

## Two Alpha Beta Members Share Reflections on Normandy

At the Alpha Beta meeting in Chenoa on February 8, Elaine Cunningham (Minonk) and Carol Hughes (Roanoke) presented “Reflections on Normandy: 75 Years Later” which centered on the highlights of their trip to Normandy in 2015. They shared a map of the 5 beaches and the country responsible for each: Sword (United Kingdom), Juno (Canada), Gold (United Kingdom), Omaha (US), and Utah (US). The most difficult beach to invade was Omaha as a 150-200 foot embankment filled with German bunkers and guns of all sizes had to be conquered once the troops hit the beach. Normandy always flies flags of the countries involved in this invasion of 156,000 troops.

The French in Normandy come up to American tourists and thank them. Elaine and Carol connected with a French couple who asked where they lived in the US. When they replied, “Central Illinois,” the husband put on his cap which said Rt. 66 on it. The couple, like many European visitors, had traveled Rt. 66.

The most touching moment for Elaine and Carol was to walk through the American Cemetery located just above Omaha Beach where 9,387 service men and women lie. By a 23-foot high memorial statue, French school children periodically place wreaths with attached thank you notes.

President Nancy Wier (Eureka) stressed attending convention at the Marriott St. Louis Airport on April 24-26. She also said chapter leaders have a choice of three Leadership Academies which will be held at three locations—St. Louis on April 24, Bradley University on June 6, and the IEA Building in Bloomington on July 15.

Treasurer Janet Kilgus (Fairbury) announced the chapter does give away a considerable amount of money to support educational projects. She added that she will be collecting next year’s dues in March and May.

For the Scholarship Committee, Connie Rich (Fairbury) reported that three young women who plan to become teachers have applied for chapter grants of \$200 each, and Missy Miller, Prairie Central High School, has been sent as a nominee for the state Florence A. Cook Award.

Legislative Chair Lou Ann Jacobs (Normal) said the legislature hopes to be finished with business by May 31. It has budgeted 850 million for education. Revenue has been better than expected and the 11 billion state debt has been reduced to 5 billion.

Alpha Beta’s next meeting will be at the Chenoa Family Restaurant on March 21 at 9:00 am. The program will feature “An Overview of the Services of the Illinois Attorney General’s Office” as they relate to education.

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International (DKG) promotes professional and personal growth and excellence in education. The Society has chapters in 17 countries and serves over 67,000 members by providing grants for educational projects, scholarships, leadership training, mentoring, and global networking opportunities. For more information, visit [www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org) or contact Carol Hughes ([chughes@mtco.com](mailto:chughes@mtco.com)).



**Photo:** Carol Hughes and Elaine Cunningham shared their thoughts about their travels in Normandy and other members added comments about relatives who had been involved in the D-Day Invasion.