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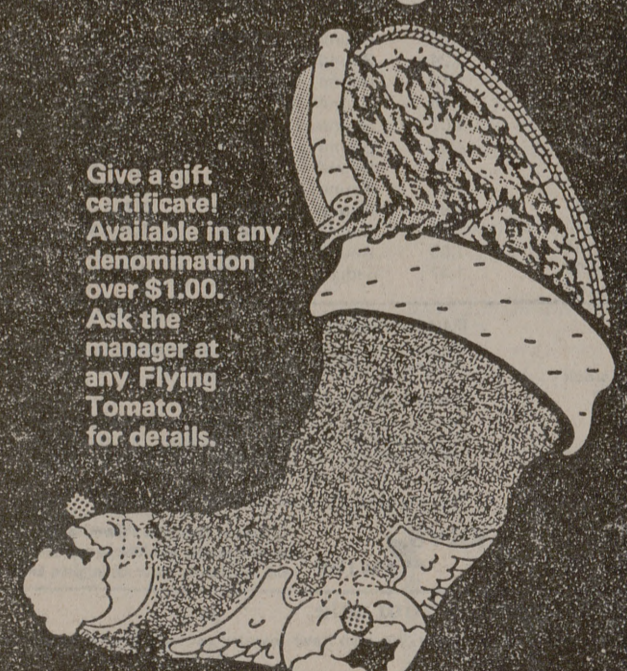
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*Coach may be barred from profession*

**Accused teacher gets peers' praise**

**Associated Press**  
FORT WORTH — Many co-workers and students of a teacher who resigned amid allegations that he sold grades have praised his classroom abilities and say they hope that he won't be barred from the teaching profession.

Dennis Shannon, a 29-year-old math teacher and coach at Eastern Hills High School, quit Dec. 4 after being confronted with the allegations, school officials said. Four students claim to have bought a grade of 75 for \$50 each and one a grade of 91 for \$75.

The Fort Worth school board has asked the Tarrant County district attorney's office to investigate and has asked the state to revoke Shannon's teaching credentials.

Attempts to reach Shannon for comment were unsuccessful, but his attorney, Tom Hill, said, "We're trying to resolve the issue in the best interest of everybody concerned."

"I don't know that he's violated any law," he said. "In my view, it isn't a criminal case yet."

Mike Hays, the school's head baseball coach, remembered what Shannon did for a young baseball player who was barely passing any course.

"That kid has gone from a 2.3 (overall grade-point average) to the honor roll," Hays told The Dallas Morning News.

English teacher Julie Landry, who taught down the hall from Shannon, described him as a "good teacher and a caring one."

Many of Shannon's students agreed.

"He's the only teacher I've ever had who made math fun and explained it so that I understand it," said 15-year-old Wendi Gribble, an A student in Shannon's algebra class.

Gribble first had Shannon in pre-algebra last year. Even then, she

said, the standing joke in the class was that Shannon sold grades.

"He would say, 'Progress reports are coming out and a lot of failing notices will be going home. That will be \$20 for anyone not wanting one sent home,'" Gribble said. "And he would say, 'If you want an A that will be \$100.' But everyone just thought it was a joke."

District Attorney Steve Chaney said an investigation will be made to see if a state law governing education records has been broken. Conviction on the misdemeanor charge carries a possible sentence of one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

**Man accused of planting bomb described as 'fine' person**

**Associated Press**  
PARIS — Among the pictures of Paris High School's Class of 1969 is one of Albert Lee Thielman, described by his former principal as "about as fine a young man as we ever had."

Thielman, a San Marcos resident, is accused of planting a bomb on an American Airlines jet bound from Austin to Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport on Oct. 30. He was arrested at a Las Vegas airport on Dec. 7 and is being held without bond.

The FBI charges that Thielman wanted to kill his wife and three children so he could collect \$4 million in insurance money.

The plane's 154 passengers and crew members escaped injury when the bomb exploded in the baggage compartment as the aircraft pulled up to the terminal. In FBI interviews Thielman denied any involvement.

The FBI, in court affidavits, alleges Thielman, who worked as a salesman for a prefabricated home company, had large gambling debts, was considering filing for bankruptcy, bought more than \$30,000 in cocaine in an eight-month period and spent money on a woman identified as a nude model.

Thielman, 34, is the only child of Eugene and Dorothy Thielman. He grew up attending a Presbyterian church. The elder Thielman taught

math at Paris High School for almost 30 years, while Mrs. Thielman was the librarian at Paris Junior College. They declined to comment about their son's case.

Thielman's friends described him as outgoing and friendly and someone who reveled in group activities.

Retired school principal Dee Cunningham said, "This community has never had the shock that this has been. He was about as fine a young man as we ever had in Paris High School. If there was such a thing as an ideal youngster, he was it."

Classmate Bobby Groves said, "He wanted to be with whatever was going on. If everybody was doing something, he wanted to do it, too."

Others remember him as a prankster, prone to practical jokes.

"He was never in any serious trouble, just a lot of mischief," said former classmate David Phillips.

Thielman is a dedicated University of Texas football fan, and sometimes he would travel to Dallas for Texas-Oklahoma weekend.

Thielman left East Texas State University in 1973 without graduating.

"He was ambitious. He wanted to make something out of himself. He wanted to go to college, be successful," Taylor said. "The last time we were talking, he showed no concern to come back to Paris. He wasn't down on it like some of them are, but he didn't want to come back."

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