



Secret Service Dogs: The Heroes Who Protect the President of the United States

Maria Goodavage

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In an age fraught with terrorism, United States Secret Service canine teams risk their lives to safeguard the president, vice president, their families, visiting heads of state, and a host of others. Unprecedented access to these heroic dog teams has allowed a fascinating first-time-ever look at a very special breed of heroes.

Wherever the president goes, there will be dogs. They'll be there no matter what the country or state. They'll be there regardless of the political climate, the danger level, the weather, or the hour.

"If you let down your guard on the job," says Special Agent Bill G., canine program manager, "it can change the history of the world." It's a burden Secret Service dog handlers take extremely seriously regardless of their specialty. Tactical dog handlers on the White House lawn, handlers whose dogs sniff for explosives around the world, and those who walk their amiable floppy-eared dogs up and down Pennsylvania Avenue all live one common mantra: Not on my watch. Or my dog's.

Secret Service Dogs immerses readers into the heart of this elite world of canine teams who protect first families, popes, and presidential candidates: the selection of dogs and handlers, their year-round training, their missions around the world, and, most important, the bond—the glue that holds the teams together and can mean the difference between finding bombs and terrorists or letting them slip by.

"These animals will gladly run into a hail of gunfire," says "Stew," a Secret Service ERT tactical canine unit supervisor. "All they ask in return is for their handlers to throw the ball with them, pet them, and talk to them in an embarrassingly high voice."

Secret Service Dogs celebrates the Secret Service's most unforgettable canine heroes. It is a must-read for fans of Maria Goodavage, anyone who wants a rare inside view of the United States Secret Service, or just loves dogs.

Secret Service Dogs: The Heroes Who Protect the President of the United States Details

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Author : Maria Goodavage

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From Reader Review Secret Service Dogs: The Heroes Who Protect the President of the United States for online ebook

Aisling says

I'm torn about this book because the topic was fascinating but the disorganization was annoying. The author is great at making it all relate-able and endearing but there was no consistent presentation and it was more like picking up 15 different magazine articles about the topic. Toward the end there were too many heart-tugging, dogs-who-died stories (we get it--handlers become attached to these amazing beasts). The best parts of the books were discussing selection of the dogs, the actual nuts and bolts of their jobs (e.g. how they are trained or transported by car/ plane) and the incidents were they did stop intruders. 4 stars for content, 3 for presentation.

Pamela Kramer says

“Secret Service Dogs: The Heroes Who Protect the President of the United States” by Maria Goodavage is not just a book about a few impressive dogs. Goodavage interviews the handlers, as well as those who began the canine program in the Secret Service, and she shares the stories in a way that is incredibly fascinating, very touching, and very real.

The readers meet Hurricane, who “thrives on belly rubs.” Hurricane is the dog who became a hero when there was an intruder on the lawn of the White House. His handler, Marshall, had to trust that Hurricane would pass by the other agents and get the intruder. In spite of being repeatedly punched, he didn’t give up. When Hurricane finally got hold of one arm, another agent sent in his dog who took hold of the other arm — and the intruder finally gave up.

Read the complete review at: [Secret Service Dogs](#)

Mike says

When we think of dogs we think of those creatures who are our best friends, who welcome us home and who give us unconditional love. For some, dogs are protection, even helpers in the fields....this book shows another side of dogs...as protector but as guard to the highest offices in the US...yes the president of the US and other important figures in Washington DC.

Maria Goodavage does an excellent job of telling the stories of several dogs (and their handlers) and how they handle guarding some of our most important people in the US. From their role as guards to how they go about their job, this book tells the good, the bad, and even the sad endings of these canines.

Christie Bane says

How could I not love this book? It's about working dogs! The only way it could have failed with me was if the author wasn't a good writer, and she IS a good writer. This book describes the selection, training, and daily routines of the dogs used by the Secret Service.

Naturally I was comparing their work to guide dogs' work. It is very different. For one thing, it's an entirely different type of dog. They want the dogs with insane drive and relentless, full-speed-ahead courage; we want moderate-energy dogs that settle well and don't require extraordinary management. Another difference is that these dogs may very well go their entire careers without ever being called upon to do what they've been trained to do, whereas a guide dog does what it's been trained to do nearly every single day of its working life. These handlers are top-notch in every way, while our dogs' handlers are generally average people with a range of dog handling ability.

The way in which these dogs are similar to our dogs is that... working dogs are cool. They just are. Just think, with all the progress humans have made in conquering the world, we still can't design anything better for herding sheep or finding bombs or guiding blind people than the dog. And even more incredible, dogs want to work with us! I don't think I will ever take that for granted, whether we're talking about guide dogs, detection dogs, protection dogs, or sheep dogs.

Jennifer says

Enjoyable quick read about the dogs used in the Secret Service.

Trish says

I really like dogs, maybe because they can be so loyal. They are so smart and so dumb at the same time that they are an unending source of intrigue. They are one link to the animal world that doesn't seem so remote as other pets can be. And I am intrigued with highly trained dogs, either in agility or in searching. Somehow I get the feeling that they probably love exercising to the limits of their abilities. The ones that don't like this stretching of their skills probably don't make the cut for difficult jobs.

The Belgian Malinois breed is the most common dog used for Secret Service training. They look like German Shepherds but have shorter hair and tend to weigh less. It is the only breed of dog used for the Emergency Response Team (ERT). Some dogs that are part of the Explosive Detection Team (EDT) are also Personnel Screening Canines (PSC) (all PSC are EDT), a job which is used in public buildings like the White House to check visitors. Some dogs are trained to walk through crowds and must have a measure of sociability as part of their natures. These are called Personnel Screening Canines Open Area (PSCO), or Friendly Dogs, or Floppy-eared Dogs: dogs which do not inspire fear. These dogs are often not German Shepherds or Belgian Malinois.

Selection of officers and canines for the relatively few dog units is very competitive, and it is usual in the Secret Service that an officer retires when his dog does, allowing other interested candidates to take a turn

within that group. A few unusual dog handlers have been exempted from this rule, but it is rare.

I have an advance e-book of this title, access granted through Netgalley, so I am not sure my reading experience will be the same as others who will purchase this title. There are lots of anecdotes and information in this book, too much really, and there is an unforgivable lack of organization that makes one feel as though one is wading through vast swathes of unedited and out-of-order interviews. Because I am interested in the material, I managed to get through it, but it was an exasperating struggle.

On the other hand, reading the manuscript is excellent practice for an aspiring editor to see what is involved in producing a decent piece of work from massive amounts of lightly-handled raw material. Whipping this manuscript into shape would require a huge investment of time and skills, but the end result could be worthwhile. It might even get you a job with a publisher, if you shared the before and after.

Kim. E. says

This book, at onset, appears to focus on the process these officers undergo to protect the president of the United States, and does so to the most part. However, time circles within himself, as does the stories about particular handlers and their relationship to their canine partners.

The pride and honor that both the human and the canine partner take in protecting the White House, it's occupants, and the world nearby is one of deep pride and one they take a deeper responsibility in than most of us will ever understand.

Learning how these dogs are selected and trained initially in Indiana, then the extra training they undergo once they are selected for the White House and secret service is deeply examined in this book, and one I really learned and was impressed by. I've been to the White House, but not since a special team was held behind a curtain as guests entered, a fan gently blowing their odor over to this secret room specially trained to notice bomb or other equally dangerous smells that could kill silently. Or that there are some dogs purposely placed around the area within tourists as another level of supervision, considering that these teams looked friendly and warming to the tourists.

This book examined some of the failures in security, such as when a man actually reached the inside of the White House 10 minutes after President Obama and his daughters flew off the grounds, or about a couple other fence jumpers that were covered by the news around the world. The handlers did not shy away from how deeply ashamed they were on these laxes, and the entire secret service underwent hours of examination for causes and ways to improve. Despite current popularity to jest or criticize these departments, it is clear how much day and night these workers take to ensure there is no success in a breach.

The personal relationship between the canine officers and their partners is explored in depth, and emotional at times, but if I had a choice, I would want one of these teams next to me every day of my life.

Kimberly Burton says

You will cry the ugly cry...amazing!

Bea Charmed says

I love reading stories about dogs, always have. I also enjoyed Goodavage's previous book, "Top Dog: The Story of Marine Hero Lucca" so reading this was a no-brainer.

I was curious, and excited, to learn more about the dogs who protect the president and the president's family. I did learn about that but it was disjointed and disorganized. There was no organization; she jumped around and meandered. The book lacked focus; the broad subject of the Secret Service canine unit was the overall focus but she had trouble narrowing it down and examining the topic. It got confusing at times. I also missed pictures. I understand that there were security reasons for the lack but they were missed nonetheless.

On the plus side, we meet many dogs and handlers, current (at the time of writing) and former. The dogs are varied and full of personality and the insights from agents and handlers, both on the dogs and their work, was fascinating. Goodavage was granted access to people and materials and fills the book with details. But there was also a frustrating lack of details on certain aspects of the work. Again, understandable for security reasons but the lack was strong. On the flip side, towards the end of the book, Goodavage goes overboard with heartrending details concerning the illnesses and deaths of some Service dogs.

"Secret Service Dogs" needed better organization and less pulling of the heart strings, but it was an interesting, sometimes informative, look at the Secret Service, what it is and isn't, and the many ways they make use of dogs. I have new respect for the dogs and the people who work with them.

Mary Norris says

Absorbing book!

This is a well-written, inspiring look at the Secret Service's K-9 members and their work of protecting the president and family, vice-president and family, other dignitaries, the White House and other buildings as needed. Their roles are specialized and so is their selection and training, all well explained. I didn't want the book to end! The human agents' jobs are explained too, but their full names aren't given, just first name and last initial. The dog's name is always given. I did wonder if the author is related to the specialized kennel in northern Indiana which supplies these great dogs because of the frequent mentions of its name. I think the late great author of dog books Albert Payson Terhune would have written this dog book better, but we can't have everything. This writer gets a solid B+ even from prejudiced me.

Lori says

I won this book in the giveaways on goodreads. I am a big dog lover so this was an interesting book to read. These dogs are the service dogs that protect the White House. Although some of this book does talk about actually being at the White House or protecting the presidents outside of the grounds, It also talks of other subjects involving the dogs. like the work it takes to find the right dog for training and all the training involved in getting the dogs ready. The relationship between the trainer and dog. The heartbreak when one of

the dogs dies. A pretty good read if you want to learn more about dogs who protect the president of the USA.

Jessica says

This was my favorite book of all of them so far because it offered a glimpse into the world of something that I have always been curious about. I love animals in general, so this book was sure to be loved by me. I loved the way that the author combined multiple true stories from many different dogs and their handlers to make this book. I also loved this book because I learned a lot of new things. I think that I liked this book so much because I found everything to be interesting. Of all of the books that I have ever read, this was one of the ones that I desperately wanted it to go on forever.

Kyle Tapper says

Title: Secret Service Dogs: The Heroes Who Protect the President of the United States

Author: Maria Goodavage

Date of Publication: October 25th 2016

Genre: Biography

Setting: The setting of this book is Washington, D.C. around the White House.

Main Characters: the main characters of this book are the secret service dogs and their handlers that serve the White House.

Brief Plot Summary: The book, Secret Service Dogs, The Heroes Who Protect the President of the United States is a book about the service dogs of the White House and their handlers. Each chapter discusses a different service dog and their handler. The book goes in depth about the kennel that the dogs come from, the initial training they go through and the intensive training the handler and service dog do together. It was very interesting to know and understand the different types of service dogs that service the White House. There are 3 different type of dogs, explosive detection dogs, personnel screening canines and friendly dogs. Each type of dog is trained differently. Also, each category of dog needs to look differently. For example, the bomb sniffing dogs are typically German Shepherd or Malinois. The friendly dogs typically have floppy ears as these dogs protect the outside gates of the White House. These friendly dogs need to appeal to the public and not be intimidating to people. All these dogs also become the handler's family dogs and go home with the handlers every day. Therefore, it is very important that the bond is strong between the service dog and the handler. The dogs also go on international missions that the President go on to help protect the President.

Central Themes: The theme of this book is hard work, dedication and training pays off in the end.

Personal response: My personal opinion of the book was it was a good read. I liked that the chapters were about different topics and characters. It was easy to follow along within the book. Also, I am studying veterinary science in school so it was interesting to read about the training of the different types of White House service dogs. Having visited the White House several times, it was interesting to get an inside view of the background of the service dogs. I enjoyed reading about the traveling the service dogs do as well. The one aspect of the book that I did not like, was the deaths of many of the dogs both in service and of old age.

Melissa Michelle says

It's a really great book. I love reading books about animals, especially those who are in the military, in the police department, and in the Secret Service! It was a great read and I would definitely read it again!

Highly recommended!

Lisa McCubbin says

Excellent book about the K-9 unit of the Secret Service and its importance to the mission.
