



## ***Southern Gateway to the Barossa***

The Willy Wagtail published and distributed by the  
volunteers of the WILLIAMSTOWN ACTION GROUP

**Issue 516      JULY      2023**

# **Quiz Night**

**Williamstown Action Group**

**Saturday 12th August**

**Change of date and venue!**

**Williamstown Soldier's Memorial Hall**

**Doors open 7pm with**

**7.30pm sharp start**

**BYO supper and drinks**

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Authorised by T. Pasin MP, Liberal Party of Australia, Shop 5, Murray Bridge Green, Riverview Rd, Murray Bridge SA 5253.

## A small "Helping" of Matt Hale

Sometimes you are lucky enough to meet people who are so enthusiastic about life, so vibrant, so full of ideas that you walk down the many side roads of their story with them with such pleasure and interest that you, unintentionally, forget why you are with them. Matt Hale is one such person. Consequently, I fear that my reporting, in this instance, may be somewhat erratic! However, I do know that since arriving in Williamstown, in 2019 as a Brevet Sergeant, Matt has pursued one of his main aspirations, which is to strengthen community ties and he has, and is doing, this in an incredibly successful manner! Put simply, Matt's philosophy is that if the Community is a strong one, good things will happen; if there is a weakly linked community, bad things will probably happen! Williamstown is benefitting from the knowledge and skills acquired by Matt throughout his working life but also because of his imagination and "Light Bulb" moments!

Where to start? Perhaps with a Side Road, with this incredible event? Matt's English parents moved to Northern Ireland in the bad times of the 1970's because there was work there. Matt's Mother, pregnant with his older brother, was waiting patiently at one end of a street in Belfast while her husband purchased cigarettes further down. The whole street suddenly exploded! One can only imagine the horror and the fear that poor woman experienced in those first few seconds before she saw, unbelievably, her husband walking towards her, somewhat singed, out of the smoke and dust, clutching his packet of cigarettes!

During 2000/2001 Matt, aged 23, volunteered in Ireland as part of the Youth Development Programme set up by The Raleigh International Organization which included a three-month overseas stint, one month of which was to be spent as a Community Volunteer back in Northern Ireland. He was sent overseas to Central America, working on Volunteer Projects in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Matt felt the best part of this time was spent living with a family who had very little but gave so much, opening up their homes to the volunteers. Working together, Raleigh Volunteers helped build an earthquake proof grain store, produced handmade concrete bricks, taught in their schools and harvested their only monetary crop of sesame seeds, which were then sold to the environmentally friendly 'The Body Shop'.

Returning to Ireland in 2001, Matt went for a month as a volunteer to the small island of Rathlin off the northern coast of Ireland. Rathlin is a place of myth and history, a place where Robert the Bruce, in hiding in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, watched a spider persevere with rebuilding its web repeatedly, thus inspiring Robert to return and fight for his throne. In our modern day setting this quality of perseverance is not lacking in Matt. The steadily decreasing population of the beautiful island depressed Matt, but inspiration struck after an early morning jog during a Raleigh International Pre-Expedition Training Camp. He came up with the idea of the Rathlin Run, a challenging road race with a difference. The Raleigh Organization financially supported his proposal after his submission of a draft budget and plans, and many volunteers from Raleigh, as well as locals, helped to make this an annual event. It is unique in that all competitors need to be ferried across from the mainland to the starting line on Rathlin. The population has risen from 75 to 150 and the event is so successful that it has continued for 20 plus years and now competitors need to book early to be able to secure a spot in the race! (To discover more on the Rathlin Run go to [www.rathlinrun.com](http://www.rathlinrun.com)) This was the beginning of Matt's 'We can do it!' journey!

So where did the ROAR event in Williamstown come from? (Reservoir Outdoor Activity Race – [www.roarbarossa.com.au](http://www.roarbarossa.com.au)) A certain young man sitting in his car watching the rain falling on the waters of the Warren Reservoir and thinking about the Cairngorm Adventure Triathlon (CAT) in the Scottish Highlands and knowing, then and there, that we could have that adventure too because Rathlin was proof that it could be done. With the Williamstown Action Group 100% supportive Matt had done it again! He came up with the title ROAR because it is catchy and has the word 'oar' in it which pleased Matt, a keen kayaker.

In 2003, returning again to Northern Ireland, Matt applied to join the Scottish Police Force, respecting his parents' wishes that he not join the Irish Police and become a possible

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victim of The Troubles!

In the process of planning a much longed for trip to Australia with a friend, via work in the Nike Factory in Thailand where he would teach English, Matt learned that he had been accepted by the Strathclyde Police (now Police Scotland). Australia went on the back burner and at the age of 26 he emigrated to Scotland where he and wife, Faye, lived for 10 years in Ayrshire and East Renfrewshire. While Matt was policing in Paisley and Glasgow, Faye was working as a Primary School Teacher. During this time in Scotland their son Ethan was born.

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Eventually, Matt did make it to Australia! In 2012, the family of three, came to visit a friend of Faye's who had immigrated and, of course, as Matt puts it, Australia sold herself to them all! After a fly-in, fly-out week of assessments by SAPOL in February of 2013, Matt was told, within a few months, that he had been accepted and he chose to do a 9-month Course here, at the end of which he won the Communication Award! His first appointment in 2014 was to Whyalla for 2 years with a short time at Ceduna, followed, in 2016, by Coober Pedy where the 10-minute morning jog to work became a two-hour noodling event on the way home as the glitter of the potch opal on the track lured him in! Lachlan, the couple's second son, appeared on the scene during their time in Coober Pedy. Promoted to Brevet Sergeant, Matt was appointed to the single person police station at Lameroo for 2 years where he became involved in the community by setting up indoor soccer matches between the immigrant South African farmers, the locals, and the Primary School Teachers, in addition to coaching Aldi MiniRoos soccer. After a year and a half in his next placement, Roxby Downs, Matt applied for Williamstown, was successful and was warmly welcomed by the Community!

Although no longer "our policeman", Matt lives in the town, commuting to his new job as a Traffic Trainer for SAPOL. As an active community member and volunteer within the town, Matt is full of ideas and plans and many good Community events and schemes within Williamstown have the Matt "Light Bulb" shining on them. The location for the new Community Gardens is one, and these gardens are being developed by other community members as mentioned in the June Issue of the WillyWag! But did you know that the 2022 'Santa Dash', the 4km walk/jog/run from the South Para Reservoir and Reserve via Whiteman and Yettie Roads to the Town Christmas Fair on the school oval was down to Matt, who knew it could be a successful community event after having run in a similar one on the west coast of Scotland, The Reindeer Run, with his German Shepherd dog, Sheba, wearing her antlers and Matt dressed as a Christmas tree? They won too! This year our Santa Dash will have a 5km route and a 10km route and it will showcase many of Williamstown's Historic Buildings enroute. As Matt points out Christmas can be a sad time for many people suffering from loss or facing personal challenges, so last year the gold .

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coin donation for entering went to Beyond Blue, an organization close to Matt's heart. Matt is also involved in trying to implement safe walking links from Victoria Creek to Victoria Park and between the Conservation Parks like Hale, Warren, South Para and The Whispering Wall. Mirroring the strong group 'Friends of the Para Wirra' Matt has established 'Friends of Hale and Warren Conservation Parks' to care for our local parks. (Interested in being involved in Friends of Hale and Warren? Join Facebook group or email – [friendsofhaleandwarren@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofhaleandwarren@gmail.com)) A strong advocate for finding out what the youth of the town might like to be involved in Matt also promotes environmental activities through his role as a Reservoir Volunteer for S.A. Water. Through his family 'Barossa Outdoors' business, which involves kayaking, e-bikes and guided hiking, his kayak section is already opening up the waterways for people but keep an ear open for news of his proposed Barossa Boat Club which would be for local members only, and down the track could involve teaching young people boating skills. (If it was anyone else, I would not be mentioning things not already in place but – this is Matt Hale!)

In addition, through the family's eBikes business element Matt is already encouraging tourists to visit our town and for those who like to rise early on a Saturday morning Matt has established an 8am start for a 5km run/walk entitled The South Para Reservoir Park Run, fully organized by local volunteers. Matt, however, has another iron in the fire, and one which he has had firsthand experience handling during his times as a Police Push Bike Patrol Instructor, teaching Police Officers how to use bikes on patrol in Scotland, and also while in Whyalla, and then Coober Pedy, where he led a SAPOL initiative whereby children from disadvantaged backgrounds were gifted helmets to keep them safer on the roads. A much better gift than an Infringement Notice! In the Coober Pedy Youth Shed Matt worked as a volunteer helping and encouraging the youngsters to fix their own bikes. Watch out for signs of this eventuating here in Williamstown!

Matt is also a volunteer for Buddy Up Australia, a Wellness Group, which provides Emergency Responders, Veterans and Families with meet ups, purposeful volunteering and events. The Adelaide Charter started up earlier this year. As a volunteer Matt's job is to increase the membership of the Group within the Barossa, Adelaide Hills and Northern Suburbs so that Buddy Up are able to support the Community strongly. If you are interested there is a Buddy Up Poster with more information on it outside the Williamstown General (Deli).

Having ideas is great but Matt knows that without support ideas go nowhere. He cherishes the good relationship he has with The Williamstown Action Group and The Southern Barossa Alliance, whose honesty in accepting or rejecting proposals is valued by Matt. However, Matt's real sounding board, is his wife, Faye. Only the really good, doable ideas get past her!

Matt was a delight to interview, exhausting to write about – as this is just the tip of The Hale Iceberg. (Matt, incidentally, is a keen ice bather, a devotee of the Wim Hof method! He finds the 8 degrees, 12 and a half minute 'freeze' he indulges in has great health benefits, is therapeutic and calming!) A modest, cheerful, imaginative yet practical, friendly gentleman Matt is a great asset to this town he has chosen to call home! L.L.



# Wishing South Para Reservoir Parkrun a Happy 2nd Birthday ☐

South Para Reservoir Parkrun - Williamstown -  
What is South Para Reservoir parkrun?

A free, fun, and friendly weekly 5k community event. Walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate – it's up to you! A Great Family event which you can do with your children, grandparents.  
SORRY NO DOGS ALLOWED ON SA WATER LAND

When is it?

Every Saturday Morning. Starting time. 8. am though best to be there at 7.45 am for any updates

What does it cost to join in?

Nothing - it's FREE!

How to join in?

Visit the parkrun website to sign up and learn more about how to participate.

**\*\* About South Para Reservoir parkrun \*\***

South Para Reservoir parkrun is a FREE weekly 5km event for participants of all standards, which takes place every Saturday. It is not a race against other runners, but a 5k timed run and it can really be whatever you want it to be, whether that's for fun or as part of a training plan.

It offers an opportunity for all the local community, regardless of age or gender, to come together on a regular basis to enjoy this beautiful park and get physically active into the bargain. We want to encourage people to run, jog or walk together irrespective of their ability - this event is truly open to all and best of all it really is FREE!

Taking part is easy - just register through the parkrun website before your first ever parkrun. The great thing is that you only ever need to do this once! Then just set your alarm for Saturday morning and get yourself there!

So, whether you are a complete novice looking to get yourself started on your own 'running journey' or a seasoned athlete wanting to use this as a part of your training schedule, you're welcome to come along and join your local parkrun.

Location: South Para Reservoir parkrun, Williamstown, Barossa, SA 5351, Australia

Cost: FREE

South Para Reservoir parkrun started on 5th June 2021. Since then, 798 participants have completed 2,439 parkruns covering a total distance of 12,195 km, including 341 new Personal Bests. A total of 129 individuals have volunteered 767 times.



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## Southern Barossa Coffee & Chat

Our last Coffee and Chat  
was at the Monkey Nut  
Café. Cant thank the  
staff enough for their

hospitality! We were fortunate to have a very  
special lady in our group Sue Parkes visit us  
for a short while we were there. Sues hus-  
band very kindly brought her to join us for a  
short time. Our love and prayers are with you  
Sue and hope it wont be too long for you to be  
back with us!

Our next catchup is on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July at  
10.30am at the Corner Store at 31-33 Queen  
Street Williamstown.

We always look forward to this visit!

We are always happy to see new faces from  
the Southern Barossa towns which include  
Lyndoch, Rowland Flat Williamstown,  
Rosedale, Sandy Creek and Cockatoo Valley  
so if you have a spare hour or two we would  
love to have you join us. If you require further  
information please contact Judy on  
0413606565.



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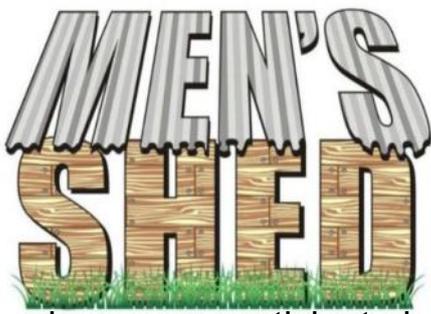
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## SOUTHERN BAROSSA MEN'S SHED

The Men's Shed is a concept which is growing in popularity and increasing in number in Australia and around the globe. It provides an outlet for men, much in the same way that the backyard shed has in Australian culture over many years. The Southern Barossa Mens Shed (S.B.M.S) welcomes men from all walks of life to attend our

Shed, you can participate in a range of activities in the workshop if that is your desire or you can simply turn up for 'a cuppa' and socialise with others in a non-pressured setting. The Mens Shed does not follow a strict format but it does encourage fellowship.

Projects are also undertaken which benefit the community.

Making or repairing furniture or homewares or toys, mending and fixing motors, renovating bicycles, arts and crafts, all examples (but certainly not the limits) of the activities that can be undertaken at the Shed depending on the knowledge and skillset of the members. There is an emphasis on 'having a go' with projects but there is no pressure, it is most important for men to enjoy the activities, have a sense of belonging and feel happy in the Shed environment.

Men with an interest in the activities of the S.B.M.S. are welcome to attend on Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 9am-1pm. at the rear of Wirraminna Little Shop of Treasures on Queen Street, Williamstown.

We have been successful in obtaining a grant of \$3,650 from the Federal Government via Social Services. This has enabled us to purchase a new bandsaw and fittings. Grants like this add to the diversity of activities our men can enjoy.

Also, thanks to The Barossa Council for a grant of \$3,000 to enable a cement pad in front of the shed making wintry access for those with disabilities. Thanks to all who helped make this possible.

Men from the shed continue to enjoy a special lunch on the last Wednesday of each month.

Any enquiries relating the shed, membership or the hire of the meeting room (attached to the workshop) can be directed to Glen Venning on 0409 675 937.

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# WILLIAMSTOWN AMATEUR PLAYERS HONOUR

## MARGIE RICHARDS

March 2023 the members of Williamstown Amateur Players held their AGM and unanimously voted to honour long time member Margie Richards with a Life Membership. This honour is bestowed on nominated members for longevity of service and dedication to our group. Margie has been a member for over 30 years and in that time has written and directed 9 pantomimes, no mean feat. These included 'CINDERS SILVER SLIPPER' which commemorated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Players and 'THE WINTER QUEEN' which was our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary show (albeit late because of covid.) Margie is one of our strongest supporters always volunteering to help with costumes and props and with over 30 years of appearing on stage playing too many characters to mention; the Queen both good and bad, Widow Washalot, an ol' cowhand, a Prince, a Duke and so many fairies, an ugly sister whose rendition of "Dancing Queen" with Hilda Foad was truly a memorable moment, one of the Village People with a unique version of Y.M.C.A. Margie, we thank you for the energy and enthusiasm you brought to all your roles. A club doesn't run itself and Margie has held various committee positions. Wardrobe mistress for many years, a thankless task with our group - so many costumes and props; so little room - Publicity Officer and Vice President. Congratulations Margie and thank you for your dedication and service to our group. Your Life Membership is well deserved.

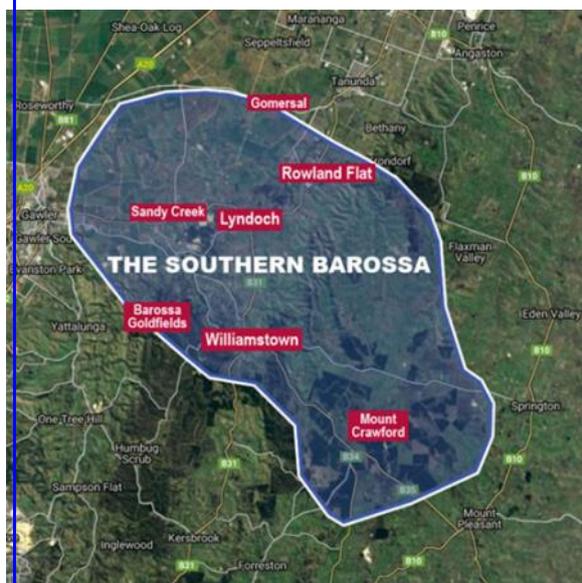
## Pioneers Mens Gathering

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023  
From 2pm \$5.00

**"Projects and Future Aims of the  
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Phone Ron 0417 096 234 or  
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**\*Venue - RSL/Senior Citizen Hall  
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services at Williamstown -**

- July 5<sup>th</sup> 10am Holy Communion
- July 9<sup>th</sup> 10am St Boniface Patronal  
Festival Nuriootpa
- July 16<sup>th</sup> 10am Holy Communion
- July 23<sup>rd</sup> 10am Holy Trinity Church  
Lyndoch
- July 30<sup>th</sup> 10am St Peter's Patronal  
Festival

Phone Parish Priest  
Steven de Kleer 85642087

Or Church Warden  
Pam 0427 246 382

## Knit and Natter

"I'm off to interview the ladies at Knit and Natter!" I said to a friend.

"What's that?" she asked.

"Don't know! That's what I'm going to find out."

And find out I did! It is simply a group of lovely ladies who get together to knit and chat while they are doing it! It began with a notice placed in The WillyWag Newsletter by Prue Hart almost 10 years ago, in the September of 2013. Newly retired and living in Williamstown Prue had commuted to work so did not know many people. Having seen a similar type of group in action in Stirling she thought that this might be a good way to meet people and share knitting skills. Starting with just 4 ladies, the group has had about 12 different members over the years and stands at about 9 at the moment, with 5 in attendance on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, a miserable, cold, wet day with continuous drenching rain and puddles everywhere. The Lord Lyndoch has become their meeting place following the closure of Te Aro in Williamstown and inside this cosy restaurant the ladies were warm and busy. Pat was knitting a jumper and wearing a beautiful one she had just finished, Monica was knitting a beanie, while Beth was embroidering a cushion cover. Although they mainly knit for themselves after a visit from a speaker from "StandBy", Kit was knitting small bears for this charity that supports anyone impacted or bereaved by suicide. The recipients are told that the bear has been knitted by a community member who cares. Prue was knitting a blanket for a South Australian charity called "Handmade Heroes", and once a year she sends, through another group, little knitted jackets and jumpers to India.

The most visible sign of these ladies' workmanship is on display on Remembrance Day each year on the side of Williamstown Institute Hall. A huge net, inside a frame made by The Men's Shed, holds hundreds of vivid red poppies knitted by the Knit and Natter Ladies. Each lady did 60 poppies and they have since provided the Lyndoch Institute with many poppies for their net display too.

Having gathered my information, I sat back, drank my coffee and listened to this group who have become firm friends. They talk about anything and everything, from good chinaware to submarines lost under the sea, to erratic phone reception and new watches, to family doings, aged care, their health and the Services provided within the Barossa! It was great! That day we had a Protea Grower there, and amongst the retirees - a Radiographer, a Registered Nurse, a Canteen Manager/Op. Shop Volunteer, and a Medical Administrator.

The Group takes no minutes, collects no money and has no rules. They can knit, sew, embroider, crochet, whatever - or not! Members come from both Lyndoch and Williamstown and favourable comments are frequently made by those who come across them 'at work'. They meet every Thursday from 1pm to 3pm at the Lord Lyndoch Restaurant so stop by and have a natter with them too or contact Prue on 85246437 if you would like more information. L.L.



# Barossa welcomes 2024 Santos Tour Down Under



The Barossa Council

For release 26 June 2023

Barossa Mayor Bim Lange is thrilled about the return of the 2024 Santos Tour Down Under, saying the Barossa will welcome not one Stage, but two.

"We're really excited that the entire Barossa region will be showcased over two spectacular days of racing," he said.

"We know from experience Tanunda will roll out the welcome mat for the Ziptrak Men's Stage 1 from Tanunda to Tanunda, which features three local loops and offers some great vantage points at Seppeltsfield, Greenock, Nuriootpa, Angaston and Mengler's Hill," he said.

"The Men's Stage 3 race also features plenty of Barossa action as riders tackle Lyndoch, Williamstown and Sandy Creek in the south as well as Mount Pleasant and Springton.

"This is another great opportunity to put the Barossa on the world stage, and we couldn't be happier Race Director Stuart O'Grady has yet again recognised our capacity for hosting this major international event."

The Santos Tour Down Under is taking place in Adelaide and regional South Australia from 12-21 January 2024. It will feature nine days of elite racing for men and women.

Please visit [tourdownunder.com.au](https://tourdownunder.com.au) for more information.



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*Thanks so much to Russell Somerville for sharing his stories with his pigeons at the June meeting due to Shana's family dilemma's.*

So....This months chat....

*With Shana Green – talking about community garden prospects happening in our community*  
**OR....**

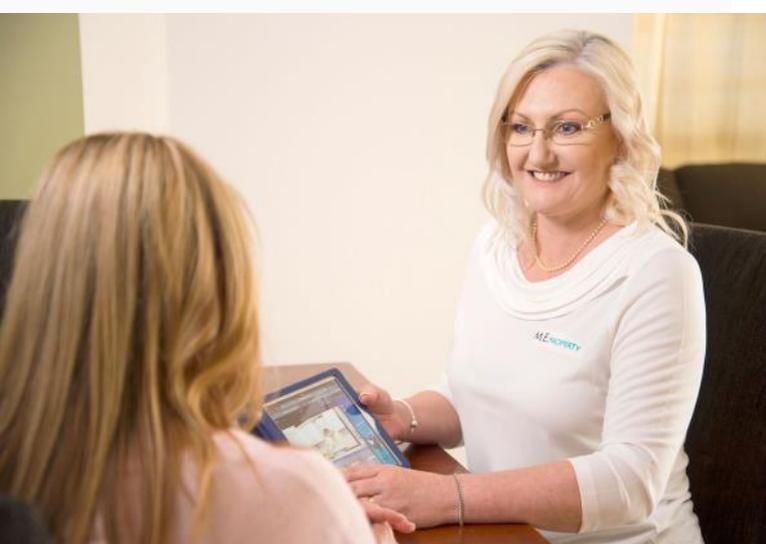


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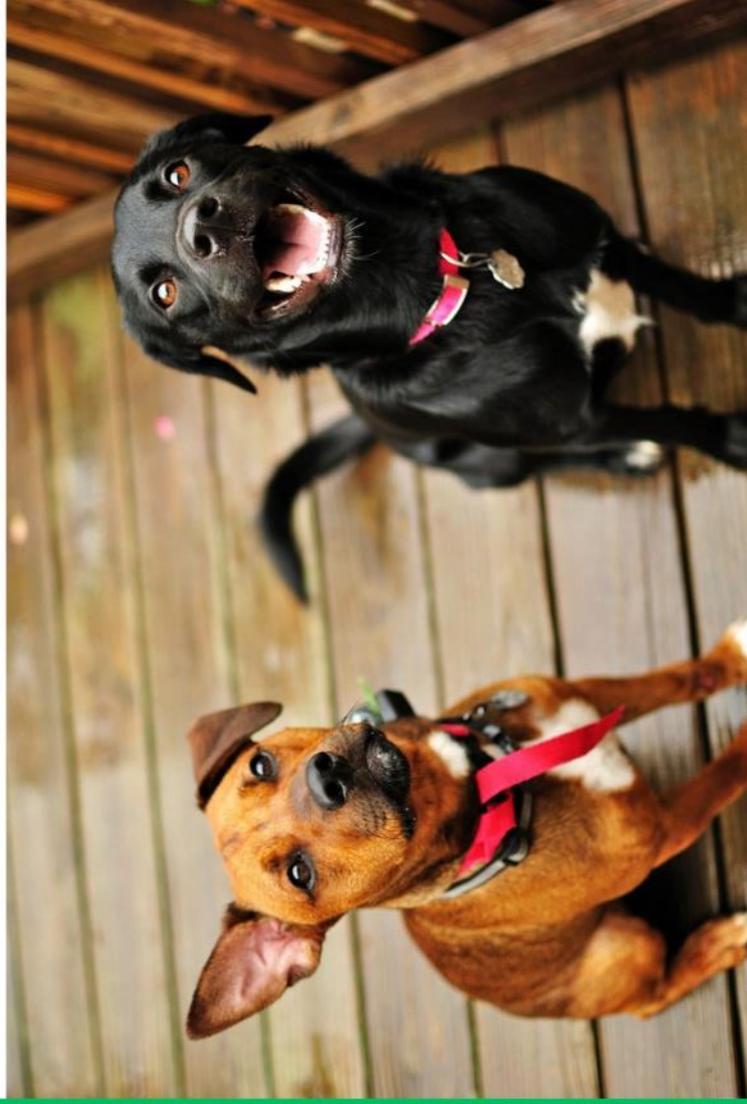
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