

## **42nd Combat Aviation Brigade**

[Leicester man takes command role in NY Army National Guard aviation brigade:](#)

Batavia Daily News, May 11, 2019

## **Emergency Response**

[Rudy's Restaurant in Oswego preparing for potential flooding:Gov. Cuomo sent 100 more National Guard troops to Lake Ontario shoreline:](#)

WSYR, May 10, 2019

[State of emergency declared for Wayne County bays :](#)

Olean Times Herald, May 10, 2019

[Lake shoreline flood preparation strongly advised:](#)

Niagara Gazette, May 16, 2019

[New York Guard putting more troops on flood control duty By Eric Durr, New York National GuardMay 12, 2019:](#)

Army.mil, May 12, 2019

[New York Guard putting more troops on flood control duty:](#)

naitonalguard.mil, May 11, 2019

[Water level inches up on Lake Ontario as rains continue to fall:](#)

WHAM, May 13, 2019

[Gov. Cuomo sending 100 more National Guard troops to Lake Ontario shoreline:](#)

My Twin tiers.com . May 11, 2019

[As lake levels continue to rise, state of emergency declared for Wayne County bays:](#)

WHAM, May 10, 2019

## **New York Air National Guard**

[Air National Guard Takes Over Penn Station for Official ANG Day 2019 \(Photosand Video\):](#)

American Security Today, May 14, 2019

## **New York Army National Guard**

[69th Infantry 9-11 to Baghdad \(video\):](#)

Task and Purpose, May 16, 2019

[N.Y.Guard Soldiers win Northeast Best Warrior Competition for the second time in two years:](#)

army.mil, By Ryan Campbell, New York National Guard, May 11, 2019

## **PFOA Issue**

[Gillibrand wants to set enforceable standards for water contaminants:](#)

Adirondack Daily Enterprise, May 17, 2019

## **State Partnership Program**

[N.Y. Air Guard firefighters meet South African counterparts:](#)

Nationalguard.mil, By Lt. Col. Al Phillips | New York National Guard | May 14, 2019

## **World War I**

[100 Years Ago in Photos: A Look Back at 1919: 37 Photos In Focus:](#)

The Atlantic ,May 15, 2019 37 Photos In Focus

---

## **42nd Combat Aviation Brigade**

### **Leicester man takes command role in NY Army National Guard aviation brigade**

**Batavia Daily News, May 11, 2019 :**

LATHAM — New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Major Mark Wilson, a Leicester resident who deployed to Iraq twice, took on the job of senior enlisted leader for the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade during an April 6 ceremony.

The 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade is comprised of the 3rd Battalion 142nd Aviation in Latham and Ronkonkoma on Long Island, and the 642nd Aviation Support Battalion, which has elements in Rochester, Dunkirk and Ronkonkoma. The brigade also has administrative responsibility for New York Army National Guard CH-47 and medical evacuation helicopter units assigned to the Army Aviation Support Facility at Rochester International Airport.

The big CH-47 helicopters are seen regularly over Genesee, Orleans, Wyoming and Livingston counties

As command sergeant major, Wilson is the key adviser to the brigade commander on enlisted soldier training, discipline, and professional development.

Wilson replaced Command Sgt. Major Joseph Marino who will be taking an on a position as operations sergeant major for the brigade.

Wilson joined the Army in 1980 and served in Germany. He transferred to the Connecticut Army National Guard in 1984 and joined the New York Army National Guard in 1988.

Wilson, who originally trained as a helicopter mechanic, has served in a number of key non-commissioned officer positions. These include a platoon sergeant and company first sergeant in the 1st Battalion 142nd Aviation Battalion; first sergeant for Alpha Company 2nd Battalion 142nd Aviation; support operations sergeant major and command sergeant major for the 642nd Aviation Support Battalion; and operations sergeant major for the 42nd Combat Aviation Brigade.

Wilson deployed to Bosnia in 1997, and deployed to Balad, Iraq, in 2004-2005 and then returned to Iraq in 2008-2009 at Baghdad International Airport. He deployed to Camp Buering, Kuwait, in 2013-2014.

His military education includes the First Sergeants Course and the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy.

Wilson's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Master Aviation Badge.

Wilson is also a federal civilian employee of the New York National Guard at the Army National Guard Flight Facility at Rochester International Airport, in addition to serving in the New York National Guard.

<https://www.thedailynewsonline.com/bdn01/leicester-man-takes-command-role-in-ny-army-national-guard-aviation-brigade-20190511>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **Emergency Response**

### **Rudy's Restaurant in Oswego preparing for potential flooding:Gov. Cuomo sent 100 more National Guard troops to Lake Ontario shoreline**

WSYR, May 10, 2019 :

OSWEGO, N.Y. (WSYR) -- 12,000 sandbags and 200 feet of aquadam now line the shore behind Rudy's in Oswego.

"The biggest effort we've been making is just to try to raise our land level to prevent the lake from coming into the parking lot or the building," said owner Jason Livesey. "We've had to replace electric lines, we've had to replace lighting, we've had to replace our seagull netting."

They might be down some outdoor seating, but inside it's nothing short of the full Rudy's experience.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo sent another 100 New York National Guard members to the Lake Ontario shoreline.

They are being sent there to help with flood preparation. This doubles the amount of National Guard troops already sent.

<https://www.localsyr.com/news/local-news/gov-cuomo-sending-100-more-national-guard-troops-to-lake-ontario-shoreline/1995047351>

[Return to top](#)

---

## State of emergency declared for Wayne County bays

Olean Times Herald, May 10, 2019 :

SODUS — Rising levels of Lake Ontario have forced Wayne County officials to take action.

Board of Supervisors Chairman and Sodus Town Supervisor Steve LeRoy, Huron Town Supervisor Laurie Crane and Wolcott Town Supervisor Lynn Chatfield declared a state of emergency for all bays in Sodus, Huron and Wolcott. By emergency order, effective Saturday at 12:01 a.m. motorized boat traffic must operate at:

- Sodus Bay: Idle speed only, causing no wake within 1,000 feet of shore.
- Port Bay, East Bay, Blind Sodus Bay: Idle speed only, causing no wake.

Lake Ontario and Wayne County bays are reported to be at 247.9 feet, the county said.

Although recent boat traffic has been minimal, increased boat traffic would create a hazardous situation, property damage and shore line erosion, the county said.

Public safety concerns are floating debris and submerged obstructions usually visible, property damage and shoreline erosion from the high water level and motorized boat traffic wakes.

Sodus Point Mayor Dave McDowell stressed that the village is open for business.

“As many know, the village of Sodus Point is frequently the first locality in the region to experience the destructive effects of high water,” he said. “To be very clear, the primary purpose of this declaration is to allow the sheriff to impose a no-wake zone within 1000 feet of the shoreline. The village is fully accessible. All the Sodus Point businesses are open. Sandbagging on Greig Street continues, but the vast majority of properties are not in peril. Preparations for high water continue unabated, systems are working and we are continuing to monitor the situation around the clock. There is no cause for alarm.”

Additionally, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announced Friday that he has deployed 100 additional members of the New York National Guard to assist with preparedness operations in eight counties impacted by potential Lake Ontario flooding, including Wayne. This additional deployment brings the total number of National Guard deployments to 200. To date, the state

has deployed 18 sandbaggers, over 850,000 sandbags, hundreds of pumps and over 3,200 feet of aquadam to the affected regions.

“To those living in lakefront communities: remember 2017, remember the flooding. The water will most likely come back to the same areas to almost the exact same spot. If you had damage in 2017, don’t wait for the floods to come. Please call your local supervisor ... and tell them you need help so they can call the state,” Cuomo said. “We’re going to call up another 100 National Guard today. So we have National Guard, we have aquadam, we have sandbags, we have pumps, we have people deployed. But we need to know where they need to be deployed before the fact.”

Cuomo also urged residents and local officials in the eight counties potentially impacted by Lake Ontario flooding to intensify their preparations as a slow-moving storm will bring heavy rain and winds to the region this weekend. The precipitation and strong gusts, will increase the likelihood flooding or pooling of water along the shoreline as water levels in the lake and along the St. Lawrence River have remained higher than average due to heavy snow melt and above average rainfall. This extreme weather has required the proactive deployment of state resources to the region to protect homeowners and businesses from potential flooding.

Following a meeting with state officials last week, the International Joint Commission has increased outflows of water from the Robert Moses-Robert H. Saunders Power Dam on the St. Lawrence River in order to minimize impacts. However, the lake’s water level remains more than one foot above average and could continue to rise, said Cuomo’s office.

[http://www.oleantimesherald.com/news/state/state-of-emergency-declared-for-wayne-county-bays/article\\_b4a7b09c-5fee-5011-aea7-67e48c9135f0.html](http://www.oleantimesherald.com/news/state/state-of-emergency-declared-for-wayne-county-bays/article_b4a7b09c-5fee-5011-aea7-67e48c9135f0.html)

[Return to top](#)

---

## **Lake shoreline flood preparation strongly advised**

**Niagara Gazette, May 16, 2019 :**

YOUNGSTOWN - If you own a home or business near the shoreline, prepare for flooding now, because later it may be too late.

That was the message Pat Murphy, commissioner for the state Division of Homeland Security, sought to get out to flood-prone areas Wednesday, as Lake Ontario's water level creeps ever closer to record highs.

"We're here to encourage businesses and residents that can take mitigating steps, to do so now. ... We need to work on it now, versus later," Murphy said during a visit to the Youngstown Yacht Club Wednesday.

Murphy said the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recorded the current lake-level at 248.3 feet and projects it will rise another 5 or 6 inches in the next four weeks. Those projections estimate the lake will peak sometime in late May to late June. Even in the most favorable possible outcomes, the lake level would likely drop much slower than the rate at which it rose.

"We can do things now. At that point (after the water peaks), the damage will have already occurred," Murphy said.

In recent weeks, the state has deployed hundreds of thousands of sandbags, thousands of feet of aqua dam (a temporary shoreline barrier), sandbag filling machines, water pumps and various other equipment to shoreline areas. Niagara County has received some 70,000 sandbags, 20 water pumps, more than 300 feet of aqua dam, 150 feet of jersey barrier and two sandbag-filling machines.

In conjunction, top state officials, including Gov. Andrew Cuomo, have toured Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence shoreline areas in recent weeks to tout their flood preparation efforts.

Echoing recent refrains from those officials, Murphy said the state will backfill any equipment that is used, and encouraged residents to contact their local officials for help reinforcing their shoreline. Local firefighters, New York National Guard troops and other emergency workers are on hand to assist in deploying sandbags.

Murphy also took aim at the International Joint Commission, which is responsible for regulating waters on the U.S.-Canadian border, including managing the outflows from the lake.

State and local officials have frequently criticized the IJC, both this year and during the flooding of 2017, for its management of lake outflows. Many critics say the problem is the IJC's new water management plan, known as Plan 2014, arguing the plan prevents regulators from increasing outflows during the fall and winter. If the IJC increased outflows now, it would exacerbate flooding that has caused thousands of evacuations in Montreal.

Last month, the IJC reduced outflows repeatedly to alleviate that flooding.

"The issue here is the water levels have got to be managed more effectively (and) earlier in the season. We don't see that happening," Murphy said.

The IJC has insisted high rainfall and high inflows from other Great Lakes and rivers are to blame, and say the lake-level would not have been managed any differently under the old regulation plan. Responding to criticism from Cuomo earlier this month, IJC spokesman Frank Bevacqua said the agency has made "every effort to reduce flooding" in New York as well as Ontario and Quebec.

"But we cannot eliminate flooding when water supplies are extremely high," Bevacqua said in a statement. "When you dump a gallon of water into a cup, some of it is going to overflow no matter how much water was in the cup to begin with."

But the IJC has mostly failed to convince residents and business-owners who have suffered from the high water. Brian Price, owner of Niagara Jet Adventures, said the lake had never hit these levels in recent memory. Many of the lake-level records broken in 2017 had been set in 1973. "We're at a crisis," Price said. "It never happened before."

[https://www.niagara-gazette.com/news/local\\_news/lake-shoreline-flood-preparation-strongly-advised/article\\_0a6c51b2-2b47-599b-b39e-65ba2fd497c3.html](https://www.niagara-gazette.com/news/local_news/lake-shoreline-flood-preparation-strongly-advised/article_0a6c51b2-2b47-599b-b39e-65ba2fd497c3.html)

[Return to top](#)

---

## **New York Guard putting more troops on flood control duty**

Army.mil, May 12, 2019 :

SODUS POINT, N.Y. - A week after deploying 130 troops to help control flooding along the Lake Ontario shoreline the New York National Guard was preparing to bring on an additional 100 personnel by Monday, May 13.

Heavy rains throughout the Great Lakes region, combined with flooding rivers in Ontario and Quebec, have resulted in Lake Ontario water levels which are two feet higher than average, according to the International Joint Commission.

The commissioner regulates water levels in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

The higher water levels increase the danger of flooding to buildings along with the lake and shorefront erosion.

New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo activated 100 members of the New York Military Forces - which includes the New York Army and Air National Guard, along with the New York Naval Militia and New York Guard state defense force--to assist in the response.

The state response included 800,000 Sandbags, 15 sandbag-making machines, hundreds of pumps and 920 feet of Aquadam--a water containment system that employs a rubberized tube filled with water-- distributed in the eight counties along Lake Ontario.

On May 10, the governor announced that he was increasing the New York Military Forces commitment to 200 troops as water levels in the lake continued to rise and bad weather meant increased wave activity.

Along with more National Guard forces, the state deployed three more sandbagging machines, 500,000 more sandbags, and additional Aquadam systems -- totaling 3,200 feet--to the region.

The governor urged lakefront communities to identify areas where state assets should be used.

"We're going to call up another 100 National Guard today. So we have National Guard, we have Aquadam, we have sandbags, we have pumps, we have people deployed. But we need to know where they need to be deployed before the fact," the governor said.

Local officials should take note of where flooding occurred during high water in 2017 and assume the same areas will be impacted, the governor said.

"The National Guard has been doing a great job. We have as many sandbags as you need, we have Aquadam, we have pumping, we have the 2017 experience. You know where it's probably going to happen again. Please call now and tell us what you need," the governor said.

In 2017 Lake Ontario Water levels rose to record levels, and the New York National Guard mobilized 400 troops in response during the spring and early summer months.

The lake is still eight inches below that level and is not expected to rise further, according to the International Joint Commission.

As of May 10, the New York National Guard had 131 military personnel with 20 vehicles on duty.

Soldiers were assisting in sandbag operations at Sodus Point, near Rochester; Watertown, where they were filling palletizing sandbags; Clayton on the St. Lawrence River; Sacketts Harbor; and Albion.

One mission involved installing an Aquadam system and sandbagging to protect "Rudy's" a popular restaurant on the lake in Oswego, N.Y.

[https://www.army.mil/article/221750/new\\_york\\_guard\\_putting\\_more\\_troops\\_on\\_flood\\_control\\_duty](https://www.army.mil/article/221750/new_york_guard_putting_more_troops_on_flood_control_duty)

[Return to top](#)

---

## **New York Guard putting more troops on flood control duty**

**nationalguard.mil, May 11, 2019 :**



SODUS POINT, N.Y. – A week after deploying 130 troops to help control flooding along the Lake Ontario shoreline, the New York National Guard was preparing to bring on an additional 100 personnel by Monday.

Heavy rains throughout the Great Lakes region, combined with flooding rivers in Ontario and Quebec, have resulted in Lake Ontario water levels that are two feet higher than average, according to the International Joint Commission.

The commission regulates water levels in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

The higher water levels increase the danger of flooding to buildings along with the lake and shorefront erosion.

New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo activated 100 members of the New York Military Forces – which includes the New York Army and Air National Guard, along with the New York Naval Militia and New York Guard state defense force—to assist in the response.

The state response included 800,000 sandbags, 15 sandbag-making machines, hundreds of pumps and 920 feet of Aquadam—a water containment system that employs a rubberized tube filled with water – distributed in the eight counties along Lake Ontario.

On May 10, the governor announced that he was increasing the New York Military Forces commitment to 200 troops as water levels in the lake continued to rise and bad weather meant increased wave activity.

Along with more National Guard forces, the state deployed three more sandbagging machines, 500,000 more sandbags, and additional Aquadam systems – totaling 3,200 feet—to the region.

The governor urged lakefront communities to identify areas where state assets should be used.

"We're going to call up another 100 National Guard today. So we have National Guard, we have Aquadam, we have sandbags, we have pumps, we have people deployed. But we need to know where they need to be deployed before the fact," the governor said.

Local officials should take note of where flooding occurred during high water in 2017 and assume the same areas will be impacted, the governor said.

"The National Guard has been doing a great job. We have as many sandbags as you need, we have Aquadam, pumping, and we have the 2017 experience. You know where it's probably going to happen again. Please call now and tell us what you need," the governor said.

In 2017, Lake Ontario Water levels rose to record levels, and the New York National Guard mobilized 400 troops in response during the spring and early summer months.

The lake is still eight inches below that level and is not expected to rise further, according to the International Joint Commission.

As of May 10, the New York National Guard had 131 military personnel with 20 vehicles on duty.

Soldiers were assisting in sandbag operations at Sodus Point, near Rochester; Watertown, where they were filling palletizing sandbags; Clayton on the St. Lawrence River; Sacketts Harbor; and Albion.

One mission involved installing an Aquadam system and sandbagging to protect "Rudy's" a popular restaurant on the lake in Oswego, New York.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/1845099/new-york-guard-putting-more-troops-on-flood-control-duty/>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **Water level inches up on Lake Ontario as rains continue to fall**

**WHAM, May 13, 2019 :**

Rochester, N.Y. (WHAM) - As homeowners and businesses brace for potential flooding, the sandbags are a sign of what could be coming.

As of this week, Lake Ontario's water level stands at just over 248 feet.

In Monroe County, 170,000 sandbags have been filled. There are also 30 operational pumps and 500 feet of aqua dams that have been laid down along the shoreline.

Greece Town Supervisor Bill Reilich said any boat or vessels on waterways in the town of Greece - Braddock Bay, Buttonwood Creek, Salmon Creek, and Lake Ontario - must not exceed 5 mph.

[Monroe County has already declared a state of emergency](#) to free up additional resources related to potential flooding.

Governor Andrew Cuomo announced Friday an additional 100 New York National Guard members are being deployed across several counties in anticipation of possible flooding along the lakeshore. That includes [communities in Wayne County, where a state of emergency](#) has been declared along the lakeshore as well.

<https://13wham.com/news/local/water-level-inches-up-on-lake-ontario-as-rains-continue-to-fall>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **Gov. Cuomo sending 100 more National Guard troops to Lake Ontario shoreline**

**My Twin tiers.com . May 11, 2019 :**

OLCOTT, N.Y. (WIVB) - Gov. Andrew Cuomo is sending another 100 New York National Guard members to the Lake Ontario shoreline.

They are being sent there to help with flood preparation. This doubles the amount of National Guard troops being sent there.

Earlier on Friday, News 4 was in Wilson, where a boat harbor dock there was [closed off due to the high water level](#).

<https://www.mytwintiers.com/news/gov-cuomo-sending-100-more-national-guard-troops-to-lake-ontario-shoreline/1996342286>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **As lake levels continue to rise, state of emergency declared for Wayne County bays**

**WHAM, May 10, 2019 :**

Wayne County, N.Y. – A state of emergency has been declared for bays in Sodus, Huron and Wolcott, Wayne County.

The order, which goes into effect Saturday at 12:01 a.m., calls for boaters to use idle speeds within 1,000 feet of shore at Sodus Bay, in addition to using idle speeds at Port Bay, East Bay and Blind Sodus Bay.

The Wayne County Sheriff's Office says concerns include erosion due to boat wakes and high water levels.

In a statement, Sodus Point Mayor Dave McDowell said the village remains fully accessible, and that the majority of properties are not in danger. Preparations to continue with potential flooding are ongoing, he said, and officials are continuing to monitor the lake.

This comes a day after [Monroe County declared a state of emergency](#) around the Lake Ontario shoreline, including Braddock's Bay, the Genesee River and Irondequoit Bay.

Governor Andrew Cuomo announced Friday an additional 100 New York National Guard members are being deployed across several counties in anticipation of possible flooding along the lakeshore.

In a statement, the governor said, "To those living in lakefront communities: remember 2017, remember the flooding. The water will most likely come back to the same areas to almost the exact same spot. If you had damage in 2017, don't wait for the floods to come. Please call your local supervisor, your local major and tell them you need help so they can call the state."

According to the latest data, Lake Ontario is currently at 247.9 feet. That is about a foot short of flooding levels seen in 2017. The lake is expected to rise another seven inches by June 10.

<https://13wham.com/news/local/as-lake-levels-continue-to-rise-state-of-emergency-declared-for-wayne-county-bays>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **New York Air National Guard**

### **Air National Guard Takes Over Penn Station for Official ANG Day 2019 (Photos and Video)**

**American Security Today, May 14, 2019 :**

The Air National Guard (ANG) is launching the largest media takeover in its history, at Pennsylvania Station, (New York Penn Station or Penn Station), the main intercity railroad station in New York City and the busiest in the Western Hemisphere, as part of its 2019 Live Events Recruitment and Retention Tour.

To honor the incredible work the ANG has done for the United States and the city of New York, including around the clock protection of Penn Station,

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer has issued an official proclamation of ANG Day 2019 on May 17.

ANG Day 2019 is a concentrated effort to recognize and support the Air National Guard's mission to empower the constituents of New York City through world-class training, tuition assistance, and career opportunities.

Our ability to acknowledge the work of the five ANG Wings within the New York City area will pay tribute to their military service, empower local hometown commitments and inspire younger citizens to serve their country.

President Brewer and several members of ANG leadership will be speaking at Penn Station on May 17 at 11:00 a.m., which serves more than 600,000 passengers per weekday, followed by an exclusive walk through of our state-of-the-art recruitment experience.

Each asset was designed to give recruits a firsthand look into the life of an ANG service member.

The activations are three diverse hands-on experiences that allow recruits to visualize their future with Air National Guard.

Virtual reality air flight training simulation chairs, oculus headsets and software used by Lockheed Martin allow the recruits to fly from any airport in the United States with the option of flying different fighter jets

Cybersecurity game that challenges recruits to thwart a cyber-attack by would-be hackers

Virtual Uniform Experience allows the recruit to be featured in four different Air National Guard uniforms and post 3D animated content to social media

The ANG Live Events Tour features six mobile assets including the ANG Mobile Experience, the Mini-Mobile Experience and The Beast physical challenge, a robust, timed obstacle course.

As part of the U.S. Homeland Security team, the ANG has responsibility for air defense of the entire United States.

With the dual mission of protecting and defending U.S. interests both at home and abroad, the ANG travels anywhere in the world to selflessly defend freedom wherever the conflict may be: on land, in the air or cyberspace.

At the same time, ANG Servicemembers perform humanitarian and search and rescue duties during natural disasters, such as hurricanes, flooding and wildfires.

<https://americansecuritytoday.com/air-national-guard-takes-over-penn-station-for-official-ang-day-2019/>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **New York Army National Guard**

### **69th Infantry 9-11 to Baghdad (video)**

**Task and Purpose, May 16, 2019 :**

Video by Task and Purpose Website about the 69th Infantry

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDLdCXZAox4>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **N.Y. Guard Soldiers win Northeast Best Warrior Competition for the second time in two years**

army.mil, By Ryan Campbell, New York National Guard, May 11, 2019 :

CENTER STRAFFORD, NH - New York Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Martin Cozens and Cpl. Joseph Ryan took first place during the Northeast Region Best Warrior Competition held in Center Strafford, New Hampshire, April 29 to May 1.

The two New York Soldiers were up against Best Warrior winners from the New England states and New Jersey. Cozens won in the non-commissioned officers' category while Ryan was facing off against other junior enlisted Soldiers.

It's the second year in a row that New York Soldiers have won the competition in both categories. In 2018, Spc. Ilya Titov and Sgt. Quentin Davis -- both from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment -- won the regional competition and went to the Army National Guard nationwide Best Warrior event.

Cozens and Ryan performed "incredibly well" during the competition, said New York Army National Guard Command Sgt. Major David Piwowarski.

"They outperformed a tough and ready field of competitors from the region and won it all," Piwowarski said.

Cozens is a Greenwood Lake, N.Y., resident, and platoon sergeant assigned to Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment.

Prior to joining the National Guard, Cozens served six years with the 10th Mountain Division from Fort Drum, including a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2013.

The win was "exhilarating," Cozens said. But he emphasized that winning in New Hampshire was "a momentary pat on the back."

"I also know I have a harder challenge down the road," Cozens added.

The next stop for Cozens and Ryan is to compete for the overall titles at the 2019 Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition July 13-20 at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma.

Months of training and preparation without slowing down has paid off for the pair.

"The first competition was in October, which we started training in August for," said Ryan, an assistant operations specialist assigned to the 1st battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment. "Things really ramped up in January after the brigade competition."

Cozens and Ryan both said the help other Soldiers gave them in getting ready for the competition was vital.

Titov, the enlisted winner from 2018 who is now a sergeant, "donated a lot of his personal time so we could work together," Ryan said. "He had the most info, he's a squared away guy," he added.

Cozens praised his company first sergeant, Daniel Markle, for working with him to get ready for first the state and then the regional Best Warrior contests.

"He was one of the forces that got me into the alpha company," Cozens said. "He's been a springboard for information and mentorship and has been in the foxhole with me since day one."

They have been supported by their sponsors and trained by other Soldiers from different companies and even at the division level many of whom were on hand for the victory, Piwowarski explained. This helped them to turn any weaknesses they had into strengths, he emphasized.

Some of the tasks the Soldiers are evaluated on during a Best Warrior event include; obstacle courses, calling for indirect fire, weapons qualification and stress shooting, land navigation, dress and appearance, and written exams.

For the regional Best Warrior event, the Soldiers have also added a surprise test: they were interviewed by a TV camera crew, said New Hampshire Army National Guard Public Affairs Officer Lt. Col. Greg Heilshorn.

On today's low-intensity battlefield any Soldier may have to talk to a reporter so the idea was to allow these top Soldiers to experience that reality, he explained.

"Two of the tasks that were the hardest for me were the M9 pistol qualification and conducting the stress shoot with it," said Cozens. "I didn't have much experience with that, so Markle put together a training program and over two months I got better and better. I had to stay on top of it and it paid off."

The stress shoot event required the Soldiers to run and conduct other strenuous physical tasks, like hauling a simulated casualty, and then engaging targets.

After going against the best Soldiers in the northeast, Cozens and Ryan said they know what they must do in order to take on the best from across the entire country.

A training program is in place to get them ready for the next round of competition in Oklahoma, Piwowarski said.

"The win is only the tip of the iceberg," Piwowarski said. "Their ongoing preparation and continuous rehearsal is what made the difference. Readiness really wins a contest like this."

The combined talents of Cozens and Ryan made it clear to the other competitors that they were going to be the ones to beat, Piwowarski said.



According to Cozens, the two quickly formed a team and trained and studied together, with Cozens calling Ryan a great motivator.

"People realized the Soldiers from New York, are a strong team," said Cozens. "It set the tone for the competition when we finished the run during the PT test together."

Ryan, who enlisted in 2017, said he appreciated the opportunity to participate in the Best Warrior and also appreciated the fact that his unit sent him to Ranger School and Airborne School to hone his skills.

"It feels really good to be able to represent New York," Ryan said. "I hope to continue succeeding and continue on representing the state."

With fellow Soldiers and their families supporting them, Cozens and Ryan said they are certain they can triumph in Oklahoma.

"They are truly the New York Army National Guard's best warriors," Piwowarski said.

[https://www.army.mil/article/221767/nyguard\\_soldiers\\_win\\_northeast\\_best\\_warrior\\_competition\\_for\\_the\\_second\\_time\\_in\\_two\\_years](https://www.army.mil/article/221767/nyguard_soldiers_win_northeast_best_warrior_competition_for_the_second_time_in_two_years)

[Return to top](#)

---

## **PFOA Issue**

### **Gillibrand wants to set enforceable standards for water contaminants**

Adirondack Daily Enterprise, May 17, 2019 :

PLATTSBURGH - U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand is among those attempting to install bipartisan legislation that would address contaminants in drinking water like those found in groundwater around the former Plattsburgh Air Force Base.

The legislation Gillibrand, D-N.Y., is pushing with Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., would require the Environmental Protection Agency to establish an enforceable standard under the Safe Drinking Water Act for per- and polyfluoralkyl substances (PFAS) in drinking water after years of inaction.

PFAS are a group of thousands of manufactured chemicals that can seep into drinking water supplies and have contaminated communities in New York, West Virginia and all across the country.

They have been linked to kidney and testicular cancer, thyroid disease and weakened childhood immunity.

-

Contaminated groundwater

-

In March, the former PAFB property in the town of Plattsburgh was identified as one of 106 military or former military sites nationwide that have contaminated groundwater.

Fort Drum outside Watertown and two sites in Oneida County, the former Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome and a Defense Logistics Agency site in Verona, have also been identified as contaminated by chemicals.

A new report shows potentially 19 million Americans are using public water systems exposed to PFAS contamination, yet the EPA has not moved quickly enough to create regulatory standards to protect Americans from this serious health hazard, according to a news release from Gillibrand.

The chemicals that contaminated PAFB, which existed from 1955 to 1995, were in foam used to fight jet fuel fires.

High levels of PFAS were found in 2015 at the former base property.

The private wells of four nearby homes are being treated as a result of the chemical discovery; the public water system serving the former base and environs is not contaminated, officials said.

-

Widespread crisis

-

The legislation Gillibrand is sponsoring would require EPA to set a Maximum Contaminant Level and Primary National Drinking Water Regulation for PFAS within two years of the bill becoming law.

Maximum Contaminant Levels are health-based standards the EPA sets for drinking water quality to determine the legal limit of a contaminant that is permitted in public water systems.

This bill would group all PFAS chemicals under one Maximum Contaminant Level.

"It is the EPA's job to protect Americans from highly toxic chemicals like PFAS, but they have failed to do what is necessary to help ensure our families in New York and across the country are no longer exposed to dangerous levels of PFAS in their drinking water," said Gillibrand, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

"This is a widespread crisis that is putting the health of millions of Americans at risk, and I'm proud to partner with Senator Capito on this bipartisan legislation to require the EPA to finally establish a clear national drinking water standard for PFAS and protect public health."

-

Wants study released

-

Gillibrand has long been working to protect communities exposed to PFAS chemicals.

In March, she grilled federal officials on the health risks of PFAS during a Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing, citing the devastating health concerns for New York residents in communities contaminated with PFAS such as Hoosick Falls and those surrounding Stewart and Gabreski Air National Guard bases.

Gillibrand helped secure \$10 million in federal funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to conduct a nationwide study on PFAS health effects and also helped secure \$20 million for cleanup in the Fiscal Year 2019 Defense-Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Act to communities that have suffered from PFAS contamination as a result of activity from the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard.

She also led the push demanding that the Trump administration release the Department of Health and Human Services study she says it was trying to keep secret that revealed PFAS poses a danger to human health at lower levels than EPA was telling the public.

<https://www.adirondackdailyenterprise.com/news/local-news/2019/05/gillibrand-wants-to-set-enforceable-standards-for-water-contaminants/>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **State Partnership Program**

### **N.Y. Air Guard firefighters meet South African counterparts**

Nationalguard.mil, By Lt. Col. Al Phillips | New York National Guard | May 14, 2019:

CAPE TOWN, South Africa - Four senior New York Air National Guard firefighters spent April 29 to May 5 in Cape Town to learn from, and share their experiences with, firefighters in South Africa's Western Cape Province.

The four members of the 106th Rescue Wing - Master Sgt. Brian Cavanagh, Master Sgt. Fredric Pravato, Staff Sgt. Robert Despres Jr., and Staff Sgt. Joshua Lebenns-are based at F.S. Gabreski Air National Guard Base at Westhampton Beach on Long Island.

The four have 90 years of firefighting experience among them. Three are currently civilian firefighters while serving with the Air National Guard and Cavanaugh, a full-time Airman, is a retired member of the New York City Fire Department.

The Americans were there as part of the State Partnership Program relationship between the New York National Guard and the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) organized by the U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation.

The office is engaged in a wide range of partnerships across many areas. The visit was designed to allow an exchange of best practices between Americans and a number of South African entities involved in efforts to fight fires in the Western Cape.

The New York Airmen visited the Table Mountain National Park Fire Management Department, attended a fire symposium at Stellenbosch University, visited several Fire Outpost Stations, and got the chance to train with South African firefighters.

The visit was requested by wild-land fire specialists in the Western Cape.

"The United States was pleased to have the 106th Rescue Wing team in Cape Town to share best practices and experience with the South African military and provincial firefighting units," said Virginia Blaser, U.S Consul General in Cape Town.

"The fact that we have opposite fire seasons provides an ideal opportunity for our two countries to support each other during challenging wildfire conditions, as happened last year when a South African team in the U.S. for training provided support for the Rattlesnake Fire on Native American tribal land in the U.S. Northern Rockies region," she said.

"This current exchange represents the beginning of what we hope to be ongoing cooperation with U.S. armed service firefighters and South African military, provincial or regional, and municipal firefighters," Blaser added.

Blaser visited the Table Mountain Newlands Fire Base with the 106th Airmen, where they observed water bucket helicopter drops in mountainous terrain as a capability demonstration.

The Stellenbosch University visit focused on the fire ecology of South Africa and responding to and controlling fires in the region. A plant called Fynbos thrives in the region and provides fuel for brush fires.

Fynbos is a critical factor in trying to control fires in Cape Town, which has a population of over four million and a vast coastline, Cape Town Fire Chief Ian Schnetler told the Americans.

Cape Town is the size of the country of Luxembourg and there is always a demand for more personnel and resources to fight fires, Schnetler said. There are currently 30 stations across the city responding to calls daily 360 days a year.

According to the Western Cape Office of Disaster Management, 2015 wildfires in the region from February to April resulted in several deaths and injuries, the burning of 17,000 acres and damage to 13 properties.

In February, a fire in the Somerset West suburb of Cape Town involved six fire engines, three water tenders, 50 firefighters and two helicopters.

"By observing recent damage areas and examining the 2015 fire, the firefighters can improve firefighting skills and expertise and further enhance the exposure they have gained from the U.S. incident command system," explained Philip Prins, the Table Mountain Fire Manager.

Previously, the U.S. Forestry Service hosted Prins and a group of his firefighters to observe the incident command system in Montana. They also wound up helping to fight a fire there in 2018.

They were the first Africans to fight fires in the U.S.

The New York Air Guardsmen were asked to help develop a training plan that the South Africans could use in teaching fire fighters how to "fast rope" from a hovering helicopter, and for the deployment of fire equipment, supplies, and safety mechanisms to put in place during a response.

"This is a job we can accomplish and succeed at very well," Cavanaugh said.

"This is exactly why we are here, here to assist and bridge the gap of our rescue capabilities and experiences," Despres said.

The 106th Rescue Wing deploys pararescue Airmen from HH-60 Pave Hawk search and rescue helicopters and fast-roping- a technique involving sliding down a rope from a hovering helicopter-is one of the ways they train to deploy.

New York Air Guard firefighters are due to return to South Africa in November of 2019. That's summer in South Africa and the start of the firefighting season.

Meeting the New York Air Guardsmen was "inspiring and revitalizing as a fire manager," said Riaan Fourie, deputy fire manager, Table Mountain Newlands Fire Base.

"I know it will bring about the necessary training, knowledge and relationships we desperately need to advance wildfire management," he said.

The Americans said they were happy to come back in the fall and get hands on with their South African counterpart.

"We eagerly look forward to being on the fire line with our brothers and sisters," Pravato said.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/1847016/ny-air-guard-firefighters-meet-south-african-counterparts/>

[Return to top](#)

---

## **World War I**

### **100 Years Ago in Photos: A Look Back at 1919: 37 Photos In Focus**

**The Atlantic ,May 15, 2019**

Nine African American soldiers from the 369th Infantry Regiment (formerly the Fifteenth New York National Guard Regiment), who won the Croix de Guerre, return home from the war aboard the Stockholm on February 12, 1919. #

<https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2019/05/100-years-ago-photos-look-back-1919/589528/>

[Return to top](#)

---