FVAP online ballots can help U.S. citizens overseas votes count

By Karen Parrish,
American Forces Press Service

The Department of Defense (DoD) Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) has a solution for overseas service members and other U.S. citizens living outside the country who haven't received an election ballot: get it online.

With Nov. 2 midterm elections just days away, Illinois and New York recently joined the list of states and territories the Justice Department has filed complaints against or investigated for irregularities regarding absentee ballots.

"Department of Justice is working with those states to remedy the situation," Pentagon spokesman Marine Corps Col. Dave Lapan said. "Obviously, DoD interest is... making sure our troops stationed overseas are afforded their right to vote."

For anxious voters, an alternative to mailed ballots is a few mouse-clicks away. New York and Illinois ballots - and those of 29 other states - are available online at the voting assistance program's website, http://www.fvap.gov.

According to FVAP Director Bob Carey, New York has agreed to count all absentee ballots received by Nov. 24, but New York voters must mail those ballots by Nov. 1.

"They can go to FVAP.gov and download that ballot right now," Carey said.

Some states allow ballots to be returned by fax or online, but the Military Postal Service will express-mail any ballots military members or their spouses submit from overseas, Carey added.

Additionally, voters from all 55 states and territories can use the FVAP online federal write-in absentee ballot automated assistant to vote for federal candidates.

Carey said the federal absentee ballot can be used for all jurisdictions' federal-level elections.

"You can choose your federal candidates online," he said. "It will print out the ballot with your choices already in there, and give you complete instructions including a pre-addressed envelope to send back to your local election officials."

Visitors to the website click once to say whether they are military or civilian. Either answer leads them to an interactive map of the United States. Clicking on their home of record or state of most recent residence will lead to options of registering to vote or requesting or tracking a ballot. Each of these options leads to a state-specific page with instructions for voters on how to submit their absentee ballot.

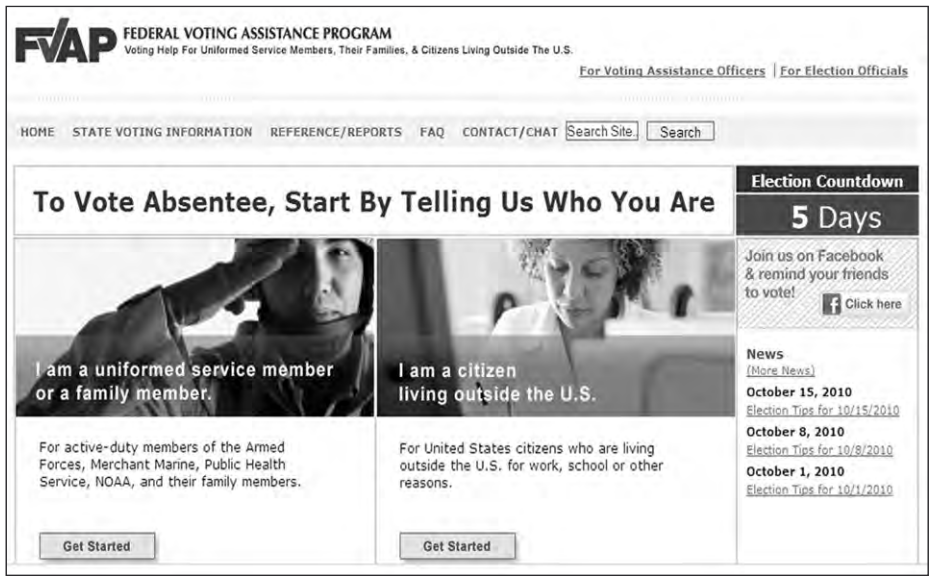

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Image courtesy of www.fvap.gov

The Federal Voting Assistance Program website also offers a reference center that provides answers to frequently asked questions, program contact information, and a chat option for voters who need more help.

"It's not too late to get your absentee ballot," Carey said. "You can get your ballot online today, and send it back, and it will get back in time to be counted."

Healthier school lunches with "Let's Move!" recipe challenge

By Karen Hawkins,
Defense Commissary Agency

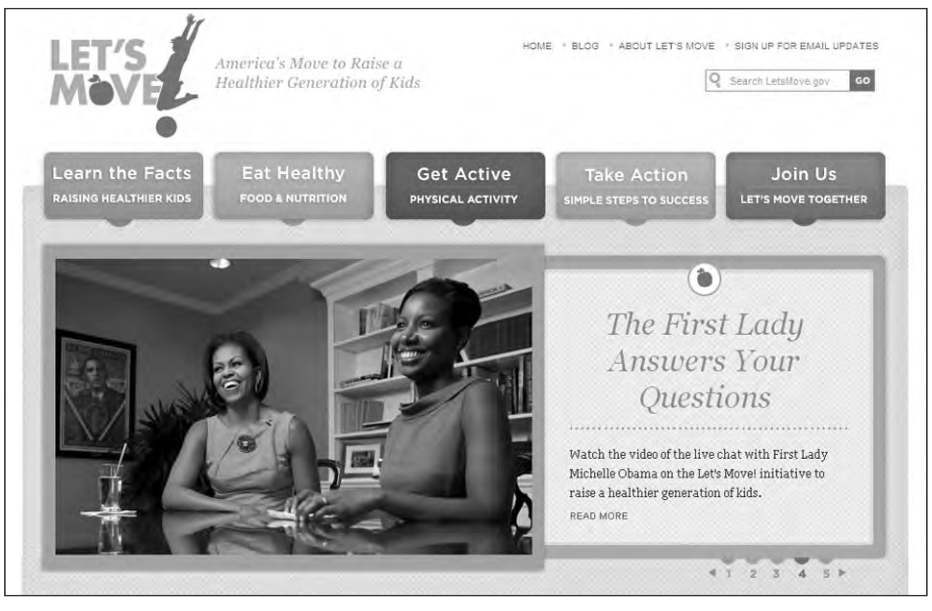
Wouldn't it be nice if your children could enjoy their favorite healthy foods at school? Of course. Well, you can pack it in their lunch bag, but now you may also be able to have it made for them at school.

If the recipe includes whole grains, dark green or orange vegetables, or dry beans and peas, then consider entering it in the Let's Move! recipe challenge. The Let's Move! campaign, started by first lady Michelle Obama, is attempting to draw national attention to solving the challenge of childhood obesity.

Let's Move!, along with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is challenging school nutrition professionals, chefs, students, parents and others to create tasty, healthy new recipes for inclusion on school lunch menus. So consider sharing that favorite healthy family recipe to help support the fight against childhood obesity, and your family may just win the challenge.

The recipe creations will be served in school cafeterias and rated by students. A Let's Move! judging panel will evaluate the recipes of 15 semifinalist teams and the top three teams will compete in a national cook-off to determine the grand-prize winner. Semifinalists' recipes will also be posted for online voting by the public to determine a "Popular Choice Winner." Winning teams will be invited to create their recipes with White House chefs.

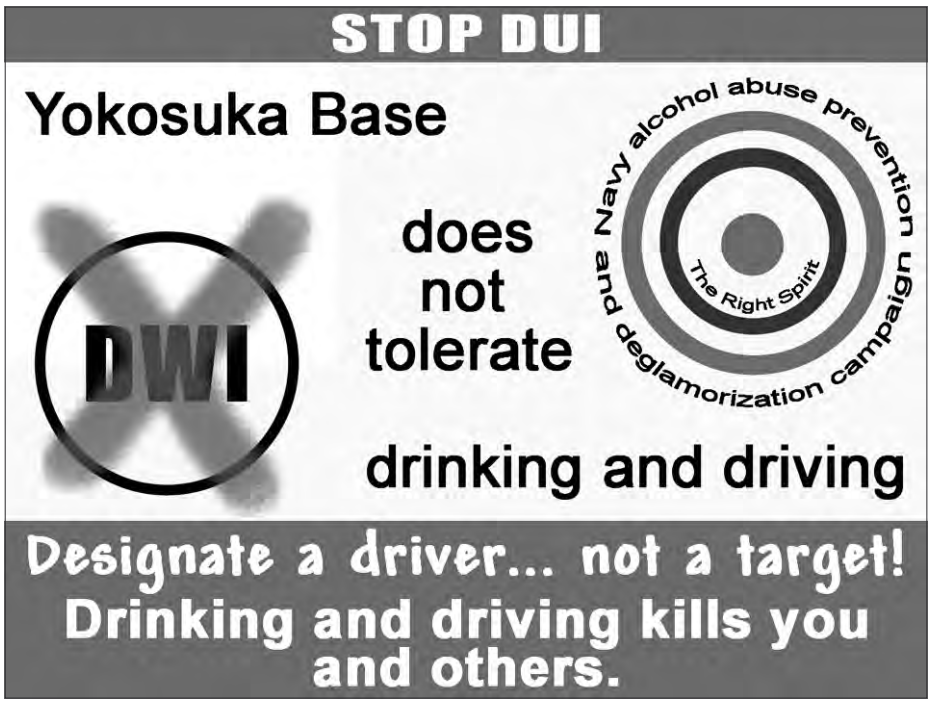
From now until Dec. 30, you may form teams that include each of the following: a chef, school nutrition professional, at least one student currently enrolled in grades 4 to 12 and at least one parent or community member. Your team will create, document and prepare a nutritious and delicious recipe that features one of the three categories: whole grains, dark green and orange vegetables, or dry beans and peas. This recipe will be prepared in the school's cafeteria and served to the majority of those students who participate in the National School Lunch Program.



The Let's Move! campaign, started by first lady Michelle Obama, is attempting to draw national attention to solving the challenge of childhood obesity. Let's Move!, along with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is challenging school nutrition professionals, chefs, students, parents and others to create tasty, healthy new recipes for inclusion on school lunch menus.

Teams can register online by going to the website, RecipesforKidsChallenge.com and clicking "Sign Up" at the top of the page at any time during the submission period. However, before that period ends, teams must submit the following via the Submit Recipes tab to enter their recipe for consideration: their recipe, using standard U.S. measurement units and weights; a statement affirming the recipe's originality; description of the student taste testing on school letterhead – with quotes from some participating students; a nutrient analysis; and a photograph of their prepared recipe.

Make sure to check out the rules section at the website for more information. More information on whole grains, dark green and orange vegetables, and dry beans and peas can be found on MyPyramid.gov.



NAVSUP
Naval Supply Systems Command

U.S. FLEET & INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY CENTER YOKOSUKA HOLIDAY MAILING DATES

Holiday Mailing Dates 2010
(For Planned Delivery by Christmas Day)

Military Mail Address to: ⇨ Mail Class: ⇩	APO/FPO AE ZIPS 090-092	APO/FPO AE ZIPS 093	APO/FPO ZIPS 094-098	APO/FPO ZIPS 340	APO/FPO ZIPS 962-966	United States
Express Mail Military Service	18 Dec 10	Not Available	18 Dec 10	18 Dec 10	18 Dec 10	18 Dec 10
First Class Mail Letters/Cards	10 Dec 10	4 Dec 10	10 Dec 10	10 Dec 10	10 Dec 10	10 Dec 10
Priority Mail	10 Dec 10	4 Dec 10	10 Dec 10	10 Dec 10	10 Dec 10	10 Dec 10
Parcel Airlift	3 Dec 10	1 Dec 10	3 Dec 10	3 Dec 10	3 Dec 10	3 Dec 10
Space Available Mail	26 Nov 10	20 Nov 10	26 Nov 10	26 Nov 10	26 Nov 10	26 Nov 10
Parcel Post	12 Nov 10	12 Nov 10	12 Nov 10	12 Nov 10	12 Nov 10	12 Nov 10