

Commodities to be distributed

Government surplus commodities will be distributed in Otis on Monday, March 23. The distribution will be from 4-5 p.m. at the west door of Otis City Hall, 105 W. Fisher, Otis. Call the city office, 785-387-2403, for more information.

La Crosse commodities will be distributed on Monday, March 23, at Sixty Plus, 704 Main Street, La Crosse. The doors will open from 4-5 p.m. Supplies will be distributed until gone.

To be eligible for commodities, a household's total monthly income must be below \$1,632 for a household of one person, \$2,215 for a household of two people, \$2,798 for a household of three people, \$3,380 for a household of four, \$3,963 for a household of five, \$4,546 for a household of six, \$5,129 for a household of seven and \$5,712 for a household of eight.

Add \$583 for each additional family member.

From Our ARCHIVES

By Linda Kenyon

10 Years Ago

March 23, 2016

A controlled burn south of Nekoma refused to stay under control on March 17, causing a grass fire that burned approximately 1,500 acres. Two separate quarters of CRP land belonging to the Melvin Phillips estate were scheduled to be burned. The fire got out of control and ended up burning an area about half a mile wide and three miles long, ranging between Ave. U to Ave. X and CR 180 to CR 210. The fire swept across CRP and pasture, but the only damage reported was to a tractor that broke a hydraulic hose while fighting the fire and a large number of round bales of hay. No cattle were reported injured.

A come-and-go retirement reception will honor Sheila DeWald of Otis on Saturday at the Cougar Den in Otis. Sheila is retiring in May from her business, Sheila's Daycare, after almost 40 years.

25 Years Ago

March 22, 2001

Saturday brought out the Leprechaun in everyone, as hundreds of fun-seekers swarmed Rush Center for the 12th Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration. "Rush Center's Wisest Citizens" John and Hulda Graver, served as Grand Marshals for the parade. Britany Oborny and Amber Shaw won the Best Overall prize with their "Fresh Picked Irish Spuds" entry and members of the Walnut City 4-H Club were the winners of the Best Green with their green sheep and "Are Ewe Into It?" float.

Piano and vocal students of Freida Brauer held a recital February 28 at First Lutheran Church in La Crosse. Students who performed include Jennifer Bittel, Rachel Proffitt, Lacey Reifschneider, Katie Karst, Clayton Kershner, Austin Webs, Callie Miller, Clinton Kershner, Amanda Moran, Meagan Wilson, Paul Dechant, Steven Isley, Katie Edwards, Mitzi Holland, Melissa Wilson, Sharon Lytle and Matthew Isley.

50 Years Ago

March 18, 1976

A fire at Case Power & Equipment, La Crosse, was discovered and reported at 7:45 a.m. March 11 by Vernon Sell, an employee. Approximately 15 firemen responded to the alarm and had controlled the blaze after 30 minutes. The fire, which had been smoldering for some time, some reports have it starting around midnight, caused well over \$100,000 damage to the inventory and stock owned by Case and the building which is owned by Bill Highfill of La Crosse. According to investigating officers and Ralph Edwardson, Manager, robbery apparently was not the motive for the fire as no property was reported missing and money in plain sight was not taken. Rush County Sheriff Jack Mendenhall reported that evidence indicated arson.

The Otis-Bison Cougar girls basketball team breezed past their first round opponent, Nortonville, 64-50 in the Class 2A State Tournament in Emporia. In semi-final action on Friday, the Cougars were defeated by the Hill City Ringnecks 56-38 to end their bid for a state crown. In the 2A girls consolation game in Emporia on Saturday, Maize took over after the first quarter and ran the score up, defeat-

ing Otis-Bison 56-28. Otis-Bison ended the season at 20-4.

75 Years Ago

March 22, 1951

As any dyed in the wool fisherman knows, March is the time of year when rods and reels should be readied and taken to the stream. So scouts Roger and Ray Serpan, Mike Pivonka and leader Ralph Pivonka packed sleeping bags and pup tents and hurried to the banks of the Walnut for an all night fishing and camping trip March 10. Spring and fish were in their minds, but not in the air. Lines were thrown in the Walnut and the hardy campers prepared to bed down for the evening. That was quite a chore, considering the fact that a snow storm was raging and the thermometer hung around the lower levels. Ice had to be broken to retrieve fishing lines the next morning. "It was cold," Pivonka said. But no one suffered any after effects, although the campers were not too comfortable that night, even with sleeping bags and tents banked with dirt. But it's not as crazy as it might sound. The boys caught a three pound channel cat for their efforts.

With this edition of The News, Charlise Elaine Karst becomes the Liebenenthal correspondent. She also becomes the News' youngest correspondent. The young woman lives on a farm north of Liebenenthal, goes to St. Joseph school, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin B. Karst, and is in the sixth grade. Charlise would have had her first column in the paper last week, but she was afflicted with a disease which seldom strikes this paper's more mature correspondents. She had the measles.

100 Years Ago

The La Crosse Republican

March 25, 1926

Rev. Joseph Stutz and Mary Katherine Baumstimler were granted citizenship in district court here Monday. The petitions of John Schneider, John Niedenthal, Henry Gerlitz, Peter Rodie Jr. and Katherine Stollenwerk were continued until the next term. The petition of John Eitel was denied.

A.H. Schloemer had the misfortune of losing his car, in which he was carrying the mail, on route one by fire on Tuesday afternoon. The cap from the tank was lost and the exhaust fired the gasoline. The accident occurred a mile from the Kraisinger school. Mr. Schloemer saved the mail and the motor of his car. Except for burned hands, he was not injured.

125 Years Ago

The La Crosse Republican

March 22, 1901

Walter Black, a fellow said to be along about McCracken, made a gun play in Otis Monday night and was arrested by Sheriff Littler at Olmutz and tried here Wednesday before Justice Dow who fined him \$5.00 and cost amounting in all to 21 dollars and 85 cents. In default of payment, Black now dines and sleeps in the county jail. J.A. Creed, Postmaster Avis, Conrad Giesick, and C. Schlegel from Otis were witnesses in the Black case. Messers Creed and Giesick were two of the persons Black drew a thirty-two caliber rifle upon.

E.F. Whiteman lost a thirty-five dollar cow Monday from the effect of a gorge on green wheat although the animal had been on that kind of pasture all winter.



Charlotte Rathke is honored with a retirement reception at Locust Grove Village in La Crosse on Friday, March 13. Rathke retired after 22 years of service as Locust Grove administrator. Rathke was surprised with the appearance of her two sons, who she was not expecting. (photo by Linda Kenyon)

-Rush County Commission Minutes-

COMMISSIONERS MINUTES Monday, March 9, 2026, 9:00 a.m. Chairman Mitchell Blackburn, Vice-Chairman Richard T. Luft and member Leslie Rogers were present. Commissioner Luft moved to approve the March 2, 2026 minutes as presented. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. Chair called for discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

The accounts payable checks, register and warrants were reviewed and signed by the board.

Deputy County Clerk Kristen Muller joined the meeting.

Dr. Robert Ladd, Rush County Memorial Hospital CEO, Amy Depperschmidt, Rush County Memorial Hospital HR Quality Director, and Monica Scudder, Health Nurse, met with the board. Ms. Scudder discussed some of the programs the health department will be attending such as Kindergarten Roundup, Back to School registration events and senior centers to inform individuals about immunizations available to seniors. Ms. Scudder presented the grant application signature page to the State of Kansas Department of Health and Environment for the State Formula, Emergency Preparedness and Immunization Action Plan for review by the board. After review, the grant application signature page was signed by Chairman Blackburn and Ms. Scudder. The grant funds requested are State Formula for \$12,000.00, Public Health Emergency Preparedness for \$9,465.00 and Immunization Action Plan for \$1,739.00 for a total of \$23,204.00 requested. Dr. Ladd discussed the Emergency Preparedness grant and the need to clarify Emergency Preparedness roles.

County Clerk Keener presented a letter of resignation from Bryce Maneth from the Garfield Township board.

Chad Foust, Road & Bridge, met with the board and presented his weekly report. They graded in Alexander, Banner, Belle Prairie, Big Timber, Center, Fairview, Garfield, Hampton, La Crosse, Lone Star, Pioneer and Union townships. Sand was hauled in Banner, Belle Prairie, Brookdale, Fairview, Lone Star and Pioneer; shoulder work done in Illinois, Pioneer and Pleasantdale and ditch work done and millings/dirt hauled in Banner. Signs were repaired or replaced in Center, Garfield, Pleasantdale and Union townships. The mechanics did regular maintenance on county equipment. Supervisor Foust discussed the Kansas statutes regarding governing speed of vehicles, maximum speed limits and alteration of maximum speed limits. Supervisor Foust stated they will be doing ditch work and replacement of culverts on Ave L east of Otis on March 23, 2026.

Raif Terry, Sales Manager for Renewal by Andersen, Jennifer Oborny, Sales Representative, and Kelly Urban met with the board by phone to discuss the removal process of the stained glass windows during the courthouse window project.

Correspondence was reviewed.

There being no other business before the board, Commissioner Blackburn moved to adjourn at 11:11 a.m. and to meet again in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 16, 2026. Commissioner Luft seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved this 16th day of March, 2026.

Mitchell Blackburn, Chairman

ATTEST: Tacy A. Keener, County Clerk

Law enforcement activity

Rush County Sheriff Mark Knowles reported law enforcement activity for March 8 through March 14.

There were 7 civil process papers served and 7 complaints of cattle out.

There was 1 arrest during the week.

On March 8, outside agency assist with Ellis County for a 911 transfer, investigation of a burglary not in progress in the 2900 block of K-4, investigation of an animal at large complaint in the 3200 block of Ave. F, request to check the area in La Crosse.

On March 9, outside agency assist with EMS for a fall victim in the 2100 block of CR 300, investigation of an animal at large complaint in the 3500 block of K-96, citizen assist reference 911 addresses, investigation of a trespass complaint in the 3600 block of Ave. J, citizen assist for information about a search warrant, prisoner transport from Barton County Jail for court purposes.

On March 10, outside agency assist with Community Corrections in La Crosse, citizen assist for a VIN inspection in La Crosse, investigation of smoke in the area in the 3100 block of Ave. N, citizen assist for missing animals in the 1300 block of Ave. M.

On March 11, citizen assist for information on statutes for flying drones in La Crosse, outside agency assist with EMS for a medical emergency in the 600 block of Locust Street in La Crosse, citizen assist for a criminal trespass in La Crosse, walk-in at the Sheriff's Office to report scam messages, conducted a welfare check in Nekoma, conducted a warrant arrest in Nekoma, investigation of an animal at large complaint in the 700 block of West 10th Street in La Crosse, investigation of a vehicle injury accident in Liebenenthal, investigation of suspicious activity in the 500 block of Oak Street, removed a traffic hazard from the road in the 3300 block of K-96.

On March 12, investigation of a driving

complaint on K-4, citizen assist for a VIN inspection in La Crosse, outside agency assist with Ellis County for a medical emergency, motorist assist in La Crosse.

On March 13, citizen assist for a welfare check in Ness County, citizen assist for questions on a protection from abuse order received in La Crosse, questions about a scam text in La Crosse, investigation of a two vehicle non-injury accident in the 500 block Main Street in La Crosse, welfare check in the 100 block North Locust in Timken, outside agency assist for an EMS emergency in the 500 block of Washington Street in La Crosse.

On March 14, outside agency assist for possible criminal threats for a Rice County investigation, check a vehicle in the 1500 block of Main Street in La Crosse, traffic control for the parade in Rush Center, investigate driving complaints near Ave. X and CR 210 and Rush Center, citizen assist for a vehicle lockout in Rush Center, investigate a false residential alarm near Nekoma, investigate a possible animal abuse near Rush Center, removed debris from the highway in the 3700 block of K-4, citizen assist for a civil matter in the 1500 block Main Street in La Crosse, investigate a possible disturbance near 9th and Peace Street in La Crosse, motorist assist at 5th Street and Main Street in La Crosse, citizen assist for a civil matter in the 1500 block Main Street in La Crosse.

Anyone noticing anything out of the ordinary occurring in the county is encouraged to contact the Rush County Sheriff's Office, 785-222-2578 or if it is an emergency call 911. You can also follow us on Facebook at Rush County Sheriff's Office. Also check out our new app on Google Play and in the App Store on your mobile device, by downloading Sheriff Connect. Once you are in the app, search for Rush County Sheriff's Office. This app will connect you to get notifications in case of an emergency, plus it provides many other resources.