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# Librarium holds customer appreciation event as it prepares to close

■ Soon-to-close Librarium holds appreciation event

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Diane Cariker (center), senior executive assistant to library system CEO Gary Shaffer, and Heidi Garrett (left), project manager for the library, cut a piece of cake for Pamela Reagan, resource sharing manager for the library, during the Librarium's closing party Tuesday. JESSIE WARDARSKI/Tulsa World

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By Nour Habib Tulsa World | 2 comments

Library staff and patrons celebrated the final days of the Librarium during a small "closing party" Tuesday afternoon.

The temporary downtown branch opened in September 2013 as renovation of the Central Library began. The Librarium will close on Sept. 2, and Central Library will reopen Oct. 1.

"It's kind of a sad day, and it's kind of a happy day," Tulsa City-County Library CEO Gary Shaffer told a small crowd of library staff and patrons who gathered for the event.

Shaffer said he expected the building, which the library system was leasing, would get "new life," but he does not know what it will be.

Aside from serving as a temporary downtown location while Central was renovated, the Librarium, 1110 S. Denver Ave., was a testing ground for new ideas.

A new service model — including new signs, self-checkout machines and library staff that is more accessible on the floor rather than

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behind a desk — was first tested at the Librarium.

“People responded well,” Shaffer said of the model.

He said the new model is less intimidating to children, who now don’t have to come up to a desk to ask for help. The model has been

rolled out to about half the system’s branches, and will debut at Central when the library re-opens.

Check-out lockers, which held reserved items for patrons, also worked well and will be making an appearance at Central.

Things that did not work out include a disk dispenser that too often jammed. Also, Shaffer said “the jury is still out” on a move to organize books by categories rather than using the Dewey Decimal System. “At this point, we’re staying with the Dewey Decimal System,” he said.

Shaffer said the Central Library renovation is almost finished, and the opening on Oct. 1 will be a family-friendly event.

Heidi Garrett, project manager for the library, was at Tuesday’s party. The longtime library employee worked at the Librarium for a year and is a champion of the new service model.

“I am in absolute awe of it,” she said.

Garrett said the model allows staff members to dedicate more time to library users.

She said the new model and technology that the library system is now using are helping it keep up with the times, as well as with the needs of patrons.

Judy Randle, chairwoman of the library commission, said the upcoming opening of Central Library is exciting. She said the renovated building has an open and airy layout, and is energy efficient.

“It’s something Tulsans can be really proud of,” Randle said.

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