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WOMAN FIGHTS AGAINST HER SECOND-CLASS LIFE
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The reason is ...
Readers: The media, the candidates, the voters and yes, the parties, are to blame for low voter turnout
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Antique boats get day in the sun

Retro vessels line up at Lake George docks

By NICK REISMAN
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LAKE GEORGE ♦ The air was crisp, the sun shining and the water smooth. Perfect boat weather, said Joe Silipigno while standing next to his wooden power boat.

While his boat was built in 2007, its retro design, with ma-

hogany wood, gilded instrument panel and plush leather seats, gives the craft the appearance that it hails from a more romantic era. Silipigno was one of hundreds of boat enthusiasts and aficionados who descended upon Lake George on Saturday for the International Antique & Classic Boat Society's annual meeting and show.

"The colors are changing on the mountains, the water is still nice, it's perfect," said Silipigno, who runs the Boathouse

Bed and Breakfast in Bolton Landing.

About 100 restored and preserved antique wooden boats — some were built as far back as 1912 — bobbed peacefully in the water as hundreds of sightseers lined the village docks. Only a few of the wooden power boats cranked up their engines to putter close to the docks. Most stayed tethered to shore, like a floating museum.

Malta resident and boat restoration expert Roger Johnson

proudly showed off his fully-restored 28-foot 1930 antique boat. The boat, with its walnut-hued mahogany took a year to restore and rebuild, he said.

"It's just like any other hobby," Johnson said. "Some people collect old cars, some people collect antique trains."

Johnson has been restoring old boats to their former glory since 1975. He said he found his first one in a field. The paint had

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Boat enthusiasts enjoy seeing the boats on display at the International Antique & Classic Boat Society boat show held at the Lake George Village docks off Beach Road on Saturday.

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Boat enthusiasts line up to see boats on display at the International Antique & Classic Boat Society boat show held Saturday on Lake George.

Hobby can be very expensive

♦ HOBBY
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chipped away and the wood was rotting.

"When I grew up, they weren't antiques," he said. "But when I bought one, that's when I decided this is what I wanted to do."

Since then, Johnson said, he's restored "countless" antique boats.

The hobby can get to be expensive.

"To restore some of these can cost up to \$100,000," said event chairman Jeff Stebbins, who traveled from Cook, Minn., for the show. "If you love the way they look, the way they glide on the water, it's worth every penny. Restoring boats like this, you have to be dedicated."

Stebbins said most of the antique boats on display were used for transporting a small group of people from an island to a mainland. They were built to last 10 years, tops.

"If the people who used this boat 50 years ago said we'd be standing here next to it, they wouldn't believe you," he said, pointing to a 22-foot craft built in 1954. "Maybe 50 percent of these boats were burned, tossed out and left to rot."

By the late 1960s, small pleasure-craft makers like Chris-Craft and Gar Wood scaled back on wood designs and focused on less expensive fiberglass construction. But enthusiasts and

restorers have kept the classic power boats from becoming extinct, Stebbins said.

Guilderland teenager Andrew Slattery had come to the show with his 4-H Club to view the boats and also learn a little about their construction.

"I've been making boats with my dad for a lot of years," said Slattery, 16, after watching a demonstration on boatmaking.

Slattery said his latest effort was an 18-foot runabout.

"Classic boats are more fun to handle and ride. There's a big difference from fiberglass," he said. "The sound they make and the feel they have on the water, it's just a nice feeling."

"When I grew up, they weren't antiques.

But when I bought one, that's when I decided this is what I wanted to do."

ROGER JOHNSON

Malta resident and restoration expert, talking about how he got involved in the hobby of restoring antique boats

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