

February 26

1874 State Senators from St. Louis were touting a bill before the Legislature to make Grand Boulevard worthy of the name. The measure called for turning it into a 400-foot-wide avenue from the River des Peres to Bellefontaine, to be adorned with shade trees, flowers and fountains.

1876 Several people were dead, many missing, after a "cyclone" devastated the business section of St. Charles. Two of the biggest businesses, the saw mill and the woolen factory, were destroyed. The county jail and the gas works was also destroyed.

1887 Grover Cleveland Alexander was born in Elba, Nebraska. The Cards obtained the aging alcoholic on waivers from the Cubs in 1926. He won several important games down the stretch to lead the Cardinals to their first pennant. He won two games in the World Series. Nursing a hangover, "Old Pete" was called in to face slugger Tony Lazzeri with the bases loaded in the seventh inning of Game Seven. He struck out Lazzeri, and the Cards would win the game.

1929 Colonel Charles Lindbergh and his fiancée, Anne Morrow, escaped serious injury on landing in Mexico City. The "Spirit of St. Louis," making a one-wheeled landing, overturned. It had lost a wheel on takeoff. Newsmen began filming the mishap, but Mexican Army officers destroyed all the film.

1929 Wright Aeronautical Corporation of Patterson, New Jersey, announced it would build a plant here to produce the famous Gypsy engines for light planes. The plant was scheduled to be in operation by July and employ 200 people. Officials said St Louis was becoming the aviation capitol of the world.

1941 Forrest Donnell, a Republican lawyer from Webster Groves, was sworn in as governor of Missouri, ending a long political fight. Democrats schemed to steal the office away. Donnell was not allowed to take office while a committee investigated alleged voting fraud. After 44 days, the Missouri Supreme Court ordered that he be sworn in. The investigation was dropped.

1962 East side rackets kingpin Frank "Buster" Wortman and two of his henchmen were convicted of conspiracy to defraud the government of income taxes. Wortman would retire to a house surrounded by a moat.

1970 The Old Chain of Rocks Bridge was closed for repair work on a hole at the east end. It never re-opened to traffic. Since the new bridge to the north had opened in September 1966, traffic had fallen to just a few hundred cars per day on the bridge that once carried Highway 66 across the Mississippi.

1973 Marshall Faulk was born in New Orleans. He grew up in the Desire Street Projects, and appeared headed for a troubled life. But Carver High School football coach Coach Wayne Reese took him under his wing. Faulk sold popcorn at the Super Dome before

becoming a college star at San Diego State. The Indianapolis Colts drafted him in 1994. They traded him to the Rams on April 1, 1999.

1975 A court ruled a Florissant man acted intentionally when he rammed his car into a jet to try to foil a hijacking at Lambert Field in 1972. The verdict meant that David Hanley's insurance company would not have to pay. Hanley ran his Caddy through two fences and hit the nose gear of the plane as it readied for take off. Hanley was seriously injured. The hijacker got another plane.

1985 Chuck Berry was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 27th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony. He was honored as "One of the most influential and creative innovators in the history of American popular music." But Berry never won an actual Grammy Award for any of his recordings.

1985 Tina Turner's *What's Love Got to Do With It?* won Grammy Awards for Record of the Year, Song of the Year and Best Female Pop Vocal. Tina also won a Best Female Rock Vocal Grammy for *Better Be Good to Me*.

1994 The Blues beat the Ottawa Senators, eleven to one. It was the most lopsided win in Blues history. Just two nights earlier, the Blues had been shut out by Quebec.

1997 Alan Lieberman returned to the United States, five years after fleeing a federal indictment. Alan and Harold Lieberman fled to Chile after being charged with defrauding homebuyers out of millions of dollars. Alan pleaded guilty in March 1997. His brother jumped to his death in Santiago, Chile in 1998.

1999 The group that had been fighting to save The Arena said farewell. The "Arena Angels" distributed ribbons in honor of the doomed landmark.

2001 William E. Maritz died. His grandfather founded the E. Maritz Jewelry Company in 1894. It evolved into one of the world's largest employee motivation firms. William Maritz was an active civic leader. He was instrumental in establishing Laclede's Landing as a tourist attraction, was one of the founders of the VP Fair, and helped save the *Admiral*.