

Five new names set for the Wall of Honor

By **ROB GLIDDEN**
STAFF WRITER

Southington High School has announced its honorees for the annual Wall of Honor induction, a tradition now in its third year.

The Wall of Honor was designed to pay tribute to graduates who have gone on to distinguished careers and accomplishments, with more names to be added each year.

The honorees are selected by a committee of educators and community members, chaired by SHS social studies teacher Bob Brown.

This year, the recipients include Karen Avitable, Christopher Cronkhite, Paul Dunn, Thomas Langdon and David Pekoske.

Karen Avitable is the current editor of AAA

Journeys Magazine, overseeing six different versions of the publication meant for AAA members in Connecticut and six other states. She estimated the total number of readers was one million.

A former editor of The Observer, Avitable has worked at several Connecticut newspapers and has taught journalism at The University of Connecticut and Middlesex Community College as an adjunct instructor.

"It was a really unexpected honor," Avitable said. "It's nice that the high school keeps tabs on its graduates."

Two of the honorees are being recognized posthumously. Christopher Cronkhite and Paul Dunn were graduates who died while

serving in Vietnam.

"I went down to the Town Green and looked at the memorial there," Brown said. "Nine people from Southington died in Vietnam, but only these two were graduates of the high school."

Brown added that the committee has received numerous nominations for soldiers, both from previous wars and current ones. However, the pattern of five honorees each year makes accommodating all of these requests difficult.

"Last year, we had several people nominated who were involved in the military," he said. "We weren't able to use them all, but we've started this year, and we hope to continue next year."

David Pekoske was recently appointed Vice

Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, which is a second-in-command position. An alumnus of MIT, Pekoske has held many other positions within the Coast Guard beforehand and has received the Legion of

Merit and Coast Guard Distinguished Service medals.

"I'm humbled by the recognition and reflect on the great foundation that Southington High School provided me," Pekoske said. "I look forward to

joining other SHS graduates on the Wall of Honor."

Thomas Langdon is a former Southington Town Councilor who has since gone on to teach business

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Erardi reprimands football coach

By **ROB GLIDDEN**
STAFF WRITER

Southington High School football coach Bill Mella was given a formal reprimand by Superintendent Dr. Joseph Erardi for his handling of checking accounts within the program.

The school administration has not finished looking into the matter, and a police investigation is also not yet complete. The letter says that as of June 13, Mella will remain head coach of the football team.

The letter outlines a

sequence of meetings between school officials about the situation, which came to light when three assistant coaches alleged that Mella was "tampering" with the fundraising dollars. The coaches all resigned and relayed their concerns during exit interviews. The coaches did not return calls for comment.

In meetings with administrators, Mella denied the allegations and attributed the accusations to "broken coaching relationships." The coach was questioned about \$5,000

which was missing from the checkbook account. According to the letter, he said \$1,000 was given to a coach who had worked for

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