

# Guelph Mercury **saturday**

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## Sister Christine bucks protocol

The unpretentious nun and founder of Guelph's drop-in centre receives the Order of Canada her own way



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**OTTAWA** — Anyone who has met Sister Christine Leyser knows to expect to be greeted with one of the diminutive nun's trademark bear hugs.

Now, Canada's Governor General knows it as well.

Michaëlle Jean looked shocked but delighted yesterday when Sister Christine scooped her up in her arms in front of a packed room at Rideau Hall, during the Order of Canada investiture ceremony.

"I just told (Jean), 'You're so beautiful,' because she is, and gave her a hug," Sister Christine said in an interview after the ceremony.

Jean laughed and put her arms around Sister Christine as the nun kissed her on both cheeks.

Before the ceremony, award recipients had been led through a brief tutorial on proper protocol — come forward, bow to the Governor General, wait as the citation is read aloud, shake hands with the Governor General and have the award pinned on.

Yeah, right.  
A staff member remarked that Sister Christine, who is not one for protocol, did not seem nervous.

"I just said I'm not bothered because I don't care if I make a mistake.

"It doesn't bother me what the protocol is," the Catholic nun said with a laugh. "You just do what feels right. We just be ourselves at the (Welcome In) Drop In centre because that's what anyone expects of us."

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FRED CHARTRAND, THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sister Christine Leyser kisses Governor General Michaëlle Jean as she is invested as a member of the Order of Canada yesterday in Ottawa.

“For more than 25 years Christine Leyser has served as a pillar of her community and a beacon of hope for those marginalized in our society. “She founded a network of facilities that provides social services, accommodation and a sense of community to those in need. Beginning with the Drop-In community centre, she expanded the organization to include the Dwelling Place, a long-term, shared support housing centre, and the Stepping Stone and Elizabeth Place, emergency shelters for men and women respectively. “With seemingly boundless energy, she remains the inspiration and drive behind all of these projects.”

Text of Sister Christine's citation, as read by Sheila-Marie Cook, secretary to Governor-General Michaëlle Jean

## U of G gets \$2.8M for work on supercorn

Research has implications for food supply, economy

Mallory Bresolin  
Special to The Mercury

**GUELPH** — With hopes of discoveries that will change the world, the Ontario government announced \$3.2 million yesterday for genomics research at the University of Guelph.

The bulk of the money — \$2.8 million — is aimed at discovering greener ways to grow corn.

The remaining \$400,000 will go to the International Barcode of Life project, led by Dr. Paul Herbert, which will use next-generation DNA sequencing to investigate biodiversity around the world.

"Genomics are basically the core of the discoveries that are going to effectively change the world over the next 20 to 30 years," said Kevin Hall, vice-president of research at the university.

The corn project is led by Dr. Steven Roth-

stein. The focus is "to enhance our ability to select better crop genetics involved in enhancing the ability to utilize hydrogen fertilizer more efficiently," Rothstein said. "Also, to utilize water more efficiently."

The important thing is to "do really fundamental basic research in how plants utilize nitrogen," he said.

"Developing corn which can withstand drought without using huge quantities of fertilizer is hugely important in terms of feeding people, but also hugely important in terms of protecting our water supply," Guelph MPP Liz Sandals said.

Both Sandals and John Wilkinson, Ontario's minister of research and innovation, said they would like to see the research commercialized.

"Having well-funded research is key to the role of the university but, quite frankly, it's bigger than that," Sandals said. "It's more of the role in terms of the future of the Ontario economy.

"Huge implications for the world food supply are coming out of this research."

Wilkinson said new knowledge creates new ideas, and new ideas create new jobs.

"Boy, do we need those new jobs," he said.



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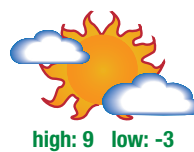
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