

Kimberly Fortin & Andrew Fish

Where did life take you after leaving Andrews University?

After graduation Andrew accepted the position of business manager at Union Springs Academy. He was business manager there from 2002–2007 and from 2007–2009 he served as vice principal and development director. I taught French at the academy and worked at a residential facility for juveniles. I went back to school for my master's degree in social work and graduated from Syracuse University in 2004. Since then I have worked at a non-profit agency counseling individuals and families. In 2009, Andrew became the executive director for the Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce and a few weeks ago also became the interim director for the Cayuga Economic Development Agency. I transitioned into a school social work position for two local school districts just a couple weeks ago. So November 2012 was a month of changes and transitions for both of us.

How did you become interested in goat farming?

We love Central New York and decided to purchase a house and land. We already had three horses and the barn at our new place had extra stalls, so we thought we'd get two goats. Two goats give WAY more milk than two people can drink, and we started making cheese. That was more cheese than two people could eat too, so we started giving it away. People told us it was better than what they could get in the grocery store! We worked with New York State and in November 2010 we opened our dairy for official production. We now have anywhere from 30–50 goats on the farm at any time. This summer, at the peak of production, we were milking 16 goats. We sell the cheese to local shops, restaurants, farmer's markets and festivals.

Are there other enterprises you'd like to become involved with?

I am working on starting a private practice to serve a rural part of our community with an anticipated opening of summer 2013. Andrew would like to expand on his courses and workshop options at the community college to assist local non-profits at becoming more efficient and effective at delivering services and to teach them how to measure and communicate the value of their services. Together we are involved in the local chapter of Farm Bureau. This fall we were finalists for the New York State Young Farmer and Rancher's Excellency in Agriculture award. We find out in December if we won. We would like to become more involved with Young Farmer programs.

Tell us about your involvement with the local community.

I have worked closely with the Child Sexual Abuse Taskforce and am on the board for the local chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness. I also teach one or two sociology classes each semester at the community college. I am part of the Cayuga County Agricultural Society that puts on the County Fair every summer. Through his work, Andrew sits on several local boards that promote business and improve the quality of life for Cayuga County. In August 2011 he was appointed by the Governor to one of ten regional economic development councils for New York State. As part of the council he serves as the cochair for the public participation and food-to-market transformational initiative committees.



Kimberly (BSW & BA in French Studies, '01)
and Andrew (BBA in Management, '02)
with some of their baby goats