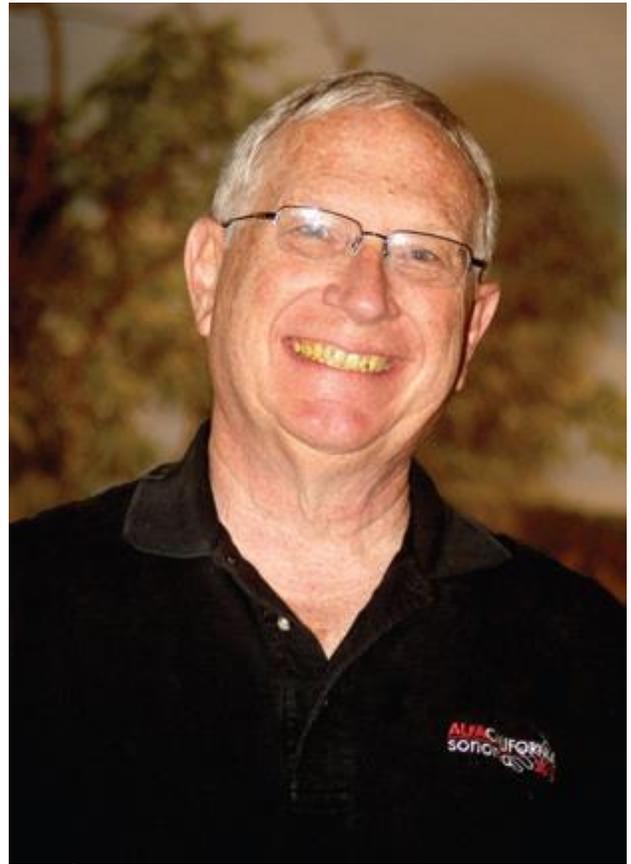


FROM THE TOP ... *the Word from Il Presidente*

(taken from the Nov/Dec 2015 *Alfacionada*)

First, an update on the Spider. After a thorough cleaning and blasting with walnut shells the headlight switch has decided to function normally again. Lucas jokes aside, what Lucas parts seem to want is regular TLC. Take it apart, clean it, lube it, and then you are good for maybe another 500 miles.

The front brakes have been rebuilt with new pads, new rubber bits and pistons in the calipers. I've got to rant about those early Girling calipers. These days most cars have single piston floating calipers. They are cheap, reliable and fairly light, but unfortunately it appears that for this Alfa, floating calipers hadn't been invented yet. The Girling designer opted for a fixed caliper, so he needed to put equal-size pistons on each side of the rotor to balance the braking force. But why make it simple when it can be made gloriously complex? He put two small pistons on one side and one large piston on the other. Equalizing the piston area required at least one piston to be an odd size. Good luck trying to find a seal for that one from anybody but Girling! The rebuilt units work fine, but they are complicated and heavy. At least I can say they are original.



Il Prez, in his new Official Portrait by Ken Sizemore

The Antique Gas & Steam Engine Festival in Vista was wonderful. Those who drove their Alfas got free admission and preferred parking on the grounds. However, the First Lady and I drove down in air conditioned comfort and paid the entry fee. I grew up on a farm and love seeing all kinds of old farm equipment. My Dad set me to driving tractors at the tender age of seven when I could almost reach the pedals. Chuck Cline got a pic of me posing with the Farmall A that was my first ride. This is a fantastic event if you are into old engines. The steam tractors are the stars of the show huffing and puffing as they move at a snail's pace. In retrospect, steam tractors weren't around very long before they were pushed aside by internal combustion engines, which is probably why they are so rare today. The guy with the Stirling Engine was there again and I spent even more time with him this year. The very idea of two pistons in one cylinder gives me a headache, but I think I nailed the concept this time.

Who went to Best of France and Italy? Just about everybody! I think the final count was 104 Alfas including four 4Cs. I saw several new restorations as well as many old favorites. Morgan Langley, VP of AROCSD, brought AROC's classy pop-up with all the Alfa Romeo insignia as well as a folding table –

in his GTV! Between that and the food Norm and Evie brought, we induced every Alfa enthusiast in the place to come over. Check out the pics and article in this issue. And, believe it or not, that Big Healey in the middle of the Alfas has Alfa power.

The election results will be official by the time you read this. Yes, the nine Board Members standing for reelection were all reelected. If you aren't quite ready to be a Board Member, but would like to get more involved with your Club, don't be shy. We are always looking for more volunteers.

Our final event of the year is the Holiday Party on Saturday, December 12th. Be sure to RSVP to MJ and Sheila and bring your favorite specialty dish, salad or desert and wine to share. This is a fun event that always brings out a number of seldom-seen Alfisti. Being a bit of an old timer myself, I always enjoy talking to the "real" old timers as there is a lot of fix-it lore that you just can't find in books.

Remember, if the women don't find you handsome, they should at least find you handy. And don't forget the duct tape, the handyman's secret weapon.

- Mike & Chris