

Every vote counts. And every voter has not only a right but also a responsibility to take an active role in our electoral process.

I tell young people all the time that you cannot just sit on the sidelines—you have to get in the game and get active, especially when it is the future of America that is at stake. Democracy is not a spectator sport.

When I served as Secretary of State in West Virginia, from 2000 to 2004, one of my top priorities was to educate our young people about the electoral process and encourage them to get involved. That was the purpose of the Sharing History and Reaching Every Student Program, also known as the SHARES program.

I am proud to say that before I left the office of Secretary of State, we had registered 42,000 high school students to vote. And, of course, those efforts have continued for the past dozen years since the SHARES program began, but nowhere more successfully than at Meadow Bridge High School.

It would be remarkable enough if 100 percent of any high school senior class was registered to vote. But to accomplish that 12 years in a row is truly extraordinary—not just a testament to the dedication of the school's staff but also a reflection of the students' commitment to their community and civic responsibility.

In fact, Principal Al Martine reports that the students themselves now take on the challenge of reaching the 100 percent registration mark. It's a matter of pride and patriotism.

The right to vote is so precious because it is the right by which all our other rights are protected. So by getting our young adults involved, we are preparing them to be active and passionate defenders of our rights as Americans.

This is not a Democrat or Republican issue, but one that all Americans can and should embrace, the way the students, faculty and staff at Meadow Bridge High School have done. And I congratulate them on the example they have set for high school seniors everywhere.●

REMEMBERING ROBERT EARL HOLDING

● Mr. RISCH. Madam President, my colleague, Senator MIKE CRAPO joins me today in recognizing the extraordinary life of Robert Earl Holding.

Idaho has lost a great visionary with his recent passing. As an entrepreneur, he saw potential in many businesses, including the Idaho resort Sun Valley.

Earl Holding came from modest means. It is well-documented how he started his business empire with the purchase of a motel called Little America in Green River, WY. He expanded the chain and added gas and oil businesses that operate in the western United States.

Earl purchased the Sun Valley Resort in 1977 and he had a long-term vi-

sion for the resort that was business as well as a labor of love.

Restoring Sun Valley Resort to its glory days took great attention to detail and substantial investment. He built ski lodges with stunning views, added high-speed quad lifts and state-of-the-art snowmaking equipment. Earl worked to create a superb skiing experience that brought Idahoans and out of staters to its slopes to an extent that wasn't possible in the past. His focus on excellence resulted in Sun Valley being regularly ranked as a top snow skiing destination.

His transformation of Sun Valley, coupled with his involvement in the 2002 Winter Olympics and the hosting of the 2009 International Special Olympics at the Sun Valley Nordic Center, led to his induction into the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame in 2011.

Earl renovated the Sun Valley Lodge more than once and upgraded the resort's golf course. He made Sun Valley into a year-round resort that allowed area businesses to expand and create new jobs. Local governments and residents have greatly appreciated his vision and long-term commitment to the resort.

Sun Valley is a special place to my wife, Vicki, and me. Our whole family has spent numerous nights in the Sun Valley Lodge—a tradition we continue to this day. It was always a pleasure to run into Earl and his wife, Carol and sit and talk in such a beautiful place. They were very gracious and it was always an enjoyable time with them.

We cannot forget in every step of the way, he had a wonderful partner in Carol. They were a great team and for every story of Earl waiting tables, there is a story of Carol cleaning rooms. For 64 years, they were partners in every sense of the word. Our thoughts and prayers are with Carol and their three children during this time.

Earl Holding was a devoted husband and father and an accomplished businessman. He had integrity in his business dealings and was loyal to his employees. He valued his customers and he was generous in many ways.

Idaho and America has had a great man pass from our midst, but we are all better off because of his presence.●

TRIBUTE TO FREDRICK MAYER

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I would like to speak today about a remarkable constituent of mine, Mr. Fredrick Mayer. His story is one of truly incredible bravery, and Mr. Mayer is one of the great unsung heroes of World War II. His selfless patriotism and unique service to the United States merit our recognition.

Born to a Jewish family in Germany, Mr. Mayer was forced to flee the rise of nazism in his home country, and as a young man he immigrated to the United States with his family. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Mr. Mayer enlisted in the U.S. Army. There, his

talents were quickly recognized, and Mr. Mayer was soon recruited into the Office of Strategic Services, OSS—a predecessor to the CIA. Once in the OSS, Mr. Mayer was presented with an unimaginably dangerous mission—to be clandestinely sent back into Nazi territory to collect critical military intelligence from behind enemy lines.

Mr. Mayer accepted his mission with full knowledge that as a Jewish-American spy, he would almost surely be killed if he was captured. Having escaped Nazi Germany only years earlier, he also accepted this mission with a unique appreciation for the injustices that were being done by Nazi forces and with a deep sense of duty to help his new home country—the United States—put an end to those injustices.

What happened next is perhaps best told in the words of Mr. Mayer's commanding officer in a May 31, 1945, written assessment of Mr. Mayer's performance:

Technical Sergeant Mayer parachuted into enemy occupied territory and remained there for three months, gathering secret intelligence and rallying Austrian resistance elements. During this period Technical Sergeant Mayer exhibited not only the highest degree of courage under constant risk of his life, but remarkable qualities of leadership and organization which made it possible for him to contact and win the support of anti-Nazi elements of all classes and walks of life, and eventually to arrange the surrender of Innsbruck to American troops.

Ultimately, Mr. Mayer spent nearly 3 months living behind enemy lines, often wearing a German officer's uniform and using forged papers to move openly without capture. In that guise, Mr. Mayer covertly organized a network of anti-Nazi Austrians and clandestinely collected vital intelligence that was then relayed by his radio operator to OSS headquarters in Italy. According to now unclassified documents, Mr. Mayer collected and relayed information on a wide array of critical subjects—important Nazi war factories, schedules relating to the movement of Nazi troops and material to and from the battlefield, the status of Nazi defenses at key tunnels, bridges, and highway bottlenecks, and the whereabouts of Mussolini, Daladier, and Hitler.

In one case, intelligence gathered by Mr. Mayer about the assembly and schedules of 26 military trains that were being sent to the Italian front led to the trains' destruction and blocked the Brenner Pass completely until well after the war ended.

After months of successful operations, Mr. Mayer was betrayed by one of his contacts. He was then arrested by the Gestapo and brutally tortured while in captivity. Nevertheless, throughout the harsh interrogations, Mr. Mayer refused to give up the location of his radio operator.

As a prisoner, Mr. Mayer was able to use his language skills and quick thinking to convince his captors to grant him a meeting with senior Nazi officers, and as American troops approached, he helped persuade the Nazi