

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

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(taken from the Oct 2015 *Alfacionada*)

The Club Concorso #2 at Museum of Flying in Santa Monica was well attended with over 20 cars present. Jeff convinced me to withdraw my Spider from judging so I could judge the older Spiders and there were five real beauties. The truth is, I could see at a glance my Spider would have been dead last in class, so it wasn't much of a sacrifice.

The museum is small, but excellent, with a nice collection of pre-WWII planes. The tour guide was showing us a 1927 Waco farm plane when Art Russell asked if he could speak for a minute. It turns out his dad fixed up one when Art was just a toddler! His dad worked at Douglas and got permission to taxi the plane from his house across the bean fields to Santa Monica Airport, then a Douglas facility. From there his dad flew the plane to Mine's Field (now known as LAX) to get it certified as airworthy.

The very next weekend was Speed Week in San Diego. Whoever said that getting there is half the fun never drove to San Diego on a Friday afternoon with no AC in yet another of our many recent heat waves.

We arrived at the hotel exhausted and soaking wet to discover a tequila festival was in full swing at the hotel. Now those people really know how to party! We had to make it an early night, but not before I sampled a couple of offerings from the friendly people next door.

The Speed Week event itself was wonderful. Our friends in the San Diego Chapter had a pop-up from AROC national and I have to say it was the best-logoed one in the club parking area. I wandered around the pits for a couple hours and managed to fall in with bad company several times, followed by more camaraderie back at the tent. (Insert happy face here.) We comprised a great group of people, with roughly half from each chapter.

At the Saturday night dinner Joyce McHattie presented me with a plaque that reads, "If you can't fix it with wine or duct tape, it's not worth fixing!" I'm not quite sure why she thought of me when she saw it, but everyone else seemed to think I was the perfect recipient.

After dinner I had trouble getting the headlights to function on the Spider. Is it a coincidence that the editor's column in the November 1 issue of *Hemmings Sports and Exotic Car* has a column entitled "The



*Il Prez, in his new Official Portrait by Ken Sizemore*

Lucas Joke Book”)? The very first joke asserts that Lucas headlight switches have three positions: dim, flicker and off. I found all three!

Speaking of the Spider, I am currently rebuilding the front calipers. I don't believe they have ever been rebuilt, and the rubber bits have long since lost their springiness, which allows the pads to lightly drag on the rotors. The right front wheel set up an annoying squeal on the San Diego trip, so no more procrastination. New pads are on the workbench and a new caliper kit and brake pistons are on the way from Centerline.

October is another busy month. First we have a tour of the Bruce Meyer car collection. I don't know exactly what he collects, but he is a past president of the Petersen Automotive Museum, and word is he has some really choice cars. RSVPs are a must and the event may be full or over by the time you read this.

Second, on October 24, is a tour of the Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum in Vista. It's not a car show, but it is a fantastic event for people who are into antique machinery. We aren't talking about a static display. The steam engines and tractors are all running. The giant steam tractors don't move very fast, but they are amazing to watch at the noon parade. Dress for warm weather and wear good walking shoes.

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. Uh, could my tagline be the reason Joyce thinks of me whenever duct tape is mentioned?

*– Mike & Chris*