

The Voice

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Earl Clapp's widow, Tillie, flanked by daughters Jodie and Elisha, as community members drove past the family home in Fenwick, Thanksgiving morning. DON RICKERS

A family, and community, in pain

It took a half hour for the procession of vehicles to pass 1351 Centre Street, in Fenwickhundreds of cars, trucks, and motorcyclestheir occupants and riders all paying tribute to Earl Clapp and his family on Thanksgiving

The idea was Jonathan Tucker's, vice president of Tucker Homes, and was quickly embraced by the Fenwick Lions Club.

"We also hope this procession shows the criminals who perpetrated this horrendous crime that this community stands together, and we will not stand for this violence," Tucker told the Voice as planning got underway late last week.

Clapp, 74, was killed on Oct. 2, in what appar-

ently started as a confrontation with would-be thieves. He leaves behind his wife, Tillie, two daughters, two grandchildren, and countless friends in the community. (His obituary appears on page 12.)

Tucker asked that any community members

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Some things just don't want to be collected

The here and now is when to enjoy fall foliage

> **BY LAURA LANE** Special to the VOICE

love fall. I love the colours. I love how the leaves fall from the trees, slowly gliding, twisting and turning and tumbling down to the ground or speeding past me with a gust of wind. I love the accumulation of leaves on the sidewalk or in the gutters so that as I shuffle my feet through them, they almost slow me down. They at least remind me how I let them slow me down on my trudge to and from school each day, or how I eagerly looked for piles that were raked into mountains for me to dive into, swim through, and when I come up for air and head home, having telltale red, yellow and orange reminders peeking out of my socks, stuck in my hair, and the odd time down my shirt.

I loved collecting as many

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PROCESSION

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who wanted to show their support for the family to arrive at Centennial Park between 10:00 and 10:45 AM. He posted notice on his company's Facebook page, and the Voice posted a story on its website late Friday. By Monday morning, the story had been viewed some 2900 times.

The community answered the call. Hundreds of participants turned out, making the trek from Centennial Park north on Church to Canboro, where the procession turned east for the roughly 2 km

run to Centre St., turning north to pass the Clapp family home and business. Despite a low, gray sky, autumn colours shone brightly.

Photos of Earl Clapp and his family were set up on easels lining the east side of Centre Street. Tillie draped one of Earl's motorcycle jackets around a chair at the end of the driveway, empty except for a motorcycle helmet in the seat and a glass of wine on an armrest. A pair of Earl's overalls and other mementos hung from a ladder.

Composed before the driveby procession arrived, Tillie and her daughters became emotional as the morning progressed, as friends gathered at the top of the driveway, and as community members started filing past in their vehicles, many offering verbal condolences. Members of the Niagara Regional Police stood a few meters away, watching somberly.

"We cried almost all the way through," said Tillie. "But it was so wonderful to know that other people are outraged, and feeling our pain, and are there for us. We've had so many offers of help...to clean out my eavestroughs, bring me food...all kinds

of stuff. Just overwhelming." Her voice took on a determined tone as she spoke from the heart.

"There are three things I want to say. Number one, I want to thank that brave lady who stopped her car on a dark highway in the middle of the night to find my husband, because he was there in the darkness, all alone. She doesn't want to be identified, but I am so thankful to her. Number two, I want to thank the Niagara Regional Police. They've been so sensitive, and every day coming to let us know what's going on. They're not telling us everything, but we respect that because it helps the investigation. I urge everybody to go to the police

media site. In the last media release, they identified a vehicle—a black Ford Expedition—that they're hoping to find. Finally, I want to thank the community for this outpouring of support. It really shows what kind of place Pelham and Fenwick are. Thank you."

At the end of the procession, a man driving the final vehicle, a classic Chevy convertible, stopped to get out and hug Tillie and her daughters.

With reporting by Don Rickers and Dave Burket.
Photos by Don Rickers.

