

# Good Happenings

News & Insights from the Ron Sitrin Team

## The Dog Days of Summer

The housing market has gone to the dogs!

### BY RON SITRIN

The weather is hot, the market seems a little lazy, and here in the DC area it really truly feels like that old saying – “The dog days of summer.”

That got me thinking. The more you look around, the more you realize how many people have pets. And a quick informal survey of our agents revealed another “ah-ha!” – a large percentage of our buyers these days are putting pet needs high on their must-have list when shopping.

Part of the reason is likely that so many households adopted a pet during the pandemic. Another reason seems to be that finding pet-friendly rentals can be a challenge, and the associated pet deposits and fees are weighing on renters. Finally, it’s Millennials – again – having an outsized impact on the market. According to a recent survey by the American Pet Products Association, Millennials are percentage-wise the most likely to have pets – and they’re also the most active homebuyers right now.

All that said, The Ron Sitrin team is still finding the

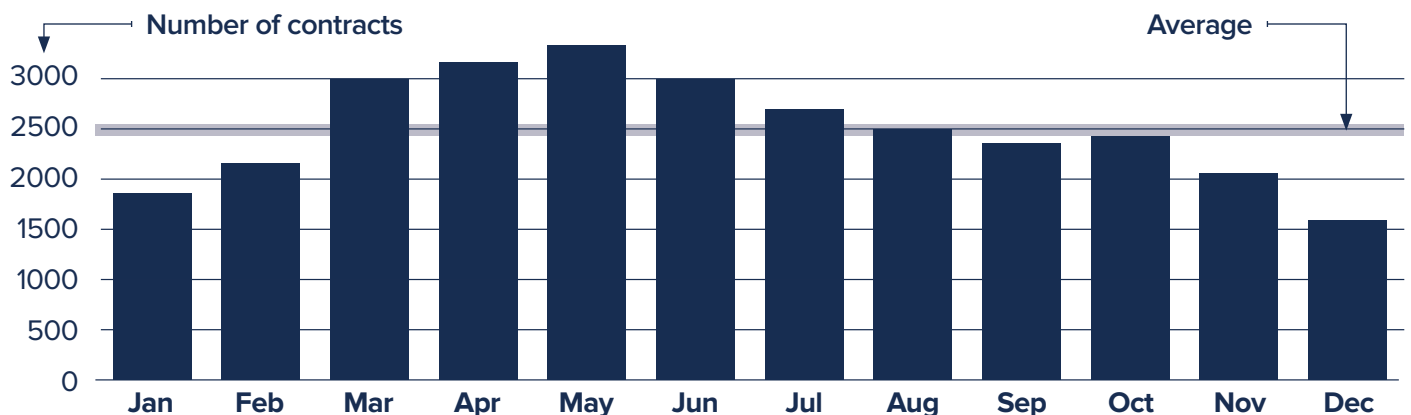


market to be busy this summer. It’s late in the traditional sense of the season but plenty of buyers are still looking and there are always sellers coming to market. We’re working hard to sniff out the right homes for our clients (and their pets!) and as always, it’s the well-presented homes at the right price that sell quickly.

In this issue we’re taking a walk through the issues near and dear to pet owners, and sharing some stories about our own four-legged family friends. Enjoy!

### Does the market really slow in summer?

Here’s the 10-year average of which month homes go under contract in the DC metro area. Despite the dog-days perception, August is still a good month for sellers to fetch a buyer.



# Priorities for the Four-legged

BY RON SITRIN

Just as buyers with school-age children look for homes in good school districts, pet owners have criteria they consider must-haves when looking for a property.

The number one request I get from prospective dog owning buyers is that the property must have a fenced yard, or a yard that can be fenced in. That's often a significant issue as it instantly rules out a lot of possibilities. It also might mean digging into HOA restrictions and the cost of a fence before committing to an offer.

The next factor is livability. Some larger pets need a lot of space. An active, 80 pound lab may feel a bit confined in an 800 sq. ft. condo. In addition to space, the ease of getting outside can be super important to the homeowner. For pet owners living in a high-rise, the stroll down the hall and elevator ride can get old real fast. We have clients that only look at first floor condos to help alleviate this problem.

Proximity to a dog park, trails or open spaces are a huge plus. Whether it's just a nice area to go on a long walk or a safe area to let the dogs off leash, dog owners love to let their dogs run around, play and sniff other dogs. I see so many groups of people

walking their dogs together while enjoying a nice conversation and getting a bit of exercise too. I think this really underscores how important location to walkable areas with other dog owners really is. Hershey and I made so many new friends just walking around our neighborhood and going to the nearby high school fields.

Mud rooms! They make the perfect location for dog food and water bowls. And after a rainy day, there's no better place to re-enter the house.

Looking down the pike, the newest trend I see is adding a dog-washing station in the mudroom. While this may seem lavish, for many it's way better than the back-breaking, water everywhere mess of using the kid's bath tub. Perhaps one day we will be marketing 4 bedrooms, 3 full human baths and 1 pet bath homes!

## Selling a Home with a Pet?

But before listing a house with a pet it's best to repair any pet damage, clean the home, and any odors. During showings put away pet toys and food/water bowls and, ideally, have your pet out of the house when the buyer arrives.

## Yes, Pet People are a Little Bit Crazy

Finding a house with a yard is one thing, but what else will people admit to doing for their pets? You'd be surprised... unless you're a pet owner yourself, in which case I'm sure you understand.

**39.29%** lived on a tighter budget to afford their dogs' expenses.

**13.96%** moved from an apartment to a house so their dog would have a yard.

**7.47%** stayed at a job they disliked because it allowed them to work remotely or had a dog-friendly office.

**6.78%** broke up with a significant other who didn't like their dog.

**5.25%** took a pay cut or accepted a position with fewer benefits to work remotely or have access to a dog-friendly office.

**4.57%** actually left a job they liked because another company let them work from home or had a dog-friendly office.

**36%** of dog owners reported that they would spend \$4,000 or more out-of-pocket on life-saving medical care for their dogs.

Sources: <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/pet-insurance/pet-ownership-statistics/>

# Pet-friendly places to take your Pup

**BY RON SITRIN**

It's summertime, and the last thing your dog wants is to be stuck at home while you're out having fun. I've found that many restaurants with outdoor seating welcome well-behaved dogs (always best to call ahead and check, of course) and big-box stores like Home Depot and Lowes welcome your leashed companion on those weekend home improvement runs.

My favorite thing by far, however, was taking Hershey on hikes. We loved working our way up and down the C&O canal, the Billy Goat Trail (sections B and C) and the Cabin John Trail near the one lane bridge. It was a treat for Hershey as she could pick up the scents from nature and always came home wiped out from the adventure.

Rock Creek Park, Theodore Roosevelt Island and the National Mall are great places for on-leash adventures too. Over on the eastern side of DC is the Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, both offer lots of natural beauty to check out while walking the pooch.

## Area Dog Parks

Let your dog unleash its inner K-9 by running free at a dog park. DC and Montgomery County offer plenty of options.

**DC Dog Parks**



**MoCo Dog Parks**



## Remembering Hershey



Dogs are such a special part of our families. They give us so much happiness and it's hard to imagine life without them. As pet owners, it's hard to accept that one day they will only be with us in spirit.

Walking around the neighborhood was our favorite activity. Hershey, all 72 pounds of her, always pulled me towards the other dogs we saw. She would start playfully prancing up and down, and in her gentle way make a new friend. She always got the other dogs wagging their tails and helped me make many new friends along the way.

Her 14 years with us were wonderful. During this time of reflection, I also remember many of her four legged friends that have also passed. They were all special and I'm grateful that they were a part of Hershey's life.



# THE **RON SITRIN** TEAM

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## In the Dog House, on Purpose

We love them like family... because they are! Homebuyers with pets have strong “must-haves” when it comes to finding a place to buy. We’ve fetched the numbers:

### The top 3 must-haves for pet families:

1. A fenced-in yard
2. Extra square footage and living space
3. Ease of accommodating “when nature calls”

# 25%

Nearly one-quarter of pet-owning buyers would pass on their dream home if it didn't work for their pet.

# 66%

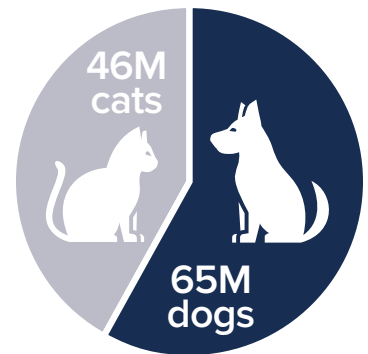
Two-thirds of pet-owning buyers would buy a home specifically because of features that cater to their pet.

# 87%

Percentage of pet-owning buyers that factor in their pet when choosing a neighborhood.

# 2/3

of U.S. households have a cat or a dog



Sources: Forbes & homebuyer.com

### Good Happenings

Good Happenings is a look at market trends, Ron Sitrin Team insights, great stories and good things we want to share. All content shared is approved by the clients.

Like any dog, we're always up for a car ride to go look at houses – we just can't promise that Ron won't stick his head out the window. Call today!

### The Ron Sitrin Team

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Have a question, story idea or comment? Give us a shout!

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*This is not intended to solicit the listing of other brokers.*

