

WELCOME TO MY SHADE

Come sit with me under my shade tree and visit a spell. I hope you had a wonderful holiday season, lots of company, delicious food, and a quiet time to renew your spirit.

Happy New Year to you! What does 2016 hold for you? Do you make resolutions each year? And the tougher question: Do you *keep* them?

For 2015, I actually wrote down goals for the year – specific goals, possibly-achievable goals – not those too-generic promises to myself, like losing weight but never how much or how soon. I did accomplish several writing goals in 2015: completion of my historical novel manuscript (sometimes thinking in terms of *hysterical*) and the young adult manuscript co-authored with Shelley Richter. I finished editing and published “Beads on a String – Peace, Joy, and Love” – the second anthology for Wordwrights-OKC Christian Writers. And, “Vittles and Vignettes” saw the light of day in November – a cookbook I had started several years ago. I could rest on my laurels for 2016, but where’s the fun (and the challenge) in that?

Not all of my goals had to do with writing, of course. Some goals transfer to 2016; some of them I failed to accomplish; and a few no longer fit my needs. Life is about choices. Here’s hoping your 2016 is fabulous and rewarding!

Look for a few topics for goal-setting on the next page. They seemed to work better for me in 2015 than generic promises. Good luck with your goals.

Thanks for stopping by. Come back again soon.

Fiction Writers Retreat

June 4-5, 2016



Susan May Warren * Mel Odom * Bill Bernhardt

Speakers/Mentors at the retreat in Midwest City. Mark it on your calendar now!

If you’re a writer, how many times have you gone to conferences, workshops, and seminars only to come away feeling like you hadn’t learned anything new? Maybe the speakers you wanted to hear were scheduled at the same time, and you had to choose between them.

Kathy Akins, Nita Beshear, and I are hosting a Fiction Writers Retreat – a mentoring event like no other. Hear all three dynamic speakers in June 2016 and learn how to write a best seller. Visit www.fictionwritersretreat.com for details. Hope to see you there!!

WORDWRIGHTS-OKC CHRISTIAN WRITERS

Wordwrights meets the second Saturday of each month, but 2016 brings a new time and a new location. Meetings will be from 10:00 am-Noon at Brown Mackie College, NW Expressway at Rockwell in Oklahoma City.

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FEATURED RECIPE

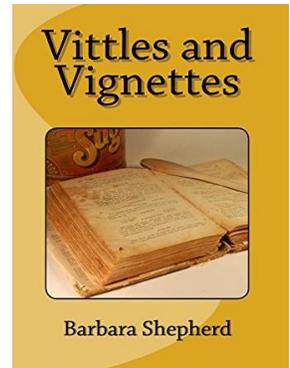
With cold weather coming, this recipe could ward off a chill. It was the divider card for Vegetables in the cookbook. Enjoy!

Chili Cheese Handwarmers

Wash potatoes and pierce skins; bake in a 400° oven until fork-tender. Remove from oven and cut a ½-inch slice from the small end of each potato, or halve potatoes. Scoop out pulp, leaving skins intact. Coarsely mash pulp with a fork.

For each cup of potato pulp, mix:
 2 tablespoons milk
 2 tablespoons canned, diced green chilies
 1½ tablespoons diced green onion
 ¼ cup shredded Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese
 Salt, to taste

Pack mixture into potato shells, mounding tops slightly. Place shells on a baking sheet; bake at 400° until heated through. Remove from oven; wrap each potato in a napkin to eat out of hand.



Happy cooking to you. 

WORK TO DO

Setting generic goals, or those that sound good but are unattainable, defeats the purpose. Try defining your goals this year; write them down; and track your success. Consider these categories:

Career/Education/Faith/Financial/Fitness/Health/Relationships/Miscellaneous

Under the Shade Tree is my way of sharing a digital glass of iced tea with you and wishing you the best life has to offer. (If you *were* here under my tree, I'd offer you a pecan praline, too.)

Thanks for sharing a few minutes with me,
Barbara



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