

# Battle of Prairie Grove 2024 - Update

## *Union Army - West of the River*



### *Reenactors of the 2024 Battle of Prairie Grove Reenactment*

*Come join us at Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park for a thrilling weekend of bringing history to life. We are excited to once again be hosting the Battle of Prairie Grove Reenactment. We look forward to seeing you all for this great weekend. - P.G. Battlefield Park*



1. Just a quick update we are a few weeks' out from this event. Please get your troops registered ASAP! Battalion Commanders please get your basic rosters and early estimates in also ASAP!

2. Revised Union Army Schedule - Attached is a revised Union Army Schedule. We have tweaked a couple of areas such as Reveille & the Friday night officer's call. Please use this new schedule. Park hasn't released an official event schedule so we will go off of the Union army schedule until otherwise notified and any changes needed.

### **Union Army Schedule**

*Prairie Grove 2024*

**Thursday Night – Dec. 5, 2024**

- Sutler setup and camping for early arrivals. (Army Commanders & their F&S only)

#### **Friday – Dec. 6, 2024**

- Camp setup all day
- **Noon** - Reenactor Registration opens
- **6 to 8 pm** – Prairie Grove Parks official Officers Call with park and CS command Staff - (Battalion Commanders & up)
- **9pm** Officers Call at Union HQ (Friday night assessment) – Battalion Commanders & staff only

#### **Saturday – Dec. 7, 2024**

- **6:00 am** – Reveille
- **6:30 to 7:30** – Breakfast
- **7:45** – Battalion Morning Reports due to Union H.Q.
- **8:30 to 9:00** – Drill (Battalion Commanders discretion)
- **9:15** – (Optional if Battalion Commanders want to do this) - Assemble of the Army of Frontier for Dress Parade! (No Knapsacks required)
- **10am** - Artillery moved to battlefield for afternoon battle
- **10:30** – 1st call to all Battalions
- **10:45** – Assemble of the Army of Frontier
- **11:00** – Army marches out to Illinois Creek for staging across the river
- **12:00 - Noon** -Infantry column eats lunch out of haversacks in field.
- **1:00 pm** - Afternoon Battle -Assault on the Borden House
- **3:00 pm** - Return to Camp / Battalions relay after action reports & or any issues to HQ

- **5:00 pm** – Officer Call at Union HQ for Battalion level officers
- **7:00 pm** – Officers Call for future planning (Next Years Schedule)

**Sunday – Dec. 8, 2024**

- **6:30 am** – Reveille
- **7:00 to 8:00** – Breakfast
- **8:00 am** -Battalion Morning Reports due to Union HQ
- **8:00 to 9:00** – Drill (Battalion Commanders discretion)
- **9:00 to 9:45** - Church Services (we assume this is going to take place)
- **10:00 am** (Optional if Battalion Commanders want to do this) - Morning Dress Parade & Sunday Knapsack Inspection (primarily Infantry but if Cav & Artillery want to participate, they can do so).
- **11:45 am** – 1st Call to all Battalions
- **12:00 - Noon** - Union Army forms to march out to staging for battle, (eats lunch at staging)
- **1:00 pm** - Afternoon Battle- Blunt’s assaults on Confederate left
- **3:00 pm** - Return to Camp, Break Down, Pack out
- **6:00 pm** - Camps should be empty

**3. Union Army Camp Map** - Also, we have attached a Union Army camp map. This is what we have as of right now. It is subject to change from now up to the event but we only expect some minor tweaking. We will advise if any changes. When you arrive on site, please be flexible & work with our command staff as we try to get everything laid out. Possibly need to tweak on where to put a few horses for HQ and Campaigner battalion command staff. **Dogtrot house is Federal HQ.** So that spot is reserved for Federal HQ and Staff. If any questions or concerns please reach out to Chief of Staff – Col. Devin Wielar.



**4. Park Schedule** – Event as of right now hasn’t released an official park or event schedule so we are going off of what we know from past events!

**5. Caps & Powder needed!** - Please make sure that you have enough Musket Caps & Cartridges for at least 60 to 80 rounds per battle. We are not sure on how many Sutlers are coming so we can’t say if anyone will have caps or powder available. James Country Mercantile who usually sales musket caps will NOT be at this event. You need to be prepared for 2 to 3 main battles plus drill. No guarantee any sutlers will be on site with powder or caps for sale.

**6. Authenticity Reminder** - Once again, we are asking for everyone to police your organizations on authenticity and maintain it throughout the entire weekend. Just because public goes home does not mean that we can change out of period uniforms and such. We need to as an Army at least go back to the basics! That means no wristwatches, no modern-day glasses or sunglasses, no modern-day footwear. In camp NO cell phones or cigarettes. If you need a period free zone please go to sutlers or parking lot Keep camp furniture to a bare minimum. Use your army ammo boxes or tree stumps to sit on over a farby mountain man chair. When cooking please do not have out in the open modern-day packaging or coolers. Keep those things inside tents at all times. This is just a basic list of things we can work on for this event that could really make a difference. Of course, many more things could be brought up but these represent a basic return to the old standards

of our hobby. Commanders, please try to enforce this and encourage your men to keep the basics of authenticity for the entire event. Let's not ruin someone else's weekend by displaying farby stuff or behaviors.

**7. Civilian Area** – Most of the Civilian area is per park request for civilian interpreters. The buildings in this area will be used for civilian demonstrations for the public. It is assumed that most Battalions will have their own civilians camping with them.

**8.** Just know that we are looking forward to this event and seeing everyone in the field. It's been way to long & this opportunity to do Prairie Grove once again is so needed! To field as an Army once again! We will be portraying the **1862 Army of the Frontier** for this weekend. Possible Saturday night officers call to discuss next year schedule if commanders are interested in doing so, just let us know. If so please try to attend so we can at least talk and see where we are at & if willing to work together!

**9. Music** If any organization has field music, please report it to Command H.Q. so we can coordinate. If there is a senior musician available for the job we want to know and work with them to coordinate field music. Regardless of Battalion.

**10. – Artillery** – Our HQ. staff officer to coordinate with Overall Artillery Commander Col. Tom Wing is Lt. Col. Don Waymack. He speaks for the General!



**11. FLAGS** – Please keep 1 flag per battalion, (Infantry can have the 2 if needed), battery or Troop. Only flags that are appropriate for the Prairie Grove campaign are allowed. Do not fly other flags not appropriate for PG in your camps. We do not want flags being flown for organizations that were not at Prairie Grove (Generic staff flags can be allowed with ok from HQ) Just check with us we want to try to honor the original battle with our flags.

**12. – Basic Impression Guidelines** - The guiding impression for this reenactment will be that of a standard western Federal soldier. Early in the war, especially in the Trans-Mississippi, this was a broad statement. However, we are defining a 'standard western federal' as:

- Headgear: Dark blue forage cap, or black wide-brim slouch or Hardee hat.  
No 'cowboy' hats or massive brass unless documented.
- Jacket: 4-button sack coat, shell jacket, or union frock coat
- Shirt: Plain white or patterned civilian shirts.
- Trousers: sky blue infantry trousers
- Footwear: black brogans
- Leathers: Black leathers with brass 'US' belt buckle, brass 'US' box plate, and brass eagle breast plate on the cartridge box with sling.
- No special impressions that were not at the original Battle of Prairie Grove will be allowed. No Zouaves, No Berdan's Sharpshooters, etc.
- Those units who are portraying specific impressions are expected to do those impressions right!



**Officer Calls** - Friday evening will be an officer's call for Battalion Commanders and Federal H.Q. Staff with C.S. Command Staff and Park. Not sure exact time but most likely around 5 or 6 p.m. - We will let you know once we have confirmation. Federal H.Q. will try to have an Officers call on Friday evening around 8 p.m. or 9 p.m. - Also, a Saturday morning Officers call sometime around 7:30 or 8 A.M.

**13. Army Dress Parade** – In years past the Federal Army has had a Dress and Parade on Saturday evening after the battle. Last time we didn't have it due to some push back from a few individuals. We want to try to do this however we are open to either doing it Saturday evening or possibly Sunday morning. Battalion commanders please reach out to us and let us know your preference. However, its important that we come together as an army and form up at some point during the weekend besides the battle. This formation is TBD! We have a couple of dress parade options already in the schedule but they are optional and only if everyone is ok with it. Let us know.

**14. Provost & Guard Mount** – We do have an active provost unit this year. They will be doing active guard mount throughout the weekend. They will be asking for volunteers to help man the various post and shifts. Battalion commanders please be willing to participate with our Provost Marshal. This adds a new aspect to our camp life throughout the weekend. It went really well at Pilot Knob last September.



**15. – U.S. Federal Command Staff**

1. Brigadier General James Crofutt – Overall U.S. Commander
2. Col. Devin Wielar – Chief of Staff
3. Lt. Col. Don Waymack – Artillery Coordinator & Aid De Camp
4. Lt. Col. Mike Shafto – Generals horse & Chief of couriers.
5. Major Edward Cuneo – Provost Marshal
6. Joe Schlageck – Chief of Medical
7. Col. Tom Wing – Overall Federal U.S. Artillery
8. Cody Faber – Overall Cavalry Coordinator (both U.S. & C.S.)

**16. – Most likely Only 3 Battalions** – So it seems that this year we are only going to have 3 Infantry battalions. Usually, we need 4 Infantry Battalions for the Saturday battle. What this means is we need a battalion that doesn't lose a lot of casualties to go up a 2nd time. Regardless who ever goes up the main hill will not be asked to do that a 2nd time. Whatever battalion goes up a 2nd time will be shifted to the left and go up the part of the hill that is less steep than the main hill. Looking for battalion commanders' input and anyone willing to do this. Campaigner Battalion is doing 36th Illinois so they are going up main hill on 2nd assault. This will

be discussed at our federal officer's call.

**17. – U.S. Federal Command Staff Picture** – Saturday morning sometime we want to get some pictures taken with the entire command staff. Please be prepared to assemble at the U.S. Headquarters to have some pictures taken if you are on U.S. Federal Command Staff. We will determine a time at Officers Call. Possible 2nd picture with all command staff and also Battalion commanders with their staff.

**18. – Volunteers Needed** – The state park will be working with a smaller staff than in the past. We will be looking for a handful of volunteers to assist with registration for a short shift of less than 2 hours each. Friday & Saturday morning. This would go a long way to maintain our goodwill with the battlefield park and sustain our great relationship with the state of Arkansas. If anyone is able to help in this regard, please reach out to Chief of Staff Col. Devin Wielar and he can hook you up with the proper person on park staff.



Nine months after their victory at Pea Ridge, the Union Army of the Frontier in the area was geographically divided. One division under Brig. Gen. James Blunt remained in the northwestern part of Arkansas, and the second under Brig. Gen. Francis Herron was stationed around the Missouri capital of Springfield. The Confederates, hoping to use Arkansas as a base for operations into the border state of Missouri, looked to defeat the Union armies in the area. Maj. Gen. Thomas C. Hindman gathered a Confederate force at Fort Smith, Arkansas, and sought to catch the Union groups while separated and destroy them in detail. On December 3rd, Hindman departed Fort Smith with 11,000 men and marched for Blunt's army. Both met along the high ground near Prairie Grove, halfway between Fort Smith and the Missouri border. By that time, Herron had arrived from Missouri and joined Blunt. The Rebels established their line of battle on a wooded high ridge northeast of Prairie Grove Church. After the failure of two Federal assaults, a spirited artillery duel kept the opposing forces from gaining any advantage. Hearing the cannon fire from Herron's fight, Blunt moved his division toward the sound of the fighting and assailed the Confederate left flank. Hindman parried Blunt's advance but was unable to make any further progress against Herron. Though the battle ended as a stalemate, nightfall saw Hindman's force retreating, establishing Federal control of northwest Arkansas.