

## **Lois Knipling Peel**

Coach Lois Knipling Peel, known as “Coach Knip” arrived at Columbia High School in 1958 after graduating from Texas Lutheran College and remained until 1991. Her athletes had 9 individual first place finishes at the UIL State Track Meet, and eight relay teams had first place finishes. In 1972, her girls team won the team title at the State Meet. In 1973 and 1974 her teams finished first in Regionals and second at State.

Those winning gold were Darlene Thomas (1971, 60-yard hurdles; 1972, 60-yard hurdles, 80-yard hurdles, long jump) Margo Diggs (1971, 100-yard dash), Willene Williams (1974, 60-yard dash), Sharion Higgins (1976, triple jump), Sheila Williams (1978, 80-yard hurdles) and Rhonda Bonner (1978, long jump).

Besides coaching individual gold medalists, Peel also had eight relay teams win first place. From 1972 to 1975 the 400-meter and 800-meter relay teams won gold medals with the 1974 squad of Higgins, Diggs, Earlene Thomas and Williams setting the national record in both events.

The 1972 track and field team won the team title at the state meet.

Peel also coached basketball and had the 1975 and 1976 zone champion and in 1978, in her final year of coaching, had a region finalist. She remained at the school in a teaching capacity until 1991