

## **Farm Stories Captivate at Library**

We could have listened for hours to the tales, but alas the library had to close up for the evening.

Friends of the Northbrook Farmers Market hosted "Stories from the Farm" at Northbrook Public Library Monday, when two farmers talked about their contrasting and sometimes similar experiences tilling the land.

More than three dozen people attended the talk, many of them farmers-market "regulars" and some not. Many asked interesting questions, such as, what's the difference between aquaponics and hydroponics (there is a difference), and what do you do with microgreens.

Both speakers are vendors at Northbrook Farmers Market.

Fifth-generation farmer, Kyle Froehlich, grew up on his parents' farm and in 2012 started his own farm in southwest Michigan. The other speaker, Rich Olson, left the corporate world to grow certified naturally grown microgreens and other vegetables in Woodstock.

Froehlich spoke about his grandfather showing him around and the late night hours spent washing and packing fruit. "His love for farming really came through and people responded to his heartfelt descriptions," said Jill Franklin, reference librarian.

Olson, who grew up in Northbrook, talked about transitioning to rural life (more aching muscles, for one). He showed slides of how over the last 4 years of farming he has amended the clay soil with organic material to make it nutrient rich.

He also talked about how he learned to use preferred bugs to reduce plant-eating bugs, thus avoiding pesticides that keep tomatoes healthy for human consumption.

All attendees received a free farmers market bookmark that lists important dates and their sponsors, along with useful facts about the market.