

ALFACIONADA

MAY-JUNE 2018



Highway Earth Concorso Coming Up! Page 10
Wine Tour, Pages 12-15



NEWSLETTER OF THE *Alfa Romeo*
Owners of Southern California

Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California

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Submissions

Please send classified ads, articles, letters and photographs to the Newsletter Address above, to arrive no later than the 25th of the month prior to publication.

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About This Newsletter

Alfacionada is the publication of the Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California, a chapter of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club, Inc., a national

non-profit organization of Alfa Romeo enthusiasts. Affiliation with AROSC and a subscription to this newsletter are included in your annual \$78 AROC dues. Non-members may subscribe to *Alfacionada* for \$20 per year, and attend meetings and events. See the website for a membership application form with rates and contact details.

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Meeting Information

General Meetings are held monthly, on a weekend day, at various locations in Southern California. A full listing of activities is on our website, arosc.org; a 12-month calendar of events is emailed with every January issue of this newsletter, and detailed information is in Previews. Check both; email any questions to info@arosc.org, and a Club director will respond.

Our Cover This Month

Top: Club Central at last year's Highway Earth car gathering and Club Concorso. Photo by Jim Barrett. See adflyer and info on page 10. Bottom: The beautiful picnic pavilion at the Cottonwood Canyon Winery. See the full report and a lot more pictures starting on page 12; this one was taken by David Waelder.

AROSC Board of Directors, 2018

Your entire Board is available at one point of contact: info@arosc.org. We welcome and encourage your thoughts and feedback. This central email address will allow us to respond, at home or on the road, through our computers and smart phones. Leave your telephone number and request a call-back if you wish; we will be happy to contact you personally.

Don't forget to check our website: <http://www.arosc.org>

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Previews ...*What's coming up and when.*

June 2-3 – DE, TT & Race, Buttonwillow.

June 3 – Huntington Beach Concours. Alfa Classes, Picnic, Huntington Central Park. Info on page 11.

June 24 – Highway Earth. Club Concorso #2. Franklin Cyn., Beverly Hills. See info on page 10.

July 21 – Summer Party and General Meeting with the Clines in the OC. Info on page 16.

August 8-12 – AROC National Convention, Olympia, WA. See info on page 21.

August 23-26 – Monterey Weekend: Monterey Motorsports Reunion, Concorso Italiano, Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance, Concours/Tour d'Lemons, auctions, parties, and more! Info on page 21.

September 22 – Summer Day Drive, route/destination TBA.

September 15-16 – Driving School, Streets of Willow. Race Calendar, page 25.



Note: Board of Directors meetings are generally held on the last Sunday of the month. Anyone with business to bring before the Board is requested to please contact Il Presidente Mike Riehle.



West Spider and Mackro-Kusnick 164 drive through Laetitia vineyards on the entry road. Elyse Barrett photo.

See additional notice of our recent events on our website, arosc.org

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FROM THE TOP ... *the Word from Il Presidente*

For anyone visiting them regularly, yes, our Chapter's website(s) are still in state(s) of change. My experiences updating the social site have gone well and, if you haven't been there lately, it now includes links to folios of David Waelder's pictures of recent events. Assuming I don't fall down on the job, the pictures are available quite quickly after events.

Bruce Colby is still updating the competition site while we search for a volunteer to take over. We don't need a website expert, but it would help that person to know the people who contribute write-ups and pictures. A little programming background would be helpful too, but it doesn't take an expert to edit the HTML to point to the new stuff.

Did you make it to our annual Wine Tour? Well you missed a very nice weekend. Many thanks to John Britton, and Chuck and Jan Cline. The hotel offered its complimentary breakfast area off the lobby for our impromptu Friday night potluck – a perfect meeting venue that night, and for dining the next morning. In what could be an AROSC first, people had so much fun on the morning legs of the drive that we didn't make it to all of the wineries. There was something just too right about lunching under a vine-covered pergola, listening to live music, and enjoying the view with a glass of wine. Dinner was at Shaw's Steakhouse, a Santa Maria landmark and an excellent eatery we've been to before. But hey, who put the drunk driver checkpoint on the road between the restaurant and the hotel? Being sober, we elected to not take a detour, and found ourselves in a traffic jam at the check. Oops! See Wine Tour coverage starting on page 12. By the way, we hit Kenneth Volk Vineyards on Sunday (a winery we didn't get to on the tour) and it was delightful. I nabbed a mixed case of their library wines that was on special, and will lobby to visit again the next time we are in the area.

It is now old news that our May event did not come together. The collector would love to have us, but when he returned from vacation we learned that the building housing his collection is under renovation and our proposed visit would be impossible. We will try to reschedule this event next year.

June 2nd and 3rd is our next competition event at Buttonwillow Raceway featuring DE, TT and Race events. It is hosted by NCRC (Northern California Racing Club), an organization that touts safety and claims drivers can spend their budgets on tires and fuel, as opposed to collision repairs.

Registration is open for Highway Earth, Club Concorso #2, on June 24th. We have done this event for the last several years and what's not to like? We have our own little area, lots of trees, interesting cars, and the organizer, Evan Klein, is an Alfa enthusiast. See the event adflyer on page 10 and sign up.

The Summer Party is in July this year, again hosted by Chuck and Jan Cline. Their big backyard, cooled by ocean breezes and outfitted with plenty of comfy tables and chairs under colorful umbrellas makes for a lovely day. There is a write-up on page 16. Note that you must RSVP so Jan can coordinate the potluck dishes.

Don't forget about the AROC National Convention in Olympia, Washington in August. Activities are selling out, so if you haven't signed up, now is the time to do so! The website is informative and nicely done. Check it out at <http://www.semperverde2018.org/index.html> Chris and I have not finalized our travel plans yet, but we have made our reservations.

Remember, if the women don't find you handsome, they should at least find you handy. And don't forget the duct tape, the handyman's secret weapon.

– Mike & Chris



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Tech Guy ... *Consider All the Clues, or, When Fuel Pumps Go Bad*

A short time back, a friend contacted me about a problem with his car, a 1969 Mercury Cougar. It seems that the week before, he was moving the car to get his RV out. The car started but ran poorly. The last time he had used the car it ran just fine. He ultimately moved the car to his driveway and took off in the RV for a few days. When he returned, he went to move the Cougar and the engine would not even turn. He could hear the starter solenoid click, there was but no movement. He also noticed gasoline leaking at the front of the engine.

After listening to him and asking a few questions, I told him to change his mechanical fuel pump, drain the oil out and refill the crankcase with new oil. Rather than doing this himself, he had the car towed to a mechanic where the fuel pump was changed and the crankcase was drained and refilled. The car started and ran just fine, and the procedure only cost \$400.

So, what was the problem? There were a few clues. The car ran poorly, there was a gas leak and the fact that the car was parked nose-down on a sloping driveway. Also he had checked the oil level and said that the oil level was very low. The engine did not burn oil and had no oil leaks.

Have you got it yet?

The root problem was a leaky diaphragm in the mechanical fuel pump. This did not allow enough fuel to get to the engine, thus the poor running when he first started it up. The fuel leak and the engine not turning after a few days of being parked on the driveway were a result of the bad diaphragm.


When the car was parked nose-down, this put the fuel tank higher than the engine. The fuel from the tank drained through the leaky diaphragm into the crankcase. From there, the gas seeped past the rings on the front cylinders and filled the cylinders. When he tried to crank the engine it refused to turn because it was hydrolocked. Hydrolocking occurs when the cylinder fills with a liquid, and since the liquid can't compress, the engine won't turn. Hydrolocking is usually caused by coolant leaking into the cylinder through a bad head gasket, or a cracked cylinder or head. This was the first time I had ever heard of an engine being hydrolocked due to gas from the crankcase. The oil was well diluted, hence the apparent low oil level on the dipstick.

This was a somewhat unusual situation. If the car had been parked on a

level surface, the crankcase would not have filled up with gas (the mechanic drained 3½ gallons out of the crankcase) and the bad fuel pump might have been harder to find. But when you consider the symptoms, it makes sense. A few other car people he talked to suspected a blown engine or a cracked block/head, yet when you look at all the clues it doesn't add up. The engine ran poorly, but it did run, and he only ran it for a minute or two. There were no loud noises for known overheating issues so the blown engine or cracked block/head don't make much sense and would not explain the gas leak. Sometimes you have to look past the common things and examine all the clues.

So until next time, may all your problems be simple and may all your solutions be inexpensive.

– Gene Brown



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2018 AROSC Club Concorso #2

Sunday, June 24th

held in conjunction with

HIGHWAY EARTH CAR SHOW



➔ **Registration is OPEN** ⬅

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The Woodies class at the San Marino Motor Classic several years ago. This is a charity event benefitting various area organizations, so its gate fee for spectators is higher than most, but so is the percentage of rare and exquisitely prepared classics. Will Owen photo.

There are too many concours and car shows on the calendar every year, and AROSC cannot make all them part of our official events schedule, so we recommend attending or entering these for fun and to broaden your automotive horizons.

June 3rd Huntington Beach Concours d'Elegance Now celebrating its 33rd year, the HB concours benefits the children's wing of the Huntington Beach Central Park Library. There is a slate of classes for Alfa Romeo and a beautiful space for picnicking. The website features a photo of our Club's cars with Norm, Gene and Bruce judging Fred's champagne gold GTV. Visit <http://www.hbconcours.org/event-schedule/> for details.

June 10th San Marino Motor Classic In its seventh year at Lacey Park, the San Marino Motor Classic brings together upwards of 200 Brass Era, Depression Era and Post WWII luxury vehicles and benefits the Pasadena Humane Society and ASPCA. There are often amazing examples of vintage Alfa Romeos present. Go to <https://www.sanmarinomotorclassic.com/> for information.

November 11th Veterans Day Car Show AROSC's Vic Galich has put on this heartwarming benefit for the Paralyzed Veterans of America every Veterans Day in the beachfront parking lot on Coast Hwy. since 2010. A great mashup of rods, customs, sportscars, and his own Alfas, this is a fun way to honor our service members and spend a fresh fall day at the beach. See www.veteransdaycarshowhb.org for particulars.

Another Very Fine Wine Tour!



Randy and Pat enjoy their lunch on the lovely pavilion at Cottonwood Canyon. Photo by Steve Edelman.

We had what we thought was a moderate itinerary: five wineries for the Saturday tour, but we had so much fun at the first three, we were unable to visit the last two. No matter, the roads were fun, the hillsides still springtime green, the weather was sunny and fresh, and the group congenial.

The majority of participants gathered for our traditional tasty Friday evening hors d'oeuvres reception in the headquarters hotel's comfy breakfast room, exchanging travel notes, and sharing veggies, cheeses, salads and slow-cooker chicken. Tour leaders John Britton and Jan and Chuck Cline were prepared with itinerary packets and we packed ourselves up to bed not too much later.

We began Saturday morning by driving on several less-traveled roads, and avoiding Hwy 101 where possible, on our way to our first stop at Laetitia Winery. In a unique arrangement with the winery, we had arranged to purchase a selection of Laetitia's best to sample for our group. Our own wine-pouring team (Chris, Jan and Chuck) offered up six different wines – including a pinot noir, a chardonnay and a syrah – for our gathering. Laetitia was generous in allowing us to use their barrel tasting/crushing/warehouse room for the event. Our



Chris pours red for John at Laetitia. David Waelder photo

second stop was at Talley Winery. Our reserved outdoor tasting area provided tables with views of the fields and sufficient shade for the whole group. We had our own server and enjoyed more than one smooth chardonnay and their Bishop's Peak pinot.

We then trekked south, for a while on the 101, then exited toward the Foxen Canyon region east of Santa Maria, to Cottonwood Canyon Winery and Vineyard.

This, also our lunch stop, was under a vine-covered canopy that seated all our gang. This winery, on 78 acres of their own vines, produces delicious chardonnays, pinots and syrahs. We were enjoying such a pleasant experience here dining and tasting, it was soon obvious the schedule had slid into "Alfa Time", so we decided to delay our next two visits – to Kenneth Volk and Riverbench wineries. Ah, two candidates for the next tour! Our group comprised 14 cars, eight of which were Alfas. Welcomed back to active touring was the silver spider of Rich Priebe. Applauded for

their excellent purchase were David and Susan Waelder driving their newly acquired Giulia that had only just consumed its first tank of gasoline. The West and Terrisse fly-yellow spiders, the red Brown Montreal, and the red Cole Alfetta GT ensured that our procession was a visible one.

After some relaxation time at our hotel, we proceeded to Shaw's Restaurant in downtown Santa Maria where 27 of us sat together for a dose of Santa Maria barbecue; a wonderful and filling end to a perfect day.

– John Britton, Jan & Chuck Cline



Dinner at Shaw's. Steve Edelman photo.



Pat and Bruce get ready to leave Laetitia. David Waelder photo.



Wine Trail sign exiting Laetitia. Elyse Barrett photo. Right, John at Talley. Jim Barrett photo. Below, Priebe Spider at Cottonwood. Steve Edelman photo.





Gene's Montreal leads the pack out from Talley. Steve Edelman photo. Below, Mike, Jan and Chris (left) and Susan (right) tasting at Cottonwood. David Waelder photos.



Below, gorgeous view of oaks and vines at Cottonwood Canyon. Jim Barrett photo.



Let's Party Like We Did Last Summer!



It's time to ink your calendars for Saturday, July 21st, for our annual AROSC Summer Party in the OC. Our 2018 seasonal celebration will be held a month early this year, but it is definitely summer and worth celebrating!

Foodie Fest As always, this is a potluck lunch, so please bring something to share. Favorite and creative homemade dishes – hot or cold – are highly desired. We suggest Italian: antipasto, salads, casseroles, pastas and/or desserts. Also, please bring your favorite beverages of choice to share.

If you can't bring a dish, please make a \$5 donation per person and Jan will buy what's needed to round out the menu.

New Homes for Unwanted Parts In keeping with tradition, we will feature our “white turkey” auction for all those Alfa parts, manuals, and tidbits out of that car you sold 20 years ago. Ephemera will also be appreciated. Just bring those precious pieces, and let them go. The Club can use the funds raised to support future events!

This is also an official AROSC monthly club meeting.

Save the Date So please save the date, and RSVP to info@arosc.org! Directions to the Clines' will be provided in response. *Ciao, Chuck & Jan*





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A Giulia TI Lusso Q2 Goes to School *by John Ireland*



Judy Gaukel with John and Giulia at Willow Springs. Photo courtesy Judy Gaukel.

My first Alfa Romeo was a 1977 Sports Sedan. In 1978, thanks to AROSC, I put it on the track at Riverside International Raceway. The 40 years since then was a long lapse from Alfas: Maserati, Ferrari, five Porsche 911s, a few Audis and VWs. But that's all past: Today I am back in an Alfa. That same 40 years passed between my first Time Trial and my trip to the Streets of Willow in April, for the AROSC High Performance Driving School.

Getting back into an Alfa had been on my mind for months, but no matter which older one I looked at, it just didn't feel like a daily driver, especially the way prices have been rising. That left one choice: Test-drive a new Giulia. The deal was done on January 31, 2018.

Three and a half weeks later I wrote: "Today was my first chance to be really alone in the car. I put it on some roads in the Hollywood Hills that I've been driving since I got my first license in 1958. Every car I've owned has been up and down these roads. My 2017 Giulia TI Lusso Q2 really, really, really impressed me. It just might be the best car I've ever owned. Yes, the performance is that good."

But new love is not without moments of doubt. I miss having an ignition key. I balk at all the nanny controls, the auto start-stop, the beeping sensors. And there is no spare tire! And why even bother with DNA when the only reason to buy an Alfa is for the D mode? Well, I've learned how to disable most of the nannies, and I bought a full-sized spare, so I'm covered. And pray that Chrysler doesn't mess up this as they did the 164; let's hope the Giulia becomes the success it deserves to be.

At last came April 21: AROSC's High Performance Driving School, and my first time back on the Streets of Willow in 20 years except one: Two years ago I put my

2000 911 on the same course, but it was so disappointing I left early the first day.

This weekend in my Giulia Lusso Q2 was a completely different experience. I ran the car in Dynamic mode with the adjustable dampeners set to firm. To all those who have sung the praises of the Giulia's ZF 8-speed transmission, they are absolutely correct: It is almost seamless in its run through the gears, always keeping the power in the sweet spot. It is so good, I was shocked that I never took it out of automatic mode the entire first day.

The same is true of the brakes. I used them fully on the skid pad and the road course, threshold braking right up to the ABS point, able to control them beautifully with zero fade. The steering is crisp and accurate and very quick. I never had to move my hands on the wheel. It has the best steering of any car I have owned.

The engine felt truly bulletproof, constantly being taken up to redline lap after lap. That redline is 6,000, and it comes up fast. Only in the afternoon session of Day 2 did the temperature rise slightly above normal, and I attribute that to my finally using the manual transmission mode, which often meant holding it at high rpms for longer periods of time.

Yes, I felt the limits of the run-flat Bridgestones, but once I use those up I'll get more aggressive rubber, since I have a real spare tire now. The side mirror sometimes blocked my view, but I will learn to look around it. That's it for the negatives.

I did have the anti-skid kick in a few times when I put the cars wheels on the tiger teeth and that upset the computer nanny. This just reminded me that I have to be smoother and more accurate. I was also overtaking a lot of cars, and on two occasions experienced the "collision avoidance" system when the car suddenly put on the brakes. It is easily disabled, which I did, though when the car is turned off, it returns to default, so I had to re-disable it on every return to the track.

On Day 2 I slowed myself down in the morning session and worked on accuracy. Then in the afternoon, I put the car in manual mode, and my conclusion is that a combination of both is the best way around the track: Use auto mode on the straights, and manual for the tighter twisty stuff.

For the first time on the track in 20 years and in a new car, I am very happy with how things went. I was not perfect, but perfection is for next time. That's what's so great about the Alfa school: Every time you go, you learn, and you get faster. That never gets boring.

This school has been running for over 20 years with almost 2,000 students attending. There are groups for full Race and for experienced Time Trial drivers, and Street Performance for the less experienced. We had both novices and more experienced drivers in the Street Performance group. There were so many entrants this time that they had to split us into two run groups and add a fourth class. There was a classroom session, then an outside class, then skid pad, and finally the track.

The instructors are all highly experienced drivers and they moved the students quickly through the program, getting them to intellectually understand and then physically experience the dynamics of car control and how to break down a track.

If you never plan to track your car, it is still well worth your time to take the school at least once. You will be a better driver for the rest of your life.

As for my car, simply said, the Giulia is the nicest balanced and nicest driving car I've had since my 1995 Porsche 993. And I think the Giulia is the better car. The two-liter Giulia isn't the fastest car on the planet, but it is still very fast, and for real-world roads, it has to be the best bang for the buck out there.

Coming home around 11PM on a recent evening, going through Coldwater Canyon to Mulholland, then down Beverly Glen and into the Valley, the car was simply pure sex. In D mode with the suspension set to firm, the Giulia just danced and hugged and turned curves into straights ... and when encountering slower traffic, just a wiggle of the toes on my right foot and the Alfa flew by them. Coming up to tighter curves, I used the paddles to drop down into third and second gears, then powered out and let the engine run to its 6,000 rpm redline. What a pleasure to drive.

Forty years ago, again on Coldwater Canyon, I had a dice in my 1977 Alfetta with a newer 308 GTS. I passed the Ferrari about three-quarters of the way up the canyon, then at Mulholland the light turned red. The guy in the Ferrari pulled up next to me. We both smiled and he said, "You make me feel like I paid too much." I think the Giulia is a just such a car ... a car that will make owners of other cars feel that they paid too much.

- John Ireland

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AROC Convention sempreverde2018

Make this THE Year You Attend!

The National Convention is back on the West Coast this year, in beautiful Olympia, Washington, August 8-12. Many of us attended the Bellevue meeting in 2005, and it is time to return to the shores of Puget Sound and the beauties of the Pacific Northwest.

With pre-convention tours set for the days before the event, there is incentive to arrive early and see the sights. Even if you get there on Alfa Time, there are oysters to be eaten and the Museum of Glass (think: Chihuly) and LeMay America's Car Museum center to see. A cool gimmick rally will take us through the countryside, and a full calendar of traditional Convention activities is slated on-site at the hotel (cell-phone photography contest, art/model exhibit, "Alfas in the Parking Lot" conversations; tech exchanges by Spica guru Wes Ingram, and more). The convention hotel has sweeping grounds and towering forests all around, so the concorso will be held right there. The banquet speaker is Garth Stein, author of "The Art of Racing in the Rain". For racers, the track, Ridge Motorsports Park, is not far away and a full schedule of slalom, time trials and a gymkhana have been prepared.

What's not to like about such an agenda? Check out the past four issues of *Alfa Owner* for enticing overviews, and register now at www.semperverde2018.org

It's That Time Again!

Get Thee to Monterey

For Alfisti, this year's Monterey Car Week/Motorsports Reunion week is opening with our AROSC Thursday Night Dinner on August 23rd. We team up with the Alfa Romeo Association and Delta Sierra Chapter to kick-start this wonderful week by renewing old friendships and making new ones. The restaurant will provide both Italian and Indian buffets. Start time is 7:00PM. RSVPs are required! Email Evelyn Silverman at Normanev@msn.com

The rest of the week includes West and Maggie Clark's annual wine tasting and light dinner in Pebble Beach; Concorso Italiano, at the Black Horse Golf Course, with a special exhibit of Alfa four-door cars including the 164 and Sport Sedan. After the event, there will be the Post-Concorso Dinner at the Clubhouse at Black Horse hosted by the Alfa Romeo Association. Track events at the Weathertech Laguna Seca Raceway run all weekend, Friday through Sunday. There will be an Alfa Corral parking area at the track. Get your pass in advance.

An e-blast will give you additional information. Watch for it!

Classified – Cars/Parts For Sale



1969 GTV – 2L Twin Spark conversion done in 2004, which now has about 28K miles on it. Mechanically sound (everything works), with no rust, it is an excellent driver. Transmission and drivetrain refurbished 2018. Interior is also in good condition. Exterior has chips and minor dings consistent with over 15 years of near-daily use. \$35k. Contact bruce.colby@sbcglobal.net

Classified – Cars/Parts For Sale



1987 Graduate Spider – Starts on first try. Runs fine. Seats in great shape. Top is new. Minor paint dings, no dents. This car was an accidental purchase on eBay (i.e., offer made and ... oops!) and I'm selling it "as-is". Odometer/speedometer does not work so actual mileage is unknown. Odo reads 109k. Passed California smog test in September 2017. Has original owner's manual. Comes w/ cover and leather wrap for steering wheel. Garage-kept now and by previous owner. Palm Springs area. Will provide as many photos as you need. To inquire, call or text your phone number to 757.761.2873. Asking \$5,500. Thanks for looking.



1991 164L – Second owner, 126,400 mi., five-speed manual. Maintained by factory-trained mechanic; runs excellent, very clean. \$4,300. 949.230-1753.

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1991 164S – My wife’s dream car, until it was replaced in her affections by a new Giulia, must find a new home. Strong engine, starts readily, cleared last smog test easily (beating the decade-younger Subaru!); 5-speed manual, newer clutch cylinder. Cosmetically challenged, needs interior work and paint. Driveable, but worn front suspension needs attention before any serious motoring. Right rear door has broken handle (replacement supplied) and ruined weatherstrip. As is all too common with these, must be kept on trickle charger (also supplied) if left sitting more than a few days, thanks to the notorious 164 Mystery Leak.

This is for sale only to an owner willing to attend to at least its basic needs, and to drive and enjoy it regularly, which is why it is advertised here and not Craigslist. Best offer meeting these requirements received by June 30th will be accepted. I will be happy to engage in any conversation about this car via e-mail, or in person if you want to come see it. More photos are available, will take others and email on request. Will Owen, 626.644.7173 or nashwill912@earthlink.net

Classified (non-commercial) Advertising

Classified ads are published as a free service to the Alfa Romeo community. Suggested length 60 words; include price, location, contact info. Photos must be in-focus, medium-resolution (300ppi) JPEGs. Alfa-related only! Deadline is the 25th of the month prior to publication (e.g., March issue = January 25).

Commercial Advertising

Please contact the Editor at info@arosc.org for a detailed rate card and complete advertising information.

Join Us At the Track

Beginners, track day drivers, or Racers,
we have a run group just for you!
All marques are welcome –



2018 Schedule

- June 2-3 Buttonwillow – DE, TT & Race with NCRC
Sorry, no enduro this time.
- Sept 15-16 Streets of Willow – Driving School
- Oct 20-21 Laguna Seca Raceway – DE, TT & Race
92dB limit, so get a new muffler! We need
100cars to make this work, so make plans
now!
- Dec 8 & 9 AAA Fontana Infield – DE, TT & Race

You can sign up for our track events at
<http://aroschpd.org>