

Garden Grill Cooking Demo @ the Mulvane Public Library

By Maggie Pinnick, Adult Program Coordinator, Mulvane Public Library, KS

On June 3rd, 2021, the Mulvane Public Library hosted an outdoor cooking demo with Nick Stroot from Garden Grill – a vegan/vegetarian meal delivery service based in Wichita, KS.



Nick is the owner and chef of the company and has been vegan for about seven years. He has a passion for vegan cuisine because it has helped him and his family be healthier. He said becoming a full-time vegan was a process and not something he did overnight. He then learned how to cook professionally at a vegan restaurant for four years before the owner moved to Michigan. From there, Nick created a Kansas-certified commercial kitchen at his home, and he developed his current business.

Outside the library, staff set up a table and chairs in the shade for everyone to learn about vegan cuisine. Nick came in and gave a brief overview of this diet and his business. He then demonstrated how to make a tofu ricotta filling that can be used for various dishes, including stuffed shells, manicotti, and lasagna. Nick said it was a go-to meal for parties or events that had non-vegan eaters attending. While demoing the filling, he talked about different types of tofu, ingredients he likes to keep on hand for vegan cooking, and where he buys his food.

After demoing how he makes the ricotta, Nick passed out previously made stuffed shells in a homemade tomato sauce for everyone to try. The shells were soft and slightly chewy with the creamy tofu ricotta inside. The olives added a nice texture that complimented the dish along with the robust tomato sauce. It definitely didn't give you vegan vibes (what are those anyway?) and felt like an easy transition food if you wanted to start a Meatless Monday.



Ironically, the Library Loot prize our patrons were entering to win was for Stroot's Meat Locker here in town. Library Loot is a raffle for our adult patrons who attend adult programs. What could have been an odd promotion to make during a vegan cooking demonstration turned out okay because the chef was related to the owners. Hooray for non-awkward situations! The rest of the evening was spent chatting with the chef about other vegan food substitutes, favorite flavors, and patrons chatting with each other. It was a fun night for all.