

ALFANATIC



Next Event

Das Kurze Klausenrennen
The Thirty-first AROC - Wisconsin
Annual Hillclimb and Tour
New Glarus, Wisconsin
Friday and Saturday May 3 - 4

If you are an AROC-WI member or past participant, you should have received your invitation.

If you didn't receive your invitation or are new to the event, have an eligible car, and would like to attend, contact the event organizer Kevin Caulfield at (612) 702-8520 or kevincaulfield@crc-mn.com.

Eligible cars are 4,8, and straight-six cylinder Alfas, pre WWII cars, and invited guests.



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John Ehle's Popular Mother, May I? Tour Back for Another Year

Club member John Ehle has organized this Mother's Day weekend tour for the past several years. It is a fun, low pressure event, guaranteed to take you to both familiar and unfamiliar places, connected by roads that are almost never straight. Since you've already had your Alfa out and running for the New Glarus event the weekend prior, it should be no problem to crank it up again for another dose of fun.

Here's what John wrote:

This year's edition of the "Mother, May I?" spring tour is on the calendar for Saturday, May 11. For those who are new to this tour, it's a casual one-day tour in southern Wisconsin. Get your car fix on Saturday, celebrate Mother's Day on Sunday!

While the development of this year's route is still in its final stages (that day job has been especially pesky this winter), it'll be ready to go very soon. This year we're planning a trek through southeast Wisconsin, starting east of the Lake Geneva area at 9 a.m., touring northwest to a morning point of interest, with a lunch stop somewhere around Ft. Atkinson/Jefferson/Lake Mills (eh, I'll figure it out). After lunch, we'll

continue northwest, skirting Madison to the east, to the Merrimac Ferry and Gibraltar Rock State Natural Area before making the stretch run for an early dinner (I'll figure that out, too).

It's an all-makes event, so participants can bring any car they want, although there's a preference for sports cars, and an even stronger preference for vintage sports cars. There is no charge for entry, with participants paying for their own meals, admissions, and entertainment. Just a fun day of driving and socializing.


Another email will follow this one in about a month with all the details. I look forward to seeing everyone in May!

Please pass this email along to anyone you know who may be interested in joining the trip, and have them email me with their interest so I can include them on the distribution list.

Thanks,

John Ehle

johnehle@comcast.net

(312) 213-4029 

2019 Local, Regional, and International Events Calendar

Anything missing? Send dates for events we've missed and we'll include them in the next calendar. email: rabhalter@att.net

May 3-4	AROC-WI Das Kurze Klausenrennen, New Glarus, Wisconsin
May 11	John Ehle's Mother, May I? spring tour, S.E. Wisconsin, johnehle@comcast.net
May 12-22	3rd Annual AROC Goes to Italy Tour (reportedly sold out, but there is a wait list)
May 17-19	SVRA Spring Vintage Weekend , Road America, Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin
May 31-June 2	MotoAmerica Dunlop Championship , Road America
June 14-16	WeatherTech® Chicago Region SCCA June Sprints® , Road America
June 20-23	Road America INDYCAR Series, Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin
June 26	Tom Heinrich's Summer Solstice Howl at The Moon Garage Party
June 29-30	CAROC Blackhawk Farms Track Days
July 13-15	AROC Pre-Convention Tours, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
July 16-21	AROC National Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
July 18-21	WeatherTech® International Challenge with Brian Redman presented by HAWK
July 26-28	Road America Vintage MotoFest and AHRMA Vintage Motorcycle Classic
August 1-4	IMSA WeatherTech® SportsCar Championship and IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge
August 3-4	Milwaukee Concours d'Elegance , Veterans Park, Milwaukee
August 11	AROC-WI 22nd Annual Italian Car and Motorcycle Show
August 18	Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance , Carmel, California
August 22-24	NASCAR XFINITY Series, Super Trucks, SCCA Pro TransAm , Road America
August 25	Geneva Concours d'Elegance , Geneva, Illinois
September 13-15	Ariens Art on Wheels Weekend featuring VSCDA Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival
September 20-22	Pirelli World Challenge , Road America
Oct 31-Nov 4	AROC Goes to the U.S. Grand Prix, COTA, Austin, Texas
July 20-26, 2020	AROC National Convention, Colorado Springs, Colorado

AROC-WISCONSIN HOLDS ITS ANNUAL BANQUET AND BUSINESS MEETING

By Robert Ludwigson

On the evening of March 23, the Wisconsin chapter of AROC held its annual banquet at the Fox and



Steve addresses the membership.

Hounds Supper Club in Hubertus, WI. Participants gathered in the bar area at 5:30, and after expressing greetings moved upstairs to a table that was set up for us. A total of 26 people were present to enjoy each other's company and the food.

In addition to our own club members, John and Patty Fell, who are members of the Ferrari club, also joined us. However they did arrive at the banquet in a new Alfa Giulia, so there may be a new member in the making. It's always good to see people who have purchased new Alfas joining our club.



Our meeting room was at capacity.

After dinner, Steve Wirtz conducted a short business meeting. He confirmed that all of the current officers will continue to serve in their capacities. These are: Steve Wirtz, president; Randy Swanson, treasurer; Robert Ludwigson, event coordinator; and Gary Schommer, past president, events and membership.

The final event of the evening was the dispensing of door prizes. Everybody was able to go home with some Alfa memorabilia. 🍀

Alfa Romeo TV Spots Discovered



Part of the bar conversation prior to the recent AROC-WI banquet at the Fox & Hounds was a discussion of Alfa's sales efforts and the seeming paucity of Alfa television spots. I recently discovered one of Alfa's rare ad placements—the Bravo network's new season of Project Runway.

ICAMS Date Now Firm

Gary Schommer reports that Joe and Filippo Reina have confirmed Sunday, August 11 as the date for this year's Italian Car and Motorcycle Show. Bob Ludwigson is in the process of vetting this year's charity recipient. Last year we raised \$2,600 for the American Heart Association. Additional information will be forthcoming. 🍀

For those who aren't aware, Project Runway is a long-running competition/reality show that showcases upcoming fashion designers. This year's series is a refresh of the show, edited to be even more inclusive and socially conscious than previous seasons, and that's saying a lot.


The ads show a couple of Red Giulia Quadrifoglios doing carefully choreographed pirouettes on a race course—all very artistic. (Closed course, don't try this at home.) At the risk of sounding judgmental, my opinion is that these ads are missing their target demographic by a long shot. It's a better target audience for Prius and Tesla. But I was watching so what do I know? 🍀

Alfa Sales Continue to Sag

Alfa's March sales improved 30% over February but are still well behind last year's numbers. Stelvios continue to outsell Giulias by about 10%, but overall sales are down by 26% relative to 2018. Alfa also continues to outsell Fiat by about 30%. Total FCA sales are down 3% for the year, the only bright spot being Ram truck, up 21% YTD. If, as Autoweek.com says, compact sport-utes are the fastest-growing part of today's market, the projected Jeep-based Alfa sport-ute can't be introduced too soon.

Jalopnik.com recently posted a report on the 26 car models with the greatest number of days inventory on hand. The information captures a metric often used to measure the health of the market. Presumably the data is from the end of February. Proximity to the top of this list is not a good thing.

The Mitsubishi Lancer leads the list with a whopping 195.3 days of inventory on hand, followed by the Volkswagen Touareg (194.1) and the 60-Series Volvo (177.9). Interestingly, the Mercedes E-class (6th) and the Mini Cooper (15th) are there. So are all models in the Fiat 500 range. Alfa's Stelvio is 12th on the list with 141.5 days of stock on hand.

The moral of this story might be that if you were thinking about buying a Stelvio, this might be a good time to make a deal 

Alfa Monthly Sales Results

	March	YTD	vs 2018
Giulia	858	2,035	-34%
Stelvio	898	2,210	-17%
4C	18	41	-24%
Total	1,774	4,286	-26%

Alfa Romeo Racing F1 Box Score

Race / Place	RAI	Pts	GIO	Pts
Australia	8	4	15	0
Bahrain	7	6	11	0
Driver Pts		10		0
Constructor Points	10	Rank	4	

New F1 Season Off to a Roaring Start

Loyal club member Roy Ferrari sent me a note last week. It contained a listing of this year's F1 driver lineup to share with you. So here it is, along with some additional commentary. F1 fans, those with DVRs or who get up early every other Sunday to watch the races, might want to skip ahead. Those with only a casual interest may find this information informative.

The Lineups

This year only two teams, Mercedes and Haas, have the same driver lineups as last. The other eight teams have either traded drivers, brought in new blood, or both.

At Ferrari, Charles LeClerc seems every bit a match for Sebastian Vettel, confirming the wisdom of the off-season move that traded LeClerc for Räikkönen.

Bottas, winner of the season-opening Australian Grand Prix, seems to have been revitalized after a lackluster 2018 season. He's proved he can run with teammate Hamilton, however Hamilton is just that little bit better.

Team	Drivers
Ferrari	Sebastian Vettel Charles LeClerc
Mercedes	Lewis Hamilton Valtteri Bottas
Alfa Romeo	Kimi Räikkönen Antonio Giovinazzi
Red Bull	Max Verstappen Pierre Gasly
Williams	George Russell Robert Kubica
McLaren	Lando Norris Carlos Sainz
Racing Point	Sergio Perez Lance Stroll
Haas	Romain Grosjean Kevin Magnussen
Tororo Rosso	Daniil Kvyat Alexander Albon
Renault	Daniel Ricciardo Nico Hulkenberg

Last year's Sauber-Alfa team is now Alfa Romeo Racing and Kimi Räikkönen is fast; unfortunately the car is still a mid-pack runner and so far Giovinazzi hasn't delivered on his promise. Other so far unhappy pairings include Gasly at Red Bull, Albon at Toro Rosso, and Stroll at Racing Point (nee Force India.) Robert Kubica, returning to drive for Williams after a long absence, is several steps slower than his rookie teammate George Russell, and Daniil Kvyat, after a shorter absence is at least somewhat competitive at Toro Rosso. Finally, Daniel Ricciardo right now must be questioning his decision to leave Red Bull for Renault.

After a disappointing performance in the season-opening Australian Grand Prix, Ferrari showed good form in Bahrain last weekend, qualifying first and second. In the race itself, it looked like Ferrari would run away and hide. Then, late in the race, disaster struck. Vettel spun battling with Hamilton for second place and LeClerc's hybrid system crapped out, leaving him 120 or so horsepower down on the competition. He finished third after leading most of the race. Red Bull still looks like the number 3 team it was last year but doesn't seem to have the power to challenge Mercedes and Ferrari. Alfa and Haas, the two Ferrari-engined teams, look to be strong mid-pack competitors. McLaren may be most improved this year, having gotten both of its drivers into Q3 for the first in a long time. Renault, for all its efforts, seems star-crossed, seeing both of its cars sidelined with almost simultaneous engine failures near the close of the Bahrain race. Meanwhile, the once great Williams team has not yet solved its problems and remains dead last.

In summary, the 2019 season looks like a battle between Ferrari's raw speed and Mercedes's speed and reliability. Both teams have two drivers who can run in front. If Red Bull can get Gasly up to speed, it is good for third in the constructor championship. Behind those three teams anything can happen. 🍀



Alfa at Sea

By Russell Whitford

"How are you going to get an Alfa Romeo on the boat?" More than one person asked us that when Lisa and I sailed away from Milwaukee, almost four years ago. We decided to give up the life of a dirt dweller for the sea. Our travels on Uproar have taken us through the Great Lakes, Erie Canal, Hudson River, Chesapeake Bay, Bahamas, Caribbean, Panama Canal, Galapagos, and French Polynesia. We still have our 156, 166, and Giulietta Veloce Spider tucked away in Milwaukee but certainly no Alfa on Uproar. We have seen a few Alfas in French Caribbean islands but usually beat up 146s or Mitos.



The Tumultuous Uproar preparing to sail

Alfa Romeo is never far from my heart though. For years I have been dreaming and planning construction of a vintage race boat with an Alfa engine. Alfa has a history of providing superb engines for hydroplane racing. The Laura I and II speedboats of Mario Verga used the powerful 159 engine and set records in the '50s. During the 1960s Alfa made marine 1300 and 1600 engines available for hydroplane racing. A book on hydroplane racing mentioned that the Alfa Romeo engines were expensive but one could depend on several years of good service without rebuilds. Tom Zat had some literature for Alfa marine engines at one time. If anyone has copies, I would love to see them.

The 1936 Crandall Flyer appeared on my computer screen and I had my boat design. This sleek, mahogany double ender really caught my eye. The original construction article from 1936 can easily be found on the internet as well as YouTube videos of replicas. The Flyer is a 15 foot single-step hydroplane designed for the 135 cu. in. engine class. The Universal

Blue Jacket four cylinder engine could easily be replaced with an Alfa 2 liter. The Alfa engine would be at least 200 pounds lighter and have almost double the horsepower.

I started collecting drivetrain parts before departing on our cruise. The batwing oil pan would not fit well between engine stringers. Ignazio gave me an Alfetta oil pan. I will probably have to cut the aft corner off and weld a plate on to accommodate the slanted installation. Marine transmissions are heavy so I found a sprint car in-out box to at least give me neutral. Race boats don't have a transmission. When you light them up, they go! Neutral would be very useful for docking, etc. A canoe paddle would work fine for reverse for this small boat. An Alfetta flywheel would be ideal due to the coupling that would hook up to the sprint car box.

Marine engines use a water jacketed exhaust manifold. I found one for a V-8 that could be modified to fit the Alfa head. Cooling would be with seawater pumped through a heat exchanger for both oil and engine coolant. I have toyed with the idea of buying an aftermarket engine management system for ignition and fuel injection. Four motorcycle coils on the firewall hooked up to the system would replace a distributor. Sparks from a distributor are dangerous in a boat.



I have designed this boat over and over in my head. But a few months ago I took another step in the project. The photo is a 1/12th scale model I constructed on Uproar while we were hanging out in French Polynesia. The model is built with scale bulkheads from the magazine article. I learned how to do old fashioned "lofting" in a naval architecture class at Purdue. The entire model is built out of 1/8" balsa and bamboo skewers. For paint and stain I used acrylic paints from Lisa's paint set, not ideal but it worked.

I can just imagine the throaty rumble of the Alfa engine, racing the Flyer at 50 mph. But that is the best I

can do from my seafaring lifestyle. Lisa and I have no plans to "swallow the anchor" and return to shore. If we do, I have a unique Alfa Romeo project waiting for me.

Russ Whitford

S/V Tumultuous Uproar

www.sailblogs.com/member/tuproar 

Mario Verga and His Alfa-Powered Speedboats

Edited from an article by William Pearce on Oldmachinypress.com

Mario Verga was a successful silk merchant born in Milan, Italy, in 1910. In the late 1940s, he became a well-known Italian speedboat racer, competing in the 450 kg (992 lb) class. He left boat racing in 1950 when he married Liliana Burlazzi, but the pull of the sport was too strong for Verga to stay away.

Beginning in 1952, Verga commissioned a series of Alfa-powered speedboats. The first boat was the Laura I, named after his young daughter. It was built by Guido Abbate at Lake Como. It was designed to compete in the 45kg class and was powered by an Alfa Romeo Tipo 159 engine, the same engines used in the 1950 and 1951 F1 World Champion Alfettas of Farina and Fangio. Using it, Verga captured the 450 kg (992 lb) class championship in 1952.

Subsequent modifications to Laura I increased the boat's weight, and it fell within the 800 kg (1,764 lb) class. In this form, Verga set an 800 kg class speed record of 125.670 mph, later increasing it to 140.737 mph on 15 February 1953 on Lake Lugano.



The Laura I. Note the Quadrifoglio on the engine cover and the script a (for Alfa) following the name.



Later in 1953 Verga had Laura II built for 800 kg class races. Constructed by Carlo Timossi at Lake Como, it reused the engine and aluminum bodywork from the Laura I. He used it to win the 1953 800 kg class European championship and went on to successfully campaign the boat in the U.S.

At that time the outright water speed record was held by a U.S. boat, the Allison-powered *Slo-mo-shun IV*, at 178.497 mph. The Italian Motonautical Federation offered a prize of 5 million lire (around \$10,000) to any Italian-built, powered, and piloted boat that could beat that record. The challenge was accepted by Verga and a few others, but over time only Verga fielded a boat. He worked once again with builder Timossi to develop the twin-engined Laura 3. If one 159 engine was good, two would be better. Alfa produced a steel frame to hold the two engines and the two-into-one transmission driving the propeller shaft at 1.333 times engine speed. The combination was said to produce over 800 hp. The wood boat frame was built around the steel engine frame and the boat was shrouded in aluminum. The exotic three-point hydroplane weighed 2,028 lbs.



Testing commenced in July 1954. The normal teething problems were addressed, but in the end the boat showed a persistent tendency to pull left that required some modifications to the hull.

Finally on October 9, despite not having fully completed testing of the modifications, Verga set out on a record run, confident that the Laura 3 could break the record. He waited until midday for the persistent wind whipping the surface of Lake Iseo to die down. When the wind failed to cooperate, Verga decided to have a go anyway. The Laura 3 had reached an estimated speed of 190 mph when the boat hit a couple of small waves, raising its bow. The aerodynamic forces caught the bow and lifted the Laura 3 out of the water. The boat flipped and rolled before smashing back down into Lake Iseo and sinking. Verga was instantly killed in the crash and the Laura 3 was destroyed. Verga's run was the last time an Italian tried to set an absolute world water speed record. 🍀

2019 Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance

Plenty of Alfisti, few Alfas

By Bob Abhalter

Chrystal and I traveled south in March to attend the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance and perhaps catch a few rays of sunshine. We were successful on both accounts. The weather cooperated, providing warmth and sun while the Concours offered up plenty of gorgeous sheet metal to admire. The only downside was the decided lack of Alfa Romeos on the show field. Only two Alfas were entered for the Sunday event. Both were Tipo 33 race cars.

The revitalized Northeast Florida AROC, so fresh it was only recently added to the US website's list of chapters, sponsored a reception Friday evening before the event. It attracted over 100 Alfisti from near and far, offering an Italian-themed buffet, cordial hospitality, and plenty of conviviality.

National President Cindy Banzer addressed the group and pledged a continuing future AROC presence at the March event. A representative of the Pittsburgh AROC plugged this year's National Convention, highlighting the combination of historic racing events and Alfa-specific happenings.

This year as last, AROC representatives manned a membership booth on the grounds of the Concours both Saturday and Sunday to field inquiries from interested non-member Alfa Owners. Scroll to the next page for some photos. 🍀



Two Tipo 33 racers, an unsuccessful 1967 “periscopio” (left) and the very successful World Champion 1975 T33/TT/12, part of the Simeone Collection (below)



The owner of this car found it packed in a container of Autodelta parts he purchased.



This impressive 1930 Isotta Fraschini “Flying Star” is a recreation of the lost original. It looked large and in charge. A similar design was done by Touring for an Alfa 1750 Spider. It's more successful on the Spider.



I know there are Miller fans in the club. This 1926 Miller 91 is for you.



Perhaps the world's first nav system, the dial on this 1910 Thomas Flyer contained route instructions. The pointer was connected to the transmission by a flex shaft to track mileage.



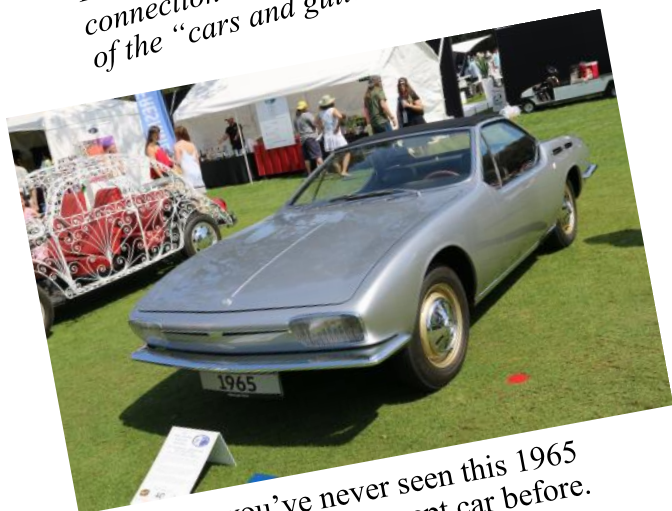
This privately owned Tucker was the 44th of 50 production pilots. It is one of 8 assembled by designer Alex Tremulis and his helpers after the factory closed in October 1948.



There's always room for weirdness at Amelia. This Porsche tractor and matching guitar has a connection with musician John Oates and is part of the "cars and guitars of the stars" group.



Business was slow when I walked by, but the stand enjoyed regular business through the day.



I'll wager you've never seen this 1965 Volkswagen type 1 concept car before.



Peugeot wants to return to the U.S. Perhaps they could update this 1938 Darl'Mat roadster as part of the line.



They don't make 'em like this anymore. 1914 Benz 18/45 four passenger runabout.



In 1934 this one-off Lancia Belva had a retracting metal roof.



Classifieds

Alfanatic will post brief non-commercial classifieds for members and friends at no charge. Email the [editors](#) to make a submission.

Wanted

Your free classified ads! Let us know.

For Sale

Gary Tree is trying to clean out his garage. He is parting a **1980 Spider** and has many other parts to sell, too numerous to list. An S2 Windshield, fiberglass bumpers, engine, transmission, door latches, etc. Just ask! Contact Gary at 608-209-2352, or gjtree-house@gmail.com

Ray Petry writes: I have a huge pile of **Alfa Romeo literature** that I move from house to house and I think it is time I shared it with another enthusiast. It includes a metal dealer sign (reproduction), an Indy car poster from the Alfa power plant years, many copies of the *Alfa Owner* from the 1990s, some copies of *Quadrifoglio*, some parts catalogs, a SPICA fuel injection manual, some Alfa books, and the special 60th anniversary Pininfarina book. I was hoping to sell them as a single lot but may consider breaking it up.

See the photos, below. There are more items available. Please inquire.

Prices negotiable, especially for the entire lot. Local pickup preferred but can ship if necessary. Alternately can meet in Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha area.

Contact Ray at flhwelder@gmail.com



*Alfa Owner, 24 issues, 1991-1993
\$5/copy, \$120/lot*

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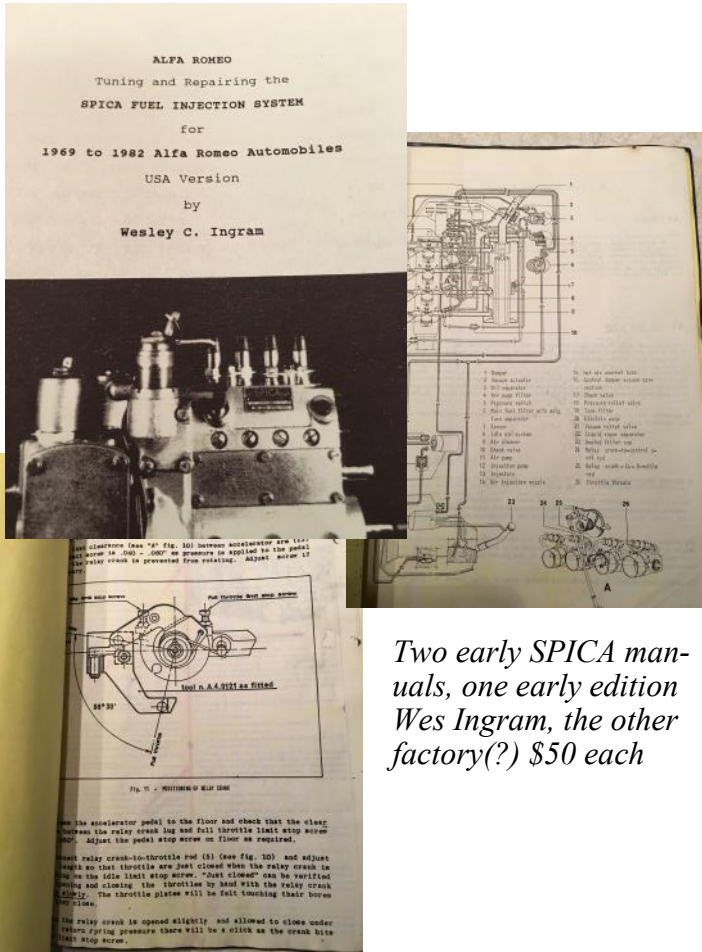
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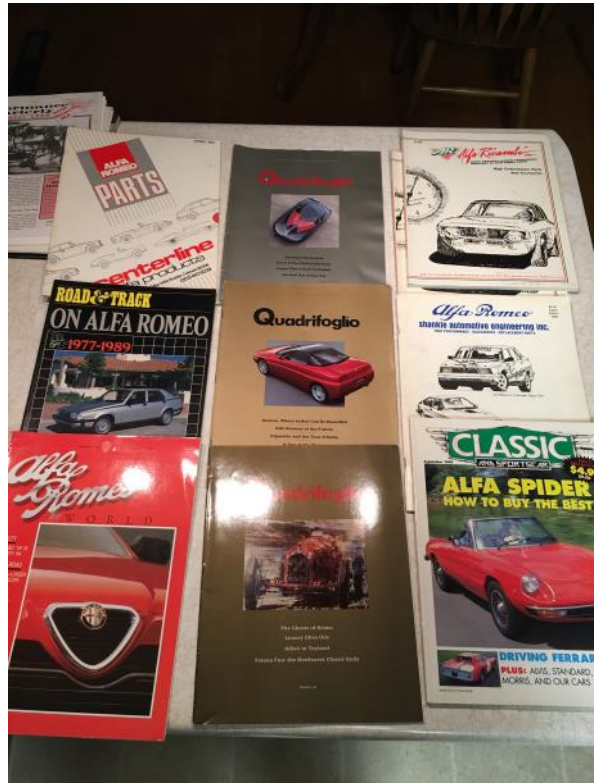
Steve's British Connection

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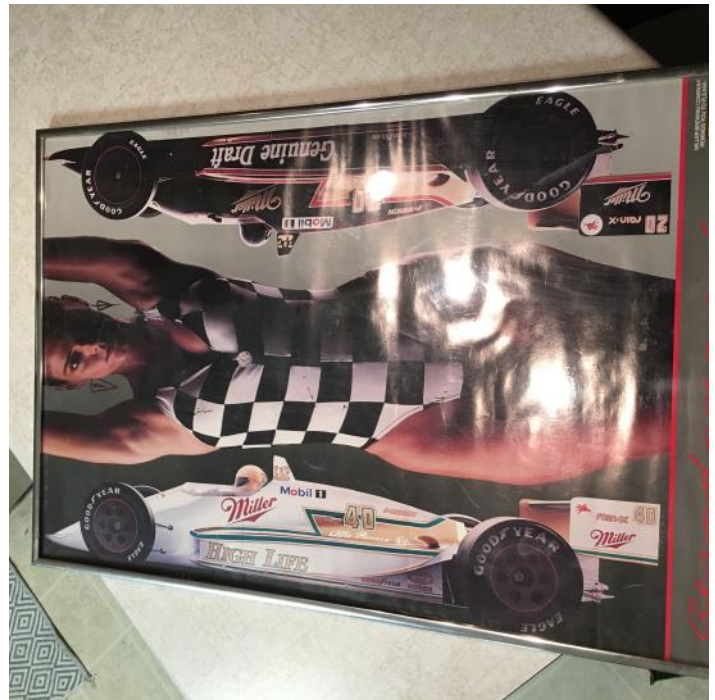
Two early SPICA manuals, one early edition Wes Ingram, the other factory(?) \$50 each



Three copies of the Quadrifoglio, Alfa's U.S. house organ, \$30 for the lot



Several copies of the Performance Quarterly, published by Alfa Ricambi. Offers accepted.



Alfa Indy Car race poster in great condition but with junk frame, \$25.00



Reproduction of an Alfa parts and service sign, 24"x24", \$50.00

Four Used Cromodora Wheels

for 72-74 Alfa Spider. Surface and finish would benefit from some reconditioning but otherwise ready for that rally! If desired, and strictly at my cost—no adder—I would be willing to get them E-Coated ready for paint refinishing. Make me an offer!

Also, **Rear Bumper** for 1972-74 Spider. Make an offer.

James Huff, 514 Simon Drive,
Hartford, WI 53027,
jphuff4@gmail.com



Automotive Fine Art

Jill Reger of Scottsdale, Arizona, is a photographer specializing in classic autos including, but certainly not limited to, Alfa Romeos. Check out her work at www.jillreger.com



This collage includes many of the Alfa photos Jill has in her collection. All are available as single prints. The collage is also available.

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SUBMISSIONS

Do you have a story you'd like to share? Have a restoration in progress or finished? Taken a memorable road trip or have a funny car story? Pictures, lessons learned, maintenance tips? Whatever. The *Alfanatic* is always looking for material to publish. Email your submissions to the editor at rabhalter@att.net and share with your fellow Alfisti.

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