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FIRST QUARTER—PREMIER QUART 2024

**DON'T MISS THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: 5:30PM, TUESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 20, 2024, AT THE HORNSBY HOUSE IN YORKTOWN VILLAGE.**

### President's Corner

Bonjour!

The last quarter of 2023 was quite busy. We started off by sending a delegation to our Sister City in Port-Vendres, France, at the invitation of their Mayor Gregory Marty. I and my wife Belinda, along with Royce Hart and his wife Darlene, made the trip on September 1-3 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Port-Vendre's incorporation. While there, we were happy to see old friends and make some new ones. We presented Mayor Marty with a collage of pictures of various locations in and around Yorktown dedicated to the French's vital help during the Revolutionary War, along with the official Yorktown flag. Best of all, we also presented Mayor Marty with a Yorktown baseball hat!

Sister Cities Yorktown provided major volunteer help in October at the Yorktown Wine Festival. We have been designated as the lead non-profit for that event, and we received a portion of the proceeds based on the number of volunteers we provided. That event, as well as the Blues, Brews, and BBQ Festival in May, are big sources of the funding that enables us to fund our events and activities throughout the year.

We finished off 2023 with a very well attended Christmas Social for all members at the Hornsby House Inn in Yorktown.

My term as President will end after our annual meeting in February. After two full terms as President and another two years as Acting President, it is time for someone else to take the reins of our group. I will remain on the Board as our immediate Past President. I leave the position with our organization in good hands and am happy to help the new President with anything they may need. I can honestly say that in the more than 25 years I have been involved with Sister Cities Yorktown, this is the very best Board of Directors I have had the privilege to work with, and all of our Boards have been very good. I can't thank them enough for all their help and hard work over the years.

Please get involved with our group and activities as much as you can, and I hope to see you at a Sister Cities Yorktown activity soon. Au revoir!

**Don Willis, President**  
**Sister Cities Yorktown**

## Culture

**According to <https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/france/new-year-day>, New Year's Day (Jour de l'an) is the first day of the year in the Gregorian calendar. It is a public holiday in France. Many people spend the day quietly in the company of friends or family.**

Many people in France start New Year's Day at midnight while celebrating with friends or family members. Public and private fireworks displays are common. Many people drink champagne, sparkling white wine or hot wine (vin chaud). People may also sing songs such as The song of a New Year (Chanson du nouvel An) and an adaptation of the Scottish Auld Lang Syne (Choral des Adieux) written by Robert Burns to mark the start of the New Year at midnight. People generally spend the rest of the day quietly.

There is a special tradition in Viella, a village in the Hautes-Pyrénées region close to the Spanish border. A church service is held late in the evening on New Year's Eve. Afterwards, people walk to the vineyards in a torchlight procession. The grape harvest begins at midnight. A strong, sweet wine is made from the grapes that have matured naturally on the vines. Bottles of this wine are specially marked to show that the grapes were harvested on January 1.

Certain types of cake and tart are associated with New Year's Day and the first half of January. These include heart shaped cakes (le coeur de l'an) and log shaped 'cakes' made of ice cream (gâteau glacé). These cakes are often decorated with symbols of the winter season and good luck charms for the coming year, such as birds, evergreen trees, bells, golden balls and chocolate coins.

King's cake (la galette des rois) consists of a puff pastry case filled with frangipane. Frangipane is made with eggs, sugar, butter and ground almonds. The cakes are sold with a paper crown on top. A dried bean, small coin or ceramic figure is hidden in the filling. The person who finds the bean, coin or figure in their portion is 'king' for the day and wears the paper crown.

# French Revolution Books

According to <https://www.readthistwice.com/lists/best-books-on-french-revolution>, several excellent books about the French Revolution exist, including:

1. Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution, by Simon Schama. Experience a captivating journey through Louis XVI's France with Citizens. Simon Schama presents a unique perspective of a country brimming with creativity and an obsession for innovation, rather than a dying regime.
2. Twelve Who Ruled: The Year of Terror in the French Revolution, by R. R. Palmer. Explore the bloody Reign of Terror in French history as the Committee of Public Safety attempted to defend the first Republic from its many enemies.
3. Liberty or Death: The French Revolution, by Peter McPhee. Provides a fresh account of the world's first great modern revolution - its origins, drama, complexity and significance.
4. Place of Greater Safety, by Hilary Mantel. Get swept up in the raw drama of the French Revolution with this captivating novel. Focuses on Danton, Robespierre, and Desmoulins.

## Grenache

### Flavors



Strawberry



Cherry



Peach



Citrus



Cinnamon



### Wine Profile

Acidity



Body



Tannin



Dryness



Alcohol/ABV: 13.5-16%



## Wine Selection

### Grenache

<https://www.foodandwine.com/wine/grenache-wine-everything-to-know>

According to Brian Freedman, Grenache is one of the greatest grape varieties that doesn't quite get the attention it deserves. Grenache tends to be built on a base of vivid cherry and berry fruit and is wonderfully food-friendly.

Grenache wine is produced in many countries and in a range of styles. Its most well-known versions are red, but Grenache also plays an important role in rosés, too. In most of the world it is referred to as Grenache or, less frequently, Grenache Noir, but in Spain and other Spanish-speaking wine-producing countries, it's known as Garnacha. No matter what it's called, Grenache / Garnacha is the source of excellent red and rosé wine, whether bottled on its own or blended with other grape varieties. Grenache Blanc, or Garnacha Blanca, is the white version of the grape variety, and important in the white wines of Priorat in Spain and the Rhône Valley (and crucial in the Southern Rhône Valley) in France.

Image courtesy of wineinsiders.com.

## Upcoming Events and Activities

February 20, 2024: Annual general membership meeting, 5:30pm, at the Hornsby House in Yorktown village. Join us at this historic building for fellowship and to elect our new officers. There might even be some good food and drink!

March 12: Board meeting at 5:30pm.

April 9: Board meeting at 5:30pm.

April 20: French Market on the York River in Yorktown. Many volunteers are needed, since this is one of our major fund-raising events every year. Being a volunteer gains you free entry to one of the best events in the area every year.

May 4: Blues, Brews and BBQ, Yorktown Waterfront. Again, many volunteers are needed.

(send email to [contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org](mailto:contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org) to sign up or for questions)

## Past Events and Activities

September: An adult delegation visited our sister city, Port-Vendres, France. Don and Belinda Willis and Royce and Darlene Royce went to PV to celebrate PV's 200th anniversary.

October 7: Yorktown Wine Festival. Several SCY volunteers came together on a glorious day to enjoy the sun and a little wine with a few thousand of our closest friends. Another major fund-raising success for SCY.

December 13: Sister Cities Yorktown hosted a very festive Holiday party for the entire membership at the Hornsby House.

## Sister Cities Needs You

Sister Cities Yorktown is looking for board members to serve as Secretary or Treasurer and members at large. We have an ambitious agenda, with the French Market in April, and Blues, Brews and BBQ in May. We will need lots of support from the SCY membership. Sign up now!

If you are interested in serving on a great board, please email us at [contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org](mailto:contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org)

# Recipe of the Month—a Winter Dish!

**Cheese Fondue:** (by Nassie Angadi, [https://snippetsofparis.com/wprm\\_print/31404](https://snippetsofparis.com/wprm_print/31404))

Prep Time 10 minutes mins

Cook Time 15 minutes mins

Total Time 25 minutes mins

## Equipment

Fondue Set

Heavy Duty Rotary Cheese Grater

7 Piece Salad Bowl Set

## Ingredients

340 g Gruyère

340 g Beaufort

340 g Comté

50 cl of dry white wine like Apremont or Reisling (2/3 bottle)

1 clove of chopped garlic

Pinch of salt and pepper

1 tablespoon of olive oil

2 baguettes

## Optional

200 g of mushrooms forestière

Pinch of paprika

## Instructions

1. Grate all the cheese so that it melts easily without clumping.
2. (Optional) Wipe the mushrooms with a damp cloth and chop them into small pieces.
3. (Optional) Start by cooking the mushrooms lightly in a stovetop pot in olive oil and garlic.
4. Add approximately 1/2 bottle of white wine into the pot and simmer.
5. Slowly add in the cheese and mushrooms as it is melting.
6. Mix the cheese by forming 8 with a wooden spatula. Note: keep temperatures low as the cheese fondue must never boil.
7. Chop the baguette into bite-size square cubes.
8. Add additional wine into the pot if the cheese fondue is too thick.
9. Once the cheese has completely melted, move the mixture to the fondue pot and serve.

Note: Depending on your fondue set, you may be able to put your fondue pot directly onto your stovetop. The above portions have been outlined for a family of 4. You can adjust the serving size as you wish, depending on the number of people. Serve with a simple salad with vinaigrette.

# Opportunities to Volunteer—we need you!

Sister Cities Yorktown is an organization comprised entirely of volunteers, and we're always looking for individuals that are able and willing to contribute their time and talents to help us accomplish our mission. We are currently ramping up our committees for this year, and have opportunities for you to help us with the following:

**Event/activity coordination/execution:** Soiree' en Blanc, French Market, Bastille Day, Wine Tastings, social events, etc. This committee will help with the planning and executing of events throughout the year, for fundraising as well as purely social events. We have several planned events, but we're always on the lookout for fresh ideas.

**Exchanges:** We support student and adult exchanges to/from our sister city, and with travel restrictions easing soon (we hope), we anticipate getting back to exchanges. This committee will help with the coordination of the exchanges between the two cities - both for the adults and high school students.

**Public Relations/Communications:** This committee focuses on developing partnerships with community organizations (public and private), educating and advocating our organization and its mission to the community.

**Business Support:** Website maintenance, social media, writing/publishing. This committee will identify areas for improvement and advise solutions to allow us to continue our mission, using current technology and methods.

We work as a team and have fun doing so! If you have the interest, skills and knowledge that you can contribute to help our organization, let us know. Please contact [contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org](mailto:contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org), or contact any one of the Board of Directors individually. **We look forward to working with you.**

# Membership

Sister Cities Yorktown (SCY) membership is open to anyone residing in or working in Yorktown or York County, or anyone with a sustained interest in Sister Cities Yorktown.

Benefits - Participation in “member only” socials and small events (e.g., wine tastings, cooking lessons, history lectures, etc.); first priority for exchange trips; receipt of SCY newsletters and information on local “things French”.

Annual dues - \$25 per individual; \$40 per family. Dues for French language teachers in York County are \$12.50. Membership for high school students in York County is free. While you can join at any time of the year, dues are not prorated. SCY receives no funding from government sources, so donations are always welcome and appreciated. SCY is a 501(c)(3) organization, so all dues payments and donations are tax deductible. Applications are available on our website at [www.sistercitiesyorktown.org](http://www.sistercitiesyorktown.org).

Please mail your check to: Sister Cities Yorktown, P.O. Box 735, Yorktown, VA 23692.

NOTE: Membership dues may only be paid by credit card at February’s Annual Meeting. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact one of our board members or email us at [contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org](mailto:contact@sistercitiesyorktown.org).



*Fostering a Culture of Citizen Diplomacy*

## **Leadership—Board of Directors**

Don Willis, President: [willisd@cox.net](mailto:willisd@cox.net)

Debra Paulus, Vice President:

VACANT: Treasurer

VACANT: Secretary

Randy Tabor: Member-at-large

Rose Field: Member-at-large

Danielle Cannella: Member-at-large

Margaret Mack-Yaroch: Member-at-large

Tommy West: Member-at-large

Tony Alford: Member-at-large

Jim Stoecker: Member-at-large

In 1990, Yorktown, Va., entered into a sister-city relationship with Port-Vendres, a small French Mediterranean village. The relationship was formalized on April 19 in Yorktown and July 13 in Port-Vendres by the Yorktown Trustees with the mayor of Port-Vendres and other dignitaries. In 2010, Sister Cities Yorktown celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the relationship with citizen exchanges between both countries. In December 2011, the York County Board of Supervisors formally recognized the relationship for York County. Sister Cities Yorktown is chartered by Sister Cities International.