

Alfacionada

MARCH 2014



Desert Classic 2014 Report and Photos Pages 12-17
Upcoming: Petersen Museum, Wine Tour and More!



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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To keep your newsletter arriving after a move, please send your change of address information to AROC, P.O. Box 12340, Kansas City, MO 64116-0340.

If you're a nonmember subscriber, or receive the newsletter on a complimentary basis, please send change of address information to the Club Business Address above.

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 \$70 AROC dues. Non-members may subscribe to *Alfacionada* for \$20 per year, and attend meetings and events. See the inside back cover 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 four-month calendar of events is on the outside back cover of this newsletter, and detailed information is in Previews. Check all three; email any questions to info@arosc.org, and a Club director will respond.

Our Cover This Month

Top: Club Concours judges look over Mike and Chris's pristine Giulietta Sprint; it was awarded First in the Closed class. Story and more results on pages 12-17. Lance Dong photo. Bottom: Norm tells us about this 1959 Cadillac during last year's Petersen tour. See page 10 for info about this year's on March 22nd. Elyse Barrett photo.

AROSC Board of Directors — 2014

Your entire Board is now 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.*

March 22 – Petersen Museum Visit and General Meeting, Los Angeles. Free parking and half-price admission for Club members, RSVP required. See article on page 18.

April 5-6 – Time Trial and Race, Chuckwalla Valley Raceway, Desert Center.

April 12 – Alfas at Cars & Coffee and General Meeting, Irvine. Visit to Crevier Classic Center, lunch in an Orange County Italian restaurant. Details page 23.

May 2-4 – Wine Tour, Solvang and Santa Ynez Valley! Hotel and itinerary details still to come; see adflyer page 20

May 17-18 – Time Trial and Race, California Speedway infield.

June 1 – Huntington Beach Concours and Club Concours #2, Central Park, Huntington Beach.

June 14 – Tour of Mullin Collection, Oxnard, lunch with Mike and Chris in Camarillo.



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



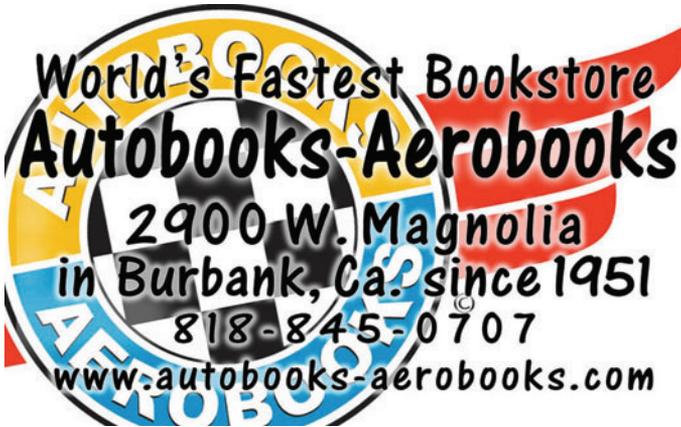
This month's Obligatory Art Shot is Steve Edelman's dramatic portrait of the Meschters' gorgeous 1966 GTV against a wild desert sky.

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

Last night I watched an episode of “Top Gear” featuring the new Alfa 4C. I knew the basic statistics on the car, but gained a new appreciation for just how small, fast and beautiful it really is. They didn’t say whether it has a rear trunk, but did remark that the bonnet doesn’t open so there is no front trunk (or frunk as they say in MR-2 circles). Is it really coming to America? Your guess is as good as mine.

Our Sprint was back on the road in time for the Desert Classic Weekend. The gearbox is still noisy, but much less so. As Hector Vasquez commented, there are three of those really expensive bearings in there and I only replaced the worst one. The gearbox leaks are gone and in a moment of ambition I changed the oil pan gasket which got the worst leak from the engine. I have since discovered some smaller leaks and will get to them one of these days.

We drove out to Palm Springs on Friday. The car ran great and the weather was perfect. It was a real treat to lunch at Bonnie and Charlie’s and see how their desert landscaping has progressed. I can recall when several of those three-foot-tall plants were little more than seedlings.

Doug and Joyce hosted another great party Saturday night. This year Doug featured two mystery wines, one red and one white. The challenge was to identify the correct grape varietal from a long list of choices. Only one person identified the correct red and no one got the white right. Nope, it wasn’t me. I hereby pass my wine tasting crown to Chuck Cline

who decided it was a Shiraz. I’ve never much cared for Merlot by any name, but this one was excellent, which led me to conclude it had to be something else. Congratulations, Chuck!

The Wine and Shine group (as our Competition Director likes to call us) was in fine form at the concours on Sunday. The weather was perfect with an occasional light breeze, and the group set up chairs under a large tree. Actually, some of us were too busy to spend much time under the tree. There were so many great cars to see, and I volunteered to help judge our Club Concours.

Speaking of the Club Concours, Norm won the open class with his ’65 Spider and Chris and I won the closed class with our ’59 Sprint. Some people might note that Norm and I were also two of the judges. Let me assure you that it is a longstanding policy that judges never judge their own cars! Truth is I probably would have judged my car more harshly because I know where all the warts are. It did have the advantage of being the oldest car entered, so it received the most bonus points for age. Our new Concours Director, Jeff Srinivasan, was really on top of the situation – from recruiting judges to getting trophies. He abstained from entering the concours and did not judge, except he did give us a few pointers on the later Spiders. Thanks again, Jeff.

While I’m at it I’d like to give a special thank you to our other new board member, Stan Deller. As Events Chair, it is Stan’s job to give a helping hand to the various event organizers. This means advance

articles for the *Alfacionada*, e-blasts and any necessary coordination. The Desert Classic Weekend was a real test because it was really several events all strung together. Thanks again, Stan. Stan has also volunteered to submit our calendar to our national organization for posting to the AROC website and printing in the *Alfa Owner*. We haven't made it much of a priority, but the national is eager to make it easy for Alfa Romeo executives to see how active we are.

March brings up the Petersen Museum visit. See page 10 for details. Try to drive an Alfa or you will be directed to a lesser, non-Alfa parking area. RSVPs are required so Norm can arrange Get Out of Jail Free passes (aka parking exit passes). Two of our members are docents at the museum and it is always fun to take the tour with a bunch of fellow

enthusiasts.

April 12th is Cars and Coffee in Irvine and always brings out a bunch of seldom-seen Alfas. Cars and Coffee traditionally starts early. We will have our own dedicated parking area, but it will fill up quickly, so get there early. Afterward, we will tour a nearby collection and lunch at a local Italian restaurant. RSVPs to Jim Barrett are required for the collection tour and lunch.

Mark your calendars for the Wine Tour coming up May 2-4. We are heading north again this year. Discussions of exactly which wineries to visit are ongoing as it seems we all have suggestions for Margi.

"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 and Chris*



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The Tech Guy ... *The Tops!*

There comes a time in every convertible top's life when it has exceeded its useful life and no longer keeps out the wind and rain. There are many ways to handle this: replace the top; replace the entire car with a new car with a good top; or, as many a less-affluent owner has done, just drive around with the top down always. I did the latter for some time. All it takes is a good jacket, a good heater and youthful stamina. Of course you do get some funny looks, especially when it's raining.

Before you replace the top, you have more decisions to make. You can have a new top custom made and installed by an upholstery shop; buy a pre-made top and have the upholstery shop install it; buy a pre-made top and install it yourself; or, as I once did, buy a used but serviceable top and install it yourself.

I did a quick Internet check and found several suppliers of Alfa tops: international-auto.com, topsonline.com, autoberry.com and convertible-topguys.com. Prices ranged from \$200 to \$600 with options of fabric type, padded or unpadded, and with or without a window zipper. Installation will be extra.

So, should you go with a custom-made or pre-made top? The pre-made tops are made from fixed patterns and match the original design of the top, whereas a custom top will probably be made by using your old top as a pattern. Your top may have stretched over the years, but the upholsterer will take that into account. With a custom top you have more options for special features such as a zipper on the rear window. You can also select the exact fabric and color you desire, but the

cost may be higher. Pre-made tops are also accompanied by a variety of choices, but you are limited to what the manufacturer provides.

If you choose the have the top installed by an upholstery shop, check with them first to see if they want to supply the top, or if you can buy the top and have them install it. Even if they supply the top, they may either custom-make it or buy a pre-made top, so find out ahead of time which it will be. If they are going to buy a top, you can probably choose the top you would like and where to get it.

The advantage to having the shop supply the top is that if there is a problem with it they will take care of it. However if you provide the top and, after installation, there is a problem, you will probably have to pay for the removal and installation of the replacement.

If you do use a shop, be sure to ask for references, and check the quality of their work. Just like mechanics, there are good upholsters and there are not-so-good upholsters.

If you do choose to do it yourself you do not have to guess how to do it. Alfa Romeo has a booklet on the convertible top for 105 series Spiders. This booklet can be downloaded for free from the Tech Library at aroc-usa.org or in hard copy from IAP (facing page) for \$11.50. This covers removal, installation and adjustment of the top with clear instructions and annotated photographs. While it is specific to the 105 series Spiders, it will probably be helpful in replacing the top for other models. Even if you are having a shop do the work, it may be a good idea to get a copy of the booklet for the technicians' reference.

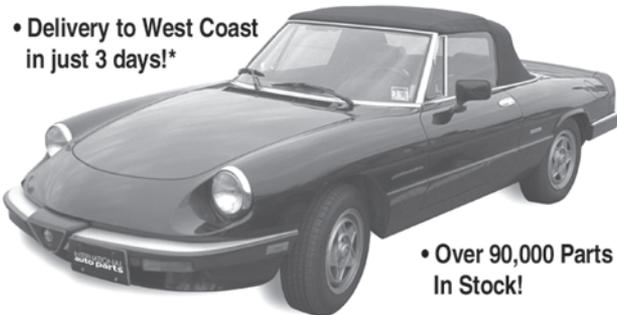
Doing it yourself will save you money, but it will cost you time. It will probably take a full day to remove and replace the top, and having someone to assist you will also be helpful. The tools you will need are simple and the skill level is not really high, but you have to pay attention to detail and take your time to ensure a good job. When removing the old top, take notes and/or photos to help you with the installation of the new top. In both removal and installation, don't force anything. If you have to force a fit, then you are probably doing something wrong. But when you are done, you can stand back and admire your work.

Once you have a new top on your spider, there are a few things you can do to keep it new. Sun is the worst enemy to the top, so use a car cover or a top cover when parked in the sun. Also avoid putting the top up or down when it is cold. The plastic window is less flexible and can crack or craze if flexed when it is cold. In addition, it is a good idea to put a soft cloth between the window and anything that the window can rub against, including itself, when the top is down.

There is no need to drive around in the beautiful Spider with a ratty top. Get going and make that car something you can be proud of, top up or down.
— Gene Brown

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Alfas at the Petersen 2014

Join Us for a Private Tour and Lunch!



On Saturday March 22, Alfa Romeo and AROSC will be featured at the world famous Petersen Automotive Museum in downtown Los Angeles. The new exhibit in the main gallery will be “Town Cars: Arriving in Style,” so get your *stile Alfa* on and come to view this and the always-fabulous collections with your fellow Club members. The day’s details include:

Special Parking: Parking for Alfa Romeos will be on the open deck 4th floor of the garage. On a clear day you can see the Pacific Ocean. There will be an exception for AROSC Members who show up with an Italian relatives – Fiat, Maserati, Ferrari. All other cars should be parked on lower floors in the garage.

Arrival Hours: Arrivals from 8:30AM to 10:00AM. Johnny Rocket’s will supply coffee and pastries on the 4th floor, and will also be open for anyone who would like to purchase breakfast.

Our Guided Tour: The Club’s tour will start promptly at 10:30AM. The

museum is undergoing a major restoration, and some interesting changes will have begun by the time of our event.

Admission: Entry into the museum for Petersen Museum members is free. AROSC Club members entry is \$8. Parking is free. For all others admission is \$12 and parking is \$8.

The Vault Tour: We may tour the vault at 1:00PM and 3:00PM at entry fees discounted to \$18 per person, for AROSC members and guests.

RSVPs Are Required: Your AROSC guided tour and lunch at Johnny Rocket’s (on the patio, weather permitting) need to be reserved in advance. RSVP to info@arosc.org. Your vault tour can be booked when checking in for our tour at the museum.

How about renewing our AROSC membership at www.arosc.org or becoming a Petersen member at www.petersen.org?

For driving instructions: The Petersen Automotive Museum is located at 6060 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036.

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Desert Classic Weekend

2014 is Off and Running!



Desert Classic 2014 Alfa Corral. Lance Dong photo.

We kicked off the 2014 AROSC social and concours calendar with a bang on February 22nd with the Desert Classic Weekend. The activities around the Palm Springs Desert Classic Concours have been a favorite for a number of years, with each one better than the last. This year's event was no exception.

The weekend started on Saturday,

with lunch at Bonnie and Charlie Schwartz's house in Joshua Tree, located in the Mojave Desert. Everyone enjoyed the desert view



Lunch group on Schwartzes' west patio. Jim Barrett photo.



Margaret, Fabio, Alessandra and Elyse. Jim Barrett photo.

from the house as well as conversation with fellow Alfisti. The weather was perfect for the start of the weekend. The atmosphere was so relaxed that everyone was on their own to get to

the hotels they were staying at for the evening.

Saturday evening dinner was a traditional barbecue at Joyce and Doug McHattie's adobe house in La Quinta. We started with a blind tasting of two types of wine where you had to guess the vintner for one red and one white wine. Out of a room of about 40 people, only one person guessed correctly. Congratulations Chuck Cline!



A colorful dinner table at Doug and Joyce's house. Jim Barrett photo.

The rest of us just drank wine for the pure pleasure of it. Later, dinner was a combination of Dougburgers (a secret recipe) and potluck. Everyone had a great time.

Sunday morning for some of us started very early as the corral for the



Desert Classic organizer Paul Merrigan visits AROSC. Jim Barrett photo.

Desert Concours opened at 6:00AM. Concours Director Jeff Srinivasan was the first to arrive with his yellow 1974 Spider, Norm Silverman was next with his 1965 Giulietta Spider, and I followed shortly thereafter with my 1979 silver Spider. Jeff, Norm and I managed to get about 50 cars in place before the opening of the show. We had 18 Alfas, two Maseratis and a sampling of British, German and American cars. By the time the show started, the corral was nearly full. We also had active participation by our



Bonnie Schwartz and Cosa greet arriving guests at Joshua Tree. Jim Barrett photo.



Alfa Corral concurs judges from left are Chuck Meschter, Mike Rhihle, Don Singer, Norm Silverman. Jeff Srinivasan photo

friends in the San Diego Chapter of AROC.

Jeff started the Alfa corral concurs judging about 9:30AM with four classes: Race, Open, Closed and Daily Driver. The awards ceremony ended with the corral "Best of Show." The results are listed on page 15. A big thanks goes to the four judges: Chuck



Roger Groves' SZ, Class 4 and Most Significant Closed Car winner. Elyse Barrett photo.

Meschter, Mike Rihle, Don Singer and Norm Silverman.

The Desert Classic Concurs also had several significant Alfas: AROSC member Roger Groves' SZ and a

Giulietta Sprint. The SZ won first in Class 4 and the Classic's Most Significant Closed Car award. The show also had a good selection of cars from all over the world. I enjoyed seeing beautiful examples of many marques.

I want to thank Charlie and Bonnie Schwartz, Doug and Joyce McHattie and the organizers of the Desert Classic Concurs for making this a very successful weekend. See you next year!

– Stan Deller



Non-Alfas of interest: above, Maserati MC-12 and Maerati 175cc motorcycle. Below, 1965 Bizzarini P538 PS; any lower and it would be underground! Bottom, by way of contrast, a towering brass-era Model T station wagon. Lance Dong photos.



Club Concours Results



OPEN CLASS

1. Norm and Evie Silverman, 1965 Giulia Spider
2. Pat and Cindy Terrise, 1978 Spider
3. Stan Deller, 1979 Spider



DAILY DRIVER

1. Jan and Chuck Cline, 1981 GTV-6
2. Harry Crytzer, 1974 Spider
3. Lance Dong, 1982 GTV-6 Balocco SE



RACE CLASS

1. Hector Vasquez, 1975 GTV America
2. James Romeo, 1971 Spider



CLOSED CLASS

1. Mike Riehle and Chris Burke, 1959 Giulietta Sprint
2. Marshall Roath, 1979 Sport Sedan

BEST OF SHOW

- Mike Riehle and Chris Burke, 1959 Giulietta Sprint



Type 57 Bugatti with riveted-together Elektron (magnesium alloy) body. Steve Edelman photo.



Another shot of the same car, taken by Lance Dong.



Hot rod custom based on 1937 Ford styling. Lance Dong photo.

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The journey is also fun. These are a few roadside sightings captured in Cabazon and along the Twentynine Palms Highway on the way to Saturday's lunch at the Schwartz's. *Stephen Edelman*



Alfa Day returns to Cars & Coffee!

*This Year's Gathering
is Saturday, April 12*

Our April fun-for-all starts early and ends early, but it is so worth the investment. If you've never been, this is the year to come on down to the best car + coffee klatsch on the planet. Our AROSC day is organized in three parts. Read on and make your RSVPs.

Part 1

We have 45 spaces in the featured marque parking area, which will be filled up by 6:45AM. There will, of course, be other spaces in the rest of the lot, but those 350 or so will be filled up by 7:00AM. We kid you not! So commit to banking sleep during the week and getting you and your Alfa organized for some of the best car-eye-opener activity in the world.

The weather will be changeable, so sunscreen, a windbreaker and hat are recommended for the parking lot. Bring your own "first cup" of coffee for when you arrive, finish it off, and plan to get a refill for just \$1. A selection of pastries and fruit are available while supplies last. Restrooms are available inside the Taco Bell corporate headquarters on the south side of the property. You need to walk a block or so, but there are signs to direct you.

This portion of the day is open to all Alfa owners, and we will also be extending the invitation to Central Coast, Orange County and San Diego chapter members.

Part 2

At approximately 8:30AM we will depart for a special collector car dealer tour. The facility is located in nearby Costa Mesa and driving instructions will be provided to those who have RSVPed. This portion of the day is for Alfa Club members only. If you wish to attend, please RSVP to the Barretts at info@arosc.org. Please key Cars & Coffee Tour into the subject line of your email.

Part 3

At approximately 11:00AM we will depart for a Club lunch and April General Meeting. This part of the day is strictly for Alfa Club members only. We will be dining at a delightful Italian restaurant nearby. If you plan to attend, you must RSVP to the Barretts at info@arosc.org. Please key Cars & Coffee Lunch into the subject line of your email.

We look forward to seeing you all there!

– Jim, Elyse & Cody Barrett

JOIN US AT THE TRACK!

TIME TRIALS, RACING, DRIVING SCHOOLS HIGH PERFORMANCE DRIVER EDUCATION

Alfas encouraged but not required to participate. All marques welcome!

2014 Schedule

January 18-19 Big Willow - RACE-TT
February 15-16 Streets of Willow - Driving School
April 5-6 Chuckwalla - RACE-TT
May 17-18 Cal Speedway Infield - RACE-TT
September 27-28 Buttonwillow - RACE-TT
November 8-9 Streets Of Willow - TBD - RACE-TT or School



RACING with AROSC is focused on having fun, competing with cars with similar speed potential. Car to car contact is NOT tolerated.



TIME TRIALS is a speed event similar to autocross, but run at higher speeds on a race track with other cars. All drivers compete for their best lap times. At these events, we offer HIGH-PERFORMANCE DRIVER ED sessions, open to drivers of all ages and skill levels. New drivers must attend classroom sessions. No competition is involved.



Our famous weekend **DRIVING SCHOOL** is for all levels of drivers. Learn about your car and how to get the most out of it in a safe, structured environment. You might even get to meet a famous race car driver guest instructor!

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SAVE THE DATE!

AROSC 2014 Wine Tour is
MAY 2-4!



Come tour the many lovely Santa Ynez-area wineries such as Tres Hermanas.

This year's AROSC annual Wine Tour is May 2-4 and we're headed to the beautiful Danish-themed town of Solvang and the vast array of wonderful Santa Ynez Valley wineries.

It has been a few years since we visited this, one of our premier grape-stomping grounds, so it will be fun to revisit favorites and explore the newer establishments. We welcome suggestions, so let us know via info@arosc.org if you have a new discovery or a longtime "best" winery you'd like to see on the itinerary.

Hotel details are being secured, and more information will follow in a Wine Tour e-blast later this month.

So watch your email, start cooking up your perfect picnic, and plan to join us in early May for a drive up to Santa Barbara County.



The quintessential wine tour picnic lunch: quiche, asparagus flan, pear-apple-walnut-gorgonzola salad.

This Just In From Stuttgart ...



Our ever-alert German correspondent T. Klein found this Alfa 6C2500 Bertone coupe being used as a spokes-model for the 2014 Retro Classics in Stuttgart. The sleek beast looks oddly at home in this posh mall ...



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Classified – Cars For Sale



FOR SALE – 1977 ALFETTA GT

purchased in Milan and shipped to the States. Alfetta has been parked in garage since 1978. Body in excellent condition but car does not run. Original owner now lives in Oregon and Alfetta is in Los Angeles, California. Asking \$1000. Thank you.

Margaret Palandech, fosterbridgeboulevard@yahoo.com.

FOR SALE – 1988 ALFA ROMEO

SPIDER VELOCE Excellent condition. Just over 10K miles. Garage kept. One owner. Comes with hardtop. \$15,000.00. Joe, 760.580.6011 (Poway, CA).



FOR SALE – 1979 ALFETTA 4-DOOR SEDAN

Complete, good body. Engine is not running – project for restoration. Car is in Gardena, CA. \$800. Miles Thompson, 310.545.3448.

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 Advertising Coordinator Jim Barrett at info@arosc.org for a detailed rate card and complete advertising information.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California

Dues for a one-year membership in the Alfa Romeo Owners of Southern California (AROSC) and the Alfa Romeo Owners Club - US (AROC) are \$70. Please fill in the information blanks in this form, clip and mail with your check, payable to Alfa Romeo Owners Club, to Alfa Romeo Owners Club, P.O. Box 12340, Kansas City, MO 64116-3040. You may also join online using your credit card by visiting aroc-usa.org, or by telephoning 877.399.2762.

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Affiliation/Subscription

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*Alfa Romeo Owners
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Our 2014 Calendar of Events

March

22 Petersen Museum Visit and General Meeting, Los Angeles. Free parking and half-price admission for Club members; docent-led tour of latest special exhibits. RSVP is necessary for the parking pass.

April

5-6 Time Trial and Race, Chuckwalla Valley Raceway, Desert Center.
12 Alfas at Cars & Coffee and General Meeting, Irvine.
Visit to Crevier Classic Center, lunch at an Orange County Italian restaurant.

May

2-4 Wine Tour, Solvang and Santa Ynez Valley.
17-18 Time Trial and Race, California Speedway infield.

June

1 Huntington Beach Concours and Club Concours #2, Central Park, Huntington Beach.
14 Tour of Mullin Collection, Oxnard, lunch with Mike and Chris in Camarillo.