

“Ghost” Fleet

By Julie Lane

Many have heard of, but few have seen the “ghost” fleet on the James River, a much talked about piece of news over the last several years in the Hampton Roads area. Originally the fleet was formed to ensure that in case of a war, the United States would have an adequate amount of ships to provide supplies to our troops. Now, most of the ships in the fleet are unusable.

The Reserve fleet is split into three different locations with the James River housing the majority of the ships. In October, The Apprentice School had the opportunity to visit the James River Reserve Fleet. The students and faculty were able to view a video and then take a ride out to some of the ships in the fleet. They were permitted to board and explore three of the ships. It was a trip into history. These ships were well over 50 years old and have had no upgrades in at least 30 years.

This was an excellent learning experience. For the most part, students only see ships this old in text books. The Apprentice School students got to actual walk though and touch these ancient relics. From the bridge to the engine rooms, nothing was left unexplored.