

My family's involvement in the greyhound industry spans three decades. My grandfather began raising, boarding and training greyhounds in 1987. Of course, I was not born until many years later, but by the time I was old enough to be involved, I loved many aspects of my grandpa's greyhound business.

I remember as a little girl, going out to the kennels with my grandparents. I would help them turn out the dogs for their afternoon exercise. It was especially fun when puppies were born. My cousin and I would ask to hold them, and we would come up with our own names for each of the little puppies. My grandpa had a training track for his greyhounds, so we always thought it was great fun to watch the dogs chase the lure around the track. I would cheer for my favorite dog to win. Some of my best childhood memories involve my grandparents and greyhounds.

As I grew older, I realized my grandpa's involvement with greyhounds went beyond the dogs I saw at his house. He has been a TGA member for over thirty years, and has served on the TGA board of directors for many years. He also was involved in legalization of paramutual wagering in Texas, and attended several hearings in Austin. He often talked about the greyhound industry with me, and I have always been interested in the different aspects of the business. In recent years, my grandpa has become involved in the kennel business at the dog track. This has been so exciting! Technology is great in this aspect. Although I live hours away from the track, I am able to watch when his dogs race! My family loves getting together and cheering as our dogs fly around the track.

In addition to my interest in greyhounds, my interest in agriculture and in particular, poultry, has led to my pursuit of a degree in Poultry Science at Texas A&M. As a freshman, I maintained a 3.4 GPA, and was very involved with many aspects of my major. I was elected as an officer of the Poultry Science Club, and also was chosen to be a member of the Ag Leadership Council. This will allow me the opportunity to help recruit new students for the Poultry Science Department. Leadership opportunities are extremely important in any industry, and this has been instilled in me since a young age. Watching my grandpa take a leadership role in the Texas Greyhound Association helped to show me the importance of industry leadership.

Although I am now away at college, I am still very involved with my family. I love keeping up with my grandparents' dogs at track kennels, and I talk to my grandparents often about how their greyhounds are performing. Greyhounds have played an integral role in my family's lives. I am grateful for the lessons I have learned from being around these beautiful animals, and for the lessons my grandparents have taught me from their industry involvement.

Laine Parker