



# MAY NEWSLETTER

## MAY Highlights

1. Marketing Calendar - May & June - **Click, Print, Hang!**
2. New Business - Well Within Dental Hygiene Clinic, Betty's Wine Bar
3. Nashville Hot Chicken Sandwich Contest - **Results!**
4. Campbell Sisters - Please report
5. Asian Heritage Month
6. Car Free Friday - JUNE 4 - **Save the Date!**
7. 4th Annual Summer Dog Show - JUNE 5 - **Save the Date!**
8. Sidewalk Sale - JULY 11 - **ACTION Required!**
9. BIA Coffee Club - May 28th at Closet Collective
10. Ontario Job Grant
11. Ryan Jaques - Using Digital Tools to Grow Your Business in 2026
12. Monthly Message from BIA General Manager, Jamie Pritchard

### UPCOMING DOWNTOWN STRATFORD EVENTS

Happy Pride Month!

| May  |   |  |   | June  |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Asian Heritage Month</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">May 1 - 31</div>  | <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Red Dress Day</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">May 5</div>   | <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Mother's Day</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">May 10</div>  | <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Coffee Club</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">May 28   8:30am</div>               | <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">4th Annual Dog Show</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">June 4   4-6pm</div>  | <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Car Free Friday</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">June 5   8-10am</div>                                    | <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Father's Day</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">June 21</div>  | <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">Coffee Club</div> <div style="background-color: #007bff; color: white; padding: 2px; font-size: 8px;">June 25   8:30am</div>                        |
| <p>This May marks the final year of Asian Heritage Month celebrations in Stratford. Look for the Indian, Chinese, and the Filipino-Canadian Community in Perth House (PCC) in partnership with the City of Stratford have organized a series of events during the month to commemorate Asian Heritage Month.</p> | <p>Red Dress Day, also known as the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People, is observed on May 5th. The day honours and brings awareness to the thousands of Indigenous women, girls and two-spirit people who have been subjected to disappearance, violence in Canada.</p> | <p>A very special day to celebrate a very special person in your life. Mother's Day means brunch, flowers, chocolate, special gifts, and meaningful time spent together. For all of you who are mothers we wish you much love and happiness!</p> | <p>Join your fellow BIA Members in the fun "morning mix &amp; mingle" a chance to chat with your neighbours and see businesses you perhaps have not had the chance to visit! Thank you to Lisa for hosting us this month!</p> | <p>We are celebrating the Dog Show of Summer for the 4th year in a row with a super-cool Dog Show in Market Square! Prepare to see "other school" hours as kids can show off their talents and well-trained ones, we hope dogs young and old to participate in the fun!</p> | <p>Join our Car Free Friday event in June! ONE DAY ONE DAY!<br/><b>• Friday, June 5 • 8am-10am*</b></p> <p>Leave your car at home and commit to work by foot, bus, bike, and see us in Market Square for a free coffee and a chance to win prizes!</p> | <p>Honour the special man in your life with indigenous food and Downtown, such as fabulous coffee and treats, a spa day, new threads, a cool bike, a walkabout with ice cream! And don't forget the sweet greeting card simply the cherry on top!</p> | <p>Join your fellow BIA Members in the fun "morning mix &amp; mingle" a chance to chat with your neighbours and see businesses you perhaps have not had the chance to visit! Thank you to Ryan and Megan for hosting us this month!</p> |
| DOWNTOWN   | DOWNTOWN  | DOWNTOWN   | Closet Collective   | Market Square   | Market Square  | DOWNTOWN  | Cannabis Cannable   |
| Tourist Appreciation Day - May 6   |   |  |   | Accessibility Week - May 31-June 6  |  |   |   |
| June is National Indigenous History Month  |   |  |   | National Bike Week - June 1-5<br>Bike to Work Day - June 15   |  |   |   |

## NEW BUSINESS

Click the button below to read our New Business stories in the Business Spotlight section of our website.



Well Within Dental Hygiene Clinic



Betty's Wine Bar

## NASHVILLE HOT CHICKEN SANDWICH CONTEST - RESULTS



🎉 THE RESULTS ARE IN! 🎉

CONGRATULATIONS to **Work Pub & Eatery**, winners of the **People's Choice Award** and \$300 in Downtown Dollars for the Nashville Hot Chicken Sandwich

Contest in May!! 🎉

**Fun Fact - There were 879 chicken sandwiches consumed as a result of this contest!**

We also thank the Judging Panel for their time and appetites! **Judge's Choice Award goes to Mercer Hall...** for bragging rights! (Also, HUGE thanks for the restaurants for donating the sandwiches!!) 🎉

Thank you for the nine restaurants that participated in this fun contest ~ feedback has been super positive and we look forward to another contest sometime soon!



Judges - Carly Douglas (Festival), Zac Gribble (DS), Mayor Ritsma, Chef Andrew Mavor (SDSS)

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FOR YOUR ATTENTION



We want to share an important clarification with our community.

A Facebook page operating under the name The Campbell Sisters Stratford was launched on February 19. The page appears to promote a clothing business using Shopify, along with AI-generated images that suggest a physical storefront in Downtown Stratford.

To avoid any confusion, we would like to confirm that there is no business by this name operating within the Downtown Stratford BIA.

We are proud to be home to a wide range of established, independent retailers, restaurants, and services that are genuinely part of our downtown community.

**ACTION:** Please report this account. Click the three little dots on the top right of the page and click Report Post. We hope this will help to push this account out of our feeds.

For a complete and accurate listing of businesses, we encourage you to visit our official directory: <https://downtownstratford.ca/directory/>

If you have any questions or are unsure about a business, please don't hesitate to reach out to us directly at [info@downtownstratford.ca](mailto:info@downtownstratford.ca).

Thank you for continuing to support local.  
#DowntownStratford #SupportLocal

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## ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH IN STRATFORD THIS MAY



This month marks the first ever Asian Heritage Month celebration in Stratford! Local representatives from the Indian, Chinese communities, and the Filipino-Canadian Community in Perth-Huron (FCC), in partnership with the City of Stratford Community Services, have organized a series of events during the month of May to commemorate Asian Heritage Month. From cultural performances and book launches to art exhibits, film screening, and food and writing events, there's something for everyone to explore and enjoy. Join the

## CAR FREE FRIDAY



**DOWN TOWN STRATFORD**

**Stratford**  
ONTARIO CANADA  
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

# 2026 CAR FREE FRIDAY in Downtown Stratford

Leave your car at home and join us ...

**FRIDAY JUNE 5th IN MARKET SQUARE**

Free Coffee ☺ Enter Draw to Win ☺ **FREE Bike Tuning**

**8am - 10am**

**Friday, JUNE 5**

**ONE DATE ONLY THIS SUMMER ~ LET'S MAKE IT BIG!**

The poster features a light blue background with white clouds. At the bottom, there is a green silhouette of bushes. In the center, there are illustrations of a red bicycle, a skateboard, a blue scooter, and a pair of roller skates. To the right, a woman in a white tank top and purple pants is running.

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## DOG DAYS OF SUMMER DOG SHOW

DOWNTOWN  
STRATFORD

# DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

Downtown Stratford's  
4th Annual Dog Show in Market Square!



THURS JUNE 4

4PM - 6PM

Save the Date of June 4th to show off your Fur Baby in Market Square!

### **Schedule**

4:00 pm - Registration

4:00 pm - Pooches & Pilates (15 min) / Pics with your Pet

4:30 pm - Dog Show Begins

5:30 pm - Dog Show Ends/Awards Ceremony

5:30 pm - Pooches & Pilates (15 min) / Pics with your Pet

Great prizes if you and your four-legged friend win in the following categories:

1. Most Unusual Trick
2. Smiliest
3. Best Dressed
4. Dog Most Like Their Owner
5. Old Timer
6. Youngest Pup
7. Waggiest Tail
8. Open Category - All Dogs on Deck!!

ALSO, new this year... is a chance to win a pair Stratford Festival tickets just for coming out!!! Fill in a ballot under the BIA tent.

We'd like to thank the following businesses and organizations that are helping to make this event - and a reprint of our fun Sniffari Map - possible!

♥ *The Barkery, Pure Pets, The Alley Cat Cat Cafe, Ruffins Pet Centre, Connection Chiropractic, Brch & Wyn, Pawsitive Difference, Stratford Dog Walkers, The Boathouse, Pitter Patter Pet Spa, Black Swan, Bru Garden, Paws on Patrol Stratford, Hartman's Coffee & Tea, The Queen's Cue Hotel, Stratford Perth Humane Society* ♥

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## DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK SALE



NEW this year we will offer a **Passport to Downtown Deals!** This will be a 5x7 inch card offering 20 shops, restaurants, cafes, services where patrons can nab ONE DAY ONLY savings. The card will be distributed from our tent in Memorial Gardens and Destination Stratford.

### **ACTION ITEM**

- Space for first 20 businesses who contact us with their offering
- Idea is to drive people to your business
- **One day only offerings**
- Patron must show card to get the discount
- Card is initialed by the shop upon purchase
- With 3 boxes ticked the participant can return the card to BIA tent or DS before 5PM for chance to win one of two prizes of \$50 Downtown Dollars

Centre two-page Stratford Times Advertisement

- Please see the info to place an ad via the button below.

[SUBMIT ONE DAY DEAL](#)

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The 2026 [Savour & Sip Trail](#) is now live — and picnic season is officially here in Stratford!

From May 1 to October 31, trail-goers can explore Stratford with a curated collection of picnic-friendly treats, redeemable with trail vouchers at 38 participating stops. With over 3,200 vouchers redeemed last year, it's one of Stratford's tastiest traditions — and it's back for another delicious season.

Grab your trail passes, curate your perfect picnic, and support the many trail partners across Stratford, St. Marys, and Shakespeare. For more info, visit [HERE](#).

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**BIA COFFEE CLUB - THURSDAY, May 28th**



**DOWNTOWN**  
**STRATFORD**  
**BIA COFFEE CLUB**



CLOSET COLLECTIVE

**Thursday, May 28th**  
**8:30 to 9:45am**  
**17 Ontario St**

Stratford & District  
Chamber

## **STOP IN, HAVE A COFFEE, WIN A PRIZE & MAKE NEW CONTACTS!**

Come to Coffee Club on Thursday, May 28th at Closet Collective for your morning cuppa Joe!

To assist us with the coffee order, we'd like to request an RSVP by May 26th. That said, unregistered drop-ins are welcome!

**RSVP**

Photos of April's Coffee Club are on our [website](#). Thank you to Vishal and Nirali for hosting a great crowd of BIA members to Coffee Club in April at Curry Zone! And for their generous giveaways of Curry Zone gift certificates!

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## ONTARIO JOB GRANT



Ontario

The [Ontario Job Grant](#) (OJG) provides funding to help businesses train their employees and update their skills. This helps employers ensure their workforce has the right skills to adapt to a changing economy.

Funding for the [Ontario Job Grant](#) is provided in part by the Government of Canada through the Canada–Ontario Labour Market Development Agreement.

The grant lets employers choose who to train, and what skills to focus on to address their needs. Employers can use the grant to train:

- existing employees to upgrade their skills
- new hires, whether currently employed elsewhere or previously unemployed (a new hire is a trainee with an identified job opportunity within the employer's workforce that has been provided with an offer of employment prior to training)

An approved third-party training provider must deliver the training.

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### ***Jump onboard!***

Ryan Jacques, owner of Cannabis Cannabis has mapped out a year long plan on how to use digital tools to grow your business. Follow this space, month by month, to create a digital presence that turns foot traffic into visibility, trust, engagement, and repeat visits by the end of the year!

#### **WEBSITE QUICK WINS**

**Customers don't just buy products or services, they connect with people, stories, and experiences; they choose to support what *feels right to them*.**

**Getting Started:** Add one human element to your digital home. A team photo, founder story, behind-the-scenes image, or simple "why we do what we do" message can instantly make your business feel more approachable.

**Going Further:** Bring your personality into key pages. Product descriptions, service pages, About sections, these should sound like your business, not generic marketing copy. The more authentic your voice, the easier it is for customers to remember you.

**Growing & Scaling:** Turn your story into a trust system. Highlight your local roots, customer experiences, team culture, or community involvement throughout your site. When visitors connect emotionally, they're more likely to visit, buy, and come back.

May is about showing customers the people behind the business. If you want help bringing more personality and trust into your digital presence, contact Ryan at [ryanmjakes@gmail.com](mailto:ryanmjakes@gmail.com).

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## MONTHLY MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER



April's rain, snow, and wind should be behind us now—at least we can hope. It's time to welcome warmer days, spring flowers, and the reopening of the theatres after what felt like a long, cold shoulder season.

In many ways, this time of year feels like a true "new year." Businesses are welcoming new staff, restaurants are rolling out fresh menus, and extended hours are returning. There's a renewed energy downtown—and it's a pleasure to see.

Alongside the excitement of the Festival season beginning and the bustle that comes with it, May also brings several important dates for reflection and recognition.

Red Dress Day, observed on May 5, raises awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People. It is a solemn and important opportunity to honour those affected and acknowledge the ongoing need for change.

Mother's Day, marked on May 10, gives us a chance to recognize and celebrate the mothers and maternal figures who shape our lives and communities in countless ways.

May is also Asian Heritage Month—a time to recognize and celebrate the longstanding and invaluable contributions of Canadians of Asian origin. It is an opportunity to honour diverse histories, elevate understanding, and continue the important work of confronting anti-Asian racism.

There's something special about May. The air softens, the evenings stay cool, and everything feels fresh with possibility. It's a season of renewal—and a reminder of the energy and vibrancy that make our downtown so remarkable.

As always, your BIA is here for you and always interested in hearing your ideas and feedback. And if you happen to see me rolling along downtown on the silver ghost scooter, please wave me down — I would be glad to stop and chat.

[jpritchard@downtownstratford.ca](mailto:jpritchard@downtownstratford.ca)

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## 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!**

Also consider joining our **Members Only WhatsApp** page. We push out all the important information through this one-way channel. Easy peasy way to stay informed!

<https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VbAnSTLliRopo2fRWE37>



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

If you need your hours updated in our [online directory](#), contact Kim at [kgriffiths@downtownstratford.ca](mailto:kgriffiths@downtownstratford.ca).

**Facebook: @downtownstratfordbia**

**Instagram: @downtownstratford**

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