

Annual Report 2015-2016



Guide Dogs

TASMANIA





Developing skills
Optimising choices
Creating possibilities

Patron:

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania.



Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Tasmania
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Front Cover Artwork, Top to bottom:

August: Guide Dogs voted Australia's "Most Trusted Charity Brand" for the third year in a row.

April: "Get On Board" with Metro Tas, Campbell Street Primary School and Guide Dogs Tas for International Guide Dog Day.

June: #MoreThanDogs was used nationally on social media platforms to promote services other than Guide Dogs. This banner and associated collateral was used for Guide Dogs Tasmania's Facebook page, website and shopfront in a 3-week campaign.

April: The Garden of Memories officially opened in Elizabeth Street, Hobart.

September: Graphic designers stitched together existing photographs of Guide Dogs Tasmania's puppies for significant, permanent signage at the refurbished Hobart office, in September.



Guide Dogs

TASMANIA

Annual Report
2015 - 2016

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Phoebe

p.1 President's Report

By Guide Dogs Tasmania President, Sue Shoobridge

I am pleased to present the President's report for Guide Dogs Tasmania for the year ended 30 June 2016.

This year has continued to provide challenges for our organisation considering the external fee for service environment that is commensurate with the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

By June 30 June 2017, we, along with other disability organisations, will lose our government block funding, which we have relied upon heavily to deliver state-wide low vision services, not including Guide Dogs.

While we have increased the quality and level of service in recent years, and have improved the organisation's financial health, following the introduction of the NDIS, the Board took the view that it would be difficult for us to deliver services without assistance going forward.

In considering our strategic approach, and after a robust due diligence process, the Board of Guide Dogs Tasmania decided to enter into a staged merger with VisAbility (formerly the Association for the Blind of Western Australia). A motion to change our constitution to allow this merger was passed by our members at a Special General Meeting of Guide Dogs Tasmania on Friday 24 June 2016.

VisAbility owns and operates Guide Dogs WA and is Western Australia's primary provider of Guide Dog mobility services to people who are blind or vision impaired. VisAbility specialises in the support of people who are blind or vision impaired, assisting people across a range of ages and disabilities in their homes, at school or work and in the broader community.

The merger will deliver cost savings for Guide Dogs Tasmania through the centralisation of back office and administrative tasks, but most importantly, the collaboration will allow for the delivery of a greater range and level of service for people who are blind or vision impaired living in Tasmania.

p.2 President's Report (continued)

All existing services currently provided by Guide Dogs Tasmania will continue. Counselling services, orthoptics and occupational therapy for adults and children will commence within the next 12 months and will expand further over the coming five years.

Under the new arrangement, Guide Dogs Tasmania members will have the opportunity to become members of VisAbility and I strongly encourage you to become members of VisAbility. Two directors of Guide Dogs Tasmania have been appointed to the VisAbility Board to maintain an important Tasmanian perspective.

The Guide Dogs Tasmania brand will continue as part of the collaboration, however this will be licensed to VisAbility. While the merger will assist with our sustainability in the future, Guide Dogs Tasmania will still need to maintain our local fundraising presence. Guide Dogs will still need to be trained in Tasmania, for Tasmanians, and we will still need the support of the community to provide them.

As I am sure you will agree, it is vital that Tasmanians living with a vision impairment or blindness are able to benefit from a comprehensive range of services.

In November, we farewelled Dan English, who ably managed Guide Dogs Tasmania as CEO since 2008. We wish Dan all the very best in his new role as CEO at Guide Dogs Queensland. Client Services Manager, Mary Langdon, also took on the role of Acting CEO between the time of Dan's resignation and the end of the Financial Year. The Board is grateful to her, the management team and indeed all staff for their professionalism, commitment and patience during this time.

In December, Guide Dogs Tasmania was pleased to re-open our Hobart building to the public after a long and most anticipated refurbishment. We held an Open Afternoon to celebrate the official opening of the newly refurbished building, and take a look behind the scenes.

We were delighted that Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania, officially opened the building.

p.3 President's Report (continued)

164 Elizabeth Street was acquired by Guide Dogs Tasmania in 1988, and required updating to make it more accessible, functional and appropriate for service delivery growth.

The refurbished building has allowed for some new additions to the head office, including a technology room where clients can try out equipment with assistance from staff, and a volunteer room which gives the organisation's regular volunteers a designated place to carry out their important duties. We now have open plan spaces that allow staff, clients, volunteers and visitors to go about their business effectively, while fostering a stronger sense of collegiality and purpose amongst the team.

For the public, the most exciting addition to the building would have to be the new puppy viewing room, located at the front of the office and easily noticeable when walking up and down Elizabeth Street.

At the end of this most challenging year I would like to reiterate my gratitude to all of the staff at Guide Dogs Tasmania. I wish to acknowledge the work of our volunteers who support us in various and important roles, and to thank our generous donors, sponsors and to those who have provided for us through their Estates.

Finally I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors for their contribution; including Ella Dixon, Ben Swain and David Howie, who retired from the Board during the year.

I will have pleasure next year on reporting our progress on the delivery of additional services for our clients as a result of the staged merger with VisAbility.

Sue Shoobridge, President



Paris

P.4 CEO's Report

By Acting Chief Executive Officer, Mary Langdon

Dear Members,

I am pleased to present the CEO's Report for Guide Dogs Tasmania for the year ended 30 June 2016.

I can report that the 2015-2016 included many positive outcomes for clients and staff.

As noted in our President's Report, Guide Dogs Tasmania has taken the decision to enter a merger with VisAbility. This occurred following a lengthy due diligence process by the Board and members voting in favour of changes to the Constitution, which allowed for the merger to take place.

This opportunity will not only create a greater range of services for our clients, but will enable the employment of more specialists and more focused training opportunities.

I thank the Board of Guide Dogs Tasmania for their comprehensive work in this space and ensuring that this was the right decision for Guide Dogs Tasmania to take for our long term sustainability. The Board have given an enormous amount of their time voluntarily, always with the best interests of Guide Dogs Tasmania and its clients at the forefront of their decisions.

The National Disability Scheme (NDIS) in Tasmania has been available for 15 to 24 year olds this year and Guide Dogs Tasmania has worked with a number of NDIS funded clients, ensuring that their Plans have not only addressed their immediate low vision needs, but are in line with each individual's future goals.

As the scheme continues to be rolled out in Tasmania, there is still a gap for clients over 65 years who are unable to access any funding packages. We will continue to work in the aged care space, advocating for this group at National and State levels.

Considering approximately 76% of our clients are aged over 65, it is

p.5 CEO's Report (continued)

critically important that we continue to fundraise so we can provide services for those Tasmanians who are unfunded and still require our services. We are extremely appreciative of the generosity of those in the Tasmanian community who continue to support us with donations, sponsorships and bequests.

Guide Dogs Tasmania is a member of the Australian Blindness forum, and this has proven to be an effective vehicle in which to advocate and have input into a range of submissions and discussion papers to government on relevant issues.

Guide Dogs Tasmania has continued to work collaboratively this year with other Guide Dog organisations under the Guide Dogs Australia umbrella. We have been successful in securing a range of National partnerships and sponsorships that have not only increased income streams, but have provided numerous marketing opportunities to further promote our services in each state and across the country.

I would like to note that we farewelled Marina Giffard, who was Guide Dogs Tasmania's Finance Manager for many years. Marina left in March this year to take up another challenge within the not-for-profit sector. Marina ensured that our finances were tightly managed and her eye for detail is to be commended. Marina's departure followed the resignation of former CEO, Dan English, who left us in November to take up the position of CEO at Guide Dogs Queensland.

I thank all of the hard working staff at Guide Dogs Tasmania. All have shown great commitment to our organisation and each individual has played an important role in the overall operations and success of what we do, often in challenging circumstances. No one person is of greater importance than another and together we have achieved much.

Many thanks must also go to our volunteers. Our volunteers have undertaken many roles in the Guide Dog and Fundraising departments. Their ongoing support and contribution are critical and highly valued.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to our clients. They are the reason

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we exist, and we appreciate their feedback via our service evaluation forms and for allowing us the opportunity to work with them. Our reward is seeing the incredible outcomes that are achieved in enhancing each individual's independence and participation within the community.

Mary Langdon, Acting Chief Executive Officer

Image 1: Volunteer Sara Dane helps out with the Collection Dog Program and PR activities. She was one of the VIPs at the opening of the refurbished Hobart office in December.

Image 2: Volunteer Roberta Lobwein, promoting the work of Guide Dogs Tasmania for a Coles in-store promotion in May. She is ably assisted by Guide Dogs Tasmania Ambassador Dog, Dexter.

Image 3: Southern volunteer Puppy Raisers gathered with their charges for a group training session in March.



p.7 Board of Directors

Sue Shoobridge

President
FCPA, FAICD, Retired
Director since 2013

Ben Swain

Vice President until 15/12/15
Partner at Murdoch Clarke Barristers
& Solicitors
Director since 2010
Resigned 15/12/15

Scott Marston

Vice President since 22/2/15.
Deputy Secretary, Department of
Premier and Cabinet
Director since 2012.

Ella Dixon

CEO Migrant Resource Centre,
Launceston
Director since 2011
Resigned 29/02/16

David Donato

Financial Planner, Strategic
Financial Planning. ADFS
Director since 2012

Image 1: Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania, officially opens the refurbished Hobart office in December in front of invited guests.

Image 2: Special guests at the opening of the refurbished Hobart office.

Elaine Guy

Finance Manager, Contact Electrical
Pty Ltd.
Honorary Life Member, Guide Dogs
Tasmania
Director since 2011

Andrew Hogan

Optometrist, Optomeyes Holdings
(OPSM Tasmania)
Director since 2014

David Howie

Partner, KPMG Australia
Director since 2009
Resigned 16/10/15

Debbie Schaffer OAM

Chair of VisAbility
Representative Director nominated
by VisAbility
Director since July 2016



P.8 Client Services Report

By Client Services / Guide Dog Services Manager, Mary Langdon

Overview

The Client Services/Guide Dogs Services Department is pleased to report another year of positive client outcomes and achievements.

Over 4,420 hours of service were delivered across the State, including on Bruny Island, King Island and Flinders Island. These services included Orientation and Mobility, assessments and recommendations for NDIS plans, equipment and aids, life skills support and training, and Guide Dog services.

In line with the report from 2014/15 Financial Year, approximately 76% of our clients were aged over 65 years, and I note that we continue to advocate at both the State and Federal Government levels regarding funded services for this cohort.

The NDIS cohort for this year included those aged 15 to 24 years. We undertook a number of assessments and provided a range of funded support services. It is certainly pleasing to see Tasmanians with disability participating in this scheme, working towards their defined goals, more fully accessing required aids and equipment, and having greater choice and control in their lives.

From 1 July 2016, the NDIS cohort includes 12 to 24 years and by 1 January 2019, that will extend to 0 to 64 years. This requires much strategic planning, ensuring that we will be able to effectively deliver required support and provide a range of services that will offer a greater range of choice for individuals.

The Client Services team met with a wide range of external stakeholders during the year, including but not limited to the Macular Degeneration Foundation, Advocacy Tasmania, GP practices, pharmacies, disability organisations, aged care facilities and allied health organisations.

We also worked closely with local councils, delivered Information and

p.9 Client Services Report (continued)

Education sessions across the State to a range of stakeholders and participated in driver training for Metro Tasmania and the taxi industry.

As in previous years, our referrals were primarily from individuals and families, allied health and Specialists.

International White Cane Day

To celebrate International White Cane Day on 15 October, we once again worked very closely with the Marketing and Fundraising team. To raise awareness of the organisation's services to assist people with vision loss, we held a lunch time activity inviting the public to think about the skills they would require to get to, and from work, if their vision was impaired. A small blindfold and simulated vision loss challenge was conducted, involving a representational obstacle course.

For every Tasmanian with a Guide Dog, there are around 25 people with impaired vision that use a cane to move around independently, safely and confidently. The ability for those who are blind or vision impaired to get safely around their community, when and how they want, is an essential element of a person's confidence and social inclusion.

Orientation and Mobility skills provide the building blocks, delivering the functional independence and well-being necessary for employment, recreation, and participation in everyday life that people with full sight may take for granted. Thanks to mobility aids like the white cane, and with training from Guide Dogs Tasmania, people with impaired vision are able to travel safely to, from and around their workplaces.

The activity received public interest and media attention, and achieved our goal of raising greater awareness of the White Cane, as well as our services.

Staff

We farewelled Orientation and Mobility Instructor, Rose Gregory, from our team during the year as Rose wanted to give more of her focus to her

p.10 Client Services Report (continued)

family. She delivered highly professional support since 2002 and was committed to offering clients the best possible solutions in order for them to achieve their goals.

We welcomed Occupational Therapist, Naomi Gilson, to our team in January and Naomi has proven to be a valuable and professional team member.

We continue to receive positive client feedback from our service evaluation forms, and this year, I am happy to report an overwhelming positive response to our service provision, professionalism and communication of staff, and that 100% of respondents would recommend our services to others. We appreciate that clients continue to take the time to provide us with this feedback.

The team are continuously striving to update their skills and are offered opportunities to attend specific training, attend conferences and participate in workshops and forums, and provide feedback on a range of issues to external stakeholders. We are committed to professional development that ultimately strengthens our level of service delivery.

Guide Dog Services

In our Guide Dog services, this has also been another year of great achievements and a busy year for our Guide Dog Mobility Instructor. We placed five dogs and we are pleased to report that two of the training programs were based simultaneously within our refurbished office in Hobart. These proved to be highly beneficial for both of the clients involved.

Overall, Guide Dog services have involved a great deal of State-wide travel, assessments, training programs, aftercare support, and overseeing our volunteers in the Puppy Raising and Boarding programs.

We welcomed four new puppies to Guide Dogs Tasmania and this would not have been possible without the incredibly valued contributions of our volunteer Puppy Raisers and Boarders. Twenty six volunteer families were

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involved in our Guide Dog department and we highly value and appreciate their commitment to our dogs.

Thank you to the hard working staff in Client Services and Guide Dogs Services and their continued commitment to offering professional support and services.

Mary Langdon, Client Services / Guide Dog Services Manager

Image 1: O&M specialist Eion Jennings guides Gaye Rutherford through a safety and orientation activity for International White Cane Day, in October.

Image 2: We welcomed Harvey and Harper in April.

Image 3: Paris and Phoebe tested out the new Puppy Play Room in September.



p.12 Funding Development Report

By Marketing and Fundraising Manager, Kate Grady

2015-16 was an exciting year for the Funding Development Department.

In July 2015, Guide Dogs Australia was voted as Australia's Most Trusted Charity Brand for the third year in a row. We are very proud of this achievement, and we believe our part in this award is due to our organisational values.

These things are important to us: people, respect, integrity and responsibility. In the Funding Development Department, for example, we have a small team of dedicated individuals who take responsibility for a number of projects. No-one does just one thing, and everyone strives to support the mission of the organisation by working innovatively, efficiently, within budget and as a team. We cover the areas of fundraising, marketing, communications, brand, bequests, grants and events and every day we do our very best with the resources available to us.

Here are just some of the highlights from the year...

In August, a fourth member joined our team so we could build and maintain our relationships with sponsors, grant providers and donors. She is also ensuring our work in the area of bequests is personalised, strategic and sustainable.

In December, Guide Dogs Tasmania opened its Hobart office doors for a public open day. Hundreds of people came along to meet the dogs, look at some of our history, learn more about what we do, and try some equipment and activities. All staff from across the organisation contributed to the success of the day and it was a pleasure to welcome members of the public into our working area. The open day coincided with the official re-opening of our refurbished building.

A formal opening for invited guests was conducted by our Patron, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner, AM, Governor of Tasmania. This day demonstrated to us that our community is interested in what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. We received many questions

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and comments about our work and in addition, gained new volunteers and supporters and received a number of new client referrals. At the end of the day, all staff agreed on one thing: we needed more staff to cater for the interest!

In January, we reached the 2,000 mark for collection dogs. That's over 2,000 money boxes we have placed to receive anonymous donations, on shop counters and floors across the state. We are everywhere! With dedicated teams of volunteers and an effective schedule in place, not only are the dogs placed, but the associated businesses are happy to see them collected regularly by friendly and familiar faces.

“...it never ceases to amaze me how the community displays so much respect, appreciation and positive feedback for what Guide Dogs Tasmania does to assist the community... Upon arriving at the store, Julie was greeted by the proprietor, (a younger aged male) showing off a huge smile while waving his hands in the air telling Julie that he was over the moon he has a GDT collection dog and how excited he was to support the organisation.”

From January 2016 report to the Board, by Collection Dogs Project Officer, Paul Wyld.

April was a huge month.

Led by a group of graduates of the Tasmanian Leaders Program, Guide Dogs Tasmania partnered with the WD Booth Charitable Trust, the City of Hobart and Playstreet Landscape Architects to officially open the Guide Dogs Garden of Memories on International Guide Dog Day.

“A sensory garden, in a public space, dedicated to reflecting on and honouring the service of Guide Dogs who have now passed away.”

The elements of the garden include a circular ‘dog tag’ grassed area, featuring a large water feature, which doubles as a water bowl for dogs that fills with fresh water daily. From the bowl rises a post that holds

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engraved dog tags, each with the name of a Tasmanian Guide Dog that has passed away. There is also a wall that features illuminated dots that in Braille read “Six legs, one journey”. Finally, a neon sign at the entrance to the Garden of Memories, welcomes all visitors. The official opening was quiet, sincere and respectful, honouring the Garden’s intent.

As part of International Guide Dog Day on April 27, Guide Dogs Tasmania partnered with Metro Tas and Campbell Street Primary School to show the community that Guide Dogs really can go anywhere, with the launch of the “Get on Board” campaign.

“Get on Board” involved a Metro bus being covered with artwork created by students at Campbell Street Primary School, with the theme that Guide Dogs are allowed in any public space, including transport.

International Guide Dog Day was a great day to officially recognise all current, previous and future Guide Dogs around the world, and the difference they make to the lives of their blind or vision impaired handlers. But it’s also an opportunity for us to make the community more aware of the challenges surrounding Guide Dogs and their handlers, including accessing public transport. This kind of reach would otherwise be impossible for us, so we are extremely grateful for the support of Metro Tas.

Metro believes in the importance of public transport as an accessible option for everyone in the community and they were pleased to play their part by ensuring all Metro drivers are trained to know how to help those who may need extra assistance when using buses.

The Campbell Street Primary School Principal was very pleased to be part of the International Guide Dog Day campaign, which saw more than 260 artworks created by the students displayed on the bus. “Get on Board” was a fantastic community project and a great opportunity for the students to see their work publicly showcased, while telling their friends and families about the great work that Guide Dogs do.

We take and create every possible opportunity to promote our services and raise the necessary funds to provide them. Community fundraising, regular

p.15 Funding Development Report (continued)

giving, collection dogs, corporate partnerships, grants, online donations, bequests, public relations, direct marketing and social media; these are some of the important areas in which we have worked this year.

We remain grateful to the volunteers who support our work through driving and collecting, preparing collection dogs, counting coins, packing mail and attending events. We appreciate their initiative, commitment, good humour and willingness to share the load, particularly amidst the disruptions around them this year.

The marketing and fundraising team look forward to another purposeful, productive and successful year in 2016/17.

Kate Grady, Marketing and Fundraising Manager

Images 1 and 2: Guide Dogs were honoured at the opening of the Garden of Memories in April.

Image 3: Harper sitting inside the Metro bus which features individual pictures of Guide Dogs by students from Campbell Street Primary School.



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2



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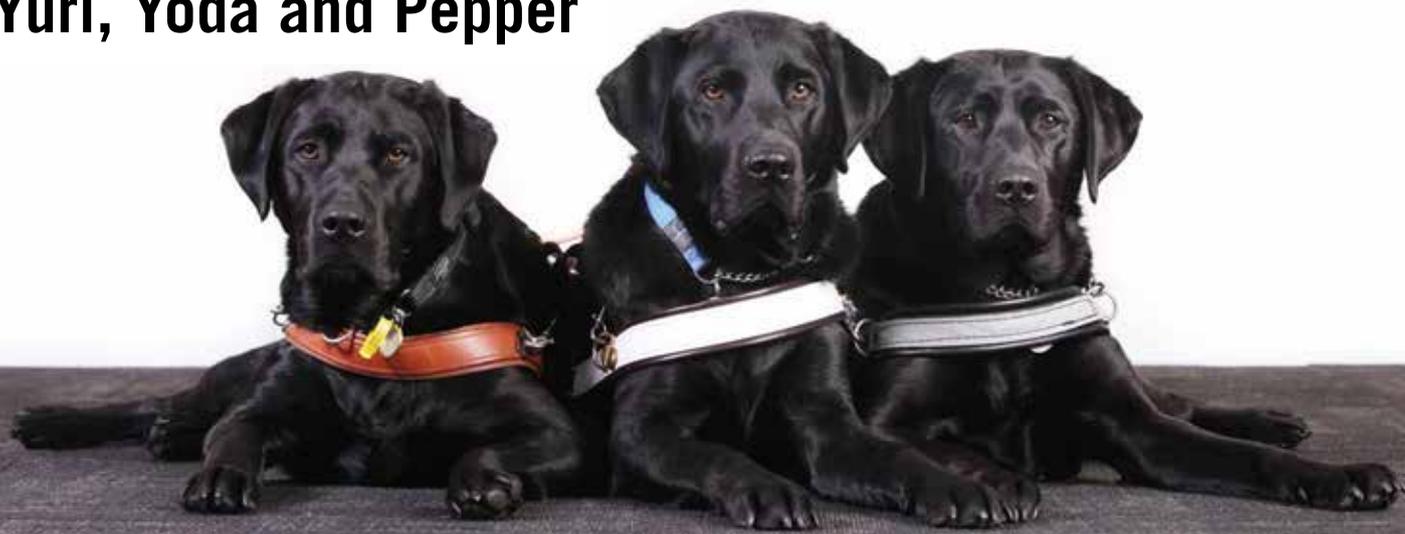
p.16 Financial Report - Summary

The figures below are a summary from our audited Annual Financial Report 2015-16. The full Financial Report and Auditor's Opinion are available in hard copy on request or via our website:

[guidedogstas.com.au /home/about-us/annual-reports/](http://guidedogstas.com.au/home/about-us/annual-reports/)

| Statement of Comprehensive Income | 2015-16 | 2014-15 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Total income | 2,303,743 | 3,015,054 |
| Less expenses | (2,521,291) | (1,995,512) |
| Net surplus from continuing operations | (217,548) | 1,019,542 |
| Revaluation of assets | (70,000) | (400,646) |
| Total Comprehensive Income for the Year | (287,548) | 618,896 |
| Statement of Financial Position | | |
| Assets | | |
| Total current assets | 5,382,486 | 6,078,696 |
| Total non-current assets | 1,869,165 | 1,945,066 |
| Total assets | 7,251,651 | 8,023,762 |
| Liabilities | | |
| Total current liabilities | 168,701 | 682,093 |
| Total non-current liabilities | 38,186 | 9,357 |
| Total liabilities | 206,887 | 691,450 |
| Net Assets | 7,044,764 | 7,332,312 |
| Equity | | |
| Reserves | 325,385 | 395,385 |
| Accumulated surplus | 6,719,379 | 6,936,927 |
| Total Equity | 7,044,764 | 7,332,312 |

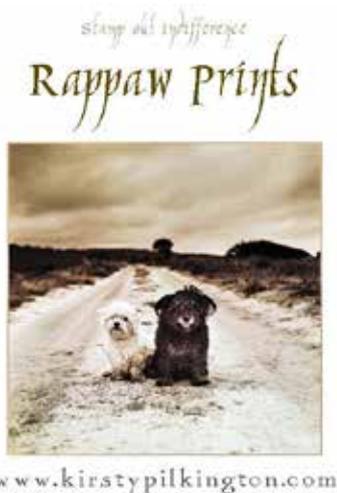
Yuri, Yoda and Pepper



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Thank you.