

## January 24

**1855** Sculptor Charles Niehaus was born in Cincinnati. Niehaus created a plaster statue of King Louis the IX for the main entrance of World's Fair. When the Louisiana Purchase Company decided to cast the statue in bronze and put it in Forest Park, Niehaus quoted an outrageous price of \$60,000. A local firm did the work, but Niehaus sued. He eventually settled for \$3,000. The statue was unveiled atop Art Hill on October 4, 1906.

**1870** The Liberal Republican Convention met in Jefferson City. Led by Senator Carl Schurz of St. Louis, they walked out of the state Republican convention and led a revolt against the radicals and the corrupt Grant administration. The Liberal Republican movement died on the national level when the party tried to run Horace Greeley for president.

**1871** Government architect Alfred B. Mullet arrived in St. Louis to begin work on the new Customs House and Post Office. Ensuring he had nothing to gain but his reputation, he promised "a costly and handsome building that would ornament the city and be a credit to him."

**1874** O'Fallon, Illinois was incorporated as a village. The town is named after John O'Fallon, an Ohio and Mississippi Railroad official. O'Fallon, Missouri is named after the same man.

**1883** Anheuser-Busch acquired the rights to sell "Budweiser." In Bohemia, beers were named after their towns, with the suffix "er" tacked on. Adolphus Busch had visited the town of Ceske Budojovice, or "Budweis" in German. "Budweiser" beers were known as the "Beer of Kings." Adolphus turned the slogan around. Several other breweries had been producing "Budweiser" beers, including Miller and Schlitz.

**1896** A constable thwarted a would-be lynch mob near Maddenville in St. Louis County. He was transporting the two men accused of killing Bertram Atwater from Webster Groves to Clayton. He drove through a hail of gunfire, abandoned his carriage and hailed a St. Louis-bound train. (Atwater's murder inspired residents of Webster Groves to incorporate to bring an end to lawlessness)

**1903** A Pinkerton detective was killed, and several others wounded, in a shootout in Franklin County with two men suspected of robbing the Union Bank. A posse of citizens was on their trail, and a special train carrying doctors and Pinkertons was speeding to Union from St. Louis.

**1909** About 1600 people were saved after the steamer *Republic* was rammed by an Italian steamer off Nantucket. Among the St. Louisans on board was Samuel Cupples, head of S. Cupples and Company. The new "wireless" demonstrated its value during the disaster.

**1945** Brigadier General Leif J. Sverdrup, Chief Engineer for General Douglas MacArthur's invasion force in the Pacific, was promoted to Major General. He became chairman of the board and CEO of Sverdrup and Parcel, the St. Louis engineering firm.

**1950** The temperature hit 77 degrees in St. Louis, the hottest January reading ever recorded. The second warmest was 76 degrees, on January 21, 1970.

**1962** Movie star Ronald Reagan was in St. Louis. He spoke at several meetings, decrying the loss of freedom due to Communist infiltration and the growing power of the federal government.

**1967** A January heat-wave was shattered by a tornado that tore across ten communities from Chesterfield to Spanish Lake. Three people were killed, 220 injured and 200 homes were destroyed. Damage was estimated at \$15 million dollars.

**1968** The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra played its first concert at its new home, Powell Hall. The hall is named for shoe manufacturing executive Walter S. Powell. His widow, Helen Lamb Powell, donated \$1 million for the hall. The building was originally known as the St. Louis Theatre. Appropriately, the last movie shown there was *The Sound of Music*.

**1978** Three glass doors at the Checkerdome were shattered and 60 policemen were called in to control a crowd of 17,000 surging to get into a Ted Nugent concert. It was the first and last concert in St. Louis with no reserved seats.

**1995** 15-year-old Christine Smetzer was beaten, raped and drowned in a rest room at McCluer North High school. Michael Taylor was convicted of the murder. He had behavior problems, and had been transferred to North one day before the murder. The case led to changes in the law to make it easier for school officials to gain access to the records of troubled kids.