

***They Left Us Everything* Chosen as 2016 Forest of Reading®  
Evergreen Award™ Winner**

*Adult readers across Ontario vote for the best Canadian fiction/non-fiction*

**NEWS RELEASE**

**TORONTO, ON** (November 10, 2016) – After months of reading the best in Canadian fiction and non-fiction for adults, readers from over 100 Ontario libraries have chosen Plum Johnson's *They Left Us Everything* as the 2016 Evergreen Award winner.

*They Left Us Everything* is a funny, touching memoir about the importance of preserving family history to make sense of the past and nurturing family bonds to safeguard the future.

"I'm so thrilled to receive the Forest of Reading Evergreen Award for my memoir, *They Left Us Everything*," Johnson says. "Libraries have been my source of inspiration and encouragement since I was young."

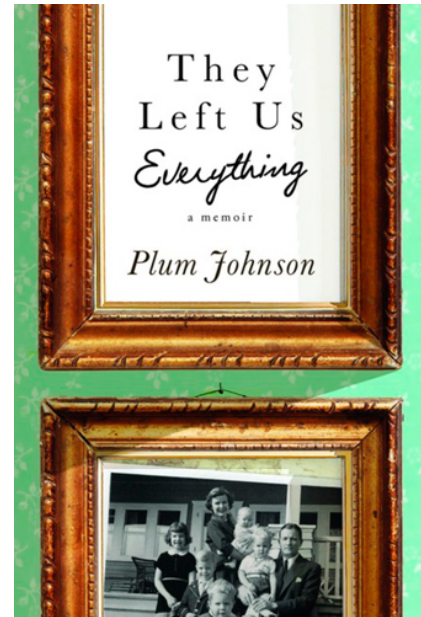
A committee of library professionals chooses the titles nominated for the Evergreen Award, which are announced every January. Votes are tallied for the award in late October.

Ontario readers participated in the Evergreen Award program through book clubs, their public libraries, and other community forums. The reading program is designed for adults and comprised of the best titles in Canadian fiction and non-fiction. It is one of eight programs that form the Forest of Reading, Canada's largest recreational reading program of its kind.

"We're excited to welcome Plum Johnson to the circle of Evergreen Award winners. *They Left Us Everything* struck a chord with the Evergreen Selection Committee, and we're glad to see it resounded with Evergreen readers," says Kathryn Lee, Chair, Evergreen Award Steering and Selection Committee. "The committee found *They Left Us Everything* to be a fascinating memoir that reminds us of the stories attached to our belongings."

The Evergreen Award will be accepted at OLA's annual Super Conference. Plum Johnson will also discuss her novel, her reaction to winning the Evergreen Award, and her upcoming works. This engaging session will also announce the 2017 Evergreen nominees.

**About *They Left Us Everything*:** After almost twenty years of caring for elderly parents—first for their senile father, and then for their cantankerous ninety-three-year-old mother—author Plum Johnson and her three younger brothers experience conflicted feelings of grief and relief when their mother, the surviving parent, dies. Now they must empty and sell the beloved family home, which hasn't been de-cluttered in more than half a century. Twenty-three rooms bulge with history, antiques, and oxygen tanks. Plum remembers her loving but difficult parents who could not have been more different: the British father, a handsome, disciplined patriarch who nonetheless could not control his opinionated, extroverted Southern-belle wife who loved tennis and gin gimlets. The task consumes her, becoming more rewarding than she ever imagined. Items from childhood trigger memories of her eccentric family growing up in a small town on the



shores of Lake Ontario in the 1950s and 60s. But unearthing new facts about her parents helps her reconcile those relationships with a more accepting perspective about who they were and what they valued.

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**About the Ontario Library Association:** The Ontario Library Association (OLA) is a centre of excellence for the library and information sector, with 5,000 members who work in public, school, academic and special libraries. OLA enables members to advocate for the right of individuals to have free and equitable access to information. Our members research, develop and participate in educational programs designed to provide exemplary library services. Signature OLA events include the annual Super Conference and the Forest of Reading® program. Follow us on Twitter @ONLibraryAssoc and like us on Facebook at Ontario Library Association.

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