

A Day in the Life of... Officer Troy Cubberly, as told by his K-9, Macho

Officer Troy Cubberly is a K-9 handler for the Richardson Police Department and has been in law enforcement for 15 years. The K-9 unit began in the fall of 2007 under the jurisdiction of then Chief of Police Larry Zacharias, and consists of two teams: Officer Cubberly and his 4-year-old German Shepherd, Macho, and Officer Cory Wendling and his 3-year-old Belgian Malinois, Max.



S C E N E

9:00 pm

RUFF! I'm Macho. I mean, my name is Macho. I'm actually a very humble and obedient German Shepherd, but I suppose my owner gave me that name because I am a police dog. That's right—stick 'em up! RUFF!

My handler, Officer Troy Cubberly, along with my partner Max and his handler, Officer Cory Wendling, normally work nights doing surveillance on narcotic locations, including vehicles. None of our workdays are the same; in fact, there's nothing typical about our days!

Officer Cubberly and I work from 9:00 pm–4:00 am. When it's time to work, many other dogs and humans are winding down for bed.

My partner Max is a Belgian Malinois, and as fancy as that sounds, he's just as smart as I am but a year younger. We are dual-purpose dogs trained in narcotics detection and certified in patrol. Patrol certification means we're trained to search buildings, vehicles and open areas, and we're trained in tracking or loss of person or article searches. For example, if there's a shooting or stabbing and the police don't have the weapon, we can sniff and search the area for the evidence.

I can't forget officer protection. Max and I are trained to protect our handlers—they're our best friends after all!

Officer Cubberly and Officer Wendling are required by federal law to train us for a minimum of 4 hours a week, or 16 hours a month. Every Wednesday night we go up and train with the Allen and Carrollton police departments. (Sometimes the Allen and Carrollton police departments come here.) We have access to the schools and different storage facilities around town that we can go to at night.

Sometimes, we'll just stop at a park and train. I love those evenings! The park is my favorite place in the whole world.

After an hour or two of training, Officer Cubberly and I sure can work up an appetite. The only problem is by the time we're hungry, most of the patrol department has already gone home. They usually work from 2:00–10:00 pm. So, we have to hit a drive-thru.

I just love jumping in the back of Officer Cubberly's Chevy Tahoe. They took the back seat out and built a cage in there just for me! My favorite feature of the car, though, is the climate control system that can protect me against possible heat exposure. If the AC quits or for some reason the temperature gets too hot in the Tahoe, my handler has a pager on his belt and it'll start vibrating telling him there's a heat alert. Then, there's a fan that will automatically turn on, and if Officer Cubberly has to, he can push this button on his pager that makes the passenger door automatically open so I can jump out!

Now that is a rare occurrence but in case I never get to talk to you again, I thought I'd brag a little on how well the Richardson Police Department takes care of us.

By 4:00 am, it's time to call it a night, RUFF! Or should I say day?

Officer Cubberly takes me home and Officer Wendling takes Max home. We try to get a good day's sleep because we never know what the next night holds for us. ■

4:00 am

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