

Newsletter of the  
**Alfa Romeo Owners  
of Southern California**



September 1998

**In This Issue: "A Hot Time In  
The Old Town . . .", & more . . .**

*Giornada*

### Meeting Information

General Meetings are held the last Friday of each month except November and December at 8:00pm in the Uruapan Room at Veterans' Memorial Park at the corner of Culver and Overland in Culver City. In November the meeting will be held on the last Friday if there are two Fridays after Thanksgiving, otherwise it will be on the Friday prior to Thanksgiving. A holiday party is held in December in lieu of the General Meeting that month.

Numerous special meetings and events are also held throughout the year. Check the Calendar information on the outside back cover for an overview of the year and review *Alfacionada* for details of events planned for the near future.

### AROSC Mailing Address

*Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California*  
Post Office Box 3621  
Granada Hills, CA  
91394

### Membership Information

See the inside back cover of *Alfacionada*.

### Important Deadline & Info!

Please send classified ads, articles, letters, and photographs to the Editor in time to arrive before the 20th of the month to permit publication in the next month's issue.

### General Information

*Alfacionada* is the monthly publication of the *Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California*, a Chapter of the *Alfa Romeo Owners, Inc.*, a national non-profit organization of *Alfa* enthusiasts. Subscriptions to this newsletter are included as part of the annual AROSC membership fees.

### Classified Advertising

Classified (non-commercial) ads are available as a free service to members and for a nominal charge of \$10.00 per insertion to non-members. Ad content must be *Alfa*-related.

### Commercial Advertising Rates

Full page	\$500 per year
1/2 page	\$275 per year
1/4 page	\$150 per year
Business card	\$100 per year

### This Month's Cover

At this June's AROSC Summer Picnic at the home of Paul and Mary Blankenship, *Alfisti* arrived in a variety of attire. Here we have Marilyn Russell providing us with a mobile advertisement for the AROSC Driving School.

*Photo by Tom Suter*

### AROSC Board of Directors - 1998

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# AROSC Previews

An outline of coming events

## AROSC General Meeting - 25 September

Join us for September's general meeting and an evening of Alfa-related fun. Come see what you've been missing in the way of club activities. Along with the usual period for tech questions, "For Sale" and "Wanted" announcements, etc., we'll have a special program featuring photos taken at this year's *Concours Italiano*.

If you were not able to make it to Monterey in person, here's your chance to get an idea of the fantastic *Alfas* that were on display, as seen through the eyes of some of AROSC's master photographers. If you *did* go, here's a chance to remind yourself what a weekend it was. As usual, the meeting time and location are located on the top of page 2 of *Alfacionada*.

## AROSC Time Trial at Laguna Seca - 26 and 27 September

On the weekend of September 26-27 AROSC will hold its fourth Time Trial of the year at the legendary Laguna Seca track. The number of entrants for the two-day event is limited and this event fills up very early, so act now if you wish to enter. AROSC has a block of rooms reserved at a local hotel which will also fill up early, so room reservations should be made at least a month ahead of the event. Call (408) 642-6621, ext. 103 at least a month ahead to get our block rate at the hotel.

For the most part, minimum entry requirements for drivers are very simple. They consist essentially of the use of an approved helmet, eye protection, and non-synthetic clothing - although the use of a driving suit is encouraged. Basic vehicle requirements consist of the ability to pass an inspection, use of upgraded safety belts, and the installation of an approved roll-over bar in open cars.

For additional information about the AROSC Time Trial program, or to obtain a registration form, contact John Cote at (714) 495-8523 or Paul Blankenship at (818) 883-0226.

## AROSC Wine Tour to Santa Maria - 10 & 11 October

"We will drink no wine before its' time." Well, it *is* time - time for our annual fall wine tour, led by the intrepid duo of Paul and Mary Blankenship. Join us for a great weekend of *Alfas*, wine,

and socializing. This year's event will be to the Enda Valley area of Santa Maria. Caravan up with us Friday night or meet us for breakfast on Saturday morning.

Make your plans early to get our block rate at the hotel. Wine tasting will take place at several wineries which have been intensively researched by Paul ("Someone's got to do it!") and Mary Blankenship. Join us for wine, *Alfas*, and socializing.

For additional information, contact Paul or Mary Blankenship at (818) 883-0226.

## This September AROSC Does Laguna Seca !

Interested? Contact John Cote at  
(714) 495-8523  
or Paul Blankenship at  
(818) 883-0226

## Alfa-Porsche Challenge at Buttonwillow Raceway - 24 October.

Come to an event which has become an annual classic. As part of the VARA vintage racing weekend at Buttonwillow Raceway, there will be a special "Alfa-Porsche Challenge" race. Add this on to the other races scheduled and you have the makings of a great weekend! Last year Rex Chalmers' *Giulia Spider* took home the

first place trophy for *Alfa Romeo*, and the previous year Alan Ward did the honors for *Alfa* driving the 2-liter *GTV* of Phyllis Gaylard. Come out and cheer for an *Alfa* victory again this year!

## AROSC Time Trial at Willow Springs - 31 October and 1 November

On the weekend of October 31st and November 1st, AROSC will hold its fifth Time Trial of the year at Willow Springs Raceway, just north of Los Angeles. For the most part, minimum entry requirements for drivers are very simple. They consist essentially of the use of an approved helmet, eye protection, and non-synthetic clothing - although the use of a driving suit is encouraged. Basic vehicle requirements consist of the ability to pass an inspection, use of upgraded safety belts, and the installation of an approved roll-over bar in open cars.

For additional information about the AROSC Time Trial program, or to request a registration form, contact John Cote at (714) 495-8523 or Paul Blankenship at (818) 883-0226.

**We Will Drink No Wine Till Its Time !**  
*Well, It Is Time - Again*

# **AROSC VISITS SANTA MARIA**

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# 0170

## Do you know the way to Monterey?

by Charlie Schwartz - AROSC President

Like so many in the Club, I'm just back from Monterey and my head is still spinning!

One thing you can say for our AROSC members – we're not an early-rising lot. I had as many people call me to join our caravan north who just couldn't manage that early in the morning (8:30) rendezvous as who could force themselves out of bed at that hour. In all, we had six *Alfas* joining about 15 Ferraris as we set out for the Concours Italiano around the crack of 10.

It wasn't long before our squadron was split up, some hot on the trail of lunch, some with little mechanical details to attend to, some deciding at the last instant to grab a more scenic route, and still others heading for Jim Allen's in Nipomo (courtesy of Dave Mericle) to see Jim's fantastic collection of cars and all things (and I mean all things!) Alfa.

Hundreds of spectacular cars, including several owned by AROSC members, assembled in the cool and foggy morning of the concours at Quail Lodge. It was a time of meeting friends new and old, scrutineering, and appreciating examples rare and precious from the far corners of the globe.

A nuvola (sky blue pearlescent) 156 appeared miraculously on the green, apparently without help from the factory, and caused quite a stir among the deprived. It's good a lot of pictures were snapped because it doesn't appear this model or any of its brethren will be coming to our shores any time soon, according to Alfa's brand manager.

So many people wanted to bring their cars to Carmel this year that a second area was opened for *Alfas*. I heard there were more than 650 *Alfas* in attendance, from the priceless to the too-well-loved. We'll be having a showing of photos taken by AROSC members at Concours Italiano at an upcoming meeting. All in all, it was truly a time to remember.

I won't say much about the Historic Races at Laguna Seca, another fantastic event of the weekend, except to remind you that your own opportunity to drive that fabled track is fast approaching: AROSC's Time Trial at Laguna Seca is right around the corner – September 26 – 27.

Also on the reminder front: October 10 – 11 is the weekend for our AROSC wine tour to picturesque Santa Maria. If you haven't made your reservations yet, do it right away. For more information on the tour, call our sommelier, Paul Blankenship at (818) 883-0266.

This fall promises to be one of the busiest in AROSC history (see the calendar on the back cover), and the members of your Board of Directors have had a lot of fun planning a full schedule of events for you. Now is the time to start thinking about how you'd like to see the calendar for next year shape up.

And the best way to do that is to run for a seat on the board. Now is the time to get your candidate statement written up and sent in to Alfacionada. Elections will be held, as usual, in November. Watch this space for more detailed information next month.

Here in the heat of summer it's a stretch to think about our annual awards meeting in January, but these things take a little advanced planning. For more years than I care to recall, we've held our January meeting in a large meeting room. This year, we're thinking of breaking with tradition and making it a dinner meeting at a westside Italian restaurant.

**Would you prefer a  
dinner meeting?  
How much would you be  
willing to spend  
for dinner?**

What do you think of this idea? Would you prefer a dinner meeting? How much would you be willing to spend for dinner? To plan and schedule the January meeting, we need to get a sense of the feelings of the membership, so contact me or anyone on the board and let us know how you feel about this idea.

Two other quick notes, both from abroad:

Those who attended the general meeting in July were treated to photos Dave Mericle shot on a June trip to the factory. One of those pictured Elvira Ruocco, the lady at the *Centro Documentazione Storica Alfa Romeo* who will gladly respond to a fax with original information about your car if you provide the vehicle numbers.

Her picture got such an enthusiastic response that I faxed to tell her and just this morning I had, by return fax, a note from Elvira asking me to extend her special regards to all members of AROSC. She says she is honored by our friendship.

One of the joys of attending a truly international event such as the Concours Italiano is the chance to meet people from around the world. There one of the participants handed me a card for the *Giulietta Register*, a world-wide association for the 750 and 101 series cars, built between 1954 – 65.

For more information, check their website at <[www.giulietta.com](http://www.giulietta.com)> or write *The Giulietta Register*, 1 Hedgerow Close, Rownhams, Southampton, Hampshire, SO168JU, Great Britain.

-30-

# A Hot Time In The Old Town . . .

*Alfisti discover that holding the summer picnic during a heat wave really warms things up*

*Text and photos by Tom Suter, Alfacionada Editor*

When AROSC holds a summer party/picnic, we don't do things halfway! On 26 July, the Winnetka home of Paul and Mary Blankenship was the scene of the 1998 incarnation of this annual event. Although Mother Nature could not scare up an El Nino storm this late in the year, she did not let up off easily.

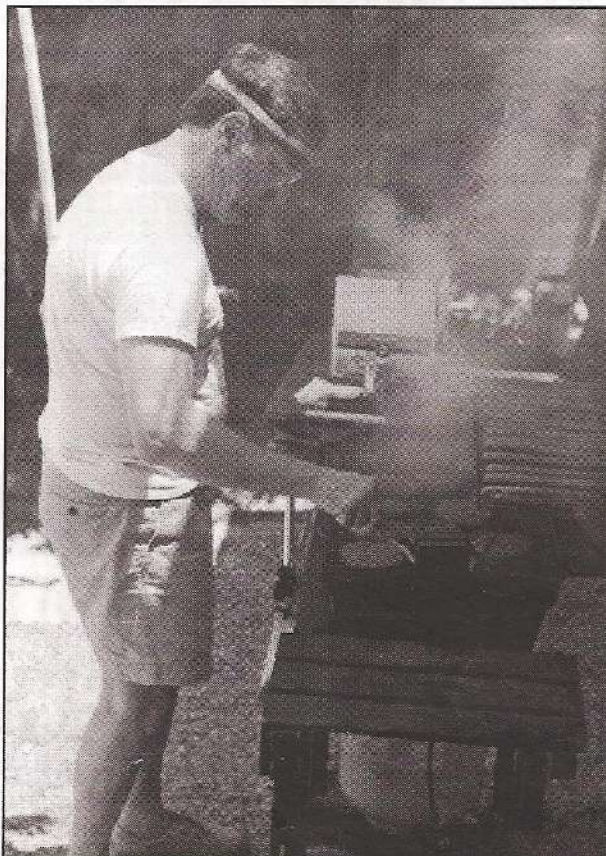
With a temperature in the shade of 108 degrees Fahrenheit, it's safe to say that a hot time was had by all. Even with the presence of an ample number of pop-ups to provide shade for all, there was still heavy demand for all of the liquid refreshments which Paul and Mary had awaiting our arrival.

Braving the challenge of the environment, Paul Blankenship served yeoman duty in front of the grill, turning out entrees for the feast. (Greater love hath no man . . .) And there were plenty of *Alfisti* present to appreciate his sacrifice, in spite of the weather. Attendees were not limited to the nearby locations in the San Fernando Valley, but came from all over the basin, including a fair contingent from Orange County and at least one hardy soul from the San Diego area.

There was some speculation that the good attendance was due to the free chow which the club was providing, but whatever the cause, the end result was a turnout which threatened to

overflow the yard of the Blankenship manor. And we did appear to do justice to the day's menu, which was laid out on tables inside a large pop-up which was equipped with insect proofing.

Following the main course and side dishes, Mary Blankenship brought out dessert, a custom-made treat designed to have special appeal to *Alfisti*, particularly those who are linguistically challenged. Thanks to the judicious use of the Blankenship refrigerator, the "Alpha Romero" cake was served in prime condition in spite of the challenge provided by the weather.



*AROSC Master Chef Paul hard at work on "Burgers Blankenship and "Weiners Winnetka".*

Along with the usual bench racing of all kinds, those attending were treated to a Tech Session conducted in a *Question and Answer* format by Santo Rimicci. Freud would have been proud to see how many of the questions were related to the cooling system of *Alfa* engines. For some reason, the subject seemed to be on the mind of most attendees!

Following the party/picnic, a meeting of the Time Trial Committee was held by AROSC Competition Chair Charlie Thieriot. They discussed the organizing and operation of the club's track events and laid plans for improving their operation. Charlie Thieriot also committed to writing an article for *Alfacionada* about the AROSC competition program and the system for awarding points for year-end trophies.

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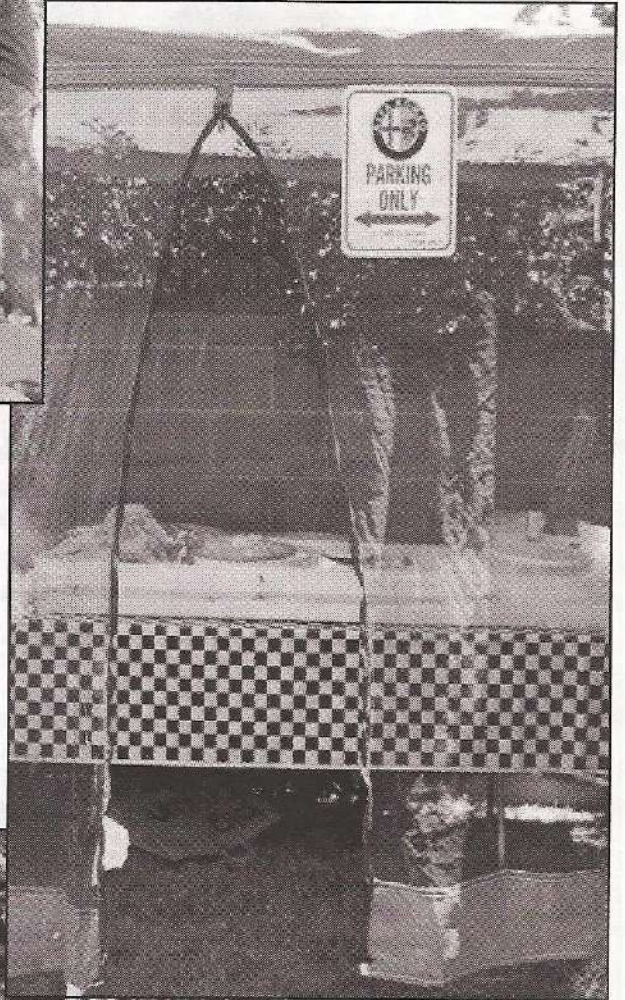
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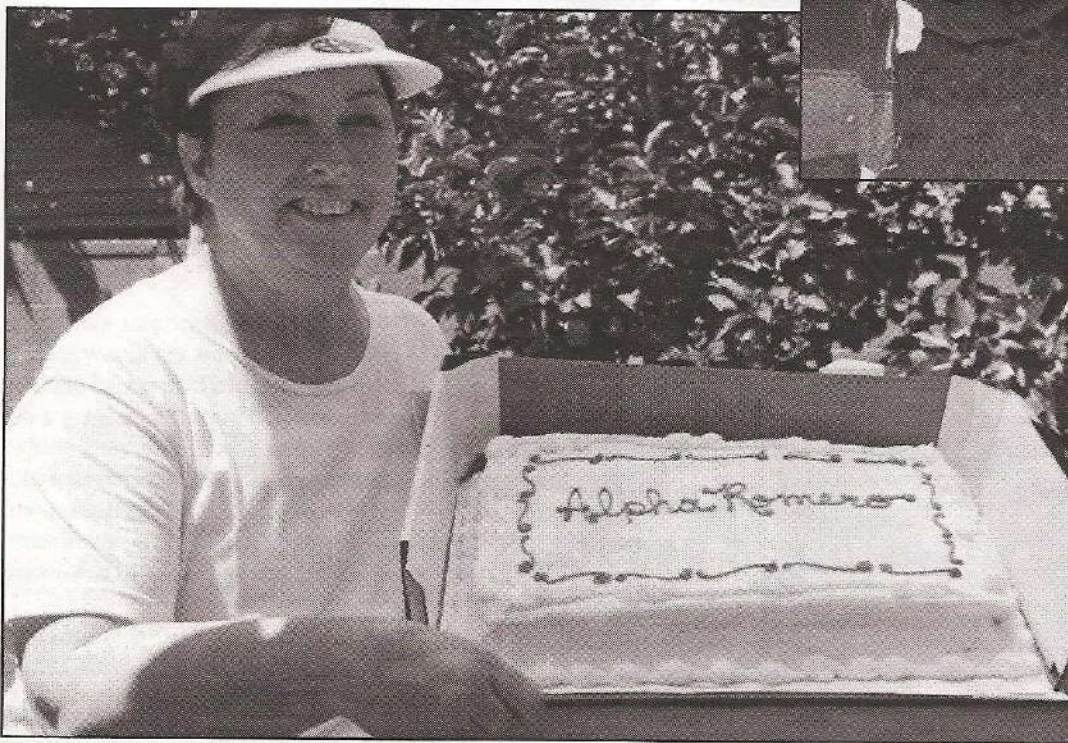
**Monday thru Friday 8 to 6, Saturday 9 to 3**



*Santo Rimicci conducted a question and answer tech session. For some strange reason, most of the questions dealt with the Alfa's cooling system!*



*Special precautions were taken to insure that Alfisti had easy access to the food.*



*Nothing but the best for AROSC members! Mary Blankenship displays the custom-made dessert*

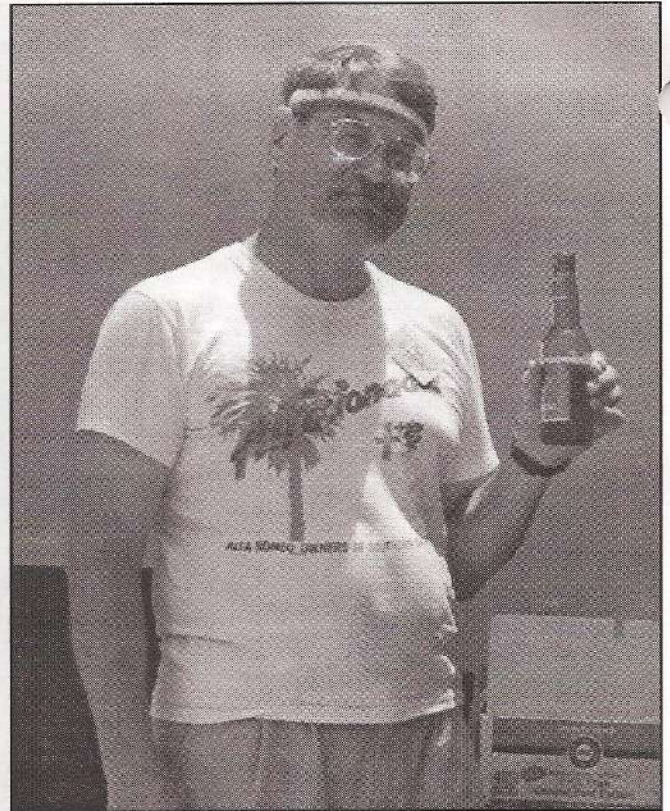
## About This Issue

### *A Note from the Editor*

As you may have noticed, this issue of *Alfacionada* is rather skimpy compared to our normal issues. This is not because we've decided to cut back on the newsletter as a normal course of events, but is due to an unexpected time crunch for this issue.

On 25 August I was told by my company that I would be leaving on 29 August for a six-week job assignment in Saudi Arabia. Without a practical option of attempting to do *Alfacionada* from there, it became necessary to prepare the issue and send it to the printer before my departure. As a consequence, this issue of *Alfacionada* was essentially thrown together without much of the content which had been planned for it, but which had not yet arrived.

My major nightmare is the thought that errors may have crept into some of the information about upcoming events as a result of the rushed preparation. If you plan to participate in one of our events in the near future, please contact one of the club officers to confirm what you have read here. I *think* that all of the information in the issue is correct, but late night preparation offers the potential for mistakes, so please be prudent.



*No, it's not the Editor, but the attitude is right . . .*

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## Milano Oil Level Sensor

by Colin Verrilli - courtesy of AROC Mid Atlantic Chapter


If your *Milano* has reached midlife, there's a good chance that the sensor that detects a low engine oil level has started to malfunction. There are two ways that a failure can show up: Either the warning light comes on when it shouldn't or the warning light doesn't come on when it should. For me, the second failure mode does not present a problem since I check regularly using the dipstick anyway. The very fact that these things fail so often makes that a good idea anyway. What does bother me though is when there's an annoying flashing red light on the dash...especially when you are giving guests a ride and they ask if something is wrong with your *Alfa*!

So when my warning light started flashing permanently, I had to do something about it. I first verified that it was actually the sensor that was bad. Measuring the resistance across the two terminals showed an open connection. It should be 13 ohms. After taking the sensor out and convincing myself that it couldn't be fixed, I was faced with a decision: do I buy a new one for nearly \$100 just for the sake of having it work properly, or do I bypass it knowing that I would never trust the sensor anyway. Having limited resources and knowing that that the \$100 could go towards new Konis instead, I chose the later.


In order to understand how to bypass the sensor, I first had to understand how it operated. The shop manual came in handy here. There is a decent description of the *Alfa Romeo* Control (ARC) computer and all it's associated sensors. The Oil Level sensor is composed of a heated coil (13 ohms) and a bimetalic switch connected in series. When the ignition is first turned on, voltage is applied to the sensor. If there is no oil in contact with the bimetalic switch, the coil will heat it and open the circuit. If there is oil in contact with the switch, the oil will absorb the heat generated by the coil and the switch will remain closed. After a few seconds, the ARC checks to see if the circuit is open or closed. If open, it lights the warning light and keeps it lit until the ignition is turned off.

With this information, I knew that simply disconnecting the sensor would not work. It would simply act like an open circuit and the light would come on. Shorting the circuit also would not be a good idea since this is connected directly to the computer which may object to a zero resistance by frying itself. The obvious choice was to place a resistance in the path equivalent to the resistance of the coil - 13 ohms. This would act just like a sensor whose switch did not open. Well, I didn't have a 13 ohm resistor, so I tried a 100 ohm one...and it did the job.

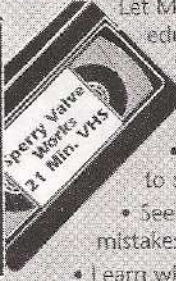
I made the bypass more appealing by covering the resistor in shrink wrap tubing and soldering a male terminal on each end. This way, if I ever decide that I just need that sensor working, I can just unplug the bypass and plug in a new sensor.



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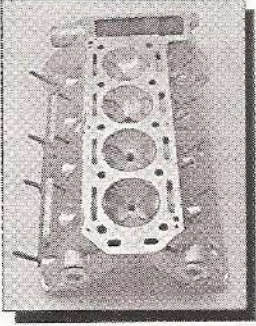
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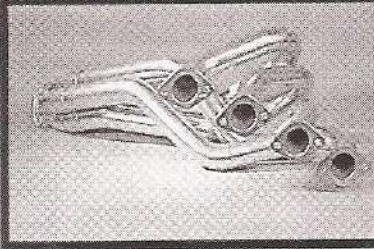

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**1986 GTV-6.** 15,000 miles. Champagne with leather, upgrades, well maintained, always garaged, spare parts, all records, originalowner, \$11,000

**1974 GTV.** Rebuilt transmission, steering box, valve job, good parts car, too much rust to restore, runs well, not registered, \$1,100  
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**1986 Spider Veloce.** White, 5-speed, new top, air conditioning, all power, Blaupunkt coded AM-FM cassette, 72,000 miles, owners manual and all repair receipts.  
Call Lynn at (213) 876-0430

**1974 GTV.** Factory air, perfect condition. New paint and new interior. Shankle springs. \$10,500 obo.  
Call Santo at (818) 701-1614 (days) or (818) 360-3418 (evenings)

**1985 Spider Graduate.** Red, 90k miles, new top. Runs but needs some work. \$1000 O.B.O.  
Call Chris at (310) 201-8815

**1974 Spider Veloce.** One of the fastest, best sorted out, and best looking Spiders in existence. This car was the subject of a three-page cover article by *European Car* magazine in June 1993. It was also one of Ward and Deane Racing's best prepared cars. Over \$15,000 (documented) spent on mechanical improvements. Too much to list here. Car has never been raced. Shown at 1996 and 1997 Concours Italiano in Monterey, and participated in several *Alfa Club* and *Ferrari Club* events. I will send detailed list and photos to interested buyer.  
Call Carlos at (310) 446-1554

**Spider and GTV Mechanical Parts Manual.** (Great restoration diagrams plus mechanical components listed and numbered in 485 pages!) **Alfetta GT and GTV Spare Parts Mechanical and Bodywork Catalog.** (Same as above in 200 pages!)

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**1984 Spider Graduate.** Red/tan, 25k documented miles. Books and records. Showroom new and original. \$6500 O.B.O.  
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Tina Van Curen (818) 247-8593, [btinavc@ix.netcom.com](mailto:btinavc@ix.netcom.com).

**1986 Alfa GTV-6,** black on black, Shankle sway bars, rear springs, Konis, Omega Motorsports fully blue printed and balanced engine, 9.75:1, Sperry stage 3 heads, OMS external oiling kit, fresh major service, new belts and tensioner, excellent interior, body and paint, BFG-TA-3 tires.  
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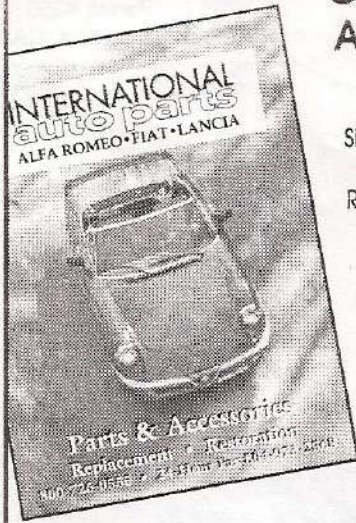
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### *Membership Application*

### *Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California*

Dues for 1 year membership in the *Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California (AROSC)* and the national organization, the *Alfa Romeo Owners Club - US (AROC)* ..... \$55.00

Member of another *AROC* Chapter wishing to add *AROSC* affiliation ..... \$22.00

Please fill in the following information and mail to:

*Alfa Romeo Owners Club - Membership for AROSC*

2468 Gum Tree Lane, Fallbrook, CA 92028

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

*AROC* Member Number (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ *Alfa(s)* Owned \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to "*Alfa Romeo Owners Club*"

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**Dan Ritter**  
936 Monterey Blvd  
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-4207

## Our 1998 Calendar

January	February	March	April
2 SMCCC Rally 8 AROSC Board Meeting 23 AROSC Annual Meeting 8pm, Culver City 31 Time Trial -Willow Springs	1 Time Trial - Willow Springs 5 AROSC Board Meeting 6 SMCCC Rally 21-2 Time Trial -Sears Point 27 General Meeting - 8pm, Culver City	5 AROSC Board Meeting 6 SMCCC Rally 27 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City 29 Tour "In Search of the Wildflowers"	2 AROSC Board Meeting 3 SMCCC Rally 11 Concours at San Antonio Winery 24 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City 26 Swap Meet
May	June	July	August
1 SMCCC Rally 2-3 Driving School - "Streets of Willow" 7 AROSC Board Meeting 29 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City	4 AROSC Board Meeting 5 SMCCC Rally 13-4 Time Trial at Buttonwillow 20 Concours at El Dorado Park 26 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City 25-8 National Convention, Santa Fe, NM	2 AROSC Board Meeting 3 SMCCC Rally 26 Tech session & BBQ at Paul Blankenship's home 31 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City	6 AROSC Board Meeting 7 SMCCC Rally 14 Concours Italiano in Monterey 28 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City 29-30 Driving School at "Streets of Willow"
September	October	November	December
3 AROSC Board Meeting 4 SMCCC Rally 25 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City 26-7 Time Trial at Laguna Seca	1 AROSC Board Meeting 2 SMCCC Rally 10-1 Wine Tourto Santa Maria 24 Alfa-Porsche Challenge, Buttonwillow Raceway 30 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City 31 Time Trial-Willow Springs	1 Time Trial-Willow Springs 5 AROSC Board Meeting 6 SMCCC Rally 15 Concours at "Under 3 Liter Meet" at Woodley Park 20 General Meeting - 8pm Culver City. Elections, "White Turkey Auction"	12 Holiday Party 13 AROSC Board Meeting