

Puppy Love

September 2019

Newsletter of *Belle Amore Dachshunds*

Volume 9, No.9



The Tail Tells

A dog's tail serves lots of functions, such as acting as a rudder in the water when swimming and acting for balance when a dog is running. It is one of his most effective means of communication. It tells us when he is happy or anxious, he even uses it to say "let's play." Tendons in a dog's tail allow him to move his tail in any direction and even control the tip separately from the rest of his tail. The direction and height of the wag can each have separate meanings. Dogs who lower their tails are usually feeling anxious, afraid or submissive, whereas a tail pointing upward can indicate excitement or arousal, a tail pointing straight out is a sign of curiosity or aggression. Meanwhile, a tail's movement back-and-forth can also express emotion. That's because each side of a dog's brain controls the opposite sides of his body. The left side of a dog's brain is in charge of emotions like love and attachment. The right brain controls feelings like fear and anxiety. So, when a dog is happy his left brain causes his tail to swing right and when he's scared his right brain tells it to sway left. We know dog's tuck their tail between their legs when they are afraid or humbled, but you might be surprised to learn this action is used to protect his genital area. When you are outside with your dog you may notice he is wagging his tail for no obvious reason that you can tell. The reason is because you don't speak dog. It is common practice for a dog to wag his tail while outside to release his scent so other animals can know he's there! The more dominant the dog, the higher he will raise his tail to spread his scent.



Finnegan is home being loved by his wonderful family in South Carolina.



This is Important!

It's important to remember your dog's tail is an extension of its backbone and a sensitive part of his anatomy; a tail has working parts of bones, muscles and nerves. A limp tail, one that cannot wag, is an obvious indication that your dog has injured his tail directly or an area connected to it. A tail can be sprained, broken, dislocated or have nerve damage. Injury to the tail can be quite painful and interfere with a dog's normal body functions. If your little doxie has a limp tail seek medical intervention immediately.



Puppies chew their tails to explore their body parts and initially consider their tail a toy rather than anatomy. Older dogs usually chase their tail because they are bored, at the same time, startled when they catch it.