

# Earning dough from doo doo is excrementally successful

Gretchen Gibb's St. Bernard, Mercedes, eats just about anything. Usually Mercedes can stomach what she devours, but a few years ago, Mercedes developed diarrhea.

A St. Bernard with diarrhea is an unpleasant animal to have around, and Gibb got on the Internet, looking for guidance.

Her search brought her to [www.pooper-scooper.com](http://www.pooper-scooper.com), a site for those who make a living removing scat (usually it's dog, though there's no reason it couldn't be any species' feces) from people's yards.

The site is owned by Matthew Osborn, author of "The Professional Pooper-Scooper: How to Start Your Own Low-Cost, High-Profit Dog Waste Removal Service." The book includes sections titled "The Need is Real and Growing," "Health Signs in Dog Stool" and, in the chapter on waste disposal, "Don't Do Anything Stupid."

Gibb, who is 37, lives in Fredonia with her husband, four kids, three dogs, three snakes, several lizards (including an iguana), a degu, a turtle, a rabbit and a cat. The idea that she could make money doing for others what she was already doing a lot of at home intrigued her. She



ordered the book.

Gibb had tried a number of home-based businesses over the years. None had worked out.

She sold cosmetics, vitamins, real estate and mortgage repayment programs.

She once started a business, called Clean Start, that specialized in cleaning newly constructed homes; it never had a client.

When Gibb told her husband, Mark, about her newest venture, the

conversation, as she recalls it, went something like this:

Gretchen: "I've found something I'm going to do."

Mark: "Do I even want to know?"  
Gretchen: "I'm going to be a poop-scooper."

Mark: (Silence).

Gibb, a determined entrepreneur, or maybe entrepreneur, opened her business in the fall of 2003. She wanted to call it Poop Scoop'n Lady, but Mark persuaded her to go with some

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thing more restrained: Pile Patrol. At first Gibb had just a handful of customers, but when the snows melted that spring, revealing an entire winter's worth of thawing waste to dog owners across southeastern Wisconsin, business, as they say in Gibb's business, really picked up.

Gibb won't say how many customers she has, but a day's labor easily fills the trunk of her BMW (license plates: 2POOPED).

She has clients in five counties, and she drives about 1,000 miles a week. On a recent Bring Your Daughter to Work Day, Gibb's 11-year-old, Allyssa, couldn't believe all the driving involved.

Nasty weather, intemperate dogs and scatological humor are all part of the job, but taking time off might be the biggest problem in Gibb's line of work. Work piles up when she's not on the job. It's like she's always on doody.

Gibb says she's gotten to the point where she's ready to either hire someone or take on a subcontractor. She needs a vacation. She's ... Tired.

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