

From Our ARCHIVES

By Linda Kenyon

10 Years Ago

October 5, 2016

Both Rush County school districts have showed little change in enrollment of students for the 2016-2017 school year. USD 395 La Crosse has 152 students in elementary, 47 in the middle school and 90 in the high school. The total headcount is 289, down three from last year. USD 403 Otis-Bison has 103 students in elementary, counting preschool and kindergarten, 87 in junior and senior high and 57 students in the virtual on-line school. The total number of students in elementary, junior high and senior high is 247, up two from last year's enrollment.

The Kansas Professional Rodeo Association has announced that the McCracken Rodeo has been named the 2016 KPRA Large Purse Rodeo of the Year by its members. The McCracken Rodeo has won Rodeo of the Year 15 times. This is the first year the title has been divided into Large Purse Rodeo of the Year, Small Purse Rodeo of the Year and New Rodeo of the Year.

25 Years Ago

October 4, 2001

Family, students and faculty attended the La Crosse High School National Honor Society Initiation Ceremony. Students Monica Toland, Lance Irvin, Nicole Deschenes, Amanda Walker and Kayla Basgall were selected to be initiated into the chapter. Senior officers and members in attendance were President Billy Legleiter, Vice President Erin Wilson, Secretary Jennifer Meitl, Samantha Woods and Maggie Renfrow.

McCracken Middle School played an unprecedented 6-man game against Utica-Healy Thursday. This was an experience for the team, as they usually play 8-man and have in the past played 11-man, but never a 6-man game. They lost 18-20, which is not bad considering that Utica-Healy, while a smaller team, is used to playing 6-man and the MMS boys only had a week to prepare for this unusual occurrence.

50 Years Ago

September 30, 1976

The Business and Professional Women's Club of La Crosse has named Mrs. Floyd (Zippa) Hall, Woman of the Year. The Barnard Library board and personnel and the BPW Club will honor her with an open house Sunday. Mrs. Hall has always been interested in library work and especially so since the establishment of Barnard Library in 1916. On April 28, 1955, she appeared before the House of Representatives Washington, D.C. in behalf of the Library Service Bill. This bill would provide necessary funds to demonstrate good library facilities for small libraries. This bill was passed in 1956. Another vision or dream of Zippa's was a history of Rush County. This dream, too, has been realized, but only by much hard work for her and the committees who so ably helped her. The Rush County History Book, which she edited, was published and released to the public on May 30, 1976.

The Pawnee Heights Tigers were defeated by the Otis-Bison Cougars 20-6 in a Quivira league game Friday played at Rozel. Otis-Bison only led by six points at half-time on an 8-yard run by Paul Erb. But the Cougars scored again in the third on a 10-yard run by P. Erb, and Don Erb ran the extra points. It was D. Erb again in the fourth quarter, scoring this time on a 3-yard run.

75 Years Ago

October 4, 1951

Television will have its commercial debut here today and an attempt will be made to receive the World Series in La Crosse. The Luft Farm Store has received a set which is installed and ready to go on a trial basis. The table model has a new type equipment built in which is supposed to give reception here, even though La Crosse is suppos-

edly far away from the "fringe" area. Eddie Leiker, manager of the store, has been getting fair to good reception in the mornings from an Oklahoma City station, and many La Crosse residents have taken time off to watch the shows. Afternoon and evening reception has been fair, although Leiker has trouble tuning in stations during those periods. The set at the Luft Farm Store is not the first to be installed here. Ralph Pivonka, La Crosse, has a set in his home. Pivonka says he can bring in stations about half the time.

The Rush county men to go into the service will leave here Tuesday and will be inducted in Kansas City Wednesday. Their names: Willard Tuzicka, Timken; Melvin E. Decker, Bison; Clifton Seaman, Nekoma; Forrest Edwards, Bison; Julius Dreher, La Crosse; William Moran, Hargrave.

100 Years Ago

The La Crosse Republican
October 7, 1926

Hays has awakened to a real menace which exists in Ellis County, and the city and school authorities have merged in a fight against the distribution of illicit whiskey in that town and have decided to call on Federal authorities for help. All evidence in booze cases is to be turned over to federal officers with the request that the United States Government lend it help at every turn to "dry up" Ellis county. It was pointed out that Hays, being a school town, has a right to expect more protection against bootleggers than cities where there is a much smaller percent of school population. Hays and Ellis county have been a hot bed of booze dealers and a real cleanup will meet with satisfaction all thru this section.

La Crosse opened the season here last Friday, against the Trego County High School, of WaKeeney, by holding them to a 0-0 tie. Although WaKeeney outweighed the La Crosse team almost 20 pounds to the man, the home boys showed they can hold a bigger team than they are. They carried the ball up to the 1-yard line but didn't have the weight to put it over, against such a heavy team. At one time it looked like the game was lost when WaKeeney intercepted a pass and ran 60 yards for a touch down, which was called back because a WaKeeney man clipped a La Crosse man during the play and such a foul calls for a 15 yard penalty from the spot where the foul is committed. The ball was brought back and after that, neither side made any serious threats against the others goal. As is usual in the first game of the season, both teams fumbled a lot, but it will be eliminated before the next game if hard work can do it.

125 Years Ago

The La Crosse Republican
October 4, 1901

Some time ago County Attorney McCormick and his deputy H.L. Anderson made an investigation to find out if or not the state law has been violated in this county pertaining to the buying of grain. After their investigation they felt satisfied said law had been violated and proceeded to cause the arrest and prosecution of E.J. Smiley of Topeka, secretary of the Kansas state grain dealers association. Last Sunday night Sheriff Littler arrested Mr. Smiley at his home in Topeka and brought him, next day, for trial in the district court, which convened the following day. Smiley was charged with entering into an agreement, contract and combination with grain dealers at Bison, Rush county, to pool and fix prices and divide said earnings, and prevent competition among the grain buyers. It appears that all the Bison grain buyers who went into the scheme were to get an equal division of grain purchased. The case was given to the jury yesterday morning and after deliberating a short time, they brought in a verdict of "guilty as charged." The judge imposed a sentence of a \$500 fine, cost of the trial, and three months confinement in the county jail. The case will be appealed to the supreme court.

-Rush County Commission Minutes-

COMMISSIONERS MINUTES Monday, September 21, 2026, 9:00 a.m. Chairman Mitchell Blackburn, Vice-Chairman Richard T. Luft and member Les Rogers were present. Commissioner Luft moved to approve the September 14, 2026 minutes as presented. Commissioner Balckburn seconded the motion. Chair called for discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

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

County Attorney Tony Rues and Deputy County Clerk Kristen Muller joined the meeting. At 9:13 a.m., Commissioner Luft moved to go into executive session for 20 minutes with County Attorney Rues, County Clerk Keener and Deputy County Clerk Muller regarding non-elected personnel with the County Clerk's office. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting returned to open session at 9:33 a.m. At 9:33 a.m., Commissioner Rogers moved to extend the executive session an additional 10 minutes. Commissioner Blackburn seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting returned to open session at 9:43 a.m.

Commissioners Luft moved to approve 2025 Rush County Transfers as proposed by the auditors, AdamBrown LLC. Commissioner Blackburn seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

At 9:45 a.m., Commissioner Rogers moved to go into executive session for 5 minutes with County Attorney Rues, County Clerk Keener and Deputy County Clerk Muller regarding non-elected personnel with the County Clerk's office. Commissioner Blackburn seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting returned to open session at 9:50 a.m.

A call was placed to Forrest Rhodes, Attorney Assist with KCAMP. At 9:59 a.m., Commissioner Rogers moved to go into executive session for 15 minutes with Attorney Assist Rhodes, County Attorney Rues, County Clerk Keener and Deputy County Clerk Muller regarding non-elected personnel with the County Clerk's office. Commissioner Luft seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting returned to open session at 10:14 a.m. At 10:14 a.m., Commissioner Rogers moved to extend the executive session an additional 10 minutes. Commissioner Balckburn seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting returned to open session at 10:24 a.m. At 10:24 a.m., Commissioner Rogers moved to extend the executive session an additional 15 minutes. Commissioner Blackburn seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting returned to open session at 10:39 a.m.

Chad Foust, Road and Bridge Supervisor, met with the board and presented his report. They graded in Alexander, Banner, Big Timber, Brookdale, Center, Garfield, Illinois, Lone Star and Pioneer townships. Magnets were utilized in Banner, Brookdale and Center; sand hauled in Banner, Garfield and Illinois; chip seal and lip removal done in Banner; ditch work done in Pioneer and corner stones located in Illinois and Lone Star. Mowing was done in Banner, Center, Garfield, Lone Star, Pioneer and Union townships. The mechanics did routine maintenance on county equipment.

Correspondence was reviewed.

There being no other business before the board, Commissioner Blackburn moved to adjourn at 11:45 a.m. and to meet again in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, September 28, 2026. Commissioner Luft seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Approved this 28th day of September, 2026.

ATTEST: Tacy A. Keener, County Clerk

Mitchell Blackburn, Chairman

-City of La Crosse Commission Minutes-

The regular meeting of the La Crosse City Commission was held on September 9, 2026 at 5:15 p.m. Present were Mayor Alan Sramek, Commissioner Bill Schroter, Commissioner Kim Peach, City Manager Lyle Hammerschmidt, City Clerk Kim Jay, and James Heifner.

Commissioner Peach motioned to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2026 meeting and 2027 Budget Hearing. Commissioner Schroter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Schroter motioned to pay the bills, Commissioner Peach seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Peach motioned to approve payment to ACI Distributors \$6,168.00 from Equipment Reserve for a limb shark saw, Mayor Sramek seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Commissioner Peach motioned to approve payment to Core & Main \$19,048.23 from Water Depreciation Res. for water line project, Commissioner Schroter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

City Manager reported on the following: water rate increase – Commissioner Schroter motioned to adopt Ordinance No. 15-224 Water rate; Commissioner Peach seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0. Employee accident; Safe Routes to School and KDOT grant application; EBH Contractors contacted city in regard to Rush Center's water; outside city limits water customer; estimate to fix city pool.

Commissioner Peach discussed issues at the pool, splash pad, and an ordinance for e-bikes and scooters.

Mayor Sramek motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:54 p.m. Commissioner Schroter seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Law enforcement activity

Rush County Sheriff Mark Knowles reported law enforcement activity for September 20 through September 26.

There were 15 civil process papers served and 3 complaints of cattle out.

There were no arrests during the week.

On September 20, investigation of suspicious activity in the 100 East Laura Avenue in Otis, investigation of a theft in the 2300 block of U.S. 183, outside agency assist for cattle out on U.S. 183, investigation of a driving complaint on U.S. 183, investigation of a burglary and criminal damage in the 200 block of East Beech Avenue in McCracken, investigation of criminal threat in the 100 block of West 7th Street in La Crosse.

On September 21, investigation of a driving complaint in the 1900 block of U.S. 183, investigation of harassment in La Crosse, citizen assist for a VIN inspection in La Crosse, investigation of identity theft in the 100 block of South 5th Street in Otis, outside agency assist with Kansas K-Patrol for a suicidal subject traveling outside of the county, investigation of a 911 accidental dial in the 400 block of West 8th Street in La Crosse, assisted a motorist on Main Street in Bison, investigation of a physical disturbance in the 100 block of State Street in Rush Center.

On September 22, conducted a welfare check in the 1500 block of Main Street in La Crosse, request to check subject in the 1900 block of U.S. 183, conducted a motorist assist in the 3100 block of K-96, conducted a motorist assist in the 1800 block of K-96, investigation of a scam in the 600 block of Pine Street in La Crosse, citizen assist for a VIN inspection in La Crosse, conducted a civil standby in the 200 block of Peace Street in La Crosse, investigation of a commercial alarm in the 800 block of Main Street in La Crosse.

On September 23, conducted a motorist assist on U.S. 183, outside agency assist for an interview for mental screening, inves-

tigation of an animal at large complaint in the 700 block of Peace Street in La Crosse

On September 24, conducted a welfare check in the 700 block of East 6th Street in La Crosse, prisoner transport from Barton County Jail for court purposes, conducted a check area in the 1300 block of Peace Street in La Crosse, investigation of a 911 accidental dial in the 400 block of East 15th Street in La Crosse, investigation of a driving complaint on 10th Street in La Crosse, outside agency assist with Barton County and Hamilton County for an overdue motorist/stuck vehicle, removed traffic hazard from the roadway in the road in the 2300 block of U.S. 183, investigation of criminal damage in the 500 block of East 11th Street in La Crosse.

On September 25, motorist assist in the 3000 block of CR 320, investigation of an accidental 911 call, request to check an abandoned vehicle in the 3300 block of Ave. J, citizen assist for a VIN inspection in Rush Center, request for a civil standby in the area of the Otis-Bison school, outside agency assist for a mental screening at the Sheriff's Office.

On September 26, report of found property in La Crosse, citizen assist for a civil matter in Otis, investigation of an abandoned 911 call near Otis, transient transport through the county, request to check a suspicious vehicle in Otis.

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.