

Duck, Duck, Goose

By Marilyn Reeves

Some of you may recall my telling how I got 'goosed' walking from my building to the Center along the path that parallels Clinton Street. No, it wasn't what you're thinking, and I use the term loosely to describe how, as I was admiring a flock of geese flying just overhead, one of them let loose and 'goosed' me. The gooey green stuff splattered over the top of my purse and my left shoe, not to mention the shoulder of my brand new spring jacket. But I found that the application of some soap on a wet paper towel took care of the mess, and I forgave the goose for his 'indiscretion.'

I happen to be an animal lover, although I must admit there are certain critters best viewed from a distance: those things that slither, have eight hairy legs, or sharp claws and fangs. Nevertheless, I do love animals, and I accept the fact that every living thing has to eliminate.

It would be nice if all the animals in the world – including the geese – had little way-stations where they could stop, do their business, and then flush. But no such facilities exist. With the possible exception of cats who at least *try* to be tidy and cover up their messes – to the chagrin of the neighbor seeing pussy dig up a place in his rose garden – most animals leave their leavings whenever and wherever they get the sudden urge to go.

Back when the majority of the country was rural, people had much bigger piles of poo to deal with – those left by horses and cows and pigs, for instance. So a little plip plopped on the ground by an over-flying goose essentially went unnoticed.

But now that folks are becoming more citified, we've become more sensitive to animals' indiscriminate habits of elimination. Dog owners now have to suffer the humiliation of picking up after their dogs – large or small – because people apparently are no longer able to simply step around the offending offal. And some folks just can't stand the idea of having geese inhabit our grounds and ponds. After all, they're pretty messy critters. I know offal is awful, but perhaps we need to focus more on how amazing the creatures of the world are and not worry so much about stepping into something they leave behind.

And I, for one, will always thrill to the sight of the Canada geese soaring in formation over my head. I just need to learn to duck!