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**Siena College Poll: Special Pet Survey**

**New York Has Gone to the Dogs: 30% Currently Have a Dog, 20% a Cat; By 57 to 17% NY'ers are Dog rather than Cat People**

**88% of Pet Owners Speak to them as if Human; ¾'s Allow on Couch; 62% Sleep with Pets (at least once in a while)**

**Over a Third of Owners Spend More than \$1000 a year on Furry Friends**

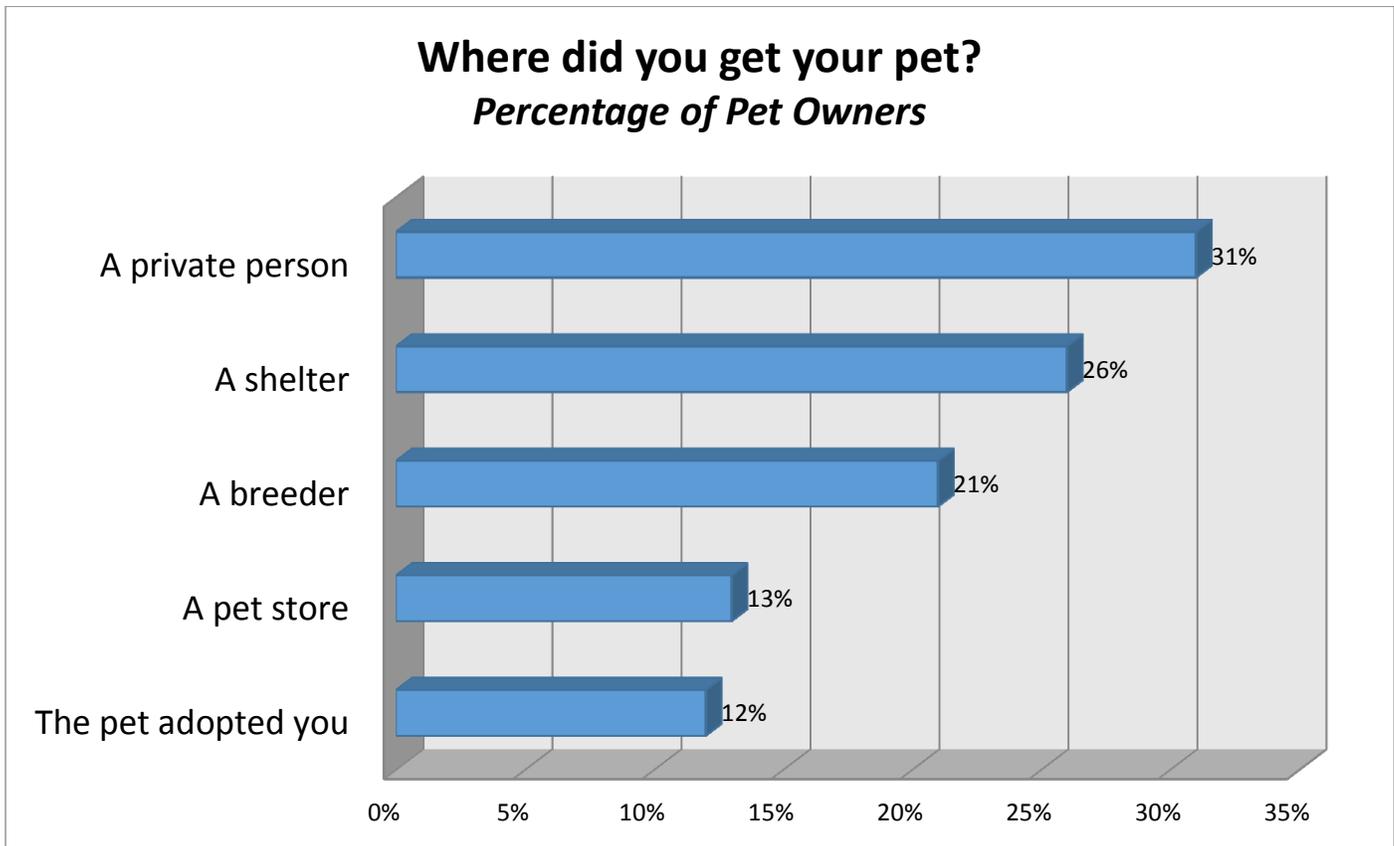
**Loudonville, NY.** Forty-two percent of New Yorkers currently have a pet as part of their household with 30 percent having a dog, 20 percent a cat and nearly one in ten having both, according to a new Siena College poll (SRI) of New York State adults released today. Forced to choose, 57 percent of all New Yorkers consider themselves a 'dog person' while 17 percent say they are a 'cat person'.

"We sure love our pets. Virtually all pet owners say that they speak to their pet as if it were a human being at least once in a while with nearly six in ten saying they do so all the time," according to SRI's Director, Don Levy. "And it looks like these four legged friends get the run of the house in many cases. Three quarters of all owners let their pets up on the furniture – nearly half admitting to all the time – and six in ten cuddle up at night with Fido – almost forty percent all the time."

While 27 percent of pet owners, either those with a pet currently or those that had a pet within the last five years, spend less than \$500 a year on food, vet visits, medicine, grooming, treats, toys or boarding, 34 percent spend at least \$1000 a year. Perhaps contributing to those expenses: 52 percent of owners buy their pets gifts some or all the time, 33 percent bring them to a groomer and 29 percent cook special food or meals for their pet at least sometimes. Thirteen percent have pet insurance and 11 percent have an invisible fence.

Twenty-six percent of owners obtained their pet from a shelter while the largest group, 31 percent got their pet from a private person, 13 percent from a pet store and 12 percent said that the pet adopted them. Seventy-three percent of dog owners but only 43 percent of cat owners have licenses for their pets.

This Siena College Poll was conducted September 1-28, 2015 by telephone calls conducted in English to 800 New York State residents. Respondent sampling was initiated by asking for the youngest male in the household. It has an overall margin of error of  $\pm 4.3$  percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame probability sample provided by Survey Sampling International of landline and cell phone telephone numbers from within New York State weighted to reflect known population patterns. Data was statistically adjusted by age, region, race/ethnicity and gender to ensure representativeness. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Dr. Don Levy at (518) 783-2901. For survey cross-tabs: [www.Siena.edu/SRI/Research](http://www.Siena.edu/SRI/Research).



*“This Siena Research Institute survey shows the important role pets play in people’s lives and how these pets are treated as a member of the family. Studies have continually shown the addition of a pet to your family has many benefits; they reduce stress, may cause you to become more active, and they teach children to be more empathetic. Perhaps most importantly, this survey confirms the popularity of adopting from your local animal shelter. Across New York State in 2014 over 60,000 pets found new homes thanks to people who adopted from shelters.” -- Brad Shear, CAWA, Executive Director, Mohawk Hudson Humane Society*