

## Suffield Veterinary Hospital April 2012 Patient of the Month

Meet Matilda, a Jersey Giant owned by the Harter family of North Granby. Matilda's magnificent photo was taken by Lori Radke of Enfield.

*"Hi! My name is Matilda Harter, born on May 26, 2011. My parents got me from Holcomb Farm in West Granby, along with two Speckled Sussex chickens, one Polish and one Araucana! When I was a chick, I danced around with these friends in a small box in the laundry room. When I grew older, I moved out to the big coop and met nine more chickens who were much bigger than me. But as I grew, I became more like the other ones but even bigger! Now I am a proud bird of Granby 4-H, being shown in fairs and special events!"*

On the evening of January 30, the Harters went out to do their daily inspection of the chickens, and noticed Matilda standing still in the snow with red droplets of blood all around her. They immediately isolated her and called Suffield Veterinary Hospital. If it hadn't been for the snow on the ground, they probably would have never found out that there was a gaping hole in her lower abdomen! At SVH, Dr. Anita Sabellico and her team cleaned and stapled Matilda's wound shut, and did an amazing job. Dr. Sabellico says she believes that Matilda was being bullied by another hen in the coop for some time. That other hen, "Red," is now staying at a friend's farm in West Suffield. Because of the location of the injury and her stoic nature, the size and severity of her skin wound was hidden from sight. There



was a fist-sized piece of skin and underlying tissue missing from her lower abdomen and pelvic area. With only a local anesthetic, Matilda allowed Dr. Sabellico to cleanse and debride away the necrotic tissue and close the wound with skin staples. When Matilda went home, wearing a stylish turquoise vest to protect the wound, the Harters pampered her in their heated laundry room with new baby chicks at her side. After about a month and several more checkups, Matilda's wound healed beautifully, with a mere scar left in its place. The Harters were diligent with nursing care and frequent bandage changes at home, and this contributed greatly to Matilda's recovery.

Now Matilda is laying on a normal schedule, and is out playing with her near and dear chicken friends. The Harters give special thanks to Dr. Sabellico and staff for making Matilda blissful again!

For being such a terrific chicken, and for putting up with all of those bandage changes, Suffield Veterinary Hospital is proud to name Matilda our April 2012 Patient of the Month.

### *Suffield Veterinary Hospital*

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