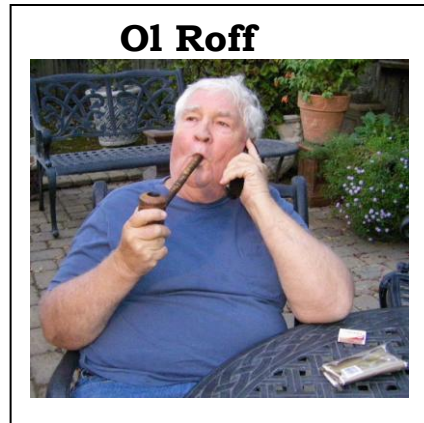


Ol Roff's World
Roff Graves
251 E.Pearl Court A
Stockton, CA 95207
Ph#209 473 7089
graves@gravescountry.com
www.gravescountry.com



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201312 Our Christmas Newsletter

Today I will introduce one of our writers. She is Diane Maupin. She lives with her husband, Paul in California's Northeast "High Country". Here is her Bio, as written by Diane----

Diane Maupin writes from her "high country" home in Northern California. Mother of five grown children, she has written short stories, poems, and essays drawn from family life for most of her life. Besides being a stay at home mom for a couple of decades, she has worked at a See's Candy Shop in Stockton, California, and she has been a librarian at several elementary schools, relishing the printed story and story-time with school children. She now translates the many insights, incidents and newsworthy items gleaned from the 'real and raw' examples and experiences of living on a small country ranch. Writing has been her passion and joy for quite a long time, and she hopes to share and extend her own zest for country life to her readers as well.

Her 2012 Christmas Story is attached.



Next I proudly present to you my near 14 year old grandson, Alexander Graves-Yu, This kid has been a kick for me most of his life. I love his wit! I am going to have him write from a near 14 year old teenager perspective. Here he discusses our prize winning question for this newsletter: please

note—Nothing has been edited, added or changed!-- Margaret Garner, an escaped slave, was justified in killing her daughter as opposed to allowing her to be taken back into slavery after she was caught. Margaret knew full well that her daughter would be subjected to the same abuse



that she was, and instead of condemning her to a lifetime of pain, instead chose to liberate her in a way.

I understand and for the most part agree with what Margaret Garner did. She understood exactly what her daughter would be subjected to if she had been taken back into slavery and felt herself that death would be a better alternative. Knowing this, she made the decision for her daughter and killed her. I can only assume that many mothers today would do the same if their child was in a similar situation of a life of unrelenting abuse and pain or quick death.

Alexander Graves-Yu

Now our newsletter--- Merry Christmas. I am so happy to be alive and enjoying this wonderful season. As you may remember, I was so ill last year. The brain tumor almost got me during the surgery. The surgery could not remove all of it. The roots are still in my brain but it and I have adjusted well. Heck, it has become my friend. I don't want to make it mad!

Let's talk about November's winner. Now this question was an absolute kick! I asked the people to tell me why they should win. The number one winner of Louis Vuittonet's painting was Hollie Stump from Albany, Georgia. Here is her answer: Ok, Roff,

You don't know me from a hill of beans was what I was going to put, but that did not seem appropriate for the subject, so you don't know me from a hill of fake outsiders. If that doesn't make sense, I can guarantee that sending a piece of art to a poor country girl in south GA does make a bunch of sense.

Hollie stump

Number Two was tied. I couldn't decide between these two: From Sue Standerfer from Valley Springs, California: Hey there Roff!... glad to see your newletter in my email box, just love it, that you keep everyone up to date on your life...makes us not worry or wonder...which is nice.. in your pic..you look comfy with that big ole pipe,,anything 'good' in it?... if not...I think I can remedy that...just drop me a line or call me..

AND

Lisa Kolb from San Pedro, California: Roff - I think I should be considered for winning either pipe or painting because both treasures start with the letter "P," and every time

I'm lucky enough to be included in your emails I say a little prayer in my head for you & then in the same breath pray that the Onion would just piss off! You are a treasure!!--Tied for winning a pipe!

So here is what we are waiting for, the prizes: First prize is a 16" x 20" painting by the well-known artist Charlie Lucas also known as the Tin Man. He is in many books, in fact a book has been written about him personally. He is from Pink Lily, Alabama. The approximate value of this painting is \$400. To \$500. He is a listed artist. "Dinosaur"

The Second Prize is a crisp \$100.00 bill. If you truly need this money, then keep it. If you can find it in your heart, then pass it on to someone in need and you will receive a true blessing.

The next prize is being donated to you by the up and coming pipe maker, Richard Kopf, owner of Rick Black's pipes, New Mexico. I cannot stress enough that he is moving upward fast and I have no idea how long he can hold his prices so low! I love his pipes. This is a beautiful specially made pipe for your Christmas—value \$100.



The final prize is this signed, hand painted snuff bottle by my friend, listed artist Louis Vuittonet,

Fresno, California. Louis' painting are not cheap but well worth investing in. This old Snuff bottle is painted on all four sides and is a real collector's item. Louis donated this to you for your Christmas!

The value of this is \$75.

Now a little bit about the judge of the responses. Our judge will be Attorney Richard Wehe, one of my dearest friends. I worked with him and for him as an investigator for the California Department of Transportation for many years. I have never known a more honest or compassionate men. I am asking him not to pay any attention to the names of the entrants, but I am asking that he take the age into consideration. If you are under 18 years old please state your age so your entry can be judged fairly. There will probably be well educated entrants and writers so all will be judged fairly. I promise you that! I know this judge!—All may participate, including my family and extended family—everyone!

There will be NO MORE just drawing names. There are many people who enter and don't bother to even read the newsletter—just tell me to enter them. That will not happen again. It is unfair to the readers! So, put a little bit of thought into it or you don't have a chance—it does not have to be proper English of punctuation—just thought is what matters. You are now a juror in the following matter:

A mother slits her baby girl's throat because she has this idea that she's saving her daughter from a fate worse than death. It's actually a true story: back in 1856, a runaway slave named Margaret Garner killed one of her kids—a two-year-old girl—with a butcher knife, in order to keep her away from slave catchers. She would have killed her other children and herself, too, but she was caught before she could complete the deed. You may want to read about her on the web. It will touch your heart!
You are the juror, was it MURDER or was it LOVE? Good luck. Deadline for submission is December 15, 2013.

In closing from all of us involved with the newsletter, and from Arlene and me, we wish you a joyful Christmas.

Oh I almost forgot, at 1:26am this morning my Heavenly Father woke me up, placing this in my mind: There is this sweet family of artists struggling right now and they could use this little pipe you got from Maine. A pipe I said to God! And the replay came "oh yes, but don't forget to wrap the stem in a \$50. bill!---Merry Christmas to you the Laster family! America loves you!

OIRoff

PS: Please bear with me as I attempt to attach Diane Maupin's 2012 Christmas story.

