

On the afternoon of January 5th, 2024, a bus headed south on Interstate 87 was involved in a rollover accident that led to two serious injuries, one of which turned out to be fatal, and other lesser injuries for many other passengers. In all, 23 people were aboard the bus, which originated in Montreal and was headed to New York City.

The accident triggered a county-wide response to what could have been a mass-casualty incident. Twelve ambulances from eight EMS Agencies, three fire company vehicles and equipment, Warren County Sheriff patrol officers, New York State Police, and numerous command vehicles all headed to the scene in a difficult-to-access area between southbound exits 23 and 22.

Warrensburg Fire Company immediately assumed incident command and began coordinating recovery, triage, and evacuation procedures. They were expertly assisted by the EMS Agencies and the police officers at the scene. The Warren County Office of Emergency Services team was quickly onsite to assist and played an important role throughout the weekend. Various New York State Agencies also played integral roles in the overall response to this accident and we greatly appreciated their continued involvement.

One seriously injured passenger was evacuated by air to Albany and ten other passengers with various injuries were transported to the Glens Falls Hospital where they received immediate and exceptional care. The non-injured passengers were transported to the Lake George Fire Company by school buses from the Warrensburg School District and the Lake George School District. At that point, the Lake George Fire Company seamlessly assumed incident command from Warrensburg.

Throughout the entire evacuation and recovery process, the Warren County 911 Dispatch effectively coordinated all efforts and kept all Agencies continually informed about the event. It was a phenomenal effort by that team.

As organizations scrambled on Friday to find a place for the passengers to stay the night, the staff at Fort William Henry Hotel stepped up to offer free room and board. Warren County Veterans' Services volunteered to shuttle passengers from Glens Falls Hospital to the hotel. The Red Cross was consistently on site at the Lake

George Fire Company to meet passenger needs. In fact, the Red Cross initially set up a shelter at the Glens Falls Presbyterian Church to house the passengers and the Holiday Inn and Resort began preparing meals for them before the Fort William Henry Hotel offered their assistance. The Fort William Henry continued to house and feed many of the passengers throughout the weekend, transporting them to retrieve their personal belongings and baggage. Particularly notable was the Fort William Henry staff hosting and assisting the family members of the passenger who lost her life in the accident. Upstate Transit transported a group of passengers to New York City late Friday evening and the following day.

This was a wide-ranging community effort that exemplified who we are in Warren County – a community that will help at a moment's notice, and that cares for everyone, residents and visitors alike. This is why we do table top exercises. Most of us know that many plans go out the window when the event starts. But in this case, our countywide training paid off with everyone understanding their responsibilities and focusing on them.

As you look around the room at the first responders represented in this room today, you should recognize that these are the same people, many of whom are volunteers, who will respond to the citizens of Warren County with the same commitment and dedication. We should all be thankful for their service.

*The Warren County Board of Supervisors offers its thanks to all of those who responded to this incident, folks who are the backbone of our county, folks who routinely put others before themselves day after day. You are seen, and you are appreciated.*