



i Saluti

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Note Bene

By Graham L. Davis, VP

A long, meandering ramble from winter into spring, marking time by polishing the doorknobs while waiting for Fiat to decide when, if ever, to reintroduce Alfa Romeo to the United States.

First, kudos to Mike Lains for yet another delightful President's Day Drive on Missouri's blue highways and luncheon rendezvous at the Dutzow Deli a.k.a the Katy Quonset Hut. Owners Karl and Tina Kustler – Porsche people, go figure – offer a modestly priced luncheon menu with a touch of 'old world' influence featuring locally produced meats supplied by William's Brothers in Washington. Food enthusiasts come from miles around and far away for his German omelet. Give Karl advance notice at 636-433-2309 and he'll whip up some authentic specialties for your evening repast.

I swear, how Mike is able to find every paved pig-path and ridge-run is beyond me but find them he does.

Sunday, February 19 dawned

Next event . . .

19th Annual European Car Show

Sunday June 4

Plaza Frontenac

Lindbergh Blvd & Clayton Rd

Setup time: 10am. **Show time:** 11am - 3pm. **Rain date:** June 11
 Registration fee: \$20 (\$25 on show day).

Limit of 150 cars, so pre-registration is recommended.

Benefits St Louis Shriners' Hospital for Children. As an added incentive to show your car, Bob Pass will donate \$150 to make the Club a sponsor of the event IF the Clubn can get 10 cars at the Show. For info and registration form visit:

<http://stleuropeanautoshow.com>

Contact Rich Hirsch at rhirsch@catenary.com or 636 285-0813 for more info.

Coming in July . . .

Alfa Day at the Lake

3 pm Boating, swimming, splashing, fishing

5 pm Dinner and polite conversation

Saturday July 15 Lake Tishomingo

Join us for a day of water sports and relaxation at picturesque Lake Tishomingo, a short drive away in Jefferson County. Drive your Alfa (or not) and bring your swimming togs, water shoes, float noodles (or favorite water toy).

Janet's making BBQ pork, bring a side dish to share. RSVP to Janet at (636) 285-0813 or jhirsch@catenary.com.

AROC National Convention

June 15 - 18 Tulsa Oklahoma

clear and *so cold* I wondered if tush and tires would ever get warm. Mike and his 'Silver Bullet' led a spirited chase followed by the stalwart Alfisti 'though more than a few opted for cars with *heat*. I couldn't help but take notice the increasing number of manses built to take advantage of the serene country solitude which we did our utmost to destroy, if only momentarily. Along

with the influx of new housing of course, come the required hydrants; large and yellow and menacingly placed directly in line at the end of fast straights. Note to self: Keep the tires on the tarmac! As the growth continues it may force us to venture further a field.

Hopefully not as far as California's Highway 1 near the town of Malibu, where only a few days later

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St Louis AROC website

www.catenary.com/isaluti

President

Phil Dean
409 E Main St
Warrenton MO 63383
(636) 795-5015 cell
(636) 456-DEAN home
pdeanmd@centurytel.net

Program Advisor

Dan Murphy
433 Clearview Dr
Belleville IL 62223
(618) 236-6322
murphydc@charter.net

Vice-President

Graham Davis
7146 Princeton Ave
St Louis MO 63130
(314) 862-6645
GrahamLDavis@hotmail.com

Tech Advisor

Bob Volpe
(314) 731-0914 office

Director

John Ryman
RR2 Box 115
Virginia IL 62691
(217) 323-2046
ryman01@sbcglobal.net

Secretary & Recipe Maven

Sue Houser
12736 W Watson
St Louis MO 63127
(314) 842-4832
alfadesign@charter.net

Director

Walt Hatcher
1000 W Main St
Washington MO 63090
(636) 239-2690 voice
(636) 239-3006 fax

Treasurer

Jane Rauth
27 Marsally
St Louis MO 63131
(314) 991-4890

Director

Chuck Workman
3519 Hwy. C
Leslie MO 63056
(573) 486-2800
oakfarm1@localnet.com

Newsletter

Rich and Janet Hirsch
6089 S Lakeshore Dr
Hillsboro MO 63050
(636) 285-0813
rhirsch@catenary.com

2006 Calendar

June	4	European Car Show (Rich Hirsch)
June	15-17	AROC National in Tulsa OK
July	15	Day at Lake Tishomingo (Janet and Rich Hirsch)
Aug	19	Picnic in Washington MO (Walt and Marian Hatcher)
Sep	16	Day in Herman MO (Chuck & Sally Workman)
Oct	1	Tech Session (Bob Volpe) possible date
Oct	8	Columbus Day Parade (Norma Urani)
Oct	22	Ferry Drive (Phil Dean & Graham Davis)
Nov	4-5	Eureka Springs (KC AROC)
Nov	11	Planning Meeting (Ralph and Jane)
Dec	9	Christmas Party (Mike and Sue)

Phil Wicks Driving Academy event at Gateway

The Phil Wicks Driving Academy and Phil Wicks Racing will have an event at Gateway International Raceway on June 10 and 11. It will consist of the regular Phil Wicks Driving Academy curriculum, the Safe Driving Curriculum on June 11, and a double header of the North American MINI Cooper Championship Race Series on Saturday and Sunday.

The race is open to Counterfeit Mini's (any make and model of race cars that comply with basic safety regulations according to Phil Wicks Racing-- information is on the website www.minidriving.com).

No license -- no problem. We have a racing school at the event, and upon successful completion, you can get a Provisional License and race the same day. Details are also on the website.

If you are a qualified instructor with Phil Wicks Driving Academy or other recognized clubs, please contact me.

Phil Wicks Driving Academy
www.minidriving.com
615-354-5576
314-330-6449

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Graduate Quest

by Chris Martin

I regrettably sold my '88 Graduate (his name...Olio) several months ago. A lady that lived only a mile away from my home saw me with the car one Sunday cruising through a shopping center parking lot...she aggressively flagged me down, and made a cash offer I could not refuse...hell, *she didn't even care about a test drive*. She went on to say that all of her friends called her Mrs. Robinson because she always had a propensity to date younger men. She believed she was destined to own a Graduate. Her father had recently passed, and had left her a nice chunk of change. The timing couldn't have been better for the both of us...she had the money, and my first child was due to be born a few short months later. I was in dire need of a more practical ride, and she had to have *my* Graduate. As she said after the sale, "The stars were aligned."



Days later, I bought an SUV...just another day...not a happy day.

Then, withdrawal set in. I had to find 'Olio II'. Little did I know that this search was to be the beginning of a long and painful journey.

I began searching the internet, local newspapers and Auto Trader. Ebay seemed like the best bet. Not more than a couple weeks after the sale, I had found a car that appeared to be identical to my old '88 down in Dallas, Texas. The pictures on eBay looked great! I paid to get the CARFAX done...all checked out; the mileage was good, there were no 'reported' accidents and the seller, a dealer, was responsive to my questions. I bid, I 'won', and a friend and I road-tripped 700 miles to get 'Olio II'.

One look 'in person' at 20 feet away told us the car had been in an accident. The paintwork looked like an 8 year-old had gone crazy with a can of Krylon. The rear window appeared to have been cleaned with sandpaper, and the seller refused to grant a full inspection of the car until money changed hands. The car remained locked throughout the brief conversation with the seller. No deal. The car had been grossly misrepresented...it only looked great in the carefully angled pictures presented on eBay.

It was a long trip back home to St. Louis.

I FINALLY GOT HOME 12 HOURS LATER...I logged on to eBay and found this seller had filed a formal complaint against yours truly for non-payment. The complaint ended quickly when I questioned the validity of the VIN # of the car, and reminded him of the 'actual' condition of this Graduate.

The next day, I left negative feedback to this disreputable seller...I wanted to make sure he did not re-list it in search of his next sucker. He, in turn, was kind enough to leave me negative feedback as well...it was a good, but short-lived battle.

Ha! 'tis only a flesh wound!

I hadn't given up hope to locate Olio II. I kept up the search on eBay, the newspapers and Auto Trader. I even asked friends in the Alfa club to keep me posted if something popped up. I think they got tired of me harassing them, and if so, I apologize.

Anyway, two weeks after the big sandbox battle with the dealer, (what I believed to be) a completely different Graduate showed its face on eBay that was in my price range...it was listed as a 1990 model. It was also for sale down in Texas, only this time, a little farther south (Houston) by a 'private' seller. I closely examined the pictures, and soon realized it was the EXACT SAME CAR I HAD SEEN IN DALLAS JUST A FEW WEEKS EARLIER! There were a few obvious changes to note...one...a completely different VIN # for this Graduate...two...a completely different year (but same model)...three...completely different mileage. In fact, this one had 30,000 more miles. I don't think Mapquest lists the distance from Dallas to Houston as 30,000 miles, but maybe there's a scenic route

around the moon? I noted that some of the same exact pictures were used in this listing as the previous listing out of Dallas. The car had all the same obvious quirks and deficiencies in all the same exact places. It was definitely the same exact car I had 'won' and 'lost' days earlier.

Course of action: notify eBay of the fraud. Their response: 'sorry you had received negative feedback, but eBay cannot be responsible for the content of the listings'. I replied that these two sellers were somehow connected and using two perfectly good VIN #'s for the exact same car. I then again warned eBay that someone was about to fall prey to this fraudulent transaction. Ebay's reply to this was notta, zero, zilch, nothing.

I called the Houston Police Department. They referred me to the FBI's internet fraud division. I called the FBI there in Houston. They indicated (understandably) that they had more pressing matters. I called the Consumer Protection Agency; they indicated there was very little they could do, but I filed the complaint anyway. I even called the State

One look told us the car had been in an accident. The paintwork looked like an 8 year-old had gone crazy with a can of Krylon.

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Bill Hanak has done major work on Ralph Coldewe's '59 Giulietta, Sue Houser's '69 GTV, and Rich Hirsch's '67 Giulia Sprint GTV.

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298-0887
11831 St Charles Rock Road
Bridgeton MO 63044
(Across from Grandpa's)

388-1181
10617 New Halls Ferry
St Louis MO 63136
(1/2 mile south of I-270)

Replacement alternators

Q I've concluded that the alternator in my 2000 GTV is shot, and have been looking at different sources for a replacement. Centerline, IAP, etc. have replacements listed for in the neighborhood of \$200.

Other sources, such as Alternator Starter Express have remanufactured Bosch units listed for this car with prices as low as \$99. From the pictures, it looks like these less expensive units might be internally regulated. I'm not hung up on originality issues as long as the replacement works.

I'd appreciate any input on the differences between the Alfa parts house replacements and units from more generic suppliers.

A The later style alternators are the way to go. These are internally regulated and have a higher output. I forget the specs ... maybe 45 amps vs. 65 amps for the newer style.

It is a direct bolt on. You remove the remote regulator and the harness between the alternator and regulator. The red wire goes to the B+ post on the back of the alternator, and the green wire goes to the Df (field) terminal.

Usually the rebuilt alternators come with the regulator, but make sure when comparing prices. Also, make sure that who ever you buy it from will accept an earlier core for the

later just to avoid any surprises later.

There maybe a noise suppressor on the back of the old alternator that you will need to remove and install on the new one as well.

Make sure that bulb in the instrument cluster is not burned out (yes, this will prevent the system from charging) and that is all there is to it. -- Jeff Greenfield



For Sale



- **'76 Alfa Romeo Spider**, ivory, 68k. Vehicle purchased 1997. California car, purchased in '97. Body sound (no rust). Not abused, wrecked, or left outside for any extended period. A list of items replaced can be furnished upon request. Includes water pump, fuel injection pump, thermostatic actuator, valve guides & valve seals, electronic ignition system, Robbins padded top, rear differential wheel bearings & seals. Invoices available for most repairs. Spare parts include odometer, tachometer, rear taillight assemblies.

Known defects include bumper chrome insert strip and seat covers. Selling car due to too many cars, not enough space. Mike Houser, (314) 842-4832, alfadesign@charter.net.

- **'91 Alfa Romeo 164L**, red, over 100,000 miles but a very strong engine, automatic transmission. I'm only the second owner having recently purchased it from Dr. John Sweet.

Everything works but the AC. More buttons to push than you'd ever want. Just a few small dings and a small rust spot above the right wheel well, otherwise excellent and still has great presence. Looking for \$2000. (Selling to put money towards my '67 850 spyder Fiat project.). Douglas Eller douglass@gracehill.org.



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Note Bene, continued from page 1

in the dawn's early hour, a couple of hot-shots supposedly mumbled "hold my beer and watch this." They claimed to have been racing a Mercedes SLR and managed to get their red Ferrari Enzo airborne at 162 + mph, interact with a power pole and unravel their life-style about as dramatically as the Ferrari dismembered. Fortunately, the driver/passenger compartment remained intact though various pieces such as the motor were strewn up the road by a quarter mile. Though spared from the clutches of death they were not from those of the law. It seems the car's driver or perhaps passenger Stefan Erikssen, once a member of the Swedish mafia having served time for forgery, was most recently a top executive of the defunct Gizmondo hand held video game sold to European investors as the next Sony Play Station. Unfortunately, the game never saw production though that didn't stop Stefan and pals from rewarding themselves with huge salaries and fancy toys – two Enzos and a McLaren Mercedes. As things became a bit sticky across the pond, Stefan sought refuge into California and imported the cars with him for 'display purposes only' and not to be driven. Was it just an oversight that he forgot to tell the lien holder, the Bank of Scotland where he and the cars migrated? Oh well, it looks as though the bank will get two of their cars, Ferrari will get some pieces for re-manufacture with a special badge claiming a unique, notorious history, and Stefan will be moving from high rent to low rent as he did in an earlier time. Kind of gives meaning to the admonition of "Drive it like you stole it."

Early March saw our first pictures of the Geneva Auto Show featuring the award-winning Alfa Romeo Spider. I think the award was for ultimate safety as it has something like five airbags! You can do an internet search and find out everything you wish to know except the *weight* but heck, even the little Pontiac Solstice weighs more than a Milano. My choice for the show car of interest is the Alfa Romeo 'Diva' from the Espera Sbarro Swiss design school (view pictures in the gallery section of www.quadrifoglio.ch/index2.html). A modern version of the 1967 waist high AR T33 Stradale by Franco Scaglione including forward hinged wing doors, the nose features a twin horizontal stabilizer with a touch of influence from the Ferrari Enzo. Fitted with the 156 series 3.2L 24 valve transverse motor, IF the car were to be produced and IF the price and weight were in the neighborhood of the \$42,000 Lotus Elise, Alfa could have a 2000 pound, 220 HP car; a dragon slayer in a sleeveless evening gown if ever there was one. I doubt that nose would ever get past our US National Safety Council or that Fiat would build it, but a kit car it *could* be and perhaps someday *maybe*.



Late in the month of April brought us to post tax time, slightly bruised but polishing those doorknobs when she said to me, "You know, *you* haven't done *your* square for the National Convention group project." Funny how those things evolve, isn't it? I had to think about it some more (shine those doorknobs) as I had yet to decide how to render the myriad of color tonal changes in *our* 6 by 6 inch square. Finally hit upon the idea of colored seed beads and like jumping off the high dive (remember those?) once you go forward, you've no choice but to finish. Finish I did though barely in time and with the help of Ralph and Jane (Coldewe) managed to have it delivered on schedule. Yes, I



do know how many beads are there and no, I *won't* go that way (if ever) again. Perhaps we could incorporate a 'guess the number of beads' contest into a future event, with a corked prize for best effort, of course. The remaining time available was spent on my Finish or Fin theme art (?) project entitled 'Alfaholic Weekend'. No time for doorknobs now with making a special delivery run to Hatcher's in the p.m. as I had to deliver Debbie to the airport in the a.m. Walked in to the display and immediately saw that the competition outclassed my crude efforts as there is a lot of real artistic talent in this club. Makes one feel lucky to be included. Oh well, Sunday morning's autocross was a hoot as all contestants managed to keep the shiny side up, the sticky side down and none rode home on a tow truck.

Well, the latest rumblings from Fiat's top guy, Sergio Marchionne is that the USA not only *needs* Alfa Romeo but *may* get it by the fall of 2007. With some corporate restructuring, Alfa will be in the Maserati division and will be sold through it's dealership organization thus putting an end to night sweats brought on by thoughts of Alfa's at your friendly, local Pontiac dealership. We've heard it all so many times before yet all things are possible, and you can't be an Alfa driver / owner and not have a positive outlook. So only this past week the USPD brings the May issue of the *Alfa Owner* to my door and there it is, a full, two page teaser advertisement featuring the 159 series 4dr AWD (yes, I do know how much it weighs) coupe. Is Fiat telling us something? Perhaps I won't need a gallon of Brasso after all.

Ciao.



from <http://carpoint.ninemsn.com.au>, May 2006

Alfa Romeo makes Le Mans legends field

This year's Le Mans race, which celebrates 100 years of the famous 24 hour endurance event, features several support races on the Saturday

There will be two 'Le Mans Legends' fields, for cars built before 1939 and the second for cars built between 1945 and 1955.

The Alfa Romeo 6C 3000CM that was driven by Juan-Manuel Fangio and owned by Argentinean President, Juan Peron, will contest the race for post-war cars, while the Italian car maker will be represented in the pre-war event by an Alfa Romeo 6C, that is being driven in the event by its present-day owner, England Rugby Captain David Cooke.

Each ACO Centenary Race will start with the tradi-



1953 Alfa Romeo 6C 3000 CM

tional 'ear of corn' formation where the drivers run across the track to their cars.

The pace car leading the formation lap before each race will be driven by Sir Stirling Moss and when Sir Stirling takes his place as a competitor on the grid for the second race, he will hand pace car duties over to race driver and journalist Tony Dron.

Last year around 230,000 people went to the Le Mans 24 Hour race, and promoters expect the record-breaking figure will be

topped for 2006's 100 anniversary race, 18-19 June. The event starts at 5pm.

Further information can be found at www.motorracinglegends.com or visit www.lemans.org



from the 750-1010 Giulietta List

Rant Against A Four Post Lift

by Bill Eastman

Mein Gott! Four post lifts have their place, and that is in the end bay of a multi-lift, full service shop. The lube boy can use it for fluid changes and the occasional exhaust work.

Jeez, someone has to stand up for modern, above ground, two post lifts!

If they were dangerous, damaging, inflexible, unreliable, or difficult to use they wouldn't be in every production shop in the world. Yet, these are the complaints I keep hearing.

While I haven't seen any studies about their impact resistance to tweakers flying through the roof in SUVs, it is safe to say they don't fall down. The arms don't break. Safety devices prevent unexpected descents. The floor bolts don't shear or pop out. Floors don't suddenly fail (except in parts of California).

Cars fall off every once in a while because an idiot is present. Typically, he is in the end bay smashing his fingers and bumping his head on the ancient four post where the ramps help keep the GarageKeepers Liability insurance rates lower. But someone always leaves the cage door open and the next thing you know he is bleeding his cooling system at lunch time. The front of the car is on the front arms, rear wheels on the floor and the chassis at a 45 degree angle. Coolant is everywhere. The rear wheels aren't blocked and the ebrake is released. A ladder is leaning against the grille, and the idiot is sitting on the core support and has his better,

unscalded eye in the radiator opening while blipping the throttle. Planned parenthood missed another one!

Yes, cars do fall off the damn lifts. Sadly, they seldom crush idiots or politicians.

Lifts don't damage cars, people do. Get the bumper sticker! Follow the handy instructions, use common sense and nothing will get twisted, bent or crushed. The chassis of the car should be supported equally on four points. Unless you have a rust bucket, the chassis deflection should be unmeasureable. The jack points are what, 46.5" apart? If the door suddenly pops open or needs adjustment after being lifted, you have problems no lift will avoid — or you have an MGTD. In either case deal with the real problem.

The notion that a four post offers increased flexibility in actual working conditions is unmitigated balderdash! Four post lifts are usually a pain in the butt. There are at least two posts too many in your way, at all times. Cords get tangled, equipment is blocked. Dropped fasteners and sockets roll to places unseen, toes are stubbed. The effective headroom is lowered by all that useless steel. The posts and their attendance ramps, bridges and other bullshit blocks all overhead light and absorbs most of the reflected light, as well. In most cases they are equivalent to Aboveground Pits. Oh, and they are a frickin joy to clean!

They simply have too many parts. I suspect they were

continues on page 10

Spring Fling

photos by Rich Hirsch, Janet Hirsch, and Mike Houser



Concours: The largest field in 14 years of Flings: GTVs, Duetto, Giuliettas, a Montreal, an Alfetta, a GTV6, and of course, Spiders.



Steve Coldewe's third place '57 Spider



Lineup at the winery -- ALL Alfas!



Dan Murphy's '63 Giulia Sprint at Hatchers'



Mike Houser's newly acquired Alfetta GT.

Rallye

The Good (TSD) Rallye

- 1 Juanita and Dale Dodd, Hermann MO
- 2 Chrystal and Bob Abhalter, Paducah KY
- 3 Glenn Beckerdite, Kansas City MO

The Bad (Gimmick) Rallye

- 1 Chrystal and Bob Abhalter, Paducah KY
- 2 Donna and Carl Davis, Galena IL
- 3 Phyllis and Bruce Tilden, Kansas City MO

The Ugly (TSD+Gimmick) Rallye

- 1 Chrystal and Bob Abhalter

Concours

- 1 Dan & Marilyn Murphy, Belleville, IL, 1963 Giulia Sprint
- 2 John & Laura Greason, Cordova, TN, 1971 Montreal
- 3 Steve & Sherri Coldewe, St Louis, MO, 1957 Giulietta Veloce

Spring Fling Results

Art Exhibition

- 1 Rich Hirsch, "Just Finished" — Traditional stained glass with center square of flashed (red on clear) glass sandblasted with Alfa logo
- 2 Bruce & Phyllis Tilden, "Faux Finis", photography, cybermagic, and wood.
- 3 Phil Dean, "Automobilia sound and light show de la senora Anna Romeo"



First Place stained glass by Rich Hirsch

Group Project favorite square: Bruce & Phyllis Tilden

Autocross

- 1 Glenn Beckerdite, Kansas City 21:03
- 2 Bob Volpe, St. Louis 21:09
- 3 Greg Hartrum, St Louis 22.09



Ralph Coldewe with copilot Tess Ervin



Greg and Leslie Hartrum in their '69 GTV



Dan and Marilyn Murphy's "new" '63 Giulia Sprint



Chris Beyer and Lynn Metzger in their '69 1750 Spider



Steve and Sherri Coldewe in their '61 Giulietta Sprint Speciale



The Group Project



Laura Torretta's "Finished for the Week, Time for Play"



Left: Anna Romeo, by Phil Dean



John Fitzgerald's all-steel construction

Alfisti Cooks!

by Sue Houser

Spring Fling was huge this year! A lot of our Alfisti friends arrived Friday night for pizza from Aldo's. We ate, talked and imbibed (I'm not sure in what order), catching up on all the news. It seems like we were all together just a little while ago. Alfa friends are the best. We all rallied, competed and/or viewed the Alfa Art, Autocrossed and Con Cours'd (besides eating, drinking and talking.) Along the way we picked up a few more Alfisti who hadn't joined us before. What a great time!

However much I would like to continue about Spring Fling, this is after all a recipe column, after all. So to continue with the wonderful home made food from the Swap Meet at Steve and Sherri's here is Sherri's Oven Roasted Roast Beef and from Graham's repertoire of always wonderful desserts, Flan.

Sherri Coldewe's Oven Roasted Roast Beef

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

3+ pound Eye of Round beef roast

Put meat in large roasting pan. Shake salt generously over roast top and bottom. I am not sure how much exactly, but you want a good coat of salt. Sprinkle a much smaller amount of pepper on both sides. Pour water in just to cover bottom of pan. Add about 1/4 inch cup fresh onion or 2 tablespoons minced onion, or 1 tablespoon onion powder.

Put pan in oven that has been preheated to 350 degrees. Bake for 3 hours. If you like your roasts more rare, you will want to cut the time. Take roast out of the oven. Put meat on a cutting board, let cool for a 1/2 hour. Put the juices in a container (refrigerate if it is going to a while before serving). Slice meat some what thin using an electric knife (unless you are lucky enough to have a meat slicer). Put meat in a container by itself & refrigerate. About 1 1/2 hours before serving, put the juices in a crock pot and heat on high until very hot. Add meat. Turn crock pot on low when ready to serve.

Graham Davis' Flan (Baked Custard)

Serves 6 - 12

Ingredients: Sugar, blanched almonds, sweetened condensed milk, cream, eggs

Custard:

Measure: 3 tablespoons sugar into an 8-inch layer cake pan. Place over heat and stir constantly until the sugar melt and turns a medium caramel color. Let cool until caramel hardens.

Preheat oven to moderate (325 degrees).

Into container of electric blender put: 3 ounces blanched almonds. Blend on high speed for 3 seconds. Leave nuts in container.

Add: 1 1/3 cups (one 14-ounce can) condensed milk, 3/4 cup cream, 3 whole eggs and 3 egg yolks. Stir to mix then blend on high speed for 8 to ten seconds.

Empty into caramelized pan, set pan in larger pan containing about 1/2 inch hot water, and bake for 45 minutes, or until set.

Cool and place in refrigerator. Do not remove from pan until the following day.

Presentation:

Invert onto chilled platter. There is no trick to this; it slips out easily*. If desired, garnish with whipped cream.

*Cheap insurance is to lightly butter the wall of the cake pan just before adding the custard mix.

There is a lot of Alfa stuff going on real soon, the European Car Show and then the National Convention in Tulsa and after that, The Day at the Lake. I have had my vacation days approved for the National, thank goodness. If we don't see you at the Car Show or the National, then hopefully we'll see you at Rich and Janet's in July. By the way, I would like to thank you all for putting up with my first attempt at being a RallyeMistress.

Before I forget, I want to thank Sherri and Graham for sharing their recipes.

Woofs and Meow,

Sue



Four-post Lift Rant, continued from page 7

originally designed by the marketing department of a steel company. All that crap has to be dragged up and down every trip. Twice the weight, twice the moving and wearing parts, twice the trouble every time. More hydraulic oomph wasted, more current consumed, more red stuff oozing out of crevices onto to the floor. More, more, more! It makes me tired just thinking of all that junk groaning in the corner.

It was suggested that four post lifts were somehow easier to use. That, I assume, stems from the fact you drive on and off. However, unless you are only changing fluids or fixing leaky exhausts, those ramps are in the way! You need to mount the "special" attachments to actually allow full service access. Well, full-service/limited access really because of the ramps and posts and bridges and bottle jacks and brackets and jigs and things used to finally elevate the car and its components.

Given my hard-earned perspective of seeing cars go up and down, every day, all day long for years and years, I have formed an opinion. For the maintenance and repair of our cars, I am absolutely convinced that the modern, two-post lift is the best tool — and Rotary makes some nice ones...

Okay, so you already have a four post lift, or maybe you have an illogical fear of teens and flying Chevys. It isn't the end of the world. Learn to live with it. If you don't actually move things very often, the setup isn't too bad. They are kind of nifty as a storage solution because the posts maybe used with a curtain wall system to partition the car away from the onslaught of filth. You can also warn your friends who have two posts about the alleged dangers of long term hyperextension and premature CV joint failure.

One thing is for sure, it is way better than having no lift.



Graduate Quest continued from page 3

Attorney General's Office in Missouri and Texas. To this day, as far as I know, nothing happened.

The auction for this 88/90 Graduate drove on through its full course of a week, and it appeared a fellow Alfa fan had fallen prey to the game by being the 'highest bidder.'

Was this sucker number two?

Several days after the auction, I contacted the highest bidder of the reported '1990' model through eBay. Turns out the high bidder never got to see the car in 'real life', and (fortunately for him) didn't even have to buy it. I could tell he was pissed, though, about 'losing' this deal. He indicated that the seller told him it was 'sold outside of eBay for a higher price'. I asked him to review the auction for 'my' 1988 Graduate, and then take a look again at the listing for 'his' 1990 model. He came to the same conclusion I did...it WAS the same car. This realization seemed to 'temper' some of his anger, and he realized he'd dodged the same bullet. Hmm... does anyone out there have any idea what happened to that car? I still don't know, but I have a feeling it'll end up on that online auction again one day. My half-ass disclaimer...not all eBay auctions are like this, but buyers please beware.

Alfa search story number two...AutoTrader.com. Found a 1991 Spider Veloce, listed 'in excellent shape, and in excellent running condition' in North Carolina. I decided that this time I was going to fly in and drive it home. The guy answered all my many scatter-brained questions clearly. The car was beautiful in person, but upon driving it for only 10 minutes, I learned it liked to overheat. It really, really, really wanted to hit that red hash mark. On top of that, it didn't even want to go into second gear, and downshifting at a stop into first gear took the arms of Popeye. Third, fourth and fifth were smooth, but with the temp dancing towards the blood-red mark, I turned back to the seller's house straight away. Sure, second gears on these can have issues, but the seller said over the phone that it shifted 'as it should'. In hindsight, that statement wasn't too far off the mark. I asked if it had ever overheated and he told me 'no'. After the car cooled, I tried to take off the radiator cap. It didn't budge...it seemed like it had been welded on. He told me that it hadn't been off in a while, but that last time he noticed there were drops of oil in the coolant. Again, no deal, and I went to plan B and took my flight back home (to my pregnant, ever-growing-impatient-with-my-search but lovely, lovely beautiful, precious wife). I called the guy in N.C. several weeks later, and he still had the car. He told me I must not have known how to shift the car because it was shifting just fine. My inner voice said, "what an asshole", but my outer voice said, "maybe, but good luck selling it."

Alfa search story number three...AutoTrader.com listed a 1990 Graduate only 20 miles away from my home in Illinois. It was the first day this ride had been listed. I met him immediately in a K-mart parking lot across the river. The pictures of this Alfa on Auto Trader were stunning. The mileage was unusually low and the price was high, but hey, this one was practically in my back yard. Upon meeting this little buggy, I noted it appeared to have been driven all of its

low miles behind a gravel truck (chips, chips and more chips...you know, like Chips Ahoy). The tires were bald...the frame to the convertible top was shot. This poor bastard could barely keep the car idling during a quick inspection. There were other issues with the car, but I made (what I believed to be) a generous offer *in cash* out of some twisted desperation for Olio II. He respectfully declined my offer, but I believe that to this day, he's *still* trying to sell it. I have a feeling that one will be a long-term repair shop cruiser. Next!

Alfa story number five. This is getting tiring. I'm about ready to say 'UNCLE!' Alfa number five belonged to the President of the Alfa club 'somewhere'...you know who you are, and I bet you're reading this right now! We negotiated for days, but no deal was struck. Hey, I just can't win here! I'm NEVER going to get another Alfa! I have my version of this story, and I'm sure you, El Presidente', have your version. Just remember...there are three sides to every story; his, hers and the truth. Another way to say this is...there are three sides to every story; CBS, CNN and FOX. Oops...there I go ripping on the press. I got off track. Back to the story line...Hey Mr. Prez, please don't have me beheaded for writing about this, and please don't kick me out of the club! I promise not to talk (too much)! But here's one punch I have to throw...VACILLATING IS BAD...VERY BAD!

Alfa story number six...*six feet under*...that's where I'm going directly if I can't nail one damned Alfa down and park it in the damned carport of my damned house. Damn. Sorry about the language; no, not really. *This journey sucks AND swallows*. Is this the end? Hell, no! By the way, I'm in the Army, and I believe somewhere it states that I'm legally permitted to curse when things are FUBAR. *Sorry if that pisses you off, but not really*. Ha-ha...I think I just illustrated an example of VACILLATING! (Ya' get it, doc?)

OK...here we go with six. Just believe that I can't go on telling this story for-freakin-ever, OK?! Keep reading and hold on tight...maybe not as tight as when riding shotgun with Bob Volpe, but tight.

Number six...well...it is in my damned carport now. Mission complete. Sure, Olio II's from sunny Miami F-L-A, and he's got a couple bumps and bruises, but he's mine...a 1991 Spider Veloce (with the *rare* red and tan color combination...he-he). Yes, there were many more speed bumps, road blocks, potholes and stinky roadkill on this road trip to my second Alfa, but they don't matter now.

I'm thankful for my gorgeous wife and her infinite patience and understanding when it came to this search...and...by the way, my daughter is going to be born in a couple weeks. That is more important than the above-mentioned journey...but, her coming into the world *does* relate to this story. As she grows older, I'm hoping that I can instill in her the same respect and love of Alfas that I have. In fact, I'm really hoping I can swing it where she respects these *old cars*, but has way too much respect for her *old man* to ask for the keys!



Janet at work. Photo by Phyllis Tilden.



!Saluti!
Alfa Romeo Owners of St Louis
6089 S Lakeshore Dr
Hillsboro MO 63050

June 2006 AROC St Louis

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
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Jun 4 European Car Show
Jun 15-18 AROC National, Tulsa