



Cadillac & LaSalle Club Potomac Region Caddie Chronicle March 2007



***PRESIDENTIAL LIMOS
STORY BY VINCE TALIANO
PHOTOS BY DANIEL JOBE AND VINCE TALIANO***



Vince Taliano and Daniel Jobe with the Presidential Limo

Living in proximity to the nation's capital has its privileges. It is not all traffic jams and high cost of living in the Washington, DC area. This is the world's most powerful city and there are reminders of that everywhere, even more so since 9/11. For me, the most recent reminder occurred a few weeks ago when Daniel Jobe invited me to accompany him and his friend Mark on a tour of the United States Secret Service facilities, which included viewing one of the Presidential Limousines. I was thrilled to attend because I know it is not an opportunity afforded to many.

As impressive as the Presidential Limousine looks in pictures, pictures do not do this car justice. There is nothing that compares to standing next to the car itself. I think it is safe to say that Daniel, Mark and I were in awe of the car.



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Out-of-service Cadillac Limos used for training



The tour began with a morning visit to the Secret Service's Training Academy in Suburban Maryland where cars taken out of service are housed and used for training. Only Daniel was able to participate in the first half of the tour, which included viewing the "older" limos and firearms training range.

There is no easy retirement for these Cadillacs as they are continuously put to the test in training exercises. And we are happy to report that they still pass with flying colors after years of dedicated service.

After completing the morning portion of the tour, Daniel met Mark and me for the afternoon tour of the Secret Service headquarters in Washington, DC. It began with viewing the Presidential Limousine and the other limousines that are currently in service. The new Presidential Limo was first unveiled at the 2005 Inauguration Parade.

It is based on the Cadillac DTS; although little of the original car remains. According to General Motors, it is handcrafted and dressed in a jet-black clearcoat finish. The vehicle is a considerably longer, wider and taller version of the production model. To maintain national security, the limousine is equipped with state-of-the-art protection and communication systems.



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The limo majestically displays its flags

The vehicle interior boasts seating with comfort and visibility for all occupants. A rear seat executive package features a concealed, foldaway desktop that can be deployed when conducting affairs of state. The rear seats have an adjustable reclining feature along with the adaptive seat system, which senses the position of the occupant in the seat and automatically adjusts the cushion for added comfort. Wood accents, rich blue leather and cloth complete the executive interior.

An embroidered presidential seal is positioned in the center of the rear seat back panel, as well as on each rear door trim panel. Presidential seals are also affixed to the exterior rear doors. The U.S. flag is placed on the right front fender, and the presidential standard is located on the left front fender when the president travels in the vehicle. Flush-mounted High Intensity Discharged (HID) spotlights illuminate the flags at night.

After viewing the limousines, we were escorted to various departments within the Secret Service headquarters to tour the state-of-the-art equipment and techniques that they use to fulfill the two major components of their mission: **protection** and **criminal investigations**. The Agents were patient with us as we asked a multitude of questions, like students on a field trip.

For me, the tour was déjà vu because I completed a summer internship with the Baltimore office of the Secret Service in 1989. The internship was a great experience and included a tour of their previous headquarters and the White House. But the highlight of my internship was attending a Baltimore Orioles baseball game with the Secret Service and George H.W. Bush. I had the privilege of being at the Landing Zone in Baltimore with the Secret Service and watched President Bush and his detail land in Marine One and proceed to Memorial Stadium in his Presidential Limo, which was based on a 1983 Fleetwood Limousine. That particular limo was replaced by a 1993 version and is now on display at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California.

After working in DC for awhile, you get accustomed to seeing and hearing motorcades from time to time, but nothing compares to seeing a Presidential Limo up close.



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**President George H.W. Bush landing and proceeding to Baltimore's Memorial Stadium
Summer 1989**