

ALFANATIC



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National Convention Set for California June 13-19

Be sure to check the January *Alfa Owner* for the formal announcement of *Alfiesta Coronado 2022*, this year's AROC National Convention. The city of Coronado, across the bay from San Diego, is the site of the Lowes Coronado Bay Resort, the headquarters hotel. In addition to having the usual four-star amenities, the hotel is convenient to beaches and runs an hourly shuttle to downtown Coronado for shopping and sightseeing.



Track events will be staged at Willow Springs Raceway, Monday, June 13. Because of the distance (209 miles), arrangements have been made for an overnight stay before driving to Coronado Tuesday.

All the traditional convention events have been scheduled, including both driving and walking rallies, a Concorso, reception, banquet, awards brunch, tech talks, art show, and bus tours of the area. Pre-convention touring promises to be fun-filled, featuring the roads and sights of Southern California.

Put those dates in your calendar now and prepare for "A Summer Vacation to Remember."



Local, Regional, and International Events Calendar

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

January 14-17	AROC Winter Retreat, Palm Desert, California
March 3-6	Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, Amelia Island, Florida
May 7-8	AROC-WI Das Kurze Klausenrennen, New Glarus, Wisconsin
May 20-22	SVRA Vintage Festival Weekend, Road America
June 6-16	AROC Goes to Italy Tour #4
June 9-12	NTT Indycar Series, Road America
June 11-12	24 Hours of Le Mans
June 13-19	AROC-USA National Convention, Coronado, California
June 17-19	WeatherTech Chicago Region SCCA June Sprints, Road America
June 30-July 3	NACSAR Cup and Xfinity series races, Road America
July 14-17	WeatherTech International Challenge with Brian Redman, Road America
August 4-7	IMSA Sportscar Weekend, Road America
August 7	ICAMS, AROC-WI, Sussex Village Park, Sussex, Wisconsin
August 19-21	World Challenge, Road America
August 20	Concorso Italiano, Monterey, California
August 21	Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Pebble Beach, California
August 28	Geneva Concours d'Elegance, Geneva, Illinois
September 16-18	Ariens Art on Wheels Vintage Weekend w/VSCDA, Road America
Sept 30-Oct 12	AROC Goes To Italy Tour #5
October 20-24	AROC Goes to the F1 USGP, Circuit of the Americas, Austin TX

Alfetta Sedan Figures in Club's Origins

A remembrance by Russ Whitford

Editor's note: A longtime Alfisti and member of AROC-Wisconsin's founding group, Russ Whitford's travels have taken him away from Wisconsin for many years, but his heart (and his Alfas) still remain. This month he writes about how he discovered Alfas and connected with our group.

I knew nothing about sports cars. I didn't know much about cars at all. But at the age of 23 I left a job where a company car was provided for an independent rep position where I had to provide my own transportation. Before switching jobs I spent a lot of time away from my Milwaukee home in Des Plaines, Illinois. Evenings I would visit the library and read *Road & Track* and *Autoweek*. If I had to buy a car, I wanted something interesting and perhaps exciting.

Reviews I read made no mention of 4-door Alfa Romeos. Somehow, I fixated on Lancia Beta as a possible choice. Waukesha had a small dealer by an old mill who sold Lancia. I visited and drove a Beta 4-door. OK, nice car. But I spotted a beat up Alfetta on the lot. They said, "Nice car, we use it as a parts runner. Everyone wants to drive it. Yes, you can take it for a drive." I drove it for a few miles, turned around and drove it back. That's all I needed to know it was the car I wanted!

Tosa Imports was the local Alfa dealer. They had a green 1975 Alfetta that had been sitting for a year or so, with rust around the side mirror. Strangely enough, my neighbor, John Vasos in Whitefish Bay, eventually purchased that very car. I saw an ad in a newspaper for Suburban Auto in the Chicago area. They had two Alfettas for sale. On my next trip to Chicagoland, I visited Suburban. Yes, they had two 1977 Alfettas. No, I couldn't drive them. Tosa Imports wanted about \$8,000 for their rusty 1975 and Suburban wanted \$6,200 for the 1977 models. They had a blue one and one was the most beautiful maroon color, Amaretto Rosso. I called a week later. The blue one was sold. No problem, I bought the Amaretto Rosso. I purchased this car in February of 1978, it was titled as a 1977, but the door plate said it was a 1976 model. Hmm.

I called Alfa Romeo in New Jersey to discuss a possible warrantee for this amazing car. Yes, I had a year warrantee and Tosa Imports would honor it. They said Craig Morningstar was going to be at Tosa that

week. I decided to meet him and talk about this strange car I had just purchased. We met a few days later. Craig filled me with confidence about my purchase. He explained that 1977 Alfettas did not meet EPA requirements. Alfa had built about 50 of them. They shipped them to Germany, but the Germans didn't want the SPICA injected cars with heavy rubber bumpers and imperial instead of metric gauges. Alfa put a speed minder on the dash. This was a dial that one could set in KPH, and it would blink if the speed was exceeded. But the German buyers wouldn't have it, so Alfa forged paperwork to call them 1976 leftovers and sell them at a discount. That's what I bought.



Not Russ's Alfetta Berlina, but a nice one.

There was a rattle in the back of the car. Craig is a big guy. He grabbed the bumper and shook the entire car. There was an empty battery box under the trunk floor. There was a loose bolt in the box. Problem solved. Seems Alfa would place the battery in the trunk if air conditioning was installed to maintain 50/50 weight balance, something touted with the Alfetta's transaxle configuration.

After owning my Alfetta for about a year, I received a recall notice. I'll try to quote it as exactly as possible. I kept this recall notice for a long time. It said, "At sustained speeds over 90 MPH the rear coupling can fail. While this is an illegal speed, your car is capable of these speeds. This could leave your car disabled which is a safety hazard. Please bring it to your local dealer for replacement at no charge." I did and my Alfetta now had a driveshaft vibration. Not only that but when I picked it up, it had a big door ding that was not there when I dropped it off.

I heard Jim Blau, owner of Tosa Imports, say, "I don't give a f&*& about Alfa Romeo." OK, I decided I would have to learn about this car and do my own maintenance. I bought some books, including a histo-

ry of Alfa Romeo. How cool! They have been making special cars for a long time.



Not Gary's 1965 Spider

I stopped at a 7/11 on Wilson Drive in Shorewood. There was a beautiful Giulia Spider in the parking lot. I wrote on my business card, "I love your Alfa. I have an Alfa too, please call me." A few days later, Gary Wirth called me, and I drove to his house. I gave him a ride in my Alfetta. He gave me a ride in his 1965 Giulia Spider Veloce, then asked me if I wanted to drive it. Yes! Then I realized Alfa guys let other Alfa guys drive their cars. Gary took my Alfetta for a drive. He said it was unusual to have so much torque in an Alfa and he liked it.

August 1978, Gary Wirth, George Meikrantz, Jim Huff, and I arranged a picnic at Estabrook Park. That was the start of AROC Wisconsin. There was an Alfa club – AROC of Western Wisconsin – that was fading out and they conceded that we should take over. Jim Hewitt from Pewaukee joined us as well as a few others.

Gary Wirth had a 1961 Giulietta Spider race car waiting for restoration. He sold it to me for \$1,000. It looked rough but was the perfect candidate for restoration. It had never been driven on salt roads and had no rust. I rebuilt the engine and the entire car. It was the first time I had even seen the inside of an engine. OK, I made a few mistakes but between me and my dad, we owned this car for over 30 years. I vintage raced it and raced in AROC events. It was always a strong contender.

There is not enough space or adequate words to describe my close relationship with my Alfa brothers. Suffice to say, we shared a common interest and felt like pioneers in the days when EPA didn't want owners tinkering with fuel injection.

Gary and I raced 500 races together on my sailboat Veloce. We raced and shared a number of Alfas. One day I went to the garage and found that Gary had sold the cylinder head from my Giulietta TI to someone. No problem, I would just build another. I now live on my boat Up roar after living aboard continually for 6-½ years and sailing 33,000 nautical miles, from Milwaukee to French Polynesia and back. My cruising days may be coming to an end. I still have a 1960 Giulietta Spider Veloce in my garage and my hot, 1974 GTV in my son's garage waiting for some attention. I look forward to these projects but more, I look forward to re-connecting with my Alfa brothers and sisters.

Thanks to all for keeping AROC Wisconsin alive.

Ciao,

Russ (Popeye) Whitford

P.S., What became of the Alfetta? Brian Monroe of MP Enterprises did a heroic job of rust repair and repainting. Gary Wirth eventually owned it and it was driven up to Alfa Heaven as a donation. One of Tom's workers drove it for years after, until it returned to the earth from whence it sprung. Next time you are at Alfa Heaven, you can see my Giulietta TI Scarfaggio in Tom's museum. 🍀

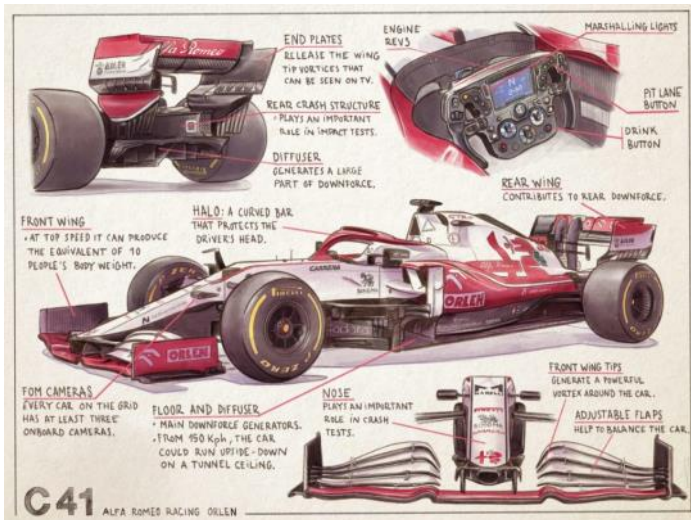
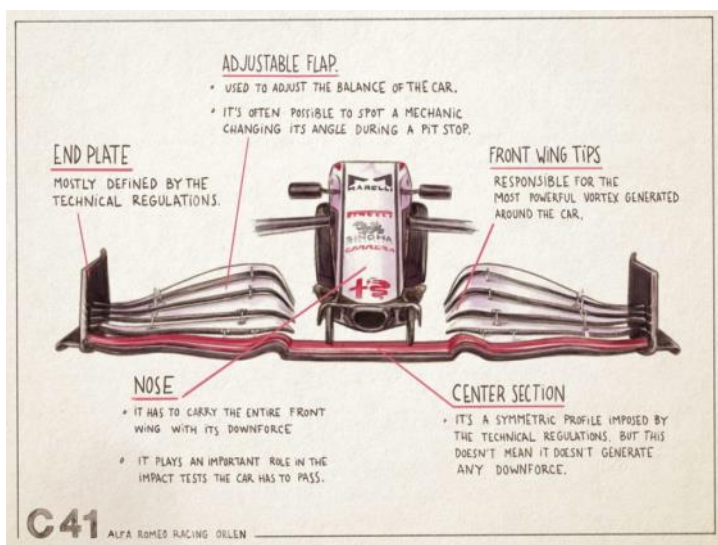
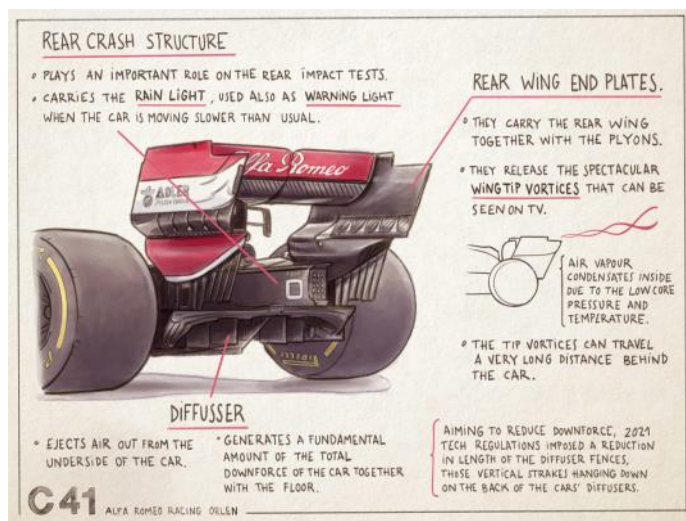
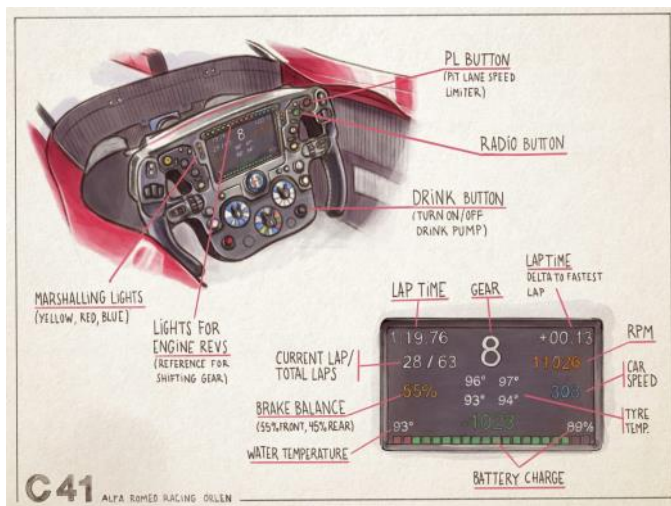
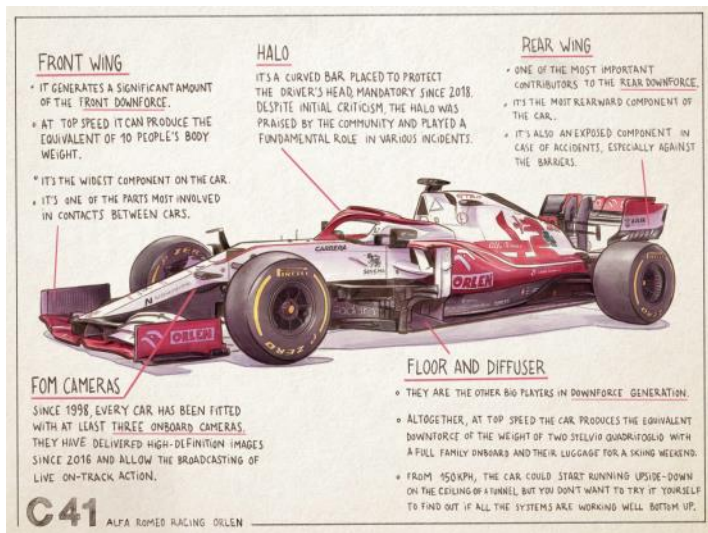
Tonale Release Projected for February

Italian media is full of rumors that the long-awaited production version of Alfa's new Tonale C-SUV will be unveiled at an event scheduled for February 8. Alfa released a [New Year's video](#) specifically teasing the Tonale, showing what appears to be the outline of the rear lights. There has been no official announcement, but usually reliable sources suggest that the event will take the place of the previously scheduled unveiling at the now-cancelled Geneva Auto Show. The model will go into production this spring at the Pomigliano d'Arco plant alongside the Jeep Compass with which it shares a platform. The Tonale is expected to appear in (European) showrooms in June and offer Diesel, plug-in and mild hybrid powertrains. 🍀



Modern F1 Cars Explained

These illustrations, found on [CircusF1.com](https://www.circusf1.com) and featuring last year's Alfa C41, provide detailed illustrations and explanations of the elements of a modern F1 car. Although next year's cars will look different, the basic principles remain the same. 🍀



How Elio Zagato Made a Name in the Automobile Industry

By David Cavaliere, edited
From ItalianTribune.com



Company Founder Ugo Zagato in a 6C1500

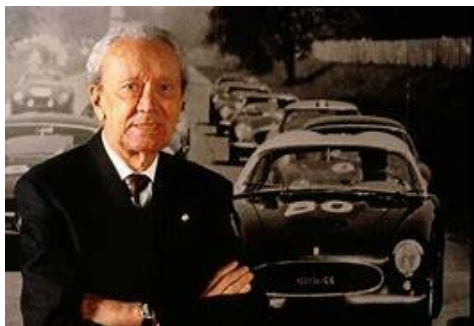
There are only a few carrozzeria whose designs are like a fingerprint. I can always tell a Zagato design. Maybe it is an intangible feature – how the compound curves join to create the ideal shape, marrying form and function; where the marriage becomes one of beauty and defines the whole. In 2019 the company celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of Zagato – one of the world's great styling houses. In 1890, Ugo Zagato was born in the village of Gavello. His mother originally envisioned him becoming a priest; instead, Ugo became enamored with the automobile. At age 15 Ugo's father died, forcing him to leave school. He moved to Germany to work for a coachbuilding firm and, after a short stint in the military in 1909, he joined the Carrozzeria Varesina, gaining experience not only in the automotive field, but also in aerodynamics. During WWI, he worked for Officine Aeronautiche Pomilio, an aircraft manufacturer. It was here that Ugo refined his concepts for integrating component strength with dynamic styling, while adding the virtue of lightness. It became not only Ugo's passion, but an objective that has permeated the company for a century.

Automobiles of the pre-World War One era, especially those intended for racing, were often heavy cars with enormous engines and tons of weight to haul around. For his part, Ugo Zagato wanted to change this. In 1919, he set up his own firm, Carrozzeria Ugo Zagato & Co., to construct and repair aircraft and automobiles. His concepts for construction were similar to Superleggera, fastening aluminum body panels directly to an aluminum frame. He began working with

manufacturers Bianchi, Diatto, and Itala, plus work on the first monocoque automobile – the 1925 Lancia Lambda. It did not take long for Ugo to establish a close working relationship with Alfa Romeo.

In 1925, Vittorio Jano, Alfa Romeo's chief engineer, asked Ugo to fashion the body for the new Alfa 6C 1500. The car was designed along the principles that Ugo most appreciated – it was light and fast. He created a sleek lightweight body for the car. Zagato designed and built numerous types of bodies for the subsequent 6C 1750, which achieved victories in the Mille Miglia in 1929 and 1930. Soon, the orders from other manufacturers flooded the carrozzeria. Bugatti, Diatto, Maserati, OM, and Rolls-Royce all became clients of Zagato.

In the 1930s, Zagato continued building light, aerodynamic cars. He adopted numerous details that incrementally improved performance. A total of thirty-six Zagato-bodied cars were at the start of 1938 Mille Miglia. The wartime years were difficult for everyone in Milan. A target for allied bombing, much of the city was destroyed, including Ugo's shop. Rebuilt as La Zagato outside Milano after WWII, Ugo was joined by his sons Elio and Gianni. It was during these years that he introduced his new concept for the automotive body called the "Panoramica." Maserati, Lancia, Fiat, and Ferrari were all graced with this innovative body.



Elio Zagato

Elio Zagato was one of the pioneers of the Gran Turismo racing category. It required at least 30 examples of a car to be produced in order to qualify for the class.

Conceived as a grouping for the gentleman sports car enthusiast (which described Elio), these would be comfortable, well-appointed and finished cars that could be driven on an everyday basis, yet would be sufficiently light and aerodynamic to race on weekends. They were the original track-day cars. The cars bodied by Zagato in the 1950s were a who's who of the GT world – AC, Alfa Romeo, Abarth, Aston Martin, Bristol, Ferrari, Fiat, Maserati, Jaguar, and Osca.

During the early 1960s, the delicate balance between handcrafting car bodies and the need for efficient in-

dustrial production spelled the demise of many carrozzeria. Wisely, Elio Zagato found a larger location in Terrazzano and in partnership with Alfa Romeo, produced the several highly successful Giulia models, including the Junior Zagato. For Lancia, Zagato created the “Sport” series for the Appia, Flaminia, Flavia and Fulvia models, also highly successful in their own right.

Ugo Zagato passed away in 1968. Elio successfully continued to expand the business for the next 40 years. He passed away in 2009. The company is now in the hands of Elio’s son, Andrea, and daughter-in-law, Marella. She, too, has the history of the Italian automobile coursing through her veins. Marella is the daughter of Piero Rivolta and granddaughter of Iso founder Renzo Rivolta. 🍀



1900C SS Zagato



Giulietta Sprint Zagato



Giulia 1300 Junior Z



Giulia TZ2



Giulia TZ

Classifieds

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

Wanted

Your classified ads! Posted free! Let us know.

For Sale

Miscellaneous Alfa Parts for Sale

- 2 ea. V6 valve cover sets
- 2 ea. v6 lower sumps
- 1 ea. V6 rear bell housing
- 1 ea. V6 Oil pan complete
- 1 ea. Spider Oil pan complete
- 1 ea. 4 cyl valve cover
- 4 ea. Bosch intake vanes
- 2 ea. Spider Idler assemblies
- 1 ea. Spider driveshaft
- 2 ea. Bins of 74 spider parts
- 1 ea. Spider Clutch disk New Valeo
- 2 ea. Spider Transmission
- 1 ea. Spider transmission without Bell housing
- 2 ea. 74 spider doors
- 1 ea. Left rear quarter panel new for 70's spider
- 1 ea. lower nose panel 70's spider New
- 1 ea. 4 cyl Engine mount for engine stand
- 1 ea. Sperry Head with 11mm cams
- 2 ea. Spider 2.0 Crankshafts
- 2 ea. European 4 cyl cast y exhaust manifold set
- 1 ea. European 4 cyl 40mm carb intake with mounts
- 1 ea. European 4 cyl 45mm carb intake without mounts

For more information, email Steve Wirtz
(swirtz@charter.net)
Any reasonable offers

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 gjtreehouse@gmail.com



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CONTACTS

PRESIDENT / WEBMASTER

Steve Wirtz (swirtz@charter.net)
1947 Wallace Lake Rd
West Bend, WI 53090
(262) 306-8238
www.aroc-wisconsin.org

TREASURER

Randy Swanson (RSwanson4@wi.rr.com)
N66 W6684 Cleveland, Cedarburg, WI 53012
262.377.7144, 781.5568 (w)

V.P., EVENT COORDINATOR

Bob Ludwigson (rludwigson@aol.com)
N88W22526 N. Lisbon Rd, Sussex, WI 53089
262-255-1676

PAST PRESIDENT, EVENTS, MEMBERSHIP

Gary Schommer (alfaman@wi.rr.com)
W141N6672 Memory Rd, Menomonee Falls, WI
53051-5119
262.252.3750

NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Bob and Chrystal Abhalter
(rabhalter@att.net)
5406 2nd Ave, Unit 2B
Kenosha, WI 53140
262-577-5212

TECH. ADVISOR

Al Pinkowsky (al@gt-motorsports.net)
520 Capitol Dr.
Pewaukee, WI 53072
262.695.4238 414.774.8938

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.

SCAM WARNING

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