

['DOG-GONE' GEESE]

by RON HALL/Senior Editor

Rumors swirled in our offices here in suburban Cleveland—somebody sawed the heads off our plastic swans.

Who would do such a thing? Why? How?

The bogus swans, anchored in the middle of the pond, worked fine for the few weeks that they bobbed in the pond, says grounds manager Tom Sprague. But big November winds came up and blew their heads off. Tom says he will glue the swans back together to use again when the pond thaws.

Tom is an experienced and resourceful grounds manager, but he's got nothing on you, our readers. Although we shouldn't have been, we were surprised at the incredible range of solutions you offered to our November "Talkback" on controlling Canada geese.

Dogs—certain dogs anyway—love to chase geese and eventually drive them away, many of you told us. (Sorry we couldn't use more of your tales—no pun intended—but we ran out of space.)

"This year Winchester Country Club purchased a border collie named Tess. Border collies herd sheep and cattle.



Dan Higgins says Tess does a great job of keeping geese away from Winchester Country Club, Winchester, Mass.

Tess herds the geese until they fly away. She has become somewhat of a heroine here at the course,"—**Daniel P. Higgins**, Winchester (Mass.) Country Club

"The park district bought a chocolate Labrador retriever named Lucy. She does a great job keeping the geese moving, especially at our golf course. We borrow her occasionally to run the parks. She won't hurt the geese."—**Mike Schiller**, Schaumburg (Ill.) Park District

"When we obtained 'Brigadoon,' a border collie, he wasn't trained. But we trained him and he does a great job."—**Keith Kist**, Pine Ridge Country Club, Wickliffe, Ohio

"My half-crazy shetland sheepdog loves to chase geese. After three or four sessions, they just don't come back."—**Steve Kennedy**, Red Eagle Golf Course, Eutaula, Ala.

"We purchased a border collie named 'Duke.' The geese! What geese? They're gone."—**Leonard Berg**, Canoe Brook Country Club, Summit, N.J.

Not only does **Doug Jetter's** black Labrador "Dandy Divot" chase geese off of his Huntenwood Country Club turf in Clayton, N.C., it swims right into the pond after them too, earning its reputation as a "goose hero."

Other creative solutions:

- **William Yanakakis** of New Meadows Golf Club in Topsfield, Mass., uses his dog to chase the geese into a small pond, then he unleashes a remote-controlled boat at the geese. "My grounds crew keeps watch and launches our boat at the first sign of uninvited



Superintendent Roy Ladrigan, Golf Courses of Kenton County, Ky., calls 'dead' goose decoys a distressing sight.

guests," says Yanakakis, adding that the geese always fly away.

- **Jim Carpenter** of Silver Creek Metro Park in Barberton, Ohio, uses a "robo-geese," a huge plastic goose decoy rigged to the chassis of an electronic remote-controlled car. "The geese just can't believe a goose can move that fast. It really confuses them, and they take off when they see it coming," says Carpenter.

- **Bob Beardsley** of Port Bay Golf Club in Wolcott, N.Y., "enlisted a local radio-controlled airplane club to practice dog fighting with them (geese)."

- **Barry C. Wood** says his invention, "Dead Goose" decoys, keep live ones from settling onto properties. "The geese believe these decoys to be real and immediately react as if a predator is in the area. Two types of decoys are used; land-based and water-based decoys," says Roy Ladrigan of the Golf Courses of Kenton County, Independence, Ky., an associate of Wood's. (For more information contact Ladrigan at 606-525-1995 or Wood at (513) 792-6017.)