

By Jan Schultz, The Imperial Republican News Editor

If you're like me, the minute you've returned home at night after work these past two weeks, the TV has been turned right to Winter Olympic coverage.

There's nothing like the Olympics to bring out a strong patriotism for one's homeland. It's hard not to feel good about your country when an American athlete stands on the top center platform, with a gold medal around his or her neck as the National Anthem rings out and the U.S. flag is raised.

It's hard to imagine the time and dedication Olympic athletes give to their sport. It should be an example to all of us on what the benefits of hard work can mean.

The work ethic of most Olympic athletes is something we all should strive for. While most of us will never be an athlete at that level, their dedication can be something we mirror in our everyday lives—by doing our best in our jobs, with our families and being a better neighbor.

Despite their finishes, it's been exciting to watch the successes of our athletes, as well as those who fell a little short. For those Olympians who do fall short of their goals, it shows us that loss is something we all experience. To do so graciously on an international stage such as the Olympics gives those athletes double kudos in my book.

There are so many great winter Olympic events, from the luge, to the bobsled, ice skating and one of the new ones this year, snowboard cross. That's the one where six racers at a time barrel down the hill on a snowboard, racing on several turns and jumps trying to get the best time at the finish. That new event has become one of my favorites.

I was glad several years ago when Olympics officials decided to change when the summer and winter games were held, so one of them comes around every two years instead of four.

Now we can count down to 2016 for the summer games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

By the way, that's the same year for the next U.S. presidential election. Guess which one I'm looking more forward to getting here?