



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Jacksonville District

NEWS RELEASE

Release No.: NR0801
For Release: January 4, 2007
P.O. Box 4970 Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019

Contact: Amanda Ellison
Phone: 904-232-1576 FAX: 904-232-2237
Email: Amanda.D.Ellison@usace.army.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Work to continue at Odyssey Middle School

Jacksonville, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District announced today that cleanup work will continue on Odyssey Middle School grounds after numerous items were discovered during removal operations this past week. Corps' contractors have worked diligently to complete all remaining removal work while school has been closed for winter break. Due to the number of items found, the cleanup process was slowed and removal operations will need to be extended. Work will continue on weekends until all removals are complete.

“We have worked diligently to ensure that our investigation and removal work on the school grounds is completed as expeditiously and safely as possible,” said project manager Wandell Carlton. “We are very pleased with the work we have accomplished and we stand behind our commitment to ensure students, parents and staff that safety is our highest priority. We are grateful to the school and the community for their patience as we work through this process.”

More than 400 pounds of munitions, and 2,000 pounds of munitions debris, including a 37-mm cannon, have been recovered from the school property this week. Among the munitions items found were 49 23-pound fragmentation bombs, one 2.36-inch rocket, a nose section of a 23-pound fragmentation bomb, one 5-inch rocket warhead, one 3.5-inch rocket warhead, a booster to a 3.5-inch rocket, three 37- mm projectiles, 16 flares, and a fuze.



These items will be detonated on Saturday, Jan. 5, at 2 p.m. Residents in the area should expect to hear several large blasts when these items are blown in place. The blasts pose no danger to people in the area.

The Corps' contractors estimated that work on the school grounds was approximately 50 percent complete after Thanksgiving, requiring a return during the December holiday break. Work is expected to be complete at the end of January.

A geophysical survey to identify areas where metal objects were buried beneath the ground was completed in August prior to the school's opening for the 2007-08 academic year. Also completed at that time were a complete surface sweep of the school grounds, which confirmed that no surface munitions were present, and soil sampling that confirmed no munitions constituents were present. It is anticipated that this final phase of removal work and subsequent restoration will complete all work on the Odyssey Middle School grounds, ensuring continued safety for students and school staff.

Work will begin in the Tivoli Gardens subdivision on Monday, Jan.7, with additional work set for a portion of the Warwick subdivision and on the Mockingbird LLC property adjacent to the school. A phased approach will prioritize and address the areas that pose the greatest risk to public safety. The remainder of the former Pinecastle Jeep Range site will be addressed with a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, beginning in 2008.

Safety is always the Corps' top priority. Should anyone encounter or suspect he or she has encountered munitions, it is vitally important that they follow the simple "3 Rs" of munitions safety: **Recognize** the item may be dangerous; **Retreat** and do not touch it; **Report** its location to the local Sheriff's Office immediately.

On behalf of the Department of Defense, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cleans up sites that were formerly used by the military. In 1943, the U.S. government leased 12,483 acres of land in



Orlando (Orange County) as an off-post site of the Pinecastle Army Airfield, for use as a gunnery and demonstration range. The site was declared surplus property and all leases were terminated on Dec. 4, 1947.

For more information about the former Pinecastle Jeep Range, please visit our web site at www.saj.usace.army.mil and click on the Pinecastle Jeep Range link or contact the Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-1576.

###