

grant county

ARTS

F. RITCHIE WALTON



F. Ritchie Walton was an educator and performer who shared his passion and creativity with hundreds in Grant County. His love for performing and music began at a young age, and after graduation from Marion High School, Marion College and Ball State University, Mr. Walton started his teaching career. A year later, he returned to Marion to teach. From 1959 to 1964, he taught music at McCulloch Junior High School. In 1964, he accepted the position of director of choral music at Marion High School. Throughout his tenure there, he directed more than 300 productions staged at McCulloch Junior High School and later at Marion High School's Auditorium which opened in 1971.

During this time, he also formed the 26th Street Singers, a high school musical group that would entertain audiences and the local community for more than 27 years. In 1976, Mr. Walton recruited some of his most talented graduates to comprise a national touring group called "The Ritchie Walton Revue". The group toured for several years, playing venues from New York to Los Angeles including appearances in Las Vegas.

To commemorate all that Mr. Walton gave to Marion and Grant County, the Marion School Board of Trustees named Marion High School's auditorium the F. Ritchie Walton Performing Arts Center shortly before Mr. Walton's death in June 2000.