

Press Release

Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau

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Civil War Encampment Set for June 25 in Springfield

Springfield, Mo. – As part of the commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War, the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation is hosting a Civil War encampment and drill at The Commons on the NW corner of National Avenue and Trafficway, just east of Hammons Field, to mark the anniversary of the arrival of the first army to occupy Springfield during the Civil War. The event will occur on June 25, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The public is invited to this free event.

At the 150th Anniversary Encampment, visitors will find an authentic Civil War camp of infantry and artillery, and can observe camp life and watch soldiers drill as their officers attempt to turn raw recruits into soldiers. Information on the 150th Anniversary Reenactment of the Battle of Wilson's Creek August 12, 13, 14, 2011, will also be available.

Historical background:

On June 11, 1861, U. S. General Nathaniel Lyon declared war on the State of Missouri. He immediately launched a campaign to drive the pro-secessionist Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson and his Missouri State Guard from the vital Missouri River Valley. At the same time he dispatched troops under General Thomas William Sweeney toward Springfield to cut off the escape of the Missouri State Guard into Arkansas. On June 24, 1861, Colonel Franz Sigel's German-speaking, St. Louis-enlisted Union troops arrived in Springfield after a hot, wearying march from the railhead at Rolla. Many of his troops had marched through their shoes and wore uniforms that had been reduced to rags by the exertions of the march. This federal force was the first army to occupy Springfield during the Civil War. It would not be the last. Springfield would change hands many times during the war. Sigel's troops went into camp around Springfield and began rounding up southern sympathizers. The arrival of these troops encouraged Unionists, discouraged secessionists, and brought home to everyone the reality that war had come to Springfield.

Established in 1950, the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation is one of

the oldest private sector support groups associated with the National Park Service. It is a non-profit corporation with IRS 501(c) (3) status.

Since the Foundation's initial purchase of 37 acres on Bloody Hill, site of the heaviest fighting in the battle, the Foundation has worked to preserve and protect the park. The goal of the Foundation is to enhance awareness and appreciation of this national treasure—a haven for historians and those who enjoy the outdoors.

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