

## Suffield Veterinary Hospital March 2019 Patient of the Month

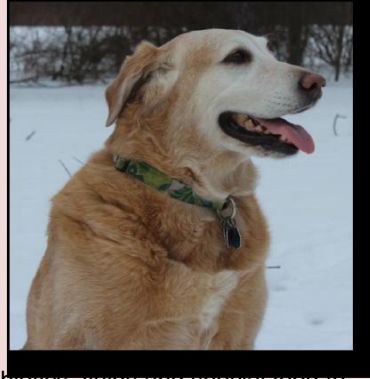
**M**eet Sofie, a golden retriever owned by the Gavitt family of Windsor. She'd had a rough life in Alabama before being brought north to the Gavitts by Sunshine Golden Retriever Rescue. The full story of her rescue and wonderful new life in Connecticut, in Sofie's own charming words, doesn't fit here, but can be found on our website [www.suffieldvet.com](http://www.suffieldvet.com). This adorable photo was taken by our vet tech/ photographer Jen Haire.

In August Sofie was brought to Suffield Vet because she wasn't acting herself. She was lethargic, developed a fever and lost her appetite. She also was drinking much more water than usual. A series of blood tests revealed that she had an infection involving her liver and kidneys. Her owner told us that Sofie loves to run in neighboring parks and swim in ponds. This piece of the puzzle led us to test her for Leptospirosis, a serious infectious disease affecting dogs, wildlife and even people! Sofie had contracted this infection by swimming in or drinking contaminated water with urine of other infected animals such as deer, raccoons, opossums, skunks or rats.

Leptospirosis can be a difficult disease to diagnose because the infection can target many organs in the body and cause a variety of symptoms. If the disease is caught early a course of proper antibiotics, fluids and special food to help restore kidney and liver function can eliminate the infection and keep your dog from becoming a carrier of this zoonotic disease. Fortunately, Sofie is back to her old self but must stay on a prescription kidney-friendly diet for the rest of her life.

The best way to protect your dog from this disease is with an annual Leptospirosis vaccination. Dogs at higher risk for Leptospirosis include most dogs with variable life styles. Working dogs who run in rural areas, suburban dogs that live near water or share their backyard with wildlife and even city dogs that may be exposed to rodents are at risk.

For putting a face to Leptospirosis — and a cute face at that — we are pleased to name Sofie our March 2019 Suffield Veterinary Hospital Patient of the Month.



### *Suffield Veterinary Hospital*

Dr. Ann Huntington v Dr. Anita Sabellico

Dr. Dawn Burke v Dr. Daniel Rothbart

577 East Street South (Route 159), Suffield, CT 06078 (860) 668-4041

View all of our Patients of the Month on our web site, [www.suffieldvet.com](http://www.suffieldvet.com)

### **Her Full Story**

Can you remember the best day of your whole life? I can! It was \_\_\_\_\_ when I stepped out of a big van after a very long car ride into freezing cold air and onto the ground covered in flaky white stuff...snow! That was the day that Sunshine Golden Retriever Rescue brought me to my mom and my forever home. I left my rough life in Alabama behind and became Sofie Gavitt of Windsor, CT!

I'll tell you what, even though that snow was cold, I haven't looked back once! My life is so much fun! The only problem is that I have so many hobbies, it's hard to fit them all into my day...well that, and after a couple hours people get tired of throwing the ball for me to fetch. Don't ask me how someone could get tired of fetch, it baffles me every day. Lucky for me, if there's no tennis ball, there's usually a squirrel to chase! When I'm not fetching, I love to swim. I'll swim anytime, anywhere! I've even been swimming in the salt ponds at the beach in Rhode Island.

Let me be clear, I love activities, but I also love to relax. Some of my favorite pastimes involve my cozy dog bed in front of the fireplace and a brand new squeaky toy. The best part about relaxing is the belly rubs. One of my best tricks is to fetch my mom's slipper from her bedroom. I know that whenever I bring them back to her, it means she's ready to wind down and give me all the pets before bedtime.

Speaking of my mom, one of the things I love most is my people. Ever since I moved to CT, I have more friends than I ever imagined! Some of my favorite people are the doctors and staff at Suffield Veterinary Hospital. I'm not just saying this because they picked me to be the pet of the month, they also saved my life! I'm recovering from a bacterial infection that made me feel awful for a long time. I have my people...my mom and the veterinarians at Suffield Veterinary Hospital to thank for

getting me healthy again! I was always a happy dog, but now, I'm back to my old self and let me tell you, I can't wait for all the fun that Spring has in store for me!