

By Amber Hanneken

Staff Writer

SPENCERVILLE — “Blink and you’ll miss it” is definitely something a passerby could say about the small post office in the heart of tiny Spencerville, but to the residents there it was one of the last bastions of community togetherness in the town. And now it’s closed.

According to the United States Postal Service, in a letter addressed to Spencerville residents, it is not yet considered a formal closing although services ended on Friday. “Let me assure you, a decision to permanently close the Spencerville Post Office has not been made,” states the letter signed by Post Office Operations Manager Kim Kerns of Oklahoma City. “Postal managers must collect extensive information for an office to be closed. In particular, customer input will be solicited via questionnaires in the near future to ensure that all issues are fully explored.”

Janet Smith, who has been a Spencerville resident for 29 years, says she doesn’t think it will ever reopen. “At the community meeting, I specifically asked how many of these offices that have been temporarily closed have been reopened and they couldn’t come up with any,” she said. Smith said the Postal Service has been trying to close the Spencerville Post Office for the last 20 years and each time the community has rallied against it. “But it didn’t matter that we rallied this time,” she said.

According to Postmaster Bettie Chappell on Friday, the safe, post office boxes and other items will be removed from the building on Wednesday. In the meantime, the 58 customers who maintained PO boxes at the facility will have new addresses with home mailboxes or can buy a PO box at the Sawyer Post Office. USPS originally told customers in a letter dated June 8 that a cluster box would be installed, but after the June 15 public hearing the Postal Service agreed to provide contract carrier service to roadside mailboxes. Chappell said some will keep the Spencerville designation and 74760 zip code but others have to switch to a Sawyer address. Chappell, who has been postmaster for two years and worked in the office since 1980, said she has chosen to retire.

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