

New Boats, New Life: Sail MV in 2022



Joy on the water: A Messing Around in Boats class enjoys an outing in Sail MV's Vixen, a Buzzards Bay 14.

AT THE END OF a memorably successful summer that saw all the programs of Sail Martha's Vineyard back in full swing, the organization's board of directors held a day-long retreat in October to plan for the years ahead. Says Dr. Daniel Pesch, president: "I think our retreat really reinforced for us the sense that this is a people-oriented organization, and that we want to strengthen that aspect of what we do. We do want to teach people about the water, and connect people with the water, and the way you do that is to extend your reach and take down the physical and financial barriers around that."

Everyone involved with Sail MV agrees that the heart of the organization's work is still the program that started it all: a summer semester of instructional programs for children on Lagoon Pond, based at Sailing Camp Park in Oak Bluffs. "This was the first year since 2019," says programs director Andrew Nutton, "that we've had a fully staffed summer program."

Sail MV hired a faculty of eleven teachers and one chief instructor for the summer, and was able to add a new course in team racing for high school kids during the last two weeks of the season. Instructors Miles Jones and Nutton led that class, which ended on most afternoons with a classroom analysis of video from a drone that flew above the young sailors.

Enrollment in this year's summer program on the Lagoon

was healthy at nearly 400 children, says John Kettlewell, Sail MV's executive director. Best of all, fully 60 percent of the children enrolled were Island kids. Everyone involved agrees that a primary goal of Sail MV as it looks ahead is to offer more of the summer curriculum to Island students on the same basis as the introductory courses: with no tuition charge beyond the simple cost of a family membership.

Expanding access to the summer curriculum and building on the early successes of the Sail Mobility program are top priorities, says Dr. Pesch: "We want to make sure we're making headway in terms of paying our staff properly, expanding access to our summer classes and increasing the capacity of Sail Mobility," he says. "We'll need to work hard to find the funding that will help us make that happen."

From Fear to Joy: Sail Mobility

"The best thing about this summer," says Andrew Nutton, "is that we had Sail Mobility back."

Launched in 2018 as a pilot program of Sail MV, then interrupted by the pandemic, Sail Mobility was busy again this summer, taking groups from Camp Jabberwocky and Island Autism out to experience the delights of sailing. "We had Camp Jabberwocky and people from Island Autism coming

Sail MV Programs Thrived in Summer 2022

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down to the water every week this summer, and we'd take them out on a power boat or the Rhodes 19," says Nutton. He delights in watching the reactions of a passenger who's never experienced a small boat before: "There's the initial fear—turning into shock, excitement, joy. That's how it works, and that's why we do it."

This summer's success has only left Nutton, and the rest of the team at Sail MV, more deeply convinced that Sail Mobility is a program not only perfectly suited to the organization, but also ripe for growth. "With the right equipment," says Nutton, "we could massively scale this up. We could offer this to the elderly community on the Island. We could offer it to all sorts of groups—but we need to be able to do it safely and professionally. My dream would be to have an assistant who can sail safely with people who otherwise would never have that opportunity to be out on the water."

Varsity Racing

This spring, coaches Andrew Burr and Andy Nutton led the high school varsity sailing team through a busy schedule of spring competition. Because of the pandemic, says Coach Burr, "We basically had a brand-new team. It was a group that hadn't done a lot of team racing together, but they sailed incredibly well at the Terk Trophy races in May (at Connecticut College)." The team finished sixth out of seven schools—not a great result, Burr admits, "but every race they were in was competitive. It was a great weekend."

Later in May, the Vineyard varsity team—which competes with boats, gear and coaches all provided by Sail MV—finished third in the Cape and Islands team racing competition. "The group really solidified this year," says Burr. And almost every junior from last year's team is back for competition this year. "They're really psyched for spring," he says.

The Return of SBA

Helping to support all this good work by Sail Martha's Vineyard, the annual Seafood Buffet and Auction was



The Arnold Brown Regatta in September drew more than 80 young sailors from all across New England.

back in its traditional form, live and in person, on July 7 at Tisbury Wharf in Vineyard Haven. "We really went back to our roots with that event," says Dr. Pesch. "We did have a short live auction with Andy Nutton and John Wilson as auctioneers—and everybody loved them—but mostly it was about getting people back together again, and it was a resounding success."

After expenses, the celebration raised nearly \$113,000 to support the summer instructional program—and enabled Sail MV to bolster its fleet with six new 420 sailboats and with six FJ sailboats purchased from the sailing program at M.I.T.

"The FJs are a great addition to our fleet," says Dr. Pesch, noting that they're the design used by college racing programs across the United States. "If budget were no issue, this is a purchase we would have made a long time ago. The fact that we were able to acquire these new boats is just huge."

Rowing and a Regatta

Members of the Rowing Club, another program made possible by Sail MV, have been going out several times each week this year on the Cornish pilot gig *Cassie*, newly repaired by Myles Thurlow, her original builder. *Cassie's* sister gig, *Grace*, has been pulled from the water for the off-season so it can be serviced and readied for duty next year.

And this summer the Vineyard Cup regatta returned to classic form with a weekend of racing and fellowship in July, highlighted by a festive gathering at Sailing Camp Park that introduced sailors from all over to the waterfront base from which Sail MV does so much of its work with youth. "Supporting the maritime heritage of the Vineyard is an important part of what Sail MV does," says John Kettlewell, "and the Vineyard Cup is a part of that. It also provides us an opportunity to get some of our kids and our staff out to do something they might not have done before—sail around the Island on a big boat."

Challenges Ahead

Looking to the future, Dr. Pesch says he's made his peace with the fact that Sail MV spends its money almost as fast as it's donated. "What's most important," he says, "is making sure we run a safe organization. The question I'm always asking is, is this a good application of resources toward our mission?"

"Public access sailing is all about getting people out on the water and empowering them in a welcoming environment. There's always that financial challenge in the background. But we're all about helping kids discover that while virtual reality can be fun, it's a lot better to be out on the water enjoying it. Sailing is such a great pursuit, and I want kids to resonate with that."

Maritime Studies Program at High School Connects Powerfully with Students



Maritime Studies classmates studying hull designs: from left are Joao Simoes, Heytto Nunes, Tegan Gale and Kaio DaCosta.

EVERY FRESHMAN AT the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School is exposed to a rotation that introduces them to vocational programs that range from automotive tech to horticulture, from culinary arts to building trades. Since 2009, the high school's offerings have also included Maritime Studies, led by instructors from the Sail MV staff.

Andrew Nutton joined Sail MV as its program director in June of 2017 and has been leading classes at the high school ever since. On a Wednesday morning in October, Nutton and four of his students in Maritime Studies 2 took time to talk about the program and the students' perspectives on it. The four boys—Kaio DaCosta, Tegan Gale, Heytto Nunes and João Simoes—came to the program for different reasons, but their satisfaction with the class, and their commitment to it, seem to be shared completely.

Tegan knew from the outset that Maritime Studies was the track for him. "My family has always been a maritime family," he says. "My father and his father before him. Commercial fishing, mainly. I just love being on the water."

Heyttor says he was drawn to Maritime Studies not because of its familiarity, but rather its newness. "This was the thing

farthest away from what I knew," he says. "I'd never even thought about this. It was something new for me, and Mr. Nutton is a good teacher—so I chose it."

Says João, "To be honest, I didn't know what I was getting into. But when we went through the rotation, I met this British teacher who was kind of funny, and I decided this was what I want to do. In the first year, I liked his way of teaching, and I decided to come back for the second year."

Kaio admits that at first he decided on Maritime Studies to be with his friends João and Heyttor. "But later on when I started taking this class, I thought it was really fun. I enjoy the stuff we do." And when it came time to look for summer work this year, Kaio found a job working on the Oak Bluffs docks with the Hy-Line ferry company.

In Maritime Studies 1, their first full year with Mr. Nutton, the boys studied navigation, meteorology, the principles of displacement, and topics important to preparation for the captain's licensing course. This year they've been building spreadsheets that allow the students to apply Simpson's rules to calculate a vessel's load capacity, its center of gravity and stability. "It involves physics and calculus,"

says Nutton—"but it's not just abstract: it's being applied in the real world."

His students say they appreciate Nutton's approach. "You're not just looking at numbers on the board," says Tegan. "You're actually watching things happen. And that's the only way I can get my head around some of this."

Heyttor says the problem-solving approaches Mr. Nutton's students are learning help them in other classes, from chemistry to physics. "It's not necessarily the stuff we learn," says Heyttor—"it's the way we learn how to do it."

João agrees: "It's not like you just sit in a class while the teacher draws up on the whiteboard all day long." One project he enjoyed, he says, was learning to splice rope: "I eventually found out that I'm not very good at it, but it was something I never thought I'd do. Almost all our classes are hands-on. It's a different way of learning."

And Tegan chimes in with an example: "The other week when we were doing spreadsheets," he says, "we were all complaining about the work, and Mr. Nutton says, 'Trust me—it pays off. Do the work now and you'll never have to do it again.' And he's right."

Nutton has taken his students on field trips to the Menemsha Coast Guard Station and to the IYRS School of Technology and Trades in Newport. This year he'll also lead trips to Mass Maritime Academy and to the Blue Economy Conference at Cape Cod Community College. Looking ahead, Nutton says, he has a syllabus ready for a Maritime Studies 3 class if the high school will support it.

Meanwhile in the classroom, Nutton continues to come up with lesson plans that engage his students and challenge them to think and learn.

"If you can build relationships with students where they feel comfortable making a mistake, where they're not afraid of looking vulnerable—then you've got them. And they will learn anything from you. If you can do that with students, it's very special to a teacher. It's why we do it, really."

Defining Success: A Note from the Director

IF YOU WORK for a nonprofit charity like Sail Martha's Vineyard, you are frequently asked, "How are finances?" That's not an easy question to answer in a few words. The bottom line in nonprofits often hovers around zero, because by definition we don't make a profit. Every dollar we get in donations, grants, and program fees goes right back into the organization, providing more and better programming.

A better way to think about how we're doing is to look at cash flow. Do we have enough cash to pay our bills and provide the services that fulfill our mission? Looking at Sail MV with that lens we see that 2022 was a successful year. Yes, we will end up close to that zero at the end, but along the way we provided summer classes to nearly 400 youth, we hired more staff at higher wages, we repaired one rowing gig for \$7,500 and maintained another that was out every week, we purchased new floats (more than \$12,000), we replaced tired boats and gear, and we purchased fuel for boats and trucks. Like you, Sail MV saw almost every normal expense grow with inflation that was not predicted in the budget we adopted in late 2021.

One thing that helped Sail MV adapt to this challenging environment was being able to return to Tisbury Wharf for our traditional Seafood Buffet & Auction. With an enthusiastic sold-out crowd, we exceeded revenue expectations while at the same time containing costs below budget. The result was a "profit" of almost \$113,000, which conveniently almost covers the costs specific to our summer programs, where we provide free classes to any Island student who wishes to join us. This is the definition of nonprofit!

However, much of the "profit" from the Seafood Buffet was earmarked in our fund-the-need appeal for new boats. I am happy to report that those funds went almost immediately to purchasing lightly used FJ and 420 sailboats to the tune of about \$59,000. The new boats have been a big hit with the high school team and fall youth sailing groups. As I hauled a 40-foot trailer loaded with six FJs onto the ferry, a friend of Sail MV came up to ask what I was doing, and he was happy to see his



Sail MV's Seafood Buffet celebration was back this summer, with all its traditional festivity. The event netted nearly \$113,000 for the organization's continued work.

donation being put to immediate use.

This is the true story of what a successful nonprofit does. Our fall newsletter provides lists of our donors, but in reality they are investors. Every penny Sail MV receives goes right back to getting more sailors (from 8 years old to 80 and above) out on the water, to boat repairs and maintenance, to teaching the Maritime Studies in the high school, to teaching the captain's course, and to helping to preserve the maritime heritage of the Island. Thank you for your investments in the Island community!

John Kettlewell
Executive Director

Thank You for Supporting Sail Martha's Vineyard

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Ten teams came from around New England to compete aboard Sail MV's new fleet of 420s in the Arnold Brown Regatta.

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 Erika Dori
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 Herby Duverne
 Lesley Eaton
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 Amy Ellrodt
 Alysa Emden
 Sacha Emerson
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 Karen English
 Lyndsay Famariss
 Gail Farrish
 Suzanne Feldman
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 Pamela Foster & Geoffrey
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 Carrie Fyler

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 Angela Mastrangelo
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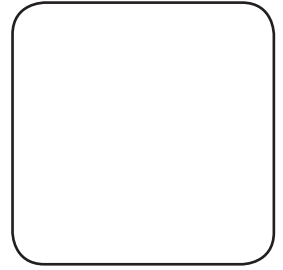
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P.O. Box 1998
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SUMMER PROGRAMS SIGNUP OPENS IN JANUARY 2023

Registration for Sail MV's 2023 summer sailing programs will open on Monday, January 9. Visit our website to sign up for next summer's instructional programs on the Lagoon.

SMV GRADUATE NAMED HEAD COACH AT UMV

One of the many joys of sailing is that it can be a nourishing lifetime pursuit. One alumna of the Sail Martha's Vineyard programs who's proving this true is Anna Flaherty, a 2020 graduate of Hobart & William Smith Colleges.

Anna was recently named head coach and program director of the sailing team at the University of Vermont. The team, which sails on Lake Champlain, competes in the Inter-Collegiate Sailing Association. Announcing the appointment of Anna and her assistant coach, Sarah Noyes, the team declared on its web page: "They have brought a phenomenal level of skill and leadership to our team, and we couldn't be more happy with our new coaching staff!"



A gathering at the Sailing Camp boathouse on the Lagoon was a festive highlight of the 2022 Vineyard Cup Regatta.

SAVE THE DATES

31st Annual Seafood Buffet & Auction:

July 6, 2023

Vineyard Cup Regatta: July 7-9, 2023