

Romeo & Giulietta



DRIVING TOUR

NOTES FROM THE MILHONE GARAGE

il Presidente**Rich Precario**

Well, another two months have passed and this is another president's column. In these last two months we had two Gimmick Rallies and a drive through the beautiful areas of North County San Diego.

Unfortunately, the pandemic is still a strong influence on our actions, plans, and endeavors. I thought by now we would have been through the worst of it and the state and county restrictions would have lessened more than they have. It looks like this "norm" may go on for a little longer. So, what can we do? We'll keep doing the best we can while respecting the enhanced hygiene, social distancing, gathering limitations, and masking requirements. We can drive and enjoy our cars both in "limited groups" and "on our own", enjoying the beautiful scenery and areas in and around San Diego. We can do all the things, both major and minor, that we've been meaning to take care of with regards to our property, cars, and hobbies. It's almost like a shift from doing all the normal "social things" we do (large group gatherings, meet with our friends, go to parties, enjoy the comradery of our fellow Americans) to all the normal "less social things" we do (small/no group gatherings, maintain and upgrade our homes and properties, maintenance on our vehicles, and the pursuit of our hobbies). It's a shift from one life style to another. Eventually the pandemic will wane and we and our club will return to both the "more social" and "less social" activities.

This year we lost (resignations, not deaths) a couple of members from our club Board of Directors (BODs), however we have gained a new member, Dan Milhone. Dan has been providing technical articles about Alfa Romeo car maintenance in our Romeo & Giulietta (R&G) publication. He brings new capabilities and ideas to the BODs and is a welcome addition to the board.

We are always looking for new members to join the BODs; this was the topic of the president's column of the last issue of R&G, so if anyone has any interest in being on the BOD, let us know. As always, we're always looking for new and different thoughts, ideas, and

desires pertinent to the club and its activities, so please feel free to email your thoughts to any of the BOD members. A list of the BODs is listed on the last page of R&G. If you have anything you would like to see in the club's activities or the direction(s) you would like the club to go in, please let us know. Your views are always appreciated (including criticisms).

Considering the current state of things in San Diego, we can't go back to "normal" without considering the previously stated safety regulations. With this in mind the National club sponsors a variety of Alfa Romeo related You Tube videos, anyone can access them by entering: "aroc-usa/aroc-youtube/" into google. Take a look at these, they are interesting and enlightening.

Another activity in which the club is currently engaged in is the 2022 Convention planning. Lance Dong is the chairman of this committee which is defining the San Diego National Convention in 2022. Send him an email (araknd@gmail.com) if you have suggestions, ideas, or any thoughts you would like to share. I'm sure he would be happy to entertain and accommodate any thoughts you may have on the topic. Also, let him know if you would enjoy working on this adventure whether in a small, medium, or large way. All members are welcome and appreciated.

The future will get better and we'll get back to normal, hopefully soon. We are a car club, so enjoy driving your cars.

That's all for now! Stay positive, happy, safe and healthy. It's just a matter of time before the world opens up again.

UPCOMING EVENTS**NOVEMBER DRIVING TOUR**

Sunday November 22. Meet at 9:45 AM, at the North County Fair Mall on Via Rancho Parkway, just east of I-15. We will gather in the parking lot under the big sign between the Macaroni Grill and BJs. Please wear a face mask and maintain social distancing. The drive up to Palomar Mountain and down to Lake Henshaw will be about an hour and a half.

VIRTUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Sunday December 6 at 1:00 PM. Additional details will be forthcoming.

VIRTUAL TECH SESSION

JANUARY: CHANGING FRONT BRAKE PADS AND ROTORS ON A SPIDER

This event will be hosted by Dan Milhone. We plan to record it and post it on YouTube. The video will be about an hour in length. If you have ever thought about changing the pads on your Alfa, this step by step video will be a good resource.

RECENT EVENTS

OCTOBER DRIVING TOUR

By George Hershman

After not having an in-person event for several months due to the COVID virus, we finally decided to try a mainly driving event. Thirteen of us, all wearing masks, met in the North County Fair parking lot on Sunday morning, October 11. The car assortment included three new Giulias, a 4-C, a Spider, a GTV-6 and a Mercedes. Participants included tour leaders Ed and Nora Aenlle, Vince and Carol Ruggiero, Randy Bull and his daughter Kelly, Dan and Carrie Milhone, Rich Precario, Ignacio Iturbe, Glen Wior, and George and Anita Hershman. Ed had planned out an interesting tour of about thirty miles on some scenic back roads through Fairbanks Ranch and around Lake Hodges. We made brief stops at the Chino Vegetable Shop and the Paradise Produce Market where large varieties of fruits, vegetables, nuts and other goodies were available. Anita appreciated the chocolate covered strawberries. All in all, everyone seemed to be glad to have a chance to get out of the house. I think the event was a big success.



Alfa Lineup for the October Tour



Tour Participants: from left Randy Bull, Ignacio Iturbe, Ed Aenlle, Vince Ruggiero and Rich Precario



Chino Vegetable Shop: from left Dan Milhone, Ignacio Iturbe, Randy Bull & Ed Aenlle; Glen Wior and Nora Aenlle are in the background

TECH ARTICLE**And the repairs continue on the '84
GTV6.....**

By Dan Milhone

Last time, I mentioned that the car had a front-end shake at 60 m.p.h. or so. Swapping front wheels for rears didn't help. "Might just be a bad tie rod end", I wished. Then the guy at the alignment shop comes out and says "Well, there are 3 bent rims, along with a tired 85,000 mile/36 year old front end. "She's gonna' need a buncha' work." I'm envisioning high denomination currency with wings, flying out of my virtual piggy bank. Ugh.

Meanwhile, the rim straightening guy said that these old Alfa Milano rims were made from a soft alloy, and he really doubted that he could straighten them all, without cracks appearing. "Once they start to get "flat-spotted" or bent beyond small dings, it's all downhill. Scrap 'em" he said. I got \$5.25 each at the scrap yard. **UGH.**

After a lot of searching Google for old pics, I saw that Ronal A-1 rims looked good on a GTV6. I looked around, but there were no nice used rims for sale anywhere. New ones from Centerline ended up being my only choice. Another unexpected expense. The **UGH** factor grew.

The tires were old and not sized correctly. At least I was prepared for this part. The new tires (Continental Extreme Contact) fall between regular passenger types, and the super sporty/sticky/short life versions. A reasonable compromise, with some fun potential. I'm not doing "track days" with this car. No need for anything more aggressive.

Now to the front suspension/steering. I've never rebuilt a complete front end, so I had some reservations. But considering the hourly rate of local shops (\$130/hour or so), I wanted to do it myself. I figured that they'd quote 6-7 hours, so there's another

\$700 plus, likely more. And that doesn't cover the parts costs. I'll use the savings to help pay for those rims.

ALFABB.COM and catalogs provided enough info that it looked do-able at home. Maybe with a bit of outside help, if needed. As it ended up, nothing was all that surprising or illogical. It's just a bunch of mechanical parts working together. "Come on, I'm not the first person to do this" was the thinking.

The mission was accomplished. It took me longer than a shop, I'm sure, but I can't see where their work would be any "better". I could do a second one much faster, not that I want to actually want do another one soon. The facts is, it's just old bushings, ball joints, tie rod ends etc. being replaced with new ones. Everything went back together without the use of a blow torch, spiritual advisor, jack hammer, tribal-knowledge or highly esoteric tools. Access to a buddy's Harbor Freight cheapo hydraulic press was really helpful. The Ugh factor fades.

Observation: No original piece was real wobbly or visibly damaged, but I can see that you don't need to have a broken part in the suspension to experience problems. The result of having a bunch of "kind of worn out" parts, adds up to bigger issues.

The results: Really different. No shimmy, and it now goes exactly where you point it. This is probably close to what it was like when new. Bonus = Modern tires out-perform 1980's designs.

If you couldn't tell, I like it. A big grin after the first test drive, per wife. It's good to take on a challenging job and complete it. That said, I won't be opening a front-end repair shop anytime soon. Jeez, it can get dirty.

As far as parts choices, I went with pieces right out of the Classic Alfa catalog. There aren't many options for this stuff. Buy only **SKF** or **Timken** branded wheel bearings, per an old pro. **NO CHINESE BEARINGS.** I went with polyurethane upper control arm and caster rod bushings (see previous article about poly bushings). Get an alignment from a good shop. Then take it out for a brisk ride on some twisty back roads on a clear weekday afternoon. Have a grin. Or two.

Meanwhile, the Ugh factor faded away. After all the work, over the last year, it has become close to “well sorted”. It always starts and is really fun to drive. My significant other likes cruising back roads (she says “It’s soooo much smoother than when you brought it home”) and the sun roof. Big scarf and big sunglasses, like in a ‘60s Italian movie. “It really does need a cup holder”. She’s right.

Rear caliper heating up, and insulation products

My car is known for having a “design issue” concerning the exhaust pipe route over the rear axle. It runs really close to the driver’s side rear brake bleeder. Short life on that caliper is a common complaint, due to getting way too hot. I looked at making some sort of bent sheet metal shield, but I opted to buy a roll of “header wrap”. It’s that cloth-like fiber banding that you may have seen on motorcycle pipes. It insulates up to something like 600 degrees or more. It definitely worked. Now there’s very little temperature difference between left and right calipers after a good drive. Probably \$45 in parts, including the stainless-steel clamps. It comes in 1, 2 and 4-inch-wide rolls, as I remember. It’s a “should do” for Alfetta/GTV6/Milano owner. And probably a good idea for a lot of other models.

If you go under your car, or if you feel your floorboards, and find an area where exhaust heat may be a concern, see if wrapping the pipe/muffler is an option. Wrapping a whole muffler could get pricey and bulky (lots of surface area to cover), but still may be worth it. Or, there are all sorts of aftermarket “heat shields” that have an adhesive on one side/reflective metal on the other. They go on the underside of the floorboards and prevent heat from getting to the interior. My GTV6 has something like that installed from the factory between the hot running catalytic convertor and the floorboard 2 inches above it. I’m sure it helps, but the parking brake base still gets pretty warm.

Don’t confuse a high temp heat shield with products like DYNAMAT. It’s probably the Industry standard, for that category of products. It’s a type of butyl rubber

sheet with one reflective (aluminum alloy?) side. The sheets are deceptively heavy, kind of like really thick roofing shingles. If you cover the floor, firewall and maybe the inner part of the doors, it adds up to more weight and cost. But it does a bunch of things. It’s primarily a sound deadener, with some thermal insulation and a bit of structural stability. This is best done when the carpets and seats are out of the car. Done right, it isn’t visible once the interior is back in place. And the car is substantially quieter and feels cooler. The interior noise can drop to a more Mercedes-like quiet. Door closing sounds much more solid, and not metallic or tinny. There’s not much question about it working, but price and weight are the 2 common complaints. Go to their Website, there are a whole bunch of different versions. I might be using it on the ’73 Spider basket case some day. They now mention a lighter weight version.

There are less expensive brands of this type of product. I’d have to guess that a product at half the price would still deliver a fair amount of isolation. I was told twice that 3M makes a “good” product. I haven’t tried any alternate brands, so I have no suggestions. If you’ve used any of the lower cost products, let us know. Spread the info. Which brings us to.....

One final thought

If you have any experiences with repairs or a product review, please submit a write up. It can be as short as a paragraph, or as lengthy as some of my ramblings. Even longer, if there’s a lot to say. Contact George H. with anything you would like to submit.

The Club is looking at doing more Tech Sessions, but the whole COVID19 deal makes it difficult, but not impossible. Any requests or suggestions?

WEB SITE

I encourage all of our members to use our web site: www.arocsd.org. If you click on events and then calendar, you will be able to see a schedule of parties, tours, car shows and other things that we participate in. Clicking on an individual event on the calendar will open a sub window with more details.

Officers for 2020/2021:

- **President: Rich Precario**
(rprecar1@san.rr.com)
- **Vice President: Ed Aenlle**
(eduardo.aenlle@gmail.com)
- **Secretary: Nora Aenlle**
(leonoraja@gmail.com)
- **Treasurer: Vince Ruggiero**
(vruggiero@aol.com)
- **Membership: Scott Currier**
(chcurrier@cox.net)
- **Event Publicity & Newsletter: George Hershman**
(ghhershman@gmail.com)
- **Web Master & Digital Communications: Lance Dong**
(araknd@gmail.com)

Members at Large:

- **Barry Armstrong**
bcarmstrong@protonmail.com
- **Jason Minos**
(jason@alfissimo.com)
- **Dan Milhone**
(dan.milhone@cox.net)
- **Robert Piacentini**
(robert@piacentini.us)

If anyone else is willing to serve on the board in 2021, please contact one of the board members listed above. We would like to have a couple more board members.