

ALFA BITS



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ALFA ROMEO OWNERS OF OREGON

MARCH 2014



ALFA BITS



MARCH 2014



VOLUME 46
NUMBER 3

...is the official newsletter (and the only one we know of) of the Alfa Romeo Owners of Oregon. It is published 10 or 11 times per year in PDF format and downloadable from the club's website, www.alfaclub.org.

We welcome submission of topical editorial material, and non-commercial buy-sell-trade Alfa-related ads are free for members. Contact [the editor](#) for details, or better yet, just send your ad and we'll let you know if there's a problem. We're really flexible.

We also welcome paid advertising when you actually pay (and you know who you are...). Contact Advertising Manager [Dennis Torgeson](#) for details and/or to repent and pay up.

If every AROO member receiving this e-zine forwarded it to just five friends, and if that pattern could continue through just eight such iterations, by the end of the week this could be the largest-circulation publication in history. And then just think what we could charge for advertising...

ABOUT THE CLUB

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Gary Williams's spectacular GTV as seen on Hurricane Ridge on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. In this issue Gary concludes his two-part story of nearly 50 years with Alfa Romeos.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN, "Driver's Seat"	III
CLUB BUSINESS	
February Board Meeting Minutes (you had to be there)	IV
PAST EVENTS	
AROO Rally School and AROO Cup Rally #1	V-VI
FUTURE EVENTS	VII
AROO Spring Track Day	VIII
Monthly Meeting	IX
AROO Swap Meet	X
AROO Board Meeting	XI
AROO Cup Rally #2	XII
Old Spider Tour	XIII
Joint Tour to Ashland	XIV
AROO Summer Tour	XV
OTHER EVENTS	
ICSCC-Sanctioned Competition Driving School	XVI
SOME OTHER STUFF	XVII-XXIII
VIDISSIMO	XXIV
STEVE SAYS	XXV
RALLY SPONSORS	XXVI
OUR ADVERTISERS	XXVII-XXIX
BUY-SELL-TRADE	XXX
REAR VIEW MIRROR	XXXI

VOTE FOR CINDY VOTE FOR CINDY VOTE FOR CINDY

DRIVER'S SEAT

AROO member and treasurer Cindy Banzer is up for reelection to the AROC Board and needs all of our votes. With the challenges facing the national club in the years to come, we need forceful, competent and passionate leadership to move things in the right direction. It is also vital that AROO have a voice on the Board who will ensure that our interests and concerns are represented. Cindy has been on the AROC Board for many years, is finishing a term as vice president, and will likely be president. But first she needs to be reelected. You may have gotten an email from AROC with a link enabling electronic voting through surveymonkey. It was a bit garbled, but functional. There will also be a paper ballot in *Alfa Owner*. Either way you do it, cast your vote for Cindy Banzer to make sure AROO has a strong voice on the national board.

I'm pumped, stoked and excited!

After a frankly discouraging Valentine Tour, I was pretty bummed about the prospects for enjoying AROO events this year, but no longer. This past weekend I taught the AROO Rally School and I got to engage with a bunch of folks eager to learn TSD rallying. Nothing like the excitement of teaching to an enthusiastic group to get me fired up. I was joined by Yulia Smolyansky, multiple winner of the AROO Cup Rally series and fierce competitor in many rallies throughout the Northwest who gave hints and tips to new navigators. Paul Eklund, past winning driver of the Monte Shelton, shared his tips for winning teamwork, while Fred and Lisa McNabb brought everybody back down to earth with hints on just doing this for fun (and Fred knows it's more fun when you win). All that talent and experience really clicked and we put on a great program. And we must have been effective, because 13 of the "students" joined us the next day as we set a record for AROO Cup Rally attendance and had a great time doing it. Read all about it elsewhere in this issue.

And Spring Track Day is coming up! And the weather won't be awful! Right now the weather is looking like partly sunny and 65, which is just about perfect track weather. So all you drivers can get the speed on without having to dodge duck ponds on the track and all us volunteers won't be standing around in ankle-deep water. I'm showing up early and bringing sunscreen and a good attitude.

Looking at the rest of the calendar I see the revived AROO Swap Meet on March 22, the venerable Old Spider Tour April 26-27, and the inaugural Meet in the Middle Tour over Memorial Day weekend in conjunction with the Delta-Sierra chapter of AROC as well as the Alfa Romeo Association. How much better could it be?

I'll tell you how much, this much: Do not miss this month's general meeting on the 19th. Our guest speaker will be Tom Kreger on *La Carrera Panamericana*. Tom has previously shared his adventures with us on Pikes Peak and Bonneville Salt Flats. Tom is a great speaker: informed, funny, and always engaging. It's guaranteed to be a fine evening with Tom and all your AROO friends, so come on out and get excited.

[Roger Dilts, Club President](#)



Location: Buster's BBQ, Tigard

Time: 7 p.m.

In Attendance: Roger, Russ, George, Lee Anne, Dennis, Yulia.

Old Business, Upcoming events, and Liaison reports

1. Minutes review – Russ – Roger moved to approve, George seconded, motion carried.
2. Treasurer's Report - Cindy (absent) – 2014 Budget reviewed and approved by email post meeting. Cindy moved and Lee Anne seconded, unanimous approval.
3. Past events reports:
 - a. Jan 26 Sykart – Bob (absent, submitted by email) – Discussed and planned for repeat event in 2015.
4. Upcoming events
 - a. Feb 16 Valentine tour – Roger – Tour plus lunch at Trees.
 - b. Feb 19 Monthly membership meeting: Reid – A classic car nightmare – Accident and recovery experience report; Hagerty coverage.
 - c. Feb 28 through Mar 2: AROO Ski trip- Yulia – to be promoted at General Meeting.
 - d. March 8 AROO Rally School – Roger – needs Volunteers.
 - e. March 9 AROO Rally Cup Rally #1- Roger
 - f. March 15 AROO Track Day – Erik/Ken – 12 registered to date.
 - g. March 22 AROO Swap meet – Dennis – will need two pop ups. 10 am start, SE Forster Rd.
 - h. May 22-25 S. Oregon Tour with Delta-Sierra – Dennis.
5. Reid's report: Bits, website and MSNWCR (submitted by email).
6. Calendar Review – Bob (absent) – Track Days added.
7. Membership Report - Lee Anne – 179 members. New members listed in Alfa Bits. Lee Anne working on new member packet and distribution.
8. Merchandise/Apparel –Yulia – Marketing and promotion of items to continue. Add to Alfa Bits?
9. Competition and track – Mark – no report, absent.
10. Advertising/Promotion – George – early stage discussion for promotion ideas. Cross club was one...
11. AROC report – Cindy (absent) – placeholder for ongoing monthly update item.

Continuing and New Business

1. Approve AROO 2014 Budget – done via email, post meeting.
2. Advertising Income – Dennis – reported that \$700 in advert income committed.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:20 p.m.

[Submitted by Russ Paine, Secretary](#)



First Rally of the Season Sets Attendance Record!

PAST EVENTS

Roger Dilts

AROO Cup Rally Series Director

The weather was roaring and pouring just a day before, but Sunday morning it was blessedly dry for the opening event of the 2014 AROO Cup Rally Series. Having worn out all the roads in Washington County over the last five years, the series this year moved to the wilds of Clackamas County. Everyone seemed to have remembered to set their clocks forward the night before, so there were no embarrassing late arrivals.

When registration closed, we had 18 teams ready to rally, which has to be a record for this event. And we drew some pretty stellar competitors. Not to leave anybody out, but last year's Monte Shelton winners April and Marcus Song were there (*not* in a Gold Duster, thank you), along with Bill and Sue Colisch, who swept last year's AROO Cup. Expect to see them in a Volvo 122s next time. Multiple past Cup winner Yulia Smolyansky was in her Subaru instead of the GTV, ably driven by Ann Fry. Standout regional rallyists Renee and Marinus Damm competed, although paired with others just to spread the talent around. Past Monte Shelton Rally Master Simon Levear and his wife Karen were there in a BMW Z3 coupe, while successful long-time teammates Fred and Lisa McNabb were in their daily driver BMW. Past Monte Shelton-winning driver Paul Eklund teamed up with Dave Haworth in a red FIAT 500. In addition we had four teams of newbies from the previous day's Rally School and several other seasoned competitors to round out the pack.

After registering and picking up their instructions and traditional cookies, everyone headed out from the Baldock Rest Area to Molalla for the odometer calibration run, followed by a break to do some math and a short transit to the start of the first regularity.

Having been duly warned at the school the previous day, the novices were ready for the first turn, which was uninstructed, so they had to apply the Default Route Instructions right away. In fact there was only one instructed turn in the entire 10.88 mile leg. Everyone seemed to do just fine in their run along the Clackamas River on Dickey Prairie Road, ending with a brisk and twisty little hillclimb through the woods. There were eight teams in single digits at the timing control and the race was on! (Sorry, it's not a *race*; it's a "precision driving competition.")

The next leg wound through the hills and valleys of the upper Clackamas for 14 miles. Amazingly, all but four teams were in single digits at the finish. Most notably the mother/daughter team of first timers Lee Anne Barham and Moira Zupan, running with their dashboard clock as their only



Bob Stewart does his best to control the crowd while Lisa McNabb and Neil d'Autremont wait patiently to register for the March Rally.

First Rally of the Season Sets Attendance Record!

PAST EVENTS

PLACE	CAR NUMBER	DRIVER/NAVIGATOR	TSD	TSD	TSD	TSD	OC	SCORE
			1	2	3	4		
1	13	Paul Eklund/Dave Haworth	1	2	2	1	0	6
N/A [§]	2	Sue Colisch/Bill Colisch	2	0	6	1	0	9
2	11	Ann Fry/Yulia Smolyansky	1	1	7	3	0	12
3	8	Marinus Damm/ Jessica Fleenor	6	5	2	0	0	13
4	14	April Song/Marcus Song	8	1	3	2	0	14*
5	15	Lynn Gibner/Linda Guthrie	3	5	3	3	0	14*
6	10	Simon Levear/Karen Levear	11	1	2	4	0	18
7	7	Marvin Crippen/Renee Damm	7	8	1	4	0	20
8	1	Fred McNabb/Lisa McNabb	3	7	8	4	0	22
9	16	Neil d'Autremont/Greg DiLoreto	14	1	7	2	0	24
10	3	Gary Eddings/Kate Sherrell	17	2	4	4	0	27
11	18	Doug Naef/Christine Merris	31	2	2	5	0	40
12	4	Brian Ruess/Kevin Ruess	21	11	19	3	0	54
13	6	Maynard Chambers/Lynn Tucker	15	13	29	24	0	81
14	9	Lee Anne Barham/Moira Zupan	45	5	34	47	0	131
15	5	Jim Trofitter/Bonnie Trofitter	23	2	1	300	0	326
16	17	Erinn Sowle/Megan Jaksich	15	300	25	2	0	342
17	12	Joe Sweeney/Jerome Deluz	62	11	300	300	60	733

[§] Last year's champions have elected not to compete for series points this year

* Tie resolved by most "ones"

Kate Sherrell, Gary Eddings (her dad and driver) and husband Russell enjoy a break between speakers at the Rally School.



timepiece, scored a mere five second penalty! Take that, you Curta jockeys! Reunited Monte Shelton teammates Neil d'Autremont and Greg DiLoreto nailed a 1 second penalty run in Neil's Porsche 928 rocket.

At the halfway point the score was Fry/Smolyansky and the Colishes at 2 seconds each, Eklund/Haworth at 3, Gibner/Guthrie at 8, and Fred and Lisa McNabb with 10. After a break to take in the post-apocalyptic vibe at the Carlton Market, everyone headed into the hills. The third regularity featured a tricky "ONTO," which all but one team followed correctly. All but five teams were under ten seconds off pace, including Jim and Bonnie Trofitter with a pack-leading 1 second demerit.

The final regularity dropped everyone back onto the flatlands with another ONTO that required quick eyes. An amazing 14 teams scored five penalty points or less! The teams wound up at JimmyOs Pizza in Oregon City for lunch and awards. After all the numbers were crunched, Paul and Dave came out on top with only 6 seconds of penalties. Bill and Sue Colisch scored 9 points: they are rallying but not competing this year, so second place went to Ann and Yulia with 12 points, and third to Marinus Damm and Jessica Fleenor a second back at 13. Complete results are in the table. I have to mention the team of Gibner/Guthrie. Lynn and Linda have worked hard through some discouraging "almost did great" rallies that made them want to quit. They didn't. They hung in there and now find themselves in some pretty impressive company. Congratulations to them and everyone else. I was really impressed by the scores. I should also note that there were only three time decs used in this event, so it was a driving contest, not a math contest.

Volunteers Mark and Nancy Batz ran two timing controls, while Bob Stewart ran registration, the off-course control and helped with scoring. We couldn't run these events without our dedicated volunteers.

Be sure to join us for the next installment on April 6 with Reid Trummel as Rally Master. If the first run was any indication, it's gonna be a heck of a series!

BITS

The next 30 days or so...

FUTURE EVENTS

March 15, AROO Spring Track Day

You can still participate – just show up and register on the morning of the event. You can also still volunteer – likewise, just show up. AROO is one of only a small handful of clubs that hosts track days and we always have a good time whether entered in the event or volunteering to help stage it. Portland International Raceway at 8 a.m.

March 19, Monthly Meeting

Starts at 7:30 p.m. in our private room at the Lucky Lab Pub, 915 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Portland 97214. Details on this month's attraction are on a following page.

March 22, AROO Swap Meet

It's the return of a fun AROO tradition. Bill Eastman is hosting it at his garage in southeast Portland. If you haven't been there before, the visit to his garage is reason enough to attend. Free food, too!

April 2, AROO Board of Directors Meeting

Open to all members. Location varies. Contact Club President Roger Dilts to confirm the location of the next meeting if you would like to attend. [Free sausage-making demo every time!](#)

April 6, AROO Cup Rally #2

REMEMBER THE NEW STARTING LOCATION: [Baldock Southbound Rest Area](#). Yes, we'll be rallying in a heretofore little-used and lightly traveled quadrant southeast of Portland. Be sure to turn around when you hear banjos.

April 26-27, AROO Old Spider Tour

A great olde AROO tradition. This is the kick-off of the long-range touring season. You'll like it. See details and a following page, **and make your reservations now**. This tour is VERY popular.



[More info here.](#)

[Register here.](#)

[See you here.](#)

**I ♥ turns
4, 6 and 10**

FREE BEER

We have our own private room at the Lucky Lab Pub. It's like our very own clubhouse. And there's free beer, free snacks, good friends, and fun times waiting for you there.

Rarely do we get a chance to experience a full and complete world-renowned race we have all heard about. Well now is your chance! Tom Kreger and Cynthia Bushell will be putting on a presentation for us at the March meeting on the Mexican Road Race also known as *La Carrera Panamericana*. This is a 2000-mile, 100-car full-out road race completed in just seven days. They competed in their 1953 Lincoln in 2006 and 2007. Cynthia also navigated in another car in 2008. Tom will show us pictures of his preparation of the car, getting to the start in Veracruz right to the finish in Nuevo Laredo and everything that went on during the race. As you know there are many accidents during the race and things like avoiding cows, horses and dogs on the route in rural Mexico are commonplace. Tom gives a very interesting and informative narrative of his and Cynthia's experience during this adventure. Last year Tom shared with us his adventure going up Pike's Peak in the Lincoln.

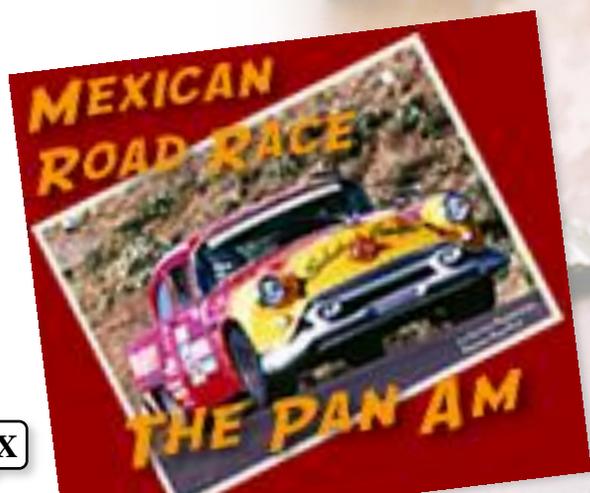
So do not miss this show. You will be laughing a lot to Tom's own description of things that he and Cynthia encountered. Guaranteed to be a fun time for all – don't miss it!

We look forward to seeing you there!

[Lucky Lab Pub](#)

**915 SE Hawthorne Blvd
Portland 97214
(503) 236-3555**

**Wednesday, March 19,
beginning at 7:30 p.m.**



SPRING CLEANING

It's time to look over those good Alfa parts you no longer need and get them in the hands of someone who does. Bill Eastman has generously opened up his recently renovated shop for our use to trade for those items you need.

For this event to be successful we need your help in bringing Alfa-related items that are in good condition to help another member. We will provide some covered area with tables in case it rains.

Bring your own table and chairs if you have them.

The club is providing good eats such as Johnson brats, chips and sodas, to name just a few of the items that will be on the menu, free for all club members.

So bring your parts, see your fellow Alfa club members, talk cars, check out Bill's great garage and put some change in your pocket.

We need parts for this to work, so bring them!

"Auto Sports" is the name of Bill Eastman's garage – look for the sign

**5815 SE Foster Road
Portland 97206**

**Saturday, March 22,
beginning at 10 a.m.**

Contact: Denny Torgeson 503.704.1800





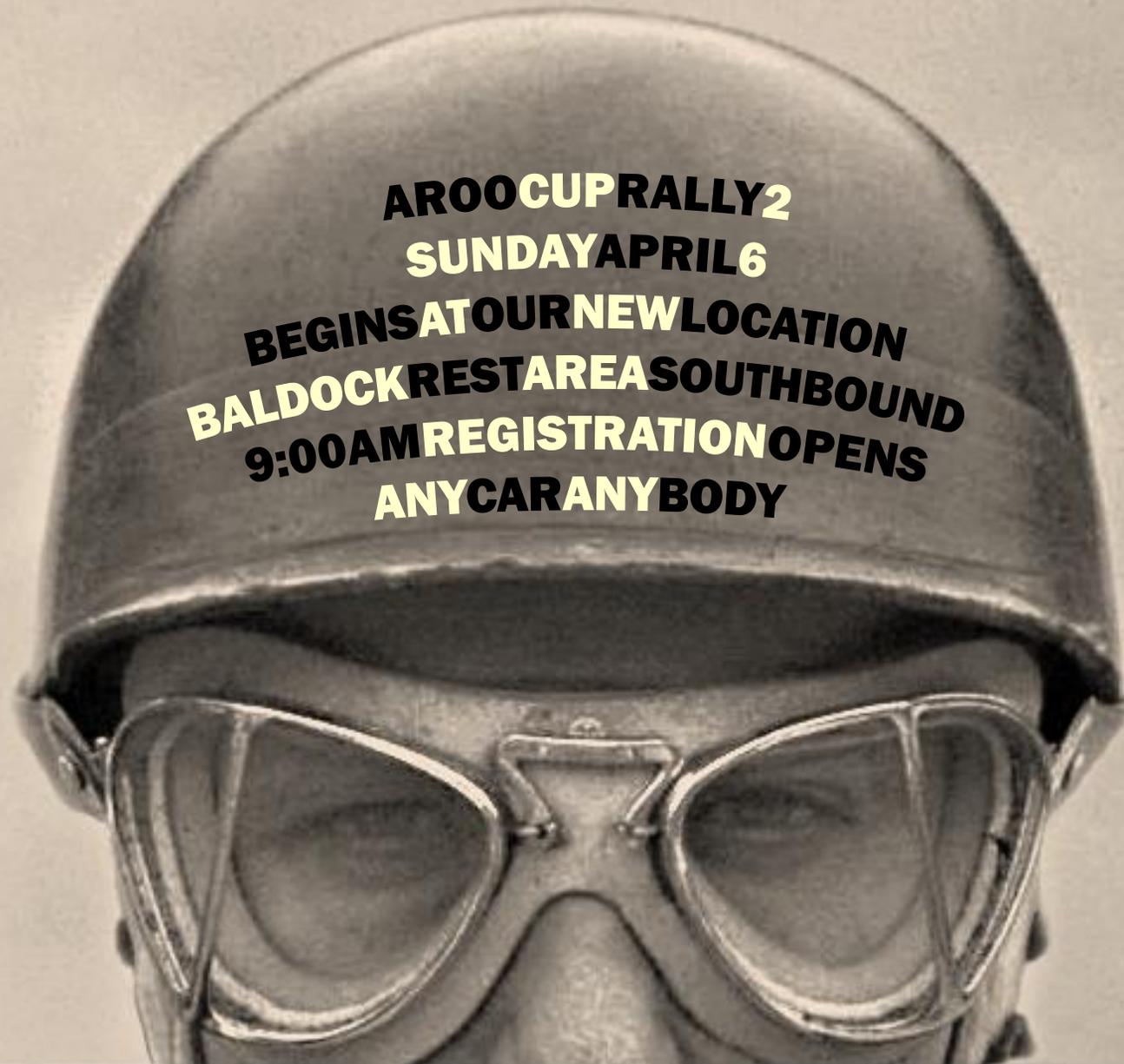
The AROO Board meets on the first Wednesday of the month, and all members are invited to attend. Contact Club President Roger Dilts to confirm the location if you would like to attend the meeting.

“Rally,” he whispered

FUTURE EVENTS

Rally Master notes: As the second rally of the four AROO Cup rallies in the series, this rally will build upon the rally school and first rally, adding only incrementally to the complexity level. The goals are (a) have fun, (b) continue the pursuit of points towards winning the AROO Cup, and (c) sharpen your skills building toward the Northwest Classic Rally in July.

Novices should not fear it. [Reid, RM](#)



AROOCUP RALLY 2
SUNDAY APRIL 6
BEGINS AT OUR NEW LOCATION
BALDOCK REST AREA SOUTHBOUND
9:00AM REGISTRATION OPENS
ANY CAR ANY BODY

I can't stop thinking about the Old Spider Tour!



QUESTIONS?
Erik Roe
(503) 706-8304
erikroe@mac.com

Just a little over one month until we travel the back roads of Oregon to John Day!

Please join us for the annual AROO Old Spider Tour, celebrating the original purchase of "Old Blue," Bob McGill's 1958 Giulietta Spider, from Rambo Motors. This tour will go east to find some of the smoothest and least-used roads Oregon has to offer. Scenery on this route is fantastic with a wide range of Oregon's landscape.

We especially encourage all of the club's old Spiders to get out and join us, but we welcome you to drive your Alfa of any vintage or type! And although the date is in April, top-down weather is expected (but bring a warm coat and a hat anyway).

Get your Alfa out of hibernation now.

Drive it at least 100 miles to make sure all systems are *AVANTI!*

And get your room reserved now.

Dates: April 26-27 (day trippers also welcome)
Departure: 8:15 a.m., April 26
Departure point: Steamboat Landing Park, Washougal WA
(Highway 14 and Washougal River Road)
Lunch: Condon – you can purchase there or BYO
Destination: John Day, Oregon
Route: Most interesting one we can find!
Lodging: Best Western, John Day
315 W Main St, John Day OR 97845
(541) 575-1700
Special rate of \$103 (tax included)
Be sure to identify yourself as with the Alfa Romeo Owners of Oregon.
Block of only 20 rooms held, so hurry and make your reservation.
Group dinner at the Outpost Restaurant Saturday night.

Sunday – another great route!
Depart John Day about 9 a.m.
Lunch at Imperial River Lodge, Maupin OR
Back in Portland for dinner

A scene from last year's
Old Spider Tour.



EARLY NOTICE OF A FIRST-TIME AROO EVENT

We will have a joint club tour in Southern Oregon with the Delta Sierra Alfa Club of Sacramento and the Alfa Romeo Association from the Bay Area. We arrive in Ashland on Thursday, May 22, tour Friday and Saturday and until noon on Sunday. Monday is the Memorial Day holiday so you can stay longer if you wish.

Also you can take in one of the many plays that are being held in Ashland at that time.

This will also be a great opportunity for our Southern Oregon members to participate in an AROO event.

Dates: May 22-25

Location: Ashland, Oregon, base for entire tour

Motel: The Flagship Inn of Ashland 541.482.2641

www.ashlandflagshipinn.com

“Alfa Romeo” rate is approx \$86 tax included

We have a block of 25 rooms. Contact Denny Torgeson for more information: 503.704.1800



NEW DATES: Summer Tour, now August 22-24

The new dates for the AROO Summer Tour are August 22-24, Friday-Sunday. Long story, but we kind of got bumped out of the Condon Hotel to make room for the Ford Family Foundation Board. The good thing is the Condon Hotel has offered to reduce their room prices SIGNIFICANTLY to make up for the change in plans. Deluxe rooms (normally \$229) are now **\$125**. Other rooms (ranging from \$169 to \$189) are now a flat **\$100**. The customized dinner I have arranged has been reduced from \$40/person to \$30/person – *such a deal!*

This will be a three-day trip. Our first night's destination is Pendleton. Lodging is at Knights Inn 541.276.3231. Our group rate is only \$45 for a single queen or king! (No, you do not need to bring baseball bats to kill the roaches ... this place has great reviews). Dinner will be at [Virgil's At Cimmiyotti's](#) where some of the best steaks in the northwest are served!

Saturday morning we will start off with the Pendleton Underground Tour. Pendleton had a very active underground community in the mid-to-late 1880s and much has been preserved. Run by a non-profit organization, you truly feel you are walking back in time. The tour ends inside the Working Girls Hotel, one of 18 bordellos that “served” the cowboys and miners of the time. It is a hoot!

www.pendletonundergroundtours.org/main/index.htm

Next we will visit the Umatilla County Historical Museum. Housed in a 1909 train depot, they have assembled an outstanding collection. In addition, an 1879 one-room school and homestead have been relocated onto the grounds.

www.heritigestationmuseum.org/index.html

The final stop before we head to Condon is the Tamastlikt Cultural Institute. This museum celebrates the history of the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla tribes. They have done a wonderful job in collecting and displaying many artifacts. I have visited there before and look forward to seeing it again.

www.tamastlikt.org

In mid-afternoon we will take the three-hour drive to Hotel Condon (541.384.4624). I have picked out a very fun route to get there so make sure things are buckled down! Many of us have stayed at the Condon Hotel before. Check out their website if you have not been there. www.hotelcondon.com Be sure to click the “events” tab to see a great picture of our Alfas parked in front of the hotel. Rob, the manager, has enticed his lady friend, Rachael, to move to Condon to run their restaurant, which does special dinners for groups. The proposed menu, including appetizers, is mouth watering! The room block will expire around July 1, hence I recommend calling them to secure a room. After these 20 rooms are gone, the only alternative is the Condon Motel (where you might want to bring that baseball bat to address those pesky roaches!).

Once you sign up, please drop me (Tom McGirr) a line to let me know you are coming so I can coordinate with the vendors we plan to visit Saturday morning. mcgirrt@columbiabank.com or 503.983.3656.

Upon successful completion of this school (in your street car) you can apply for an ICSCC Novice License.

The ICSCC program requires three “clean” Novice races, passing a written exam, worker requirements, and driver interviews to advance to Area, then three more clean races in the senior race group before advancing to a Senior Competition License.

ICSCC Senior Licenses have been accepted as proof of skills across the nation. In some cases a driver must also get a license from the local sanctioning body, but the ICSCC License makes that easy.

Note: While the Competition School allows your street car, all further racing needs to be done in a legal race car with legal driver protection and gear. Rental cars are available from several ICSCC members if you don't have a race legal car or want to try different vehicles before committing to build one. Sadly we only have three active Alfa racecars, but perhaps you can change that.

IRDC will hold a school on April 5 at The Ridge Motorsports Park. This is an opportunity to receive instruction that will allow you to apply for a race license with Conference. You can sign up at MotorsportReg.com and the cost is \$265 USD. Here is a link that should take you directly to the correct page: [REGISTER HERE](#)

The event also includes an HPDE (High Performance Driver Education) run group and a “Test and Tune.” More information is available here: [IRDC WEBSITE](#)

Bill Spornitz
Lead Instructor, Proformance Racing School
Past Conference Steward

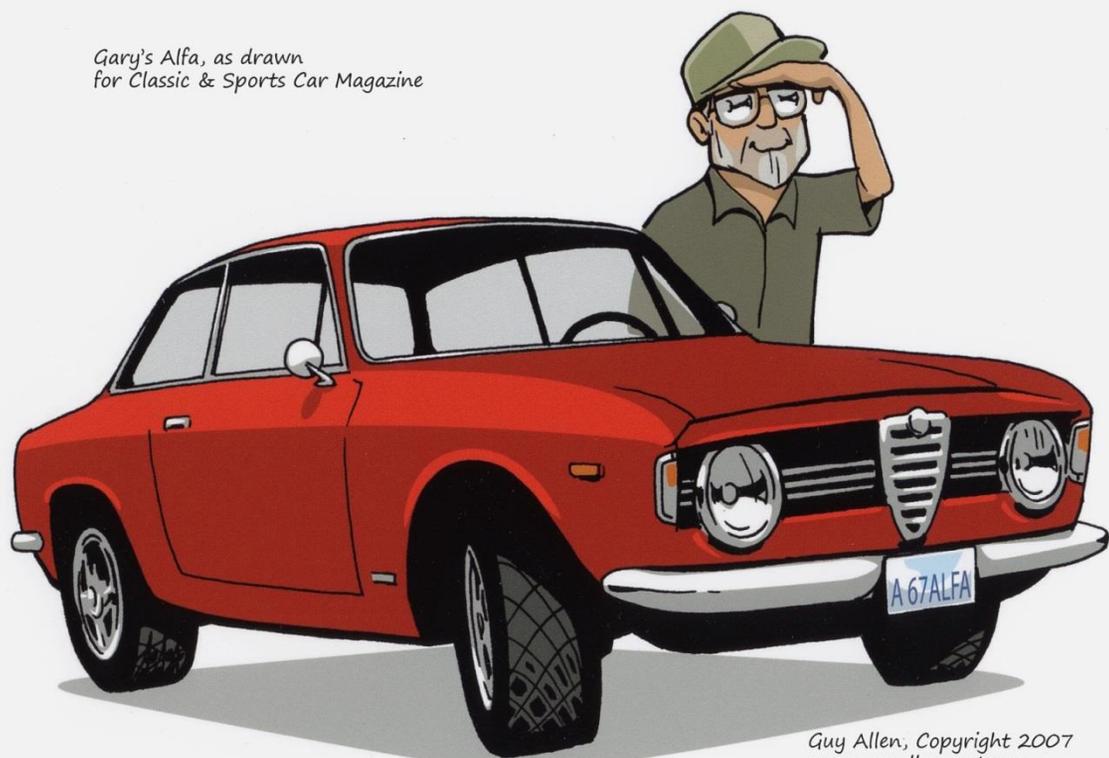
Greg Miller
IRDC President, NWARC and AROO Member
Phone [425.820.8660](tel:425.820.8660)
Cell [206.890.2525](tel:206.890.2525)
gmler@ccnw.com
Kirkland, WA



Half a century (almost) in the life of a typical Alfista, conclusion

By Gary Williams
Washougal, Washington

Gary's Alfa, as drawn
for *Classic & Sports Car Magazine*



Guy Allen, Copyright 2007
www.guyallen-art.com

A drawing of Gary and his GTV done to illustrate an article that appeared in *Classic & Sports Car* magazine in 2007.

TIME FOR A MORE SERIOUS RESTORATION

After nearly 20 years of regular use, the Alfa's Baltic Blue paint faded, the original upholstery gave up the ghost, various suspension pieces wore out, the motor and transmission got tired, and I didn't feel safe tossing the little car around corners any more.

This time I decided to do a full-blown restoration. That meant there were decisions to be made, such as what color to paint it and, most importantly, how to hide the actual cost from Raelene, my wife of 45 years. We spent a lot of family time discussing colors. The popular choice was dark green. No one else drives the car except me, so I got the final say: Alfa's fiery 501 red.

After much research, I selected a body and paint shop that came highly recommended by a respected local Alfa repair shop. The owner promised a quality paint job in three months. He delivered a quality paint job, but it took nine months and a great deal of begging, prodding, and general aggravation. We did not part as friends, a common restoration outcome.

Next came upholstery. Once again I'd done my research and selected a shop with an impeccable reputation and lots of happy customers. And once again my GTV became the shop car, the one that gets a little work now and then when all the quick-to-bill jobs have been completed. It spent its months of confinement stuffed into a far corner,





Gary, left, and friend Steve Smith pull a 1750 engine prior to replacing it with pumped 2L, circa 2005.



New Dunlop Direzza tires go on, 2011.

covered with shop dust, upholstery pieces, bags and boxes, where it was usually hemmed in by cars that came in later and exited sooner. This time the promised three to four months turned into 18. Regular visits didn't help. Pleading and begging didn't help. But finally the call came. It was done. True to their word, the interior was beautiful, but the surprisingly high invoice made me want to wretch. Another common restoration outcome. A good rule is to carry a barf bag when you're about to see the invoice for the first time.

At least now I had a vintage Alfa with gorgeous upholstery and a very nice paint job (not counting a couple of shop dents that the paintless dent guy was later able to make disappear). It was time to replace the worn mechanical bits and pieces, upgrading for performance wherever possible. In went an Alfaholics Fast Road Suspension and all new control arms, bushings and other bits and pieces. In went new, larger front and rear brake calipers, the fronts with vented rotors. In went a warmed up two-liter motor, with high lift cams, ported and polished big-valve head, bigger carbs, aluminum flywheel, and other go-fast pieces. The head was built by one of the best, Rich Goodrich. The motor was completed by another of the best, Steve Smith. The tranny was also built by one of the best, Tom Sahines, who lightened all the gears while he was at it. As a finishing touch, the car got a set of sticky Falken Azenis tires. (Now it rides on Dunlop Direzzas that I like even better.

AUTHOR'S INSIGHTFUL PARENTHETICAL EXHORTATION

Having just mentioned three of the key men who helped me restore the car, I want to insert a parenthetical thought. Rich, Steve and Tom have been active in the Alfa community for



Half a century (almost) in the life of a typical Alfisto

SOME OTHER STUFF

decades, and have long histories of being generous with their friendship and their expertise. If you have benefitted from their knowledge and/or friendship – or that of any of their counterparts in other parts of the country, Wes Ingram being just one – I hope you make a special effort to tell them how much they are appreciated. We have some very special people among us and it would be just plain wrong to take them for granted.

Jumping back into my story, I think it's obvious that the decision to buy Jerry's Alfa back in 1966 affected more than me. It also influenced the automotive choices of the next generation of Williams family drivers.

While Hill is now without an Alfa, she can still blip the throttle, downshift her Saturn, and take turns with élan, using the skills learned in her Spider.

And Ted has already owned a GT Jr. project car, two Milano Verdes, an Alfa Sport Sedan, and his own red GTV. The latter was encouraged by what happened in late in 2004. Ted had just bought his latest Milano, and I had just fine-tuned the hot new engine in my GTV. I asked if he would accompany me on a test drive, a one-day, 500-mile round trip along the California coast to see his Grandparents.

When we got down to Coast Highway 1, I pulled over and asked Ted to drive. Most motorists on this route are there to admire the view rather than challenge the highway that snakes along the coast. But with me goading Ted to rev the motor higher and go faster, he became a terror heading south along the sheer cliffs that border the ocean. He's a good driver and had just completed a high speed driving school for people in law enforcement. I sat back and enjoyed the ride as we passed one slow-poke after another.

Ted had so much fun that when he got home he put the Milano up for sale and began an aggressive hunt for a GTV. He found it a few



Gary's GTV at home in Washougal, Washington, as seen after a snowfall in March 2012.

Half a century (almost) in the life of a typical Alfisto

SOME OTHER STUFF

Ted and Gary's
Alfas in front of
their home in
Santa Clara, 2005.



weeks later in the hills of Berkeley, California. And this time, at least, he took the old man's advice: Buy the best GTV you can afford; it will cost less in the long run than bringing a worn out car back to life.

Now with a house full of small children, Ted's Alfas have moved on to new owners. He's taking an Alfa break as I did when the kids were young. But I doubt if our family's Alfa adventures are over. They are probably just beginning. After all, there are five grandchildren to indoctrinate, a task that I accept enthusiastically. And it's all because a chance encounter with an old friend became the genesis of a nearly 50-year love affair with the little red cars from Milan. And yes, I do wish I'd kept the Giulietta Spider, the Healey 100, and the GTC, but none of them were as much fun to drive as the upgraded GTV. **BITS**

Gary's Alfa at home
in Washington,
March 2012.



Just some old photos

SOME OTHER STUFF

Alfa Romeo 33/2, Le Mans, 1968. ▶



New spark plugs for the race. Team Alfa at work. Monza 1951. ▼



A scene repeated frequently, the world over. ▶



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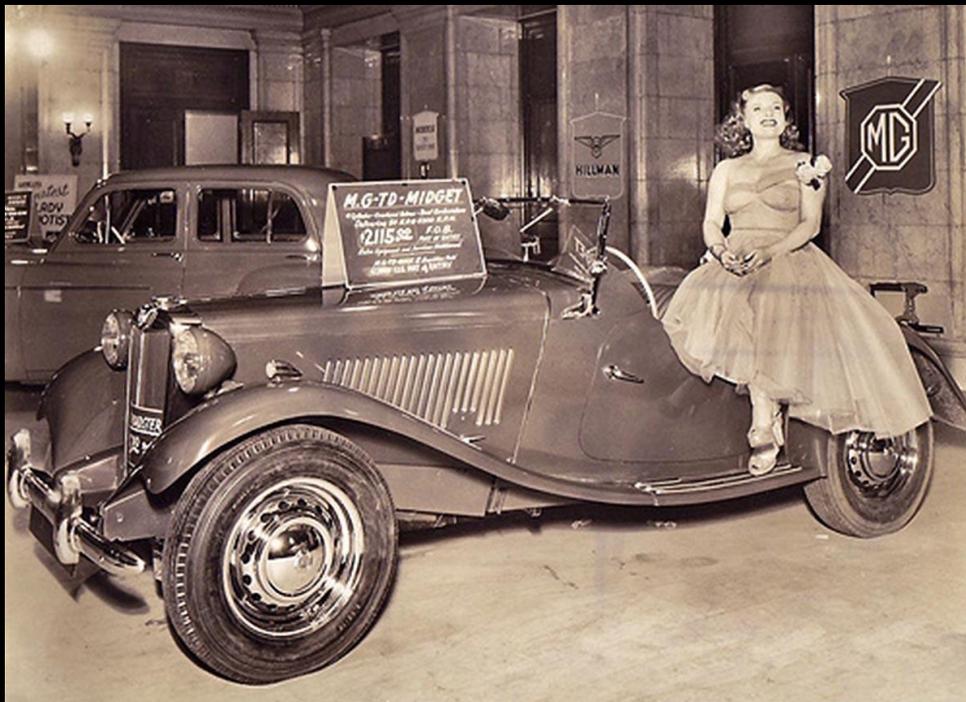
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*The Italians
design their cars
to reflect their
concept of
feminine beauty...*



... and so do
the British!

“Can a car be art?”

VIDISSIMO



Jeremy Clarkson of the BBC program “Top Gear” tackles this question on behalf of the Alfa Romeo 8C and the result is ... is ... *unique*.

By the end I wasn't really sure if he liked the 8C or not. I guess he paid it a left-handed compliment by concluding that it is art, and as such should be mounted on the wall rather than driven.

In any case, Clarkson is never boring. Click on his image at left and see how you interpret what he has to say about the 8C as art.





The activities schedule is really warming up, and Steve wants a front-row seat.

And who wouldn't? It's like a smörgåsbord of car club activities, without the funny little meatballs.

In the next six weeks or so we have a track day, a monthly meeting with a terrific presentation, a swap meet with food and beverages provided, a TSD rally, and a great overnight tour on great roads.

Steve's in. Funny little meatballs or not.

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