

Meetings: Tuesday 12 Noon, Virtual Meeting

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OCTOBER IS ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MONTH

Happy Birthday	Happy Anniversary
Oct 29: Libby Nelson	

UPCOMING SPEAKERS:

Oct 26: Luke Vorstermans "Roll Over Hippo" Project	Nov 02: Shashanka Vangari Who's Who	Nov 09: Jack Ng - Whidbey Island Club Challenges for the restaurant industry during COVID
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OUR CLUB LAST WEEK'S MEETING:

President Elect **Chili Yalamanchili** presided.

Guests: **Travis Franklin** – proud dad of our speaker

Program: Larissa Franklin – Her athletic journey

- How she went from an 8-year-old from Maple Ridge dreaming of going to the Olympics to being a 2020 Olympic Bronze Medalist, as a member of the Canadian women's softball team.



LARISSA FRANKLIN'S BIO

- Born in Maple Ridge, B.C.
- Got her start in softball playing for the Ridge Meadows Softball Association and the White Rock Renegades.
- Began her college playing career at Indiana University – Purdue University Fort Wayne and set numerous school records
- Named First Team All-Summit League
- Set the single-season stolen base record with 27 in 32 tries.
- Larissa transferred to Western Kentucky University where she tied the school's longest hit streak at 15 games.
- She finished her collegiate career with 213 games played, a .398 batting average, 287 hits, 173 runs, 69 RBIs, 91 stolen bases and 70 walks.

- She has been a part of the National Team program since 2011, when she competed as part of Team Canada at the 2011 WBSC Junior Women's World Championship in Cape Town, South Africa.
- Known for her excellent slap game and incredible speed, she earned a spot on the Junior Women's National Team in 2011.
- Her first action with the senior team came in 2013 at the World Cup of Softball and the WBSC Americas Qualifier.
- Since then, she has been a mainstay in the outfield for Canada competing in multiple international events.
- **MEDALS**
- Pan American Silver Medalist.
- Pan American Gold Medalist.
- 2x World Bronze Medalist.
- **2020 Olympic Bronze Medalist.**
- Larissa is now part of the RBC Olympians program that is a national initiative comprising of 55 Elite Athletes, that provide support to Canadian athletes, helping them succeed in international competition, and as they transition into life after sport. As a part of this program, athletes like Larissa act as ambassadors, spreading Olympic values of teamwork, excellence, commitment and leadership to communities across Canada.
- FUN FACTS ABOUT LARISSA
- Favourite food? Cereal
- Favourite Movie? Happy Gilmore
- Pre-Game Ritual? Hacky Sack
- Future aspirations? Work for the Vancouver Police Department
- LARISSA'S HERO? Her Mom

The following are some highlights of Larissa's talk.

"I always want to make my parents proud and I like public speaking, but when I'm talking to a group from Maple Ridge there is always that little bit more of a pressure to make my parents proud. My parents had a lot to do with my success and my athletic ability, but there are so many people from Maple Ridge that have helped me. I am going to start my remarks on the outfield in the ball park at the Olympic games when we were one score away from winning the Bronze at the Olympics, and then go back to the beginning when I was eight-year-old Larissa."

Larissa told us of the last moments of the final game when they were in the lead by only one run, and what it was like to win the game (they won by a score of 3 to 2 against Mexico). She said that those watching the game "wouldn't have seen what it was that got us there- what was in my back pocket- and what was in my back pocket was Maple Ridge - the team behind the team ...".

Larissa's mom and dad always told her that the number one rule in sports was that you always have to finish what you started - you can't quit in the middle of the season. "So naturally - at the end of grade 7 season - I quit, although I didn't quit in the middle of the season. There were two reasons that I quit softball. Firstly, I wasn't enjoying the sport anymore and, secondly, I wanted to concentrate on figure skating. I was doing figure skating seven days a week and I wanted to focus on that. But the softball coach called me and said, 'I understand you want to focus on figure skating, but the invitation is open for you to come out to softball whenever you can'. This took the pressure off me, because I could continue my figure skating but still come out to softball... and my love of softball came back".

"Like in anything that we do, success is not linear. Whatever journey we are on, we're not always going to enjoy what we're doing. We will go into a pit, but then when we come out of the pit we will be up at the top... This is what our Olympic coaches put us through... We have our coaching staff and we have our support staff. They planned we would be in the pit a month before the Olympics, where we would be feeling the worst we could possibly feel. Physically, mentally, our bodies hurt, we were tired, people were ready to go home. We were to the point where we started bickering at each other for no reason. We knew they were putting us into this pit. They warned us - they told us that we were going to be feeling like crap so that when we came out on the other side we were going to be up 'here' (feeling on top)."

"There's an old saying that 'you can't be what you can't see'. At five years old I was excited to put on my softball equipment. I had one goal and I had no idea how I was going to achieve it. I wanted a pair of my very own ball pants and the socks to go with my softball jersey, because when I turned on the TV and saw major league ballplayers wearing their outfits, I wanted to be just like that."

"There is something on the walls of the schools in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, that produces inspiration of a magnitude far greater than what you would expect. As I walked down the halls at eight years old, I would stop and look up and I would take it all in. And what I saw was where I wanted to go. I wanted to be on the wall of Hometown Heroes so bad, and I focused on the posters of the people that I could relate to - Jody Barnes who was a figure skater and Leslie McPherson who played softball - and I thought to myself, how do I get on this wall? But I didn't know

how to get up there. It was one of those dreams that just seemed impossible."

"So when I got the call in 2014 during the last year of my university telling me that I had been chosen to be a Hometown Hero, I was so ecstatic. I don't think I knew how big that dream was for me. It was subconsciously ingrained in me by those years of looking up at those posters. I look back now as an adult and think of how much work goes into choosing those Hometown Heroes. The nomination, the people submitting the nomination, the selection committee sitting down choosing who is going to become a Hometown Hero, how you get the information out that nominations are available, what platform do you put it on, how do you reach all of these people, and then going through the printing process of making the posters, then someone has to go and take it to the schools, all those logistics and time and work. But as an eight-year-old, I just stood up and looked at the posters, I had no clue of all the work that went into it. But it is the community, the 'team behind the team', that makes those moments possible."

"When the pandemic hit, I didn't know how I was going to train for the Olympics or if it was even going to happen. I phoned the Maple Ridge Softball Association and ask if there was any way I could get a pitching machine, and they said yes. So, I picked up the machine and put in my backyard because I had one goal. I needed to become a better bunter. If I'm going for the gold medal, I need to be a better bunter. This is just another example of how my community was behind me to support my goal. At the Olympics, not only was I asked to "sacrifice bunt" (you're essentially putting yourself out to allow another player to move around the bases), I was asked to do it twice, and I did it successfully both times. I don't tell this story to say I became a better bunter - I tell this story because I had the backing of the Ridge Meadows Softball Association, of the community, at a time when it was stressful and worrisome. If I hadn't had that support, I might not have got one - let alone two - successful bunts at the Olympic Games. It really is the team within the team.

I think a person is a problem maker or problem solver. I see Rotary as a group of problem solvers. I see Rotary as a group that sees different problems in the community and asks, How can we solve this problem? How can we make our community better? "



Larissa Franklin celebrates with team mates after the win.

Fun Dollars:

Many members were happy about our speaker – “great” - “inspirational” - “fantastic”.

There was praise for Matt and Warren’s vaccination card project. A female lawyer (who will remain anonymous) said that it was a great project because downloading, making and laminating the cards kept a certain person (who just recently turned 75) “out of trouble”.

Larissa’ father, Travis Franklin, said he enjoyed meeting with our Club to hear his daughter speak, to which Ken Holland remarked that Larissa “will go a long way” (and added, to Travis, on having such an inspiring daughter, “I can’t believe you grew that!”).

Our fine master, Mark Forster, reminded us that World Polio Day is on October 24, and the reason that it is held every year in October is because that is the month of birth of the man who led the first team to develop a first vaccine against poliomyelitis, namely the American physician **Jonas Salk**. World Polio Day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago. (His actual birth date was October 28, 1914)

SEE OUR AD IN FRIDAY’S EDITION OF THE NEWS:

Mark also reminded us that prior to COVID, Patrick O’Brien used to grow and sell pumpkins to club members to raise money for polio. Mark assessed a fine on everyone who had not bought a pumpkin from Patrick this year (even though Patrick was not growing or selling them anymore!).



END POLIO NOW

World Polio day is Oct. 24

TAKE ACTION
ERADICATE A DISEASE FOREVER

ROTARY IN ACTION
How Polio Eradication Infrastructure Supported the COVID-19 Response

Rotary's PolioPlus program was the first initiative to tackle global polio eradication by vaccinating children on a massive scale. Rotary members have contributed more than \$2.2 billion and countless volunteer hours to protect nearly 3 billion children in 122 countries from this paralyzing and potentially fatal disease that still threatens children in some parts of the world.

For more than 30 years, Rotary has been joined in the fight to end polio by the formation of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). The infrastructure and staff set up for the GPEI have unmatched technical expertise and wide community networks to inoculate against polio. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the polio team was perfectly placed to mobilize a large-scale emergency response, and immediately redirected its staff and resources towards the worldwide response to COVID. Particularly vital to the COVID response is contact tracing and data management: tools that were developed and used by polio teams to trace contacts and monitor the spread of the poliovirus, and that were quickly adapted to trace thousands of suspected COVID cases. In most countries, contact tracing for COVID-19 is being totally managed by polio teams.

Rotary

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Today’s Quote:



Submitted by Laurie Anderson

And on the Homepage of our website.