



Service Spotlight - Litchfield Volunteer Ambulance

For more than 70 years, Litchfield Volunteer Ambulance is still providing around the clock service to the community.

Tucked away behind an 1800's salt box house just off the town green, LVA occupies a vintage carriage house that was converted for their use in the early years of the organization. Although space is tight, they are able to operate three ambulances from the historic building.

When LVA took over ambulance service from the state police in 1948, the name of the organization was Berkshire Hills Ambulance Association. In its first year of service, Berkshire answered 89 calls for service with minimally trained volunteers running a 1948 Cadillac-Miller ambulance. For many years, the ambulance was stationed at the State Police barracks before the association, which was headed by then-President Robert Doyle, a local pharmacist, was offered its current home by the Borough of Litchfield. "I remember as a kid seeing the ambulance parked at the old police barracks", recalls LVA Chief John Pudlinski. "It wasn't until the Borough gave us the carriage house that we had a garage".

At some point in 1970's, Berkshire Hills Ambulance Association became Litchfield Volunteer Ambulance, to be more reflective of the communities they serve. LVA provides primary ambulance service to Litchfield and Northfield, as well as the Town of Morris. When the now disbanded, former Morris Volunteer Fire Department abruptly ceased its ambulance coverage for the town, Litchfield Ambulance stepped forward to assist its neighbor. Now a regionalized concept, their efforts have benefited all involved towns. Pudlinski, a retired State Trooper and retired Inspector with the Chief State's Attorney, keeps busy with the day-to-day operation of the corps. He is also an EMS-instructor, running courses throughout the year. He speaks with pride of his members

whenever given the opportunity. "Having been involved in EMS for almost 50 years, I can say without hesitation that my LVA members are among the most dedicated group of individuals whom I have had the pleasure of being associated with," he said.

Chief Pudlinski opened in reflection of his years in EMS and the collaboration he has seen. "Look, we all know that EMS is a team effort—not just of a single individual or agency. It is only through the excellence and professionalism of Waterbury Hospital's ED physicians and nurses, as well as EMS organizations, that the citizens of our communities receive the highest quality care".

LVA continues to grow and evolve with the ever-changing public safety and healthcare environment. Having an annual call volume now that exceeds 1200, LVA augments its dedicated volunteer staff with paid personnel as needed.

Statistics:

Established: 1948 as Berkshire Hills Ambulance Association

Chief of Service: John Pudlinski

Number of Members: 22

Number of Ambulances: 3

Annual Call Volume: 1200

The Litchfield Enquirer, Litchfield, Conn., Thursday, February 13, 1975



AMR Crew Saves Several Families from a Structure Fire

On July 29, AMR EMT Michael Messenger and Paramedic Keith Slater were honored for life-saving actions at a recent apartment building fire.

While clearing Waterbury Hospital on the morning of July 13, both men noticed smoke coming from the rear of the building located across the street for the Emergency Department entrance. They quickly proceeded to investigate the source of the smoke. Within seconds, Slater determined the fire was coming from a motorbike that was on fire next to the structure. He attempted to remove the bike from the structure, but was unable due to the extent of the flames. Slater asked Messenger to have AMR dispatch call for the fire department because fire had quickly spread to the structure.

Both Slater and Messenger entered the building and began banging on apartment doors. Despite the growing smoke conditions as they accessed the upper floors, they continued alerting residents. Messenger ushered some children out of the building while Slater was forced to turn back because of the smoke.

Within minutes, the Waterbury Fire Department arrived on scene to find the building heavily engulfed in flames. Slater, a former volunteer firefighter was able to give a situation status report to the arriving WFD lieutenant. One building resident died in the blaze, while more than 20 others lives were spared due to the actions of the AMR crew.

Both men received accolades from AMR, Waterbury Hospital, city officials as well as the state legislature for their heroism.

“I have always had tremendous respect for EMS”, said Waterbury Mayor Neil O’Leary. “In my thirty plus years as a police officer, I have seen the work they do. They are often forgotten. Not today. You guys (Slater and Messenger) went above and beyond to save lives that day”.

AMR’s Regional Manager Chris Chaplin praised the men as he presented them with plaques and challenge coins. State Senator Eric Berthel, a former EMT, offered his congratulations and gave each an official proclamation from the Connecticut Legislature.

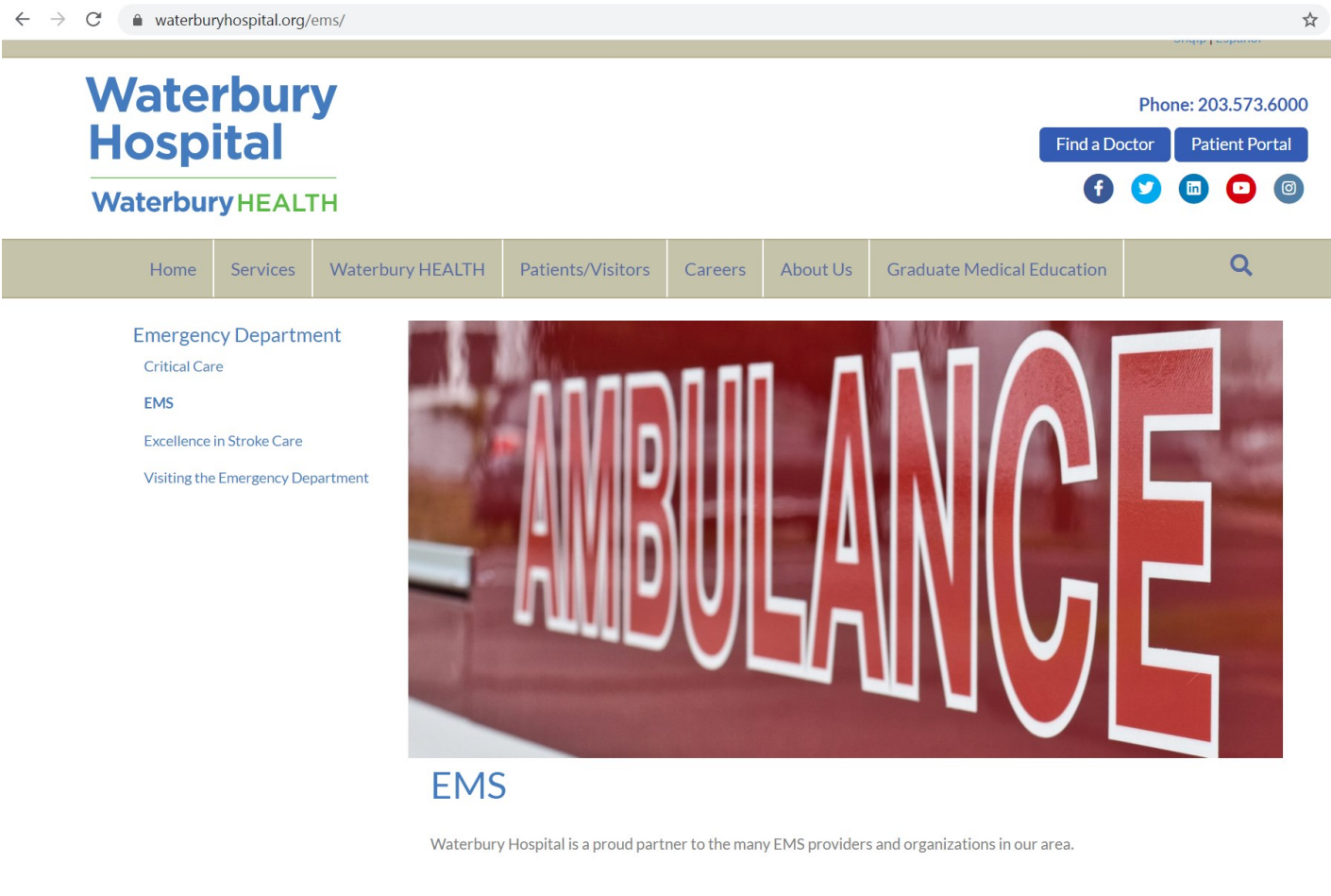
The ceremony concluded as Waterbury Hospital Senior Vice President/COO Mark Holtz proclaimed his continued admiration for EMS providers. “We could not do what we do in our ER, without the great work EMS does every day. We are partners in caring for patients”, Holtz said. “I am proud to be here today to honor these guys who risked their lives for others”.



EMS Website

Waterbury Hospital has added a new section to our webpage that now includes EMS. Here you will see links to the CME's that we have done recently so that if you miss it in person, then you can attend it online. You can still receive your CME by taking a short quiz at the end.

Also, going forward, our Newsletters will be posted in the newsletter archives. The link to the website is: <https://www.waterburyhospital.org/ems/>. You can also access it by going to www.WaterburyHospital.org and you will see it by going into the Emergency Department section. If you have any ideas or items that you would like to see added to the Website, feel free to reach out to us.



The screenshot shows the website [waterburyhospital.org/ems/](https://www.waterburyhospital.org/ems/). The header includes the Waterbury Hospital logo, the tagline "Waterbury HEALTH", and contact information: Phone: 203.573.6000, Find a Doctor, and Patient Portal. Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram are also present. The navigation menu includes Home, Services, Waterbury HEALTH, Patients/Visitors, Careers, About Us, and Graduate Medical Education. The main content area features a sidebar with links to Emergency Department, Critical Care, EMS, Excellence in Stroke Care, and Visiting the Emergency Department. A large image of an ambulance with "AMBULANCE" written on its side is displayed, with the text "EMS" below it. A caption reads: "Waterbury Hospital is a proud partner to the many EMS providers and organizations in our area."

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, September 16, 2020 @ 18:00 ZOOM
CME—Burns Injury Training

- Jason Bresky, RN CCRN of Bridgeport Burn Center will be giving education and support about the advancement of care for Connecticut's burn patients.