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2023 VISITORS & BUSINESS GUIDE

Captain Clay with guests, Alice Riviere and Kelly Antonio.

Sail & Surf Adventures

Captain Clay inspires on the water

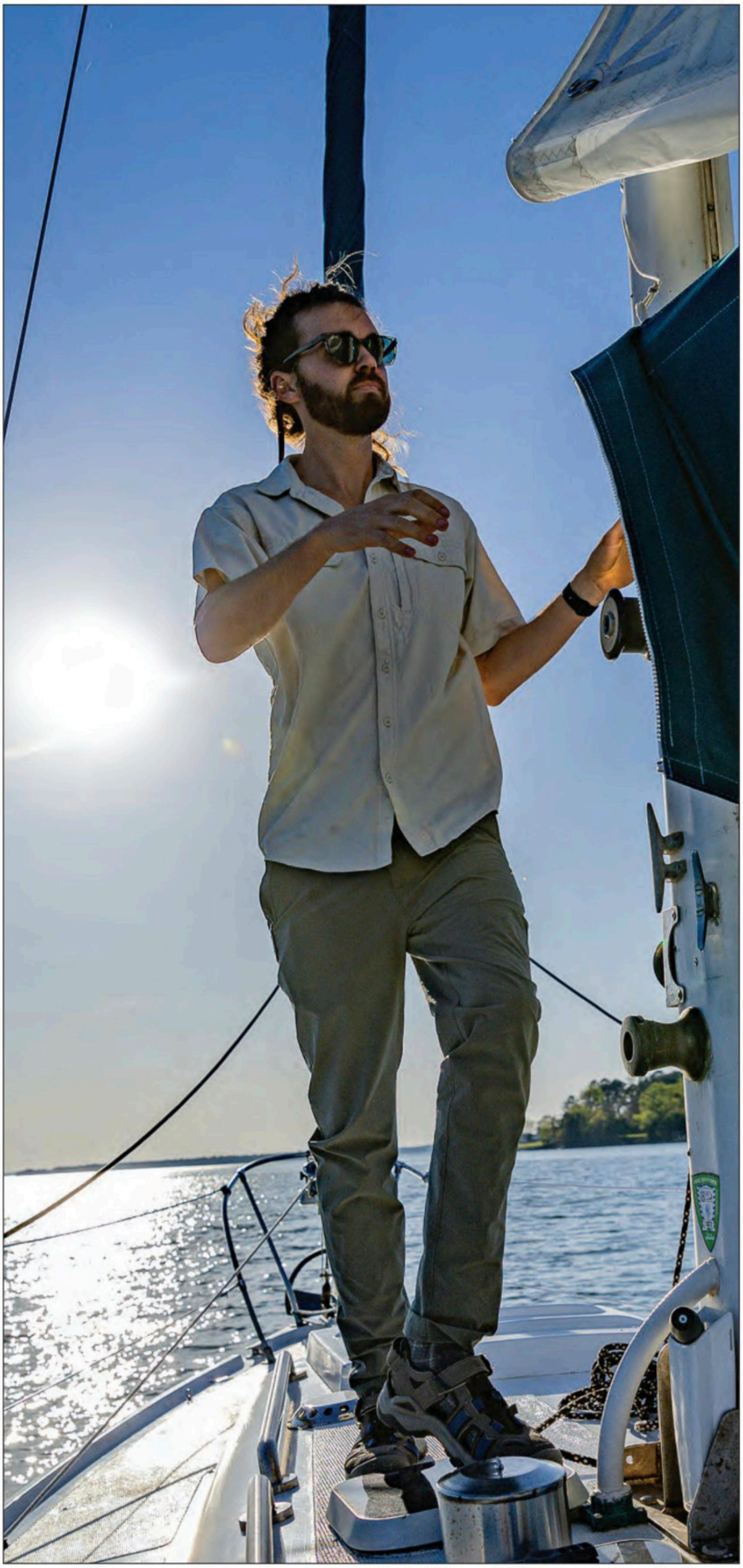
Written by Ann DeMuth • Photographs courtesy of Claiborne Dingledine

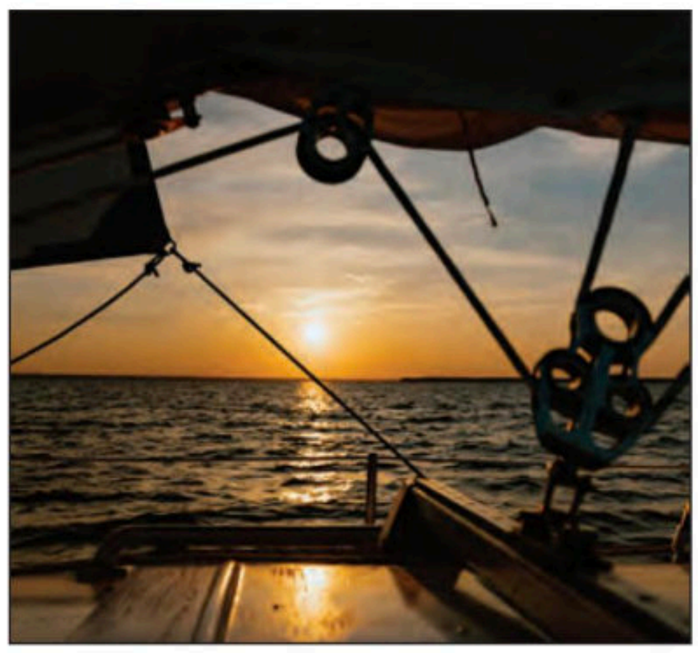
Get out on the water with Sail & Surf Adventures. Captain Clay Dingledine grew up in the Northern Neck and started sailing and exploring the local waterways when he was 13. Two decades later, he's still smitten – "It's that moment the engine goes quiet and you realize you are being propelled through the water by the wind. It's magical." You can join Captain Clay on a sailing charter in the morning, the afternoon, at sunset or under the light of the moon. You can even sail to a surfing destination. Sit back, relax and be on the lookout for osprey, bald eagles, sea turtles and dolphins, or jump in and grab a line and trim a sail. Sail & Surf Adventures also offers sailing lessons – on your boat or on the charter boat *Galene*.

Galene, a 36' Columbia, was built in 1968. Captain Clay, not interfering with her classic lines, has added modern amenities including solar panels and electronic navigation. The cockpit is roomy and the galley is eclectic. Charters are laid-back and intimate, with a maximum of 4 people. Get your day going with a 2-hour Breezy Brunch Cruise, or sign up for one of the afternoon excursions. Make more of a day of it with the Sail & Savor trip. *Galene* sets sail from Carter's Cove Marina at 11am, heads down the Rappahannock River, under the R.O. Norris Bridge into Locklies Creek. By 12:30, you'll find yourself at Merroir Tasting Room with the opportunity to indulge in local oysters, craft beer, wine and a full menu of other options. At around 2pm, you'll hop back on Galene for a leisurely sail to home port.

More of an evening person? Sign up for the Sunset Cruise which leaves port an hour and a half before dusk. Watching the sunset under sail as the Rappahannock River glows around you is a moment to remember. Sail & Surf Adventures also offers a Moonlight Cruise for a few evenings scheduled around the full moon. The charter description gives a preview – "the full moon lights up the river with an ethereal glow that sparkles off the water's surface and creates a truly spectacular and unique experience." Captain Clay adds, "There is an other-worldly vibe that accompanies sailing at night."

Along with captaining charters, Captain Clay really enjoys sharing his love of sailing while teaching. He looks forward to further developing the Sail & Surf Adventures sailing school. "I like to see the light that turns on for people when they realize they can harness the power of the wind and use it to go almost anywhere in the world they want." One-on-one and small group lessons are available, tailored to your experience level from basic sailing terminology and concepts to advanced cruising techniques and engine mechanics. Learn to sail on the Chesapeake Bay aboard the classic Galene or on your own sailboat. Captain Clay remarks, "I've taken people out for lessons on a boat that they just bought. The excitement that comes with learning to sail your own boat is contagious."





Leisa Gerber and Ryan Faulkner enjoy a snack and sunset.

Are you a surfer at heart? Clay has traveled from Maine to Florida, California, Mexico, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Puerto Rico to find the best waves. "Adventure is at the root of what drives my sailing and surfing trips. I try to bring that sense of excitement home to share with people on our local waterways." You can be sure the Surf Fisherman's Island Excursion is an adventure. It all starts at Kiptopeke State Park on the southern end of Virginia's Eastern Shore where you board *Galene*. After sailing for an hour or so, you'll anchor off Fisherman's Island and paddle in for a surf session. The island and its beaches are a National Wildlife Refuge, and with no public road access, surfing this deserted break at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay is an amazing opportunity few others have embarked.

Custom charters are also an option. Captain Clay enjoyed the past charters booked for a weekend family reunion. "There were children and grandparents, and everyone was excited to enjoy the water from the decks of a sailboat."

With a myriad of options, getting out on the water is easy with Sail & Surf Adventures. Whatever experience you decide to embark on with Captain Clay, you can be sure it will be an adventure to remember long past stepping back on land.

Learn more about Sail & Surf Adventures at **sailsurfadventure.com.**