

October 17

1803 President Thomas Jefferson sent the Louisiana Purchase to Congress for approval. Critics were blasting Jefferson for the biggest land deal in history. Many said he was exceeding his authority, and the deal was unconstitutional. Lewis and Clark were already planning an expedition to explore the vast territory.

1817 Joseph Rosati arrived in St. Louis. He became coadjutor to Bishop DuBourg, and was named the first bishop of the new St. Louis diocese in 1827. He supervised construction of the old cathedral, and brought the Jesuits to establish St. Louis University. Rosati founded a Catholic newspaper and asked the Sisters of Charity to open the first hospital west of the Mississippi.

1861 Colonel Jefferson Jones, who formed a force of Callaway County residents to resist the Union, sent the federals a proposal. If they withdrew, he would disband his forces, and the county would be loyal to neither the Confederacy nor the Union. He had made his county an area outside of any government control. That's why, to this day, the county is known as "The Kingdom of Callaway."

1876 Jackson County, Missouri authorities were furious at the St. Louis Police Department. Acting on a tip, St. Louis Police made a foray into Jackson County and arrested a man they thought was outlaw Frank James. When they got him back here, they realized their mistake and released him.

1957 The Senate Rackets Committee sent a team of investigators to St. Louis and ordered the seizure of all records from Teamsters Local 688. Local Teamsters President Harold Gibbons had quickly risen to become the second most powerful Teamsters official in the country. The committee would expose widespread irregularities in the union.

1960 A St. Louis County coroner's jury was studying recommendations on ways to cut the terrible toll on the "Dead Man's Stretch" of Lindbergh, between Schuetz and the Rock Road. There had been four fatal accidents there, and 136 injuries so far that year.

1968 Jose Feliciano issued his controversial bluesy rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner" on vinyl. He had first performed the first widely heard non-traditional version of the anthem before Game Five of the World Series between the Cardinals and the Tigers in Detroit. He was roundly booed. Feliciano cleared the way for the different versions of the national anthem we hear today.

1974 Professional basketball returned to St. Louis as the "Spirits" of the old ABA lost to Memphis. A crowd of 5400 showed up at the Arena for the first game. The Spirits would last only two seasons before the ABA merged with the NBA. But the team included memorable characters such as Marvin Barnes and Fly Williams. The team's rookie announcer on KMOX was Bob Costas.

1978 An 18-year-old U-City High School dropout went on a shooting spree after a fight at the school. Three students were wounded, one seriously, before he was wrestled to the ground by the assistant principal.

1980 Former Big Red kicker Steve Little was left paralyzed from the shoulders down when he lost control of his sports car and hit a sign on I-270. Just a few hours earlier, Little had learned he was being cut from the team.

1982 The Cardinals had their backs to the wall, as Milwaukee took a three-games-to-two lead in the world series. Robin Yount had four hits as the Brewers won 6-4.

1987 The Cardinals and the Minnesota Twins squared off in Game One of the 1987 World Series. In a hint of things to come at the Metro Dome, the Cardinals lost 10-1.

1996 Ozzie Smith played his final game as the Atlanta Braves humiliated the Redbirds 15-0 in Game Seven of the National League Championship Series. Pinch hitting for Andy Benes in the sixth inning, Ozzie saw one pitch from Tom Glavine. He popped out in foul territory to Jermaine Dye. The Cardinals had won the first three games of the series, but Donovan Osborne self-destructed in Game Seven.

2000 Washington University Chancellor Mark Wrighton announced that the Presidential Debate would go on as scheduled. He expressed sympathy for the families of Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan, his son Roger and campaign advisor Chris Sifford, killed in a plane crash the night before. Vice President Al Gore and Governor George Bush honored Carnahan before the debate began.