thoughts of spring flowers, warm sunshine, and the return of crowded streets bustling with people from all over this planet.

A reminder the AGM will be live and in person this year at Features restaurant, March 26 at 6:30. Our board and staff are looking forward to seeing you there so we can talk about 2023 and plans for 2024. The meeting will be followed by refreshments and casual conversations. To help us plan

for the event we would appreciate it if you could take about a minute and [register](#) by March 15.

The BIA will be featuring March Break ideas for our Downtown core in our marketing plans. We encourage you to share our socials to maximize the reach for the benefit of all.

All \$10,000 of the Ten Buck Bucks back certificates have been handed out. Last year the \$10k distributed represented \$132,000 in purchases from our downtown

businesses. Add on the \$10,000 as it is redeemed and an estimate of a 30% uptake and the program was responsible for approximately \$145k in sales. Please treat them as cash.

For those attending the [BIA Coffee Club](#) it has been a great opportunity to mix and mingle with other Downtown Businesses. This networking is probably one of the most important sessions you can attend as the more each of our businesses know about each other the better we can refer business to each other and keep it downtown. The next BIA Coffee Club will be hosted by By Coles and Keys 25 York Street on WEDNESDAY MARCH 27 - DROP IN 8:30AM TO 9:45AM. To assist the Host Business with their coffee order, we'd like to request an RSVP before March 25. That said, unregistered drop-ins are welcome! [Click Here to Register](#)

We are always looking for ways to improve our communications in getting out information to our membership. If you have any ideas you feel will help please reach out.

Your BIA is here for you and is always interested in your feedback. If you see me rollin along downtown on the silver ghost scooter please catch my attention, I would love to hear from you!  
[jpritchard@downtownstratford.ca](mailto:jpritchard@downtownstratford.ca)

See you Downtown!

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## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Tuesday, March 26, 2024 | 6:30pm  
Features Restaurant, 10 Downie St

All BIA Members and staff are invited. Following the Order of Business for the evening, attendees are welcome to enjoy refreshments and social time. Please see below for the meeting agenda and the QR code or button at the bottom where we ask you to please rsvp for the event.



Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area  
Annual General Meeting  
March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Features, 10 Downie Street, Stratford, ON

NEW! REGISTER IN ADVANCE  
[downtownstratford.ca/agm](https://downtownstratford.ca/agm) or scan the QR code:



The BIA encourages you to register early to enable our team to properly plan for the event. The first 15 registrants will receive a gift from the BIA at the AGM.

Please send questions for the Board  
in advance to [info@downtownstratford.ca](mailto:info@downtownstratford.ca).

Dear BIA Members:

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Downtown Stratford Business Improvement Area is scheduled for Tuesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at Features, 10 Downie Street.

The Annual General Meeting will start at 6:30 p.m. and the following business will be transacted:

- 6:30 P.M. Welcome and Call to Order by Chair
- Land Acknowledgement
- Introduction of BIA Board Members and the BIA Team
- Approval of Minutes of 2023 Annual General Meeting March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- Business Arising from the Minutes
- Update from the City of Stratford
- Report on Activities of 2023
- Report on Plans for 2024
- Questions \* Please send questions in advance to [info@downtownstratford.ca](mailto:info@downtownstratford.ca).
- Report from the Treasurer
- Motion to Adjourn 2024 Annual General Meeting

47 Downie Street Stratford, Ontario N5A 1W7 519-273-2461

[AGM RSVP](#)

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## RETAIL BUSINESS HOLIDAY ACT

The Retail Business Holiday Act is Provincial Legislation that requires most retail businesses to be closed on most holidays in Ontario; however, municipalities may adopt by-laws allowing certain stores to open on certain holidays for specified hours.

The City of Stratford adopted a By-law allowing some retail stores to be open



during Stratford's designated Tourism Season which extends from May 1st to mid-November each year.

Small retail stores may open on Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day and Thanksgiving Monday in Stratford between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm provided that they have 4 employees or fewer normally employed and have less than 3,000 sq ft / 278.71 square metres for serving, selling or displaying goods or services to the public.

Large retail stores need to apply to the City for an exemption in order to open for business in Stratford on Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day and Thanksgiving Monday between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. A completed [application](#) and fee must be submitted to the Clerk's Office for consideration.

If the holiday does not fall between May and November the retail store may not open for shopping. However you should check the Legislation link below as there are some exceptions for retail stores.

Minimum fines for opening businesses on prohibited days of retail operation are \$500 for the first offence, \$2,000 for a second offence and \$5,000 for a third or subsequent offence. Retail stores may be fined up to \$50,000 or the total amount of gross sales for the holiday, whichever is greater. For information about closures, contact the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, which administers that Act.

Enforcement of the Retail Business Holidays Act in Stratford is the responsibility of Stratford Police Services.

For more information please visit the [Retail Business Holiday Act](#).

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TEN BUCKS BACK



Another successful Ten Bucks Back campaign is behind us! Sold out on March 1st, \$10,000 in campaign gift certificates were given out on a total of \$127,000 in sales. Get ready, BIA members, to accept the bucks when they come into your business! The bucks expire April 30, 2024.

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## NEW BUSINESS

IG FINANCIAL



A warm welcome to Travis Blum and his wife Kathleen who in the last quarter of 2023 purchased and completely renovated both floors of 147 St Patrick St, the former Dudes and Dames business. The main floor now offers a super bright and beautifully decorated space for IG Financial Division Manager, Travis, and his team of advisors to do the work they love!

IG Wealth Management, founded in 1926, is a national leader in delivering personalized financial solutions to Canadians through a network of advisors located across the country. The company has 1.3 billion in assets under management.

Travis, prior to IG Financial, worked for Sun Life Financial. Before his career in the financial world he worked for 10 years at Good Life Fitness, traveling near and far to bring gyms back into the black if they were struggling. So it's proof that Travis knows a thing or two about managing money!

IG offers an extensive lineup of top performing investment products designed to help clients reach their financial goals. As life becomes more complex, Travis and his advisors help clients create a comprehensive financial plan that can adapt and change as life does. Plans for pre-retirement, for small business owners and farmers, investments, insurance and also how to manage debt.

Kathleen is the office manager and the talented décor brains in both the office

and upstairs where they offer the St Patrick "soon to be on Air BnB" luxury two-bedroom apartment that sleeps 6. Roomy and gorgeous and definitely well located, it's sure to be booked up as soon as it's listed!

[For more info on IG Financial, please click here to our online directory.](#)

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## KDB LAW



KDB Law just might be the coolest law office in town, set up in the unique black and white Tudor style house at the corner of Ontario and Erie St. A perfect setting for seasoned lawyer, Katie DeBlock Boersma and her (currently) all-female team at KDB Law. Katie is no stranger to working downtown having come from years of building her legal practice at Monteith Ritsma Phillips Law. Finally Katie found her stars (and family life) align for the moment she could begin the dream of steering her own ship.

Ruby Joy has joined the firm as an associate lawyer. Ruby spent five seasons as an actor with the Festival and it was her involvement with the union there that became a catalyst for her decision to attend law school.

Rounding out the team are law clerks, a paralegal, an accountant and the first friendly face you encounter upon entering is Jane DeBlock, Katie's own mother who manages administration, a large and exciting change for this nurse who just retired in December from decades at the health unit! Law practice areas include corporate, wills & estates, employment, real estate. agricultural pertaining to succession conflict. Also mediation, small claims and the landlord tenant act.

KDB Law provides a modern approach to the delivery of legal services so that clients feel compassionately supported in their needs. Katie explains that her team "leads with empathy, recognizing that our clients often seek legal services during challenging periods in their lives—marked by high stress, overwhelming circumstances, and emotional intensity." Her team is committed to providing a supportive environment and holding space for emotions during client interactions. Not something they teach you in law school, she admitted!

Katie is very involved in our community and is the Chair of the Stratford Perth Museum Board and Chair of the Local Community Food Centre Board. She is mom to two girls ages 10 and 8 and lives on a farm in Mitchell.

**[For more info, please click for KDB Law in our online directory.](#)**

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**BRADSHAW COLLECTIVE**





Entrepreneur Jonny Kirwin on March 1st opened his latest business above his thriving café, BRCH & Wyn, in the Bradshaw Building on Downie St. The brand new Bradshaw Collective - a bright, beautiful co-working space - is the most serene environment to connect and collaborate with like-minded people or simply get down to the tasks at hand.

Lush green plants, the faint sounds of tropical birds and the cathedral sized windows boost inspiration and help to get those creative juices flowing for your work. And the furniture... colours pulled from the papered wall at the front door, sage green, dusty pink, and golden yellow. When you've settled into a comfy work seat at your desk, you may never want to leave!

Choose from flexible plans that offer a hot desk, dedicated desk, flex desk all the way to your own private room or office. You can even choose a "walking desk!" A boardroom meeting space can be booked by the hour and offers seating for 10, AV equipment and catering from Brch & Wyn. Incidentally, Jonny built the stunning live edge board table with his dad! And it's his sister, Celina Michaeli, and her team at her company, CLM Interiors, brilliantly renovated the whole space!

Soon to be available as well are two phone-booth sized soundproof pods. Perfect for taking those zoom meetings in full privacy. Security cameras, eventual 24/7

access, and fast and reliable Wifi round out the perfect place to work your day away. Oh, and let's not forget that fantastic coffee and lunch is just downstairs!

[For more info, please click here.](#)

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BIA COFFEE CLUB - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27th



**DOWN  
TOWN**  

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**STRATFORD**

**BIA COFFEE CLUB**

The BIA Coffee Club" will be hosted this month by **Coles and Keys at 25 York St. on Wednesday, March 27th from 8:30am to 9:45am.**

Please join your fellow BIA Members for this fun "morning mix & mingle," a chance for us all to learn a little more about our neighbouring downtown businesses. Being a great ambassador of Downtown Stratford means getting to know as much as we can about each other!

The format is a monthly Coffee Club, with the Host having a great opportunity to showcase their business to the BIA membership. Start your morning off on the right foot by dropping in for a fun chat between 8:30 and 9:45am on your way to work! To assist the Host Business with their coffee order, we'd like to request an RSVP by March 25th. That said, unregistered drop-ins are welcome!

[RSVP HERE!](#)

Photos of February's well attended Coffee Club below! Thank you to Deb, Brett and the amazing team at Partners in Employment for hosting!





## SOCIAL MEDIA - GET IN TOUCH!

If you haven't already we'd love for your to join our BIA MEMBERS ONLY Facebook Group. A great discussion and sharing forum for all things business & downtown!

[JOIN NOW!](#)

Reach out to us through our Downtown Stratford BIA Social Media platforms and remember to tag us so we can share in our stories!

**Facebook:** [@downtownstratfordbia](#)  
**Instagram:** [@downtownstratford](#)

Twitter: @dtStratfordBIA

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519-508-1415 | kgriffiths@downtownstratford.ca | downtownstratford.ca

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