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Dozens of Canyon residents came to Saturday's event to support their post office.

Andersen, making her first official visit to Canyon, said the post office is "a tribute to what's really importanthuman interaction."

Elena Tyrrell, who started working Saturday relief in Canyon in 1990 while also working at a Moraga post office, has been Canyon's Postmaster since 1998 and received multiple accolades at the event. She had to apply twice for her current job, she said, because postal officials originally didn't want a local person to serve as Postmaster.

Apparently the job runs in the family: Tyrrell's mother, Virginia Menge, was also Postmaster, although her technical title was Officer in Charge.

Menge worked when the post office was located inside Joe and Grace Knipe's Canyon Grocery Store. The store and its post office were destroyed in 1969 during a Shell Oil pipeline explosion, and the post office was then housed in a trailer. Another

chased as the Canyon Store Trust.

So why is this post office so important? Tyrrell calls Canyon Post Office, with its 290 boxes, a "necessity" office. The U.S. Postal service is not so sure. The Canyon location, along with 13,000 other post offices nationwide, is currently being considered for closure or service cutbacks. But residents see their post office as the heart of their community.

Goodwin said it embodies the true nature of a rural post office. He explained that the office routinely gets five-star reviews online from customers who know they can get same-day passport application service, and the Postmaster "is a career employee committed to her job and the community."

As Central Co-coordinator of the Canyon Fire Council, Goodwin also values having a Postmaster who can direct fire and medical emergency reunmarked back roads.

Canyon residents vote by mail be-

Photo Ohlen Alexander

93 Moraga Way, Orinda

Canyon Steinzig, the aptly-named president of the Canyon Community Association, said at Saturday's event, "We are here to celebrate this community and its vital heart. . . . The post office has always been supported by the U.S. Government - it's part and parcel of our identity as a nation."

Goodwin said Canyon representatives want the Postal Regulatory Commission to ask the U.S. Postal Service Headquarters "to take Canyon off the POStPlan list and order the local postal district to work with us to create a business plan to grow our way to more prosperity."

Lorenz explained that residents hope "to protect a beloved institution that supports and connects our community," and to avoid possible cutbacks or closure. "We don't want our community to crumble," she said.

View a discussion of the POStsponders to sites on the winding, often Plan from the League of Postmasters point of view online: http://www.savethepostoffice.com/pos

Cathy Tyson contributed to this

