

# ALFANATIC



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## **Next Event** **John Ehle's** **Mother Stay Away From Me** **Social Distancing Spring Tour** **Saturday May 9, 2020**

**What:** A one-day spring driving tour. Participants may bring any car of their choosing. There's a preference for sports cars, and a stronger preference for vintage (pre-1990) sports cars, but anything is welcome. This is not a lead-follow event, and there are no "run groups," thus allowing participants to go at their own pace. For social distancing purposes, there will be NO set stops along the route, and NO organized meals; lunch will be on your own, with the route running through an area with a variety of lunch options, should you choose to purchase rather than bring your own. I will email the participants the route book in pdf format the day before the tour, on Friday, May 8.

**When:** Saturday, May 9, 2020. Planned departure time of 10:00 am. There will be NO social gathering at the start, but I will be at the starting point 10-15 minutes early to wave or say hello from a minimum distance of 6 feet. It would be great to see all of your friendly faces, even only from a distance, and gather the cars at the start to see what cool cars show up this year. There's certainly no need to get out of your car for the sake of distancing and safety.

**Where:** We'll start from the the Visitors Center/Rest Area in Pleasant Prairie, just north of the Wisconsin state line at the interchange of I-94 and Hwy 165.

**The Route:** We'll start off heading west through Kenosha County before swinging north/northwest, through the Kettle Moraine forest, then north to Delafield (I-94 & Hwy 83) where we'll find multiple lunch options, both take-out and drive-through, or a spot to park and eat whatever lunch you may choose to bring with you. From there we'll head north before looping west, just south of Hartford, then south through Sullivan before heading southeast, clipping the southern edge of Mukwonago, and finishing in Franksville at the interchange of I-94 and Hwy K (Pilot, A&W) in Racine County. I anticipate that the drive will wrap up around 4 p.m., depending upon your pace and the number of stops you make.

The nice thing about this route is that it does offer flexibility for those who don't want to drive the whole thing. There are two easy bail-out points if you only want to drive part of it. The first is in Delafield when we pass through the interchange of I-94 and Hwy 83 at around 12:30 p.m. The second will be around 2 or 2:30 p.m. when we pass through the interchange of I-94 and Hwy F just north of Sullivan.

**Cost:** FREE! However, food/beverage and incidentals are on you.

**RSVP:** If you are planning to drive the route, please let me know by end of the day on Thursday, May 7, so I can include you on the distribution list for the route book on Friday the 8th. **Email John at [johnnehle@comcast.net](mailto:johnnehle@comcast.net)**



### **In This Issue**

- Event Updates
- Events Calendar
- Alfa History—Part 1
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## Reschedules Continue

Last month brought with it a new bunch of event cancellations to add to previous reschedulings.

The **Formula 1** series hopes to resume this summer. Its website holds forth the possibility of kicking off racing in July, with the first race being Austria on July 5, without spectators. AROC is still advertising its tour package for the U.S. Grand Prix in October, but one would have to question whether the race will happen and, if it does, whether the scheduled date will hold.

Closer to home, **Road America** is rolling its schedule one race at a time. The May 17-19 Spring Vintage Festival is postponed indefinitely. The next auto race on the schedule is the June Sprints, which at this writing is still scheduled.

**CAROC**, our neighbors to the south, decided to cancel their June 6 lapping day at Blackhawk Farms Raceway.

The **Le Mans** 24 hour race has been moved to September and the **Sebring** 12 hour to November 14.

One of the more significant cancellations recently announced is the postponement of the 70th edition of the **Pebble Beach** Concours d'Elegance to August 2021.

The Pebble Beach cancellation unleashed an avalanche of other Monterey events cancellations—the Concorso Italiano, Legends of the Autobahn, The Concorso d'LeMons, The Gooding Auction, The Quail, A Motorsports Gathering, McCall's Motorworks Revival, and the Worldwide Auctioneers Pacific Grove Auction—have all cancelled or rescheduled their 2020 events. It's likely only a matter of time before the other major auctions either reschedule or go virtual.

So far, the other major event of Car Week is still on the schedule. The Monterey Motorsports Reunion at Weathertech Raceway Laguna Seca, aka The **Monterey Historics**, has not yet announced a schedule change.

Closer to home, the August 23 Geneva Concours just cancelled.

Other premier events not yet rescheduled are the July 24-26 **Concours D'Elegance of America** in Plymouth, Michigan, and The Heinrich's June 24 **Sportscar Solstice** Howl at the Moon Garage party. Stay tuned.



## 2020-21 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](mailto:rabhalter@att.net)

<b>May 9</b>	<b>John Ehle's Mother Stay Away from Me Social Distancing Spring Tour</b>
May 17-19	<del>SVRA Spring Vintage Festival, Road America</del> <b>Postponed, Date TBA</b>
June 6	<del>CAROC Lapping Day, Blackhawk Farms, Beloit,</del> <b>CAROC Cancelled</b>
June 12-14	Weathertech Chicago Region SCCA June Sprints, Road America
June 12-13	Fueled 2020 MotoGaro 250 Tour <a href="http://www.motorgaro.com">http://www.motorgaro.com</a>
June 13-14	<del>Le Mans 24 Hour Race</del> <b>Postponed to 19-20 Sep</b>
June 18-21	NTT Indycar Series Weekend, Road America
June 24	Tom and Pam Heinrich's Sportscar Solstice Howl at the Moon Garage Party
July 23-26	Weathertech International Challenge, Road America
July 30 - August 2	IMSA Road Race Showcase, Road America
July 24-26	<a href="#">Concours d'Elegance of America</a> , Plymouth, Michigan
August 6-8	NASCAR Xfinity Series Henry 180, Trans Am, Stadium Trucks, Road America
<b>August 9</b>	<b>(T) AROC-WI 23d Annual ICAMS Show, Reina Intl. Auto. Brookfield, WI</b>
August 16	<del><a href="#">Pebble Beach Concours D'Elegance</a>, Pebble Beach, California</del> <b>Cancelled</b>
August 23	<del><a href="#">Geneva Concours D'Elegance</a>, Geneva, Illinois</del> <b>Cancelled</b>
August 28-30	World Challenge Sportscar Weekend, Road America
September 10-13	U.S. Vintage Grand Prix, with <a href="#">Alfas at the Glen</a> , Watkins Glen, NY
September 18-20	Ariens Art on Wheels VSCDA Vintage Weekend, Road America
October 9-11	SCCA National Championship Runoffs, Road America
<b>October 22-26</b>	<b>AROC Goes to the U.S. Grand Prix, Austin, Texas</b>
<b>May 7-8, 2021 (t)</b>	<b>AROC-WI New Glarus Hill Climb</b>

## Want an Electric Alfa?

The Italian “lifestyle” business Garage Italia Customs, founded by Lapo Elkann, brother of the FIAT chairman John, operates an automotive-themed bar and restaurant, a design firm, and a workshop producing custom cars, both one-off and series. It has developed a series of electrified cars, including a converted Fiat Panda 4x4, a vintage FIAT Jolly, and a radically remade 500 convertible. The basic concept is dubbed Icon-E.

Discarded vehicles are dragged from the junkyard, restored, customized, and electrified, using motors and battery packs developed by the Newton Group.



The next car to be produced under this concept is a Series 4 Spider. The Duetto (*all* Alfa Spiders are Duetto to most Italians) will get the full treatment as seen in the above concept drawing. The retromod loses its exhaust, the door handles are shaved and fat tires are added. The concept drawings of the stylized interior still unexplainably shows the five-speed gearshift.



No specifications or performance figures are provided, but judging from the data provided for the Panda 4x4, (65 mph top speed, 62 mile range) these cars are designed to be seen in rather than driven. 🍀

## Super Giulia for Alfa's 110th Anniversary

On March 2, Alfa Romeo announced the availability of the GTA and GTAm versions of the Giulia. Only 500 copies of the fire-breathing sedans will be produced.



Inspired by the original Giulia GTA (A is for Alleggerita = lightened) introduced in 1965, this lightweight Giulia aims to provide a similar experience as a street-legal racecar. Not just a Giulia with a body kit, the Quadrifoglio-based special has been seriously breathed on. The F1-inspired aero package was developed in cooperation with Sauber Engineering. The twin-turbo V-6 has been tuned to produce 540 hp, up 35 from standard. The suspension has been revised and the front and rear track widened. Weight savings include use of carbon fiber for the driveshaft and several body panels. A titanium exhaust system also saves weight, as does the substitution of Lexan for the side and rear windows. The total benefit is a savings of 220 lb. over the standard car.

The GTAm (back in the day, the “m” stood for Maggiore—enlarged) version takes things a bit further with the elimination of the back seat, replaced by a deck with storage for helmets and a fire extinguisher. Carbon fiber racing seats and a full harness are also a part of the GTAm package. There's also a rear wing and a more radical front splitter. This sounds like a track day special, for sure.

Alfa Romeo says that purchase of these cars is by application. When the 500 cars are subscribed, the sales process will be one-on-one with a product specialist. The delivery package includes a trip to Alfa's Driving Academy. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that these cars will be available in the U.S. Alfa expects most to be sold in Europe and is said to be “evaluating” introducing them elsewhere. Don't hold your breath. 🍀

**Late Breaking! See Pg. 7 for Pricing & Configurator.**



## Alfa Romeo Stories

*Editor's note: FCA Italy has produced a serialized history of Alfa Romeo in honor of its 110th anniversary, June 24. All photos courtesy FCA Italy. Text translated from the Italian by MS Word with edits by Bob Abhalter.*

### Chapter 1: From the origins of the 24 HP to the first international victories (1906-1925)

*Early 20th century stories and characters that revolve around the first car: an elegant tourer capable of 100 km/h.*

#### The French Arrive from Naples



Perhaps you think our story should begin on June 24, 1910, with the founding of A.L.F.A. (Anonima Lombarda Fabbrica Automobili) But we'll start a few years earlier with a singular character – a Frenchman with a handlebar moustache and a strong business sense.



Pierre Alexandre Darracq started with a bicycle factory in Bordeaux, but soon fell in love with cars. His machines were a success in France so he decided to export them and opened branches in London and later in Italy.

Darracq began production in Naples in April 1906, but Naples is far from France. The logistics were difficult and shipping very expensive. By December, production was moved to the Portello District of Milan.

Unfortunately, market problems compounded the logistical difficulties. The car did not take off in Italy due to the differing expectations of Italian buyers.

The French liked the Darracq because it was small, light, and inexpensive. The Italians wanted more power. Only a few thousand cars were sold and production in such low volumes was expensive. At the end of 1909 Darracq put the Italian company into liquidation.

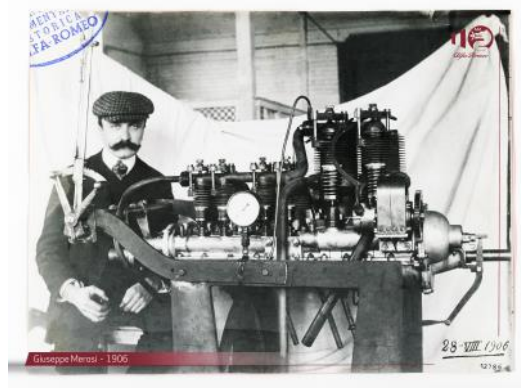
#### The Milanese Knight

But there were those who believed in the potential of the Portello works. Darracq Italy's CEO, Ugo Stella, with the help of some Lombard financiers and the guarantee of the Milanese Bank Agricola, took over the plant and retained the more than 200 workers who worked there. It seemed a reckless move, but Stella had a vision and a plan, the first of a series of remarkable insights which dot the Alfa Romeo story. He knew the trade, assessed the risks, and analyzed the market. He knew the type of car his customers would like. And he had an ace up his sleeve – he had found just the man to design them.



#### The Surveyor from Piacenza

Giuseppe Merosi was a surveyor from Piacenza. Like many young people of his time, he was consumed by a passion for the car – a passion he matured by going to work in the automobile industry.



In the autumn of 1909, Stella asked him to create two completely new cars of 12 and 24 taxable horsepower. More powerful than the existing Darracq, they were to be suitable for the tastes of the Italian clientele, and have a chassis that accommodated high end bodywork. In his Milanese home at Via Cappuccio 17, the young designer worked night and day and handed over the completed drawings of the first car to the Darracq technical office on January 1, 1909.

## The 24 HP

Thus for perhaps the first time in the history of the automobile, the design of the 24 HP was born before the brand that finally put it on the market. It had a monoblock engine (not common at the time), 4 cylinders, a 4 liter displacement, and 42 horsepower, with a unique torque-tube driveshaft transmitting power to the rear wheels. It featured a sturdy frame reinforced with c-shaped crossmembers on which body builders Castagna, Schieppati, Sala, and Bollani developed touring and limousine bodies for a demanding clientele. The 24 HP was targeted to the premium market segment. It cost the equivalent of two years of the average employee's salary.



The 24 HP was capable of reaching 100 km/h (62 mph), and was manufactured with extreme care and precision, making it a durable and top performing model. It was an instant success. The first A.L.F.A. was already a true Alfa Romeo—elegant and sporty, technologically advanced, and with an unmistakable charm. It's the magic formula that will accompany the brand throughout its history—and make it unique in the car landscape.

Merosi realized he was on the right track and pushed the accelerator pedal. In 1911 he developed the 24 HP



Corsa, with reduced weight, more power, and more speed—a bit like today's GTA. With this car, A.L.F.A. entered the world of racing only a year after its founding. The first victory came at the Parma-Poggio di Berceto in 1913. Driver Nino Franchini was second overall and first in class.

## The 40/60 HP

For a young brand, racing was the best way to make itself known. Merosi knew this well and decided to take the big leap, putting a dedicated race car into the development pipeline. In 1913 the 40/60 HP was born.

One of the most futuristic creations of the time was developed on this base. Count Ricotti asked the bodybuilder Castagna to develop an experimental aerodynamic design on the A.L.F.A. chassis. The resulting 40/60 HP Aerodinamica looked like it came out of a novel by Jules Verne. It was capable of reaching 139 km/h (86 mph).



But the outbreak of the Great War changed the scenario for everyone. A.L.F.A. was called to participate in the war effort. On December 2, 1915, the Company Ing. Nicola Romeo & C. took over the Portello plants and converted them to the production of ammunition and aircraft engines. The original production department was joined by a new forge and foundry, equipped with machine tools and equipment purchased directly from the United States. Employees grew from a few hundred to over 1,200.

## The Engineer Senator

Nicola Romeo, future Senator of the Kingdom, is another key figure in our story. During the war the industrialist acquired several companies, including *Costruzioni Meccaniche di Saronno*, *Officine*





*Meccaniche Tabanelli* in Rome, and the *Officine Ferroviarie Meridionali* in Naples. He changed the company's name to *Società anonima Ing. Nicola Romeo e Co.*, and when the *Banca Italiana di Sconto* demanded the liquidation of A.L.F.A., he was ready to acquire it.

## New Ownership

After a legal battle with the former owners over the name, Nicola Romeo decided to add his surname to the brand and market them as Alfa Romeos. The first cars to carry the new brand were the 20-30 HP and its derivative ES Sport. They were cars that were developed along the lines laid down by Merosi before the war – elegant, fast, and with a unique temperament.

In those years, drivers Giuseppe Campari, Antonio Ascari, Ugo Sivocci, and the young Enzo Ferrari were frequently on the front pages of the newspapers. Alfa Romeo was the frequent winner in Italian races—Mugello, Parma-Poggio di Berceto, Targa Florio, Aosta-Gran San Bernardo, and Coppa della Alpi—but international successes were still lacking.



## Merosi's Masterpiece

"The Italian answer to the most elegant cars in the world." This is how the British press greeted the new Alfa Romeo RL presented at the November 1921, London Motor Show. The RL was a brand new car, and perhaps Merosi's masterpiece. It had a 6 cylinder, 3 liter engine producing 56 horsepower. The single block had a removable head with pushrod-operated valves. The RL had a top speed of 68 mph and handled well, with precise steering.

Also under Merosi's leadership, two special racing



versions were born in 1923. Lightened to 2,161 lb., they were born to triumph at the Targa Florio—and succeeded.

In April, Ugo Sivocci appeared at the start with a green four-leaf clover on a white background painted on the side of his car. The lucky charm worked and Sivocci triumphed in the 14th Targa Florio (the first in a long series). The Quadrifoglio entered the history of the brand.

## The Designer Recruited by Ferrari

Ultimately the time came to develop Grand Prix cars separate from production automobiles. It was Enzo Ferrari himself who recommended a person for the manager's position—Vittorio Jano, a young designer from Piedmont who had gained deep expertise at FIAT on the architecture of engines and chassis.

Jano brought revolutionary ideas to Alfa Romeo, such as developing power out of small displacements. These ideas proved successful. His GP Type P2 with Ascari at the wheel bested the competition on the Cremona circuit at an average of over 98 mph.



The victories of the Type P2 brought Alfa Romeo to the top of motorsport. In 1925 it won the first Grand Prix World Championship, organized by the International Association of Recognized Automobile Clubs. To celebrate the victory, the Alfa Romeo logo was surrounded by a laurel wreath.



To be continued...

## Jay Leno Drives a Montreal

In case you haven't seen it, Mr. Leno has released an episode of Jay Leno's Garage featuring the Montreal. <https://youtu.be/OwLQ7jbdVV0>

It's safe to say that he likes the car and the way it drives. Unfortunately he doesn't seem to know all that much about it and doesn't rely on the owner of the car or other authority to provide the details. The deeper you are into the Montreal world, the less you'll like it. Nonetheless it's mostly pleasant to view, if a bit cringe-worthy at times.

## Alfista Meets Pinterest, Rebuilds Duetto

It's becoming apparent that there will be precious few car shows of any type for the foreseeable future. That statement excludes the drive-by shows that take place every sunny Saturday and Sunday within sight of our condo, just a half-block off the downtown Kenosha "loop," used for years by local car guys to air out their rides—burnouts not allowed.

With that sort of show you have to take what you get. If you aren't fortunate enough to live near a popular thoroughfare, you may want to resort to virtual car shows. Plenty are available on the internet

Faithful AROC-WI member David Ziglin recently discovered Pinterest.com. Just navigate there, type in *Alfa Romeo* or any other marque you fancy, and you'll find all the images your heart desires. But be careful.

"Of interest to anyone who values his privacy, it might be interesting to know that Pinterest—as others—follow our every key stroke. In a very short time they found out that I was interested in Alfa Romeos and other foreign sports and GT cars. Of course, they were hot on to other interests of mine although there are many that they have yet to delve into or discover," says Ziglin.

### *The Duetto Part...*

On another topic, David reports that Mike Besic has finished making his former Duetto racer into a streetable car. Mike built up the 1600 motor that he said broke records on the dyno and added a new transmission. The fuel cell and dual pumps stayed, the short shifter and pre-oiler were deleted. The car has been refinished and is ready for the street. We expect pictures! 🍀

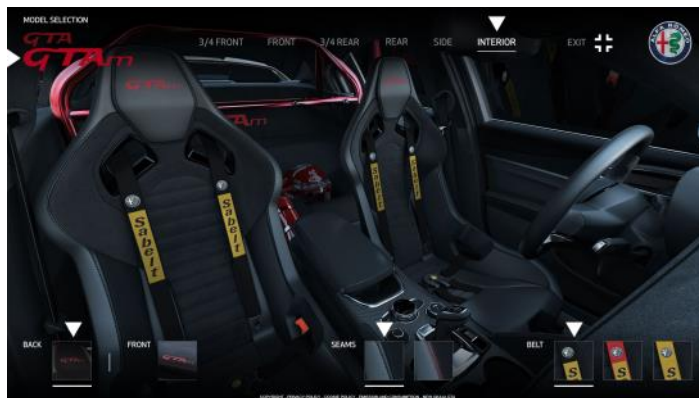
## Alfa Romeo Announces Italian Pricing for GTA and GTAm

On March 30, Alfa Romeo announced the Italian Pricing and released a configurator for the new Giulia GTA and GTAm sports models.

According to [ClubAlfa.it](https://clubalfa.it), the base price for the GTA in Italy will be €175,000 (\$192,255) and the GTAm will sell for €180,000 (\$197,748). Both prices include VAT. Pricing elsewhere in Europe will differ slightly due to variations in the VAT. There was no pricing announced for the United States, nor are there any



plans as yet to introduce the car here. Interested buyers and fans can configure their dream car using [Alfa's configurator](https://clubalfa.it). The models come in three colors: Red, White, and Green. (Think Italian flag.) Both the GTA and GTAm are featured. One can switch between them to see the model differences. Click on GTAm and the sedan grows a wing. The interior of the GTAm, loses a rear seat and adds a roll bar and lightweight seats. The configurators are not yet complete down to the minor details but give one an overall sense of the car. Serious buyers can expect



a more personal hands on experience. Next stop – the Nurburgring, where Alfa expects the GTAm to turn in times of 7'10" to 7'15" sometime this May. 🍀



## 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

**1991 Alfa Romeo Spider** with a ZF auto trans,\$8,000. I bought it 3 years ago and put \$12,000 into it as a keeper but health and flexibility prevent me getting in and out. Mechanically good but paint not the best. Located in Green Bay. Call (920) 362-7663 Romeo Raabe.



**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 [gittreehouse@gmail.com](mailto:gittreehouse@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) (sold), an Indy car poster from the Alfa power plant years, many copies of

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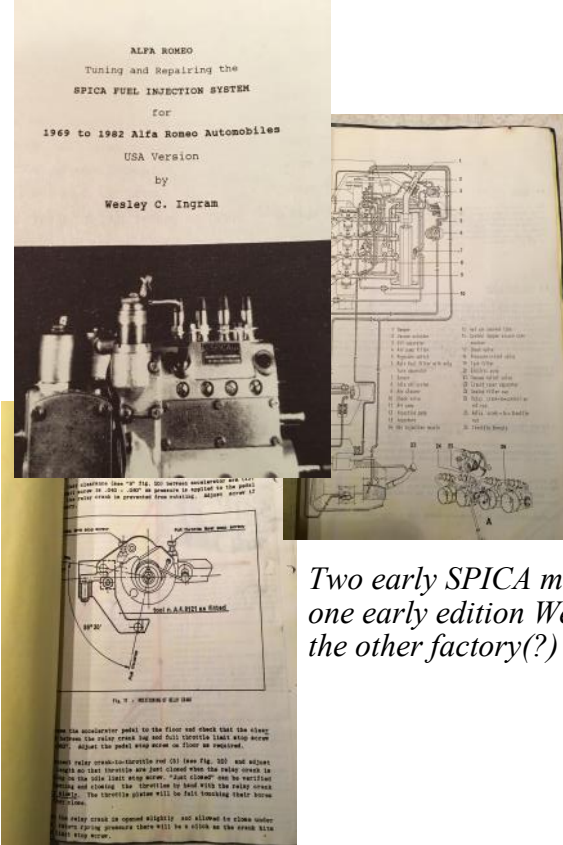
the *Alfa Owner* from the 1990s, some copies of *Quadrifoglio*, some parts catalogs, a SPICA fuel injection manual, some Alfa books, and the special 60th anniversary Pininfarina book. I was hoping to sell them as a single lot but may consider breaking it up. See the photos, below.

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](mailto:flhwelder@gmail.com)



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*



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



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



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

**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](mailto:jphuff4@gmail.com)

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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](mailto:rabhalter@att.net) and share with your fellow Alfisti.

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