

August 28

1818 Jean Baptiste Pont du Sable died in St. Charles. He was 73. Du Sable was born in Haiti. About 1772, he established a trading post at a swampy place the Indians called "Eschikagou," meaning "place of bad smells." In 1800, he sold the property in what is now the heart of Chicago for \$1200. Du Sable moved to St. Charles, where his granddaughter lived. His was nearly penniless when he died. A Black Heritage Series postage stamp issued in 1987 honors du Sable.

1820 In the first state election, Alexander McNair was elected as the first governor of Missouri. (Missouri had yet to be admitted to the union) McNair, a former St. Louis County Sheriff, defeated Territorial Governor William Clark.

1882 The Commander of the Army, William T. Sherman, announced he would retire next year and return home to St. Louis. When Republicans tried to convince him to run for President in 1884 Sherman said, "I will not accept if nominated and will not serve if elected." When Sherman died in 1891, the funeral was the biggest the city had ever seen. Sherman is buried in Calvary Cemetery.

1903 The cornerstone was laid for the five-story octagonal building that now serves as the city hall of University City. Edward Garner Lewis built it to house as the headquarters for his publishing empire in the planned community he founded.

1904 Blinded by dust while competing for the Louisiana Purchase Trophy, world famous racecar driver Barney Oldfield lost control of his "Green Dragon." The vehicle slammed into a fence on the lower turn at Fairgrounds Race Track at 60 miles per hour. The car cut one spectator in half and killed another. Oldfield vowed never to race again, but he was back on the track in a few weeks.

1936 A line of thunderstorms brought the heat wave of 1936 to an end once and for all. For 15 out of the last 17 days, the high temperature in St. Louis was over 100. (It hit 98 and 99 on the other two) At least 471 people had died.

1959 The section of the Mark Twain Expressway from Natural Bridge to Lindbergh was completed. You could now drive on a four lane four-lane expressway from New Florence, Missouri to Bircher Boulevard in St. Louis. The section from downtown to Bircher opened in 1961.

1963 Josephine Baker spoke during the March on Washington. She told the crowd of 250,000, that they looked like "salt and pepper, just as it should be." Wearing her uniform from her days as a French war hero, Baker said, "You are on the eve of a complete victory. You can't go wrong. The world is behind you." Her words would be overshadowed by a speech made by Martin Luther King that day. About 200 St. Louisans made the trip by bus to take part in the march.

1970 A zoo-keeper cleaning a cage in the reptile house left a drain open, and a deadly king cobra slithered away. Amazingly, they re-opened the reptile house to the braver members of the public. They figured the snake was trapped inside, and cobras are nocturnal, so there was no danger. 40 Days later, the snake was found unharmed.

1970 Residents of the Pruitt-Igoe public housing complex complained about the conditions there. They said buildings were dark, leaky and plagued by vandals. Two buildings were demolished in 1972. The rest were dynamited in 1975, a symbol of the failed public housing system.

1977 The great downtown movie palace, Leow's State, closed its doors for the last time. The 1924 opening of the theatre had been a gala affair, broadcast live from St. Louis to New York, and attended by the biggest stars of the day.

1999 Rams quarterback Trent Green suffered a season-ending injury when he was tackled by free safety Rodney Harrison of the Chargers in an exhibition game. His replacement was a little known former quarterback from Arena Football League and NFL Europe. Kurt Warner had only taken 14 snaps in the NFL. Warner's first pass was perfect, and was promptly fumbled. Many Rams fans believed the season was over.

2000 A St. Louis based Internet company announced a 70-million-dollar deal for the naming rights to the Kiel Center. The home of the Blues would be known as Savvis Center.