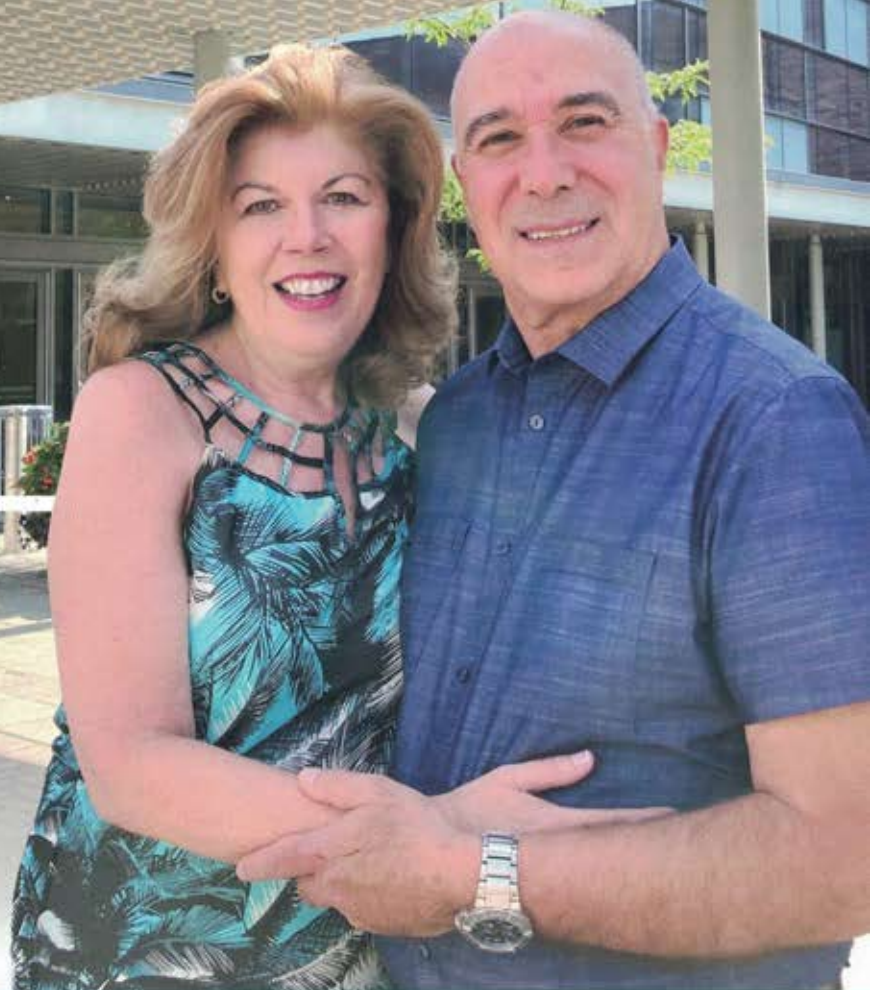


SHERRY BENNETT & ANDRE LA ROSA:

CONNECTIONS RUN DEEP IN MILL POND & BEYOND



Partners for 7 years, Sherry Bennett and Andre La Rosa feel their lives have been enriched by the friendships they have made in Mill Pond and throughout the Richmond Hill community.

BY HEATHER ROSEN | PHOTOS BY MERK PHOTOGRAPHY
ADDITIONAL PHOTOS PROVIDED BY SHERRY BENNETT

Sherry and Andre became acquainted 8 years ago through "Connecting the Community," a group that met at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts (RHCPA), prior to the pandemic. The group's focus on networking led to the couple's involvement in various charity fundraisers that solidified many lasting friendships among like-minded members for whom giving back is a guiding principle. It also sparked the relationship between Andre and Sherry, who were the first of several couples to meet through this Richmond Hill community group.

Andre says one of his fondest memories was his first date with Sherry at the RHCPA after their initial meeting. They saw George St. Kitts' outstanding musical, *The Love Train Revue* – on Valentine's Day, no less – and have been together ever since.

Andre and Sherry both have homes in Richmond Hill, and each has two adult children who live in different cities and have their own successful careers. Sherry has one granddaughter, so far.

Sherry grew up near Keele and Lawrence in Toronto, where her father practised medicine. Andre was raised in Toronto and, in late 1990s, Woodbridge, but has called Richmond Hill home for over 30 years. Sherry, a resident of York Region for almost 40 years, moved to Richmond Hill soon after meeting Andre.

Andre is a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA) who opened his own accounting firm in 2012 after 25 years of working for CIBC firms. Located in the heart of Richmond Hill across from the RHCPA, Andre provides accounting and tax services to owner-managed businesses, including personal and corporate tax returns.

After devoting several years to caring for people in her life, Sherry was determined to create a business that would help others in need of compassionate care and respite. She founded Bayview Concierge in 2012 to help people in the community manage the 'logistics of life.' Initially, she worked with a team of five volunteers as she began providing advice and referrals to individuals and families that

required access to a range of services from medical assistance, transportation and home care, to downsizing and legal advice.

"When illness hits a family, the logistics of life are in free-fall," says Sherry. "Do you have people you can call if you or a family member gets sick, needs counsel, or wants help finding a service?"

"Who will do the grocery shopping? Who will cook and clean, look after the kids, get them to school or walk the dog? And, if the illness is long-term, how do you go about sourcing care, financial advice and other vital services? It's stressful enough to cope with it all – so we, at Bayview Concierge, take care of sourcing the services so people can focus on what's more important," she adds.

Although running the business has been challenging during the pandemic, Sherry believes there is a growing market for providing trusted service providers to families getting back into the workforce post-pandemic, as well as to seniors, the fastest-growing demographic in Canada.



To better assist people living with chronic pain and debilitating anxiety, Sherry began to research the healing properties of medical cannabis treatments. After consulting with a number of medical cannabis physicians,

she ultimately founded an educational platform called Let's Talk Cannabis™. Her most recent lecture on medical cannabis education was held virtually on July 27, through the Richmond Hill Board of Trade. She is also gearing up for a series of live events featuring expert speakers at the



Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, to be held in the near future.

As a couple, Sherry and Andre are focused on the dynamic social circle they have built together in Richmond Hill, while giving back to the community. They are both involved in fundraising efforts for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, including riding the Big Bike, and actively participate in other fundraising activities.



Continued on page

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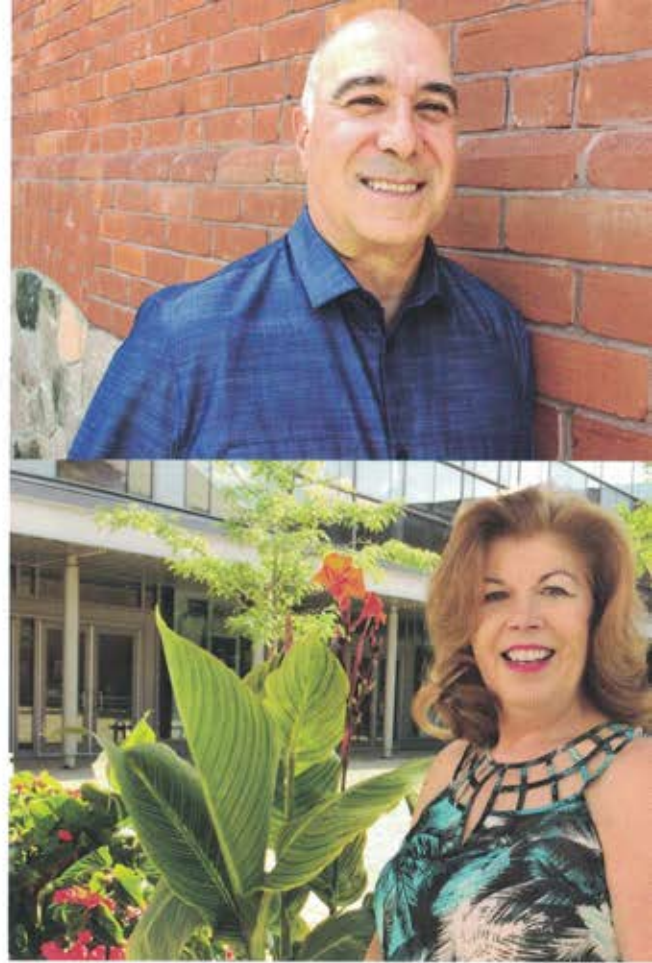
Andre volunteers as Treasurer on the boards of various not-for-profits, including the Richmond Hill Board of Trade, High Notes Avante (a mental-health charity), Connecting the Community, and a Condominium corporation.

Sherry and Andre have a keen interest in travel, and Andre hopes to return to Italy in 2022 to visit his relatives who still live in Calabria.

They both look forward to resuming their favourite activities as soon as it is safe to do so; their love of live theatre and music at RHCPA is top-of-mind. Andre also pursues a variety of athletic activities such as biking, curling and skiing, and is an avid Maple Leafs fan – though he notes that the team persists in frustrating their fans! As restrictions ease across the province, the couple hopes to plan several get-togethers with their many friends in the community to catch up on each other's lives.

In Mill Pond, Sherry and Andre make the most of their time in the neighbourhood, savouring the ample green space, concerts in the park and festivals such as the Winter Carnival, Ribfest and the Richmond Hill Rotary Craft Beer Festival. They feel very fortunate to be able to appreciate these activities so close to home.

"We enjoy what we have here: the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, Mill Pond, Richmond Green, Dunlap Observatory and a variety of good restaurants," says Andre. "You don't have to go to downtown Toronto to have a good time; we have lots to enjoy right here in our own backyard. We're strong supporters of small businesses in the area. Let's highlight the local businesses, especially during these difficult times."



Andre La Rosa

Chartered Professional Accountant

"Hello Neighbours, I live and work in the Mill Pond area and would be pleased to discuss your accounting and tax requirements."



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