

Woodmen

Edition

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Briargate, Pine Creek, Rockrimmon, Peregrine and Mountain Shadows

TRANSPORTATION FOR NORTH-SIDE SENIORS

Amblicab, NextFifty partner to provide aging residents with rides to appointments, events

BY WILLIAM J. DAGENDESH

Agnes Fatora got to keep her Friday pedicure appointment at the north Academy Boulevard Beauty Brands salon thanks to a new online transportation scheduling service from Amblicab — made possible by a NextFifty Initiative grant.

A door-through-door transportation service, Amblicab provides transportation and home-care services for elderly, disabled and low-income citizens living in the Pikes Peak region. Amblicab also conducts business operations outside of Colorado Springs in additional disability service-related functions.

NextFifty Initiative is an independent Colorado-based nonprofit that exists to fund mission-driven initiatives designed to improve community services for the elderly population and caregivers. NextFifty Initiative has awarded 33 grants and \$3.3 million statewide, one being the convenient online and mobile transportation service for free rides for seniors in the region.

Fatora, 93, is thrilled to be part of this service, she said. "Everyone is friendly and the drivers are helpful," Fatora said as Amblicab driver Rob Huff helped the Woodmen-area resident disembark the vehicle. "Amblicab takes me to the salon, doctor, anywhere I want to go," Fatora said.

Inching her way into the salon, Fatora



Amblicab driver Rob Huff, right, assists Agnes Fatora with disembarking the vehicle upon arriving Friday at Beauty Brands salon on north Academy Boulevard. Photo by William J. Dagensh

explained how each week for the past decade she visited Beauty Brands for a hair wash, manicure and/or pedicure. When boarding her former transport service became too difficult for the walker-dependent Fatora, she sought a more convenient mode of transportation and found it in

Amblicab.

"The drivers were great; however, it was better for me to use Amblicab's (electronic) lift to get in and out of the vehicle," Fatora said in her trademark raspy voice.

Amblicab serves a broad demograph-

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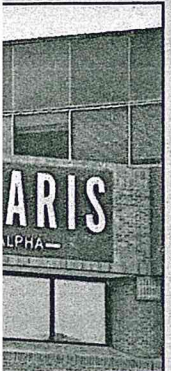
UCCS to host literacy festival Saturday

BY HEILA ROGERS

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TRANSPOTATION FOR NORTH-SIDE SENIORS

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Agnes Fatora, right, receives a pedicure from Beauty Brands Nails Technician Kari Stephens. "People like Agnes make clients the best part of my job," Stephens said. Photo by William J. Dagensh

ic, said Executive Director Gail Nehls. Amblicab delivers limited services on Saturday for medical appointments and non-emergent medical transit rides for those on Medicaid, Nehls said.

"We take people to their jobs, day programs, social events and medical appoint-

ments," Nehls said.

Also, clients can use a mobile app or website to schedule a ride. "I use an app because I am deaf in my left ear and don't have proper (listening) balance," said Fatora as she removed her shoes in preparation for her pedicure.

From 2016 to 2017, Amblicab saw a 20 percent rider increase, and that the percentage continues to rise, Nehls said. "We have served the Colorado Springs community for 47 years, providing rides to individuals with disabilities, seniors and the economically disadvantaged," Nehls said.

"We're beginning to market our services and integrate our transportation with in-home care clients. That could be one reason for an increase in ridership. Also, we're receiving more referrals from senior-based community organizations."

The partnership between both companies happened when Amblicab submitted a grant application to NextFifty Initiative for its inaugural grant cycle in winter of 2017, said Chief Operations Officer Diana McFail.

"NextFifty Initiative was impressed by the innovative approach Amblicab was taking with their project to allow older adults to use a mobile application to request and schedule on demand," McFail said.

"We know transportation and social isolation are some of the greatest issues facing older adults today. This project will help older adults continue to thrive, while helping to dispel the stigma that they are technology adverse."

For its part, NextFifty Initiative will seek and fund game-changing breakthroughs to improve and sustain quality of life for

people in the second 50 years of their life. NextFifty Initiative plans to do this via grants and financial support through organizations committed to the elderly population and their caregivers.

Through its grant making-efforts, NextFifty Initiative seeks to identify and partner with organizations working to improve the lives of the aging population, McFail said. "NextFifty Initiative seeks projects that target the most vulnerable in the aging sector including low-income individuals, homeless, and ethnic and racial minorities' communities," McFail said. "We aim to create change with far-reaching impacts, ensuring the second 50 years of life are as vibrant as the first," McFail said.

Amblicab can accommodate reservations a month in advance and provides service to communities south to Fort Carson, west to include Manitou, east to Marksheffell and north to Northgate. Lift assistance is available on all vehicles. A \$3.50 cash or check donation is encouraged.

Amblicab is located at 5660 N. Academy Blvd., and operates from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call 633-4677 for more information. To cancel an appointment call 425-2203. The dispatch is 633-4604. Next Fifty Initiative is located at 950 S. Cherry St. Suite 510, in Denver. For more information, call 303-547-1800.

UCCS TO HOST LITERACY FESTIVAL

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The Black Educator's Network mission statement emphasizes collaboration, cooperation and communication. During last year's festival they hosted representatives from several local organizations. Hear Here Poetry, KaPow Comics & Coffee and the Children's Literacy Center were all involved, among others.

Local high school students presented lessons on acrostic poetry. Several

BLACK EDUCATORS NETWORK LITERACY FESTIVAL

Registration begins at 7:45 a.m. Saturday in Dwire Hall at UCCS, 1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway.

Sponsored by the Black Educa-

