



Alfa Notizia Feb. 2012

Dear Florida Alfa Club member, (well, it is a news letter!)

We had a Geronimo of a January. Our monthly "business" meeting was held in the restaurant room at Jason's Deli in Clearwater instead of the banquet room we usually fill up, push the tables together, sit side by side and enjoy a deli meal before the meeting. If you live in the Tampa Bay area and haven't attended a monthly meeting, do come. Most arrive between 6:30 & 7:00 and enjoy a good deli meal. Jason's offers an assortment of delicious deli sandwiches and soups. Couples often order a single sandwich and split it, they are big. Mike Ward, who drives an immaculate 1989 Quadrifoglio spider, owns Flatland Cyclery, and takes bikers on tours on weekends, gets a monster, salubrious salad. That's gobs of health food.

The meetings are held the second Thursday of every month, begin promptly at 7:30 and usually last an hour. Then there's a half hour of BSing out in the parking for those who wish to linger.

On Saturday, the 21st, over a dozen Fac members gathered at Ruggero & Carla Santilli's home in Palm Harbor to drive on Ruggero's simulated track driving machine.

Barry Andress, Ruggero, John Rady Front row:
Dan & Dianne Castorani, Jean & Dennis
McGee, Linda Rady, fiancé Lisa & Mike Ward,
Delmas Greene. Photo by Carla.

Ruggero watches Dan "Mario" Castorani race
around the Sebring 12 Hour track. For safety
reasons Dan's wife, Dianne, is the designated
wine drinker. Photo by Carla.



And drive they did, in a Lamborghini Diablo at the 12 Hours of Sebring Course, simulated of course. After several laps of spinning out and scraping sheet metal on the guard rail Delmas turned in a lap time of 2:26 minutes only to be beaten by Dan's time of 2:25 which was beaten by John's time of 2:23. Then the maestro, Ruggero, sat down and showed them how to properly drive the course by turning in a time of 2:19 minutes. Then he tightened down the Lamborghini's suspension and everyone lapped much faster times. The simulator driving was so realistic that Mike Ward said he got dizzy when he spun out. The dizziness could have been caused by the fine Italian wine the Santillis graciously served with the pizza.

On Sunday, January 29th, in bitter winter cold of 75 degrees, the Florida Alfa Club hosted a day of polo at the Sarasota Polo Club. Fifty four people, mostly in shorts, shirt sleeves and sun hats, were in attendance. Fourteen came up from the South West Florida AROC and seven across from the Central Florida AROC. Alan Kaufman came down from Bloomfield Hills Michigan and showed up in his shiny red, 1982 spider.



Two of the three rows of seventeen Alfas and Fiats lined up for display at the Sarasota Polo Club in typical January, Florida weather. Photo by Larry Sisco.



Judy & Larry Sisco tailgate off of their black sapphire 1988 Quadrifolio. Behind them, en- suit is Bob & Theresa Lombardo's red 1992 MkII. Photo by Bob Lombardo.

If you haven't been to a polo match it's something to see: 10,000 lbs of thoroughbreds thundering across a field chasing a 2" ball while their riders swat at it with 6' mallets ! And there we were, Alfas all lined up, glistening in the sun while we picnicked in the shade of the palms and tent. At half time, when many non-Alfa spectators were stomping davits back into the field, up in the announcer's booth Ray La Brosse described the fifteen Alfas and two Fiat 124s that paraded around the field to the cheers of the photographing spectators who didn't stomp on a steaming davit. The parade began and ended with Lombardos: Bob in the newest car there, his 1992 spider and Theresa, his wife, in Harmon Heed's 1964 Giulia spider. Theresa and Harmon's car are both blondes were born in the same year.

A bit on the “Sport of Princes.” Each polo match consists of six periods called chukkers. There are four riders on a team, a total of eight playing on the field. Each rider gets a new mount every chukker. That’s a total of forty eight horses for every match. Plus the two ump’s and one ref’s horses and I don’t know how many times they change mounts. The average boarding cost for a horse at the Sarasota Polo Club is \$1,300 a month. Plus tack and farrier fees. (Tack is equipment and farriers are horse shoers. Horse sh---ers are called muckers.) Plus trainers and groomers fees. Plus veterinarian fees. Plus big trucks and trailers to haul the horses from match to match many weekends. So, ladies, next time you feel like complaining about the money your man spends on his Portello pony, be grateful he doesn’t have a stable of polo ponies ! Or smile and buy a couple of hats like Ann DiMatteo did.

Now we’re into February and the “business” meeting (sometimes abbreviated to “BS meeting but we do get business done) will be on Thursday, the 9th.

Feb 11, Saturday, Ferrari of Tampa Bay in Palm Harbor will hold its monthly “Cars & Coffee” from 8:00 ~ 10:00 AM.

Feb 18th, Saturday, the club(s) are putting ten Alfas on the grass at the prestigious Sarasota Exotic Care Fest. There will be seven cars from the Florida Alfa Club, two from the South West Florida Club and one from the Central Florida Club. We can squeeze one more car into our area so, if you have a very nice Alfa and would like to discuss entering it, call Harmon at (941) 342-1246. Selection is by committee. Entry is only \$50. See details at www.sarasotaexoticcarfest.com.

Sarasota Exotic Car Fest 2011. Right: Dennis Gonzalez’ 1991 164S with its elegant engine compartment. Below: Norm Sippel’s race ready 1960 Giulietta veloce spider. Photos by HE Heed



There will also be about 75 Ferraris there, a dozen Lambos, many Masies, Aston Martins, Jags, Veyron, Stryker, Saleen and the supporting new Rolls, Bentleys and Porsches. Last year was the first year the FAC participated as a club. Of the ten cars it had on the grass seven were entered to be judged. They earned an Honorable Mention, Silver Trophy, Gold Trophy, two Platinum Trophies and "Best in Show" !

This gorgeous event is held at the exclusive St Armands Circle and is free to spectators. After all, tis the season. Around the outside of the circle are many chic boutiques and fine restaurants so come without hats but with appetites. Abundant, free parking is available behind the shops on the four quadrants of the circle. Entrants should arrive around 8:30 AM. Show time is 10:00 AM ~ 4:00 PM.

*In March the business meeting will be held at Jason's on **Thursday, the 8th.***

March 10th, Saturday, "Cars & Coffee" at Ferrari of Tampa Bay .

March 9~11th is the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance. This show is to the East Coast what Pebble beach is to the other West Coast and it's held here in Florida, up by Fernandina Beach. There will be 225 invitational only cars on the 17th and 18th fairways of the Golf Club of Amelia Island just behind the Ritz Carlton. These are truly rare and fully restored automobiles, vintage 1974 and older. There will be superlative Alfas from the 1920s, 30s and 40s. This is heaven for European and exclusive car owners ! Admission is \$50, in advance. www.ameliaconcours.org.

You can register to attend the RM Auction on Saturday for \$100. There you will see cars sell for well over \$5,000,000 with bidding increments going up in the tens of thousands of dollars. Two years ago, at two auctions, over \$3,200,000,000 worth of automobiles were reportedly auctioned off at Amelia. That's 3.2 Billion.

You can try to book a room at the Ritz but it is most likely sold out by now as are all other hotels/motels on the island and in Fernandina Beach. Polly Greene has graciously reserved rooms at the Crown Plaza Hotel at the Jacksonville Airport exit for \$89 per night. To secure reservations call (904) 741-4404 and ask for Florida Alfa Club rates. Book now, the rooms are limited. A group often caravans over from the Tampa Bay area on Friday or Saturday; for more info contact Delmas Greene at (727) 799-1486.

March 17th, 7:00~9:00 AM, duPont Registry "Cars & Coffee" in St Pete.

March 24th, Saturday, the Mid Florida AROC is holding a rally to Bok Tower & Gardens near Lake Wales in central Florida. This beautiful but bizarre neo-gothic and art deco detailed erection was built in 1929 and contains a singing 60 bell carillon. The acres of surrounding garden's landscaping were designed by Frederick Law Olmstead Jr. who also designed the landscaping for the National Mall, Jefferson Memorial and the White House. His father, Fredrick Law Olmstead Sr., designed Central Park in NYC and the Biltmore Estate's landscaping in Asheville, NC.

Preregistration of a group of 20 or more gets the \$12 @ ticket price reduced to \$10. A FAC group plans on arriving at the tower around 11:30 AM and enjoying picnic lunches together before the tour. To participate contact Delmas or Polly Greene at (727) 799-1486. We need to let the Mid Florida club know our number by March 1st. It will be a fun drive on the curvy roads winding through the central Florida hills !

April 12th, business meeting at Jason's.

April 14th, "Cars & Coffee" at Ferrari of Tampa in Palm Harbor.

April 21st, duPont Registry "Cars & Coffee" in St Pete.

April 29th, Sunday, 12~4:00 PM, "Alfas on the Lawn" picnic at Jane and Bob Bartel's home in West Palatka, FL, on the St Johns River south of Amelia Island. (See the July 2011 issue of Alfa Owner.) This is another event we are very fortunate to participate in and you don't want to miss. "Black Bart" has been providing Alfisiti through "Black Bart's Emporium, Inc., Purveyors of OEM Badges & Emblems for Ferrari, Alfa Romeo & Other Fine Italian Automobiles" for many years. www.black-barts.com. Since he retired to Florida he has hosted an annual picnic in his meadow like back yard. This intimate gathering of 20~25 cars often brings out a rare car such as, last year, Axel Rosenblad's front engine, Bertone bodied Dino. For info call John Rady at (727) 585-4290.

Well, fellow members, that's about all for now. If you lose this letter you can see what's going on with the club at our website, www.floridaalfaclub.org. If you want to read what's going on with Alfa/Chrysler read our fellow AROC's colorful newsletters: Mid Florida's at www.alfafila.com and South West Florida's at www.swflaroc.org. If you want to list info or Alfa related item for sale in next month's letter, contact me at harmonheed@yahoo.com.

Yours truly,

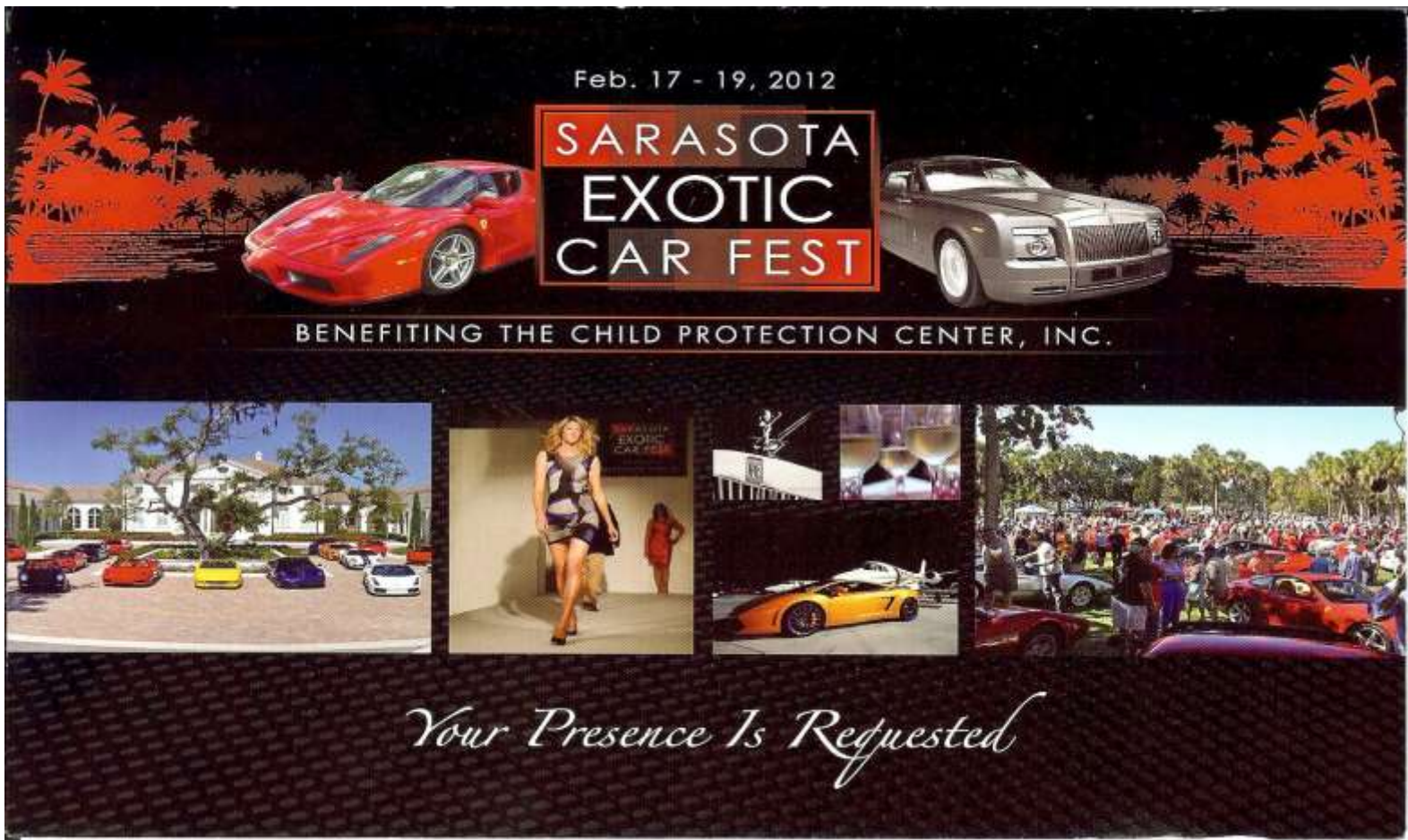
Harmon

ps. Did you all see the Fiat commercial at Super Bowl Halftime ?

Florida Alfa Club

Saturday, February 18th

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM



Feb. 17 - 19, 2012

SARASOTA
EXOTIC
CAR FEST

BENEFITING THE CHILD PROTECTION CENTER, INC.

Your Presence Is Requested

The banner features a red Ferrari sports car on the left and a silver Rolls-Royce Phantom on the right, set against a dark background with orange palm tree silhouettes. Below the banner is a collage of four images: a row of colorful sports cars parked in front of a large white building; a woman in a purple dress walking on a runway; a yellow sports car on a stage; and a large crowd of people gathered around various cars at an outdoor event.

*The Florida Alfa Club will have ten Alfa Romeos in St Armands Circle, come see them and many other exotic cars ! Call **Harmon at (941) 342-1246***