



WELCOME TO MY SHADE

Come sit with me under my shade tree and visit a spell. It's been quite a while since we've shared my shade. We have a lot of catching up to do. Summer rain in Oklahoma is rare – except for this year. August and September brought record-breaking rainfall and let me postpone installing a water sprinkler system until next year. My grass is lush and green going into fall.

As for my writing: Drum Roll, Please!!

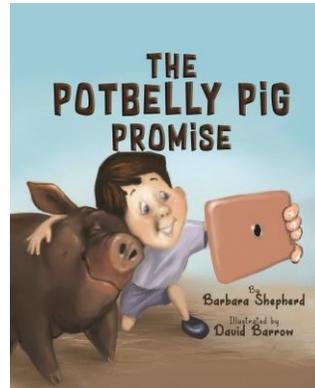
Doodle and Peck Publishing chose an illustrator (David Barrow) and published my first picture book – *The Potbelly Pig Promise*.

The Wild Rose Press published my first novel, *River Bend*, which is set in 1830s Texas and chronicles a young woman's journey to survive and build a life for herself and her child in a dangerous and sparsely-populated frontier.

And another first: We're celebrating a 100-year anniversary of the suffragette movement, so my short stage play about an event in the struggle is timely. I entered the 10-minute play into a contest, and *Night of Terror* competed against national and international entries. It placed in the Top Eight and won production. How exciting to see and hear my work on stage for a Saturday night performance and repeated for a Sunday matinee at Town and Gown Theatre in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Stay tuned for an update soon on my recent conference presentation and two anthologies. Hope things are going well in your creative space.

Thanks for stopping by. Come back again soon.



Christmas is only 10 weeks away! Picture books make great gifts. In *The Potbelly Pig Promise*, Dylan promises to take a special photograph for his autistic friend but runs into trouble. Will Dylan get to keep his promise? [Find it on Amazon](#)

OCTOBER IS:

- National Country Music Month
- National Cookbook Author Month
- National Pizza/Pasta Month
- National Physical Therapy Month
- National Dessert Month
- National Book Month
- National Children's Magazine Month
- National Eat Better, Eat Together Month
- National Go Hog Wild/Eat Country Ham Month



[Find it on Amazon](#)

FEATURED RECIPE

October brings Halloween, opens the door to more holidays, parties, and treats, and reminds us of other times we've enjoyed. Have you been to a taffy pull?

"Boiling candy transformed the cold back room of Grandpa's split-log house into a party atmosphere. He brought his old hay hook in from the barn, scrubbed it clean, and dried it with a striped dishtowel. He reached high to hang the iron tool on a huge nail, attached to a clean and heavily-varnished wooden plank on the sturdy wall. When Grandma brought in steaming, molten candy on a large cookie sheet, Grandpa buttered his strong, weathered hands and gathered up the hot taffy, too blistering for anyone else to handle. Exhibiting his years of experience, he slapped the taffy onto the hay hook and pulled it like a rope, repeatedly stretching and looping the heavy mass over the iron tool with a rhythm that bordered on grace." *[Vittles and Vignettes]*

Vanilla Taffy

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ½ cup water
- 2½ tablespoons vinegar
- 1 teaspoon glycerin
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

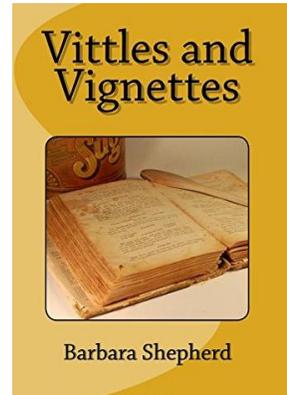
Mix and boil sugar, water, vinegar and glycerin in a heavy saucepan until it reaches hard-ball stage (260°.) Stir in vinegar and pour hot mixture onto a buttered platter. When candy is just cool enough to handle, butter your hands generously and pull taffy until it turns a very white color. After pulling taffy, stretch it into a long rope and cut into short pieces with a very sharp knife or scissors. Wrap each piece in waxed paper, twisting the ends. Store in a covered container.

Note: Taffy can be pulled between two people, being careful not to drop it, if you do not have access to a clean hay hook or similar tool.

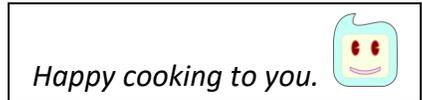
Under the Shade Tree is my way of sharing a digital glass of iced tea with you. If you were here under my tree now, we could slip into the kitchen to pull taffy and make a plate of Hopkins Fudge, too. Yum!

Thanks for sharing a few minutes with me,

Barbara



[Find it On Amazon »](#)



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