

A MAN OF HISTORY

While in Washington D.C., Lauck and Calovich pose with veteran Thomas Norwood. Norwood was just one of the many men Calovich had the opportunity to meet and learn from. "Thomas Norwood actually has a fascinating story, reuniting with a loved one after 71 years apart. He was in the 51st airborne as a paratrooper on D-Day in 1944," Calovich said.

DYNAMIC DUO

On the first night in D.C., Calovich introduces herself to Albert Small, the man who funded and organized the Normandy Institute. The pair, along with the rest of the institute, attended a meet and greet, at the White House visiting center. "On the first night, I was nervous about meeting my fellow Normandy Scholars," Calovich said. "To my relief, they were the coolest group of people to be traveling with. We had such a good time together and still keep in touch."



A DAY IN PARIS, far right

After weeks spent on research, Lauck and Calovich visit Paris. Though most of their sightseeing in France had been exclusively WWII based, the pair visited many national monuments in Paris, enjoying a relaxing day. "While in Paris we went on a very quick walking tour of our choice," Lauck said. "We visited several stops including a Parisian chocolatier, then saw the Arc de Triomphe, ate lunch at a little French bistro and sat outside, and then went to the Eiffel Tower."

A PERMANENT HONOR, right

As Calovich stands in front of Decker's grave, she remembers his life and dedication to America. After countless hours of research on her silent hero, Calovich has been invited back to Normandy in the summer 2016 to dedicate a permanent memorial at his crash site. "A group called Le Souvenir Francais has been looking for more information about Edmond Decker for a long time. When our news articles started popping up we found each other," Calovich said.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY AUDREY CALOVICH



THE FRIEND OF A LIFETIME

In honor of World War II hero, senior Audrey Calovich travels to Normandy, France

STORY BY MARIE ORRICK DESIGN BY MEGAN MCCORMACK

As she sat on the enormous cliffs that overshadowed Normandy's rapturous beaches, senior **Audrey Calovich's** breath escaped her.

Pursuing her passion for History and WWII culture, Calovich applied for Normandy: Sacrifice for Freedom Albert H. Small Student & Teacher Institute. As part of the program she chose a silent hero to study. After weighing her options and spending a considerable amount of time at the National Archives in Union Station, Calovich selected Edmond Lamont Decker, a highly decorated fighter pilot from WWII, born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri.

"I got a list of about 200 men and then narrowed it down to less than 20 that were from the Kansas City area, but I kept going back to Edmond Decker," Calovich said. "When I found his high school yearbook picture I knew he was the right choice. We'd have been friends if we'd have lived at the same time."

With history teacher **Lisa Lauck** by her side, Calovich traveled to Washington D.C. to study her silent hero. There they joined 14 other student-teacher teams, each from different states. Calovich and the few accepted students attended authentic classes at the University of Maryland, George Washington University, Martha Washington College and the War College. These lectures were

A SURREAL EXPERIENCE

While Lauck and Calovich stand on the cliffs that overlook Normandy's beaches, Lauck absorbs history. While in Normandy, the student-teacher team spoke with many locals and veterans about their experience on those same beaches. "We had a lot of veterans and locals come talk to us about their lives living at that time period and in this setting," Lauck said. "And it was beautiful, some of the bluest water I have seen and to stand there on a gorgeous day and put your hands in the sand and realize that those events occurred right there is surreal."

PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY AUDREY CALOVICH

accompanied by tours of renowned monuments that added to the student's research.

"Our days in Washington D.C. consisted mainly of being at the University of Maryland and having lectures by professors and experts on Normandy and the Battle on the Beach," Lauck said. "Usually in the afternoon we spent time at Arlington National Cemetery and the National Archives doing research and collecting data."

After extensive studies in D.C., the group travelled to Normandy, France, the historic birthplace of the Battle of Normandy. They were based in Bayeux, not far from the D-Day landing beaches. There, the teams attended several more museums and lectures, each with a different, distinct perspective on the war. At obscure yet significant war sites in Normandy, each student presented their own miniature lecture.

"Some presentations were given from bomb craters, the hedgerows where fierce fighting occurred, in front of the church where bloodstains from the wounded soldiers can still be seen on the pews," Calovich said. "My lecture was on the importance of the Enigma cipher machine that was used to break the German codes during the war."

At the end of the week, Calovich and the rest of the institute visited the Normandy American Cemetery where nearly 10,000 American servicemen are buried. Students took turns at the graves of their silent heroes, carving etchings in the sand and reading eulogies.

"By the time you're eulogizing them in front of their grave, you've brought them back to life. Then you have to kneel down and tell them goodbye. It's strangely like you've lost a dear friend even though you never got to meet them," Calovich said. "I came away from the whole experience wanting to give all of the men in that cemetery the same honor I was able to give Edmond Decker."

MAKING A STATEMENT



While in Debate and Forensics class, freshmen Sam Wilson and Anissa McGunnie practice their debate skills below left. After joining the team, students travel to different schools to compete in tournaments.

As juniors Elsa Brundige and Zoe Mulkey, pictured above left, listen to the opposition's case, they take notes to prepare for their next move.

"Debate is very important because it gives people the foundation for public speaking," Mulkey said. "This is something that you are going to use no matter what you do or where you go."

With the support of the debate team on her back, senior Jessica Korth, pictured left, argues against animal testing.

"Debate has been my family in high school. We all stick together and love to see each other succeed," Korth said. "I can't explain how grateful I am."

"The whole scholarship was amazing—the assigned readings and blog entries, the lectures and tours, meeting the vets, traveling to D.C. and France. But having us do research on one 'regular guy' who died there is a genius idea. Nothing has ever brought the battle home in the same way." junior Audrey Calovich

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