

Dog From Bette Midler a Lasting Gift

The actress purchased the first of Toronto's several geese-poop-patrolling dogs.

Posted: June 24, 2008, 5 a.m. EDT

Residents of Toronto, Canada, have Bette Midler and a pioneering dog named Lucy to thank for the decrease in goose poop on their beaches.

In 1996, Midler was filming "That Old Feeling" in the city's High Park and took note of the Canada geese's ever-present droppings. While talking to park supervisor Carol Guy, Midler mentioned a New Jersey program where Border Collies herd geese away from populated areas.

Guy forgot about the exchange until a few weeks later, when Midler and the movie's producers purchased a Border Collie puppy named Lucy Goosey to aid the city's waterfowl management program as a gift to the city.

Fast-forward a dozen years, and Lucy is now retired. But Guy and Border Collies Piper, Roy, Dixie, and Will are still patrolling the park to scare away geese, whose feces pollute the water.

"Everybody knows that Lake Ontario is the major source of our drinking water. If you've got poor water quality, that means poor health for a lot of people," Guy told the Toronto Star.

All the dogs – including Lucy, Midler's gift – live with Guy on a farm north of the city. "This is amazing," Guy says, "to have this kind of partnership with a dog and do this."