

## Suffield Veterinary Hospital May 2014 Patient of the Month

Our May Patient of the Month is Presley, a five-six year old Dachshund mix, pictured in this fetching photo taken by Lorilee Photography of Enfield. Here is Presley's story:

*Laurie Simpson, Westfield State University Director of Advising, has a lot on her academic plate. Last fall, Laurie and her cousin Pat were connecting on Facebook, talking about their favorite concert ever (Elvis Presley, 1975, in Springfield), and that led to an unexpected union. Laurie's friend Pamela, who is a foster mother for rescue dogs, sent her a heartfelt message: "I have the dog for you." "His name is Presley." Within days, Presley was shipped from Florida and arrived at Laurie's home in West Springfield just a few weeks before Thanksgiving. Laurie, who couldn't help falling in love with Presley, says, "He's found his forever home."*

**A message from all of us at Suffield Vet:** Presley is an adorable dog who showcases a troubling problem that has escalated exponentially in the past 10 years — the influx of "rescue dogs" into New England from the southern states. In the recent past, when a family wanted a dog or a puppy, they usually went to local shelters, pet shops, or to breeders in the area. After interacting with and learning about the prospective new dog, they were able to make an educated decision about whether it was a good fit for their family.

Today the vast majority of new dogs or puppies we see are purchased sightunseen through rescue websites and travel up from the south in large buses or trucks filled with dozens or hundreds of dogs. These rescue groups run the entire gamut from truly legitimate, careful and caring through get-rich-quick schemes that are little better than puppy mills just using a different marketing plan. Many times the dogs arrive with parasites, nutritional deficiencies, and personality disorders due to lack of proper socialization. Most of these adoptions eventually work out fine, in large part due to the remarkable adaptability of dogs and the patient love of their new owners. But there are many hurdles to jump along the way that might be avoided by going to local breeders.

Presley was apparently used in Florida as a stud dog by a family that "raised" mixed breed dogs. Luckily for Presley, he ended up being taken to a good rescue facility and was fostered by Laurie's friend Pamela, who sensed that somehow Presley and Laurie were destined for each other! He arrived here with heartworm disease, though a paper accompanying him said he had been tested and was negative. Laurie has the perfect home — quiet, patient, willing to work hard to correct some of his negative behaviors. Treating heartworm disease is expensive and takes several months, but she is happy to do it for him.

With a tip of the hat to wonderful owner Laurie Simpson, we are proud to make Presley our May 2014 Patient of the Month.



### *Suffield Veterinary Hospital*

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