



LIFTT

Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow

The LIFTT Connection
Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2022 VOLUME 3, ISSUE 6

Gnome Sweet Gnome!



LIFTT's Glendive team members recently participated in a "Straw Bale Trail" event sponsored by the local branch of Tractor Supply Co.

Their display "Gnome Sweet Gnome" was on view outside LIFTT's offices at 120 S. Kendrick Ave.

LIFTT has some more artistic endeavors planned for Glendive and eastern Montana through a growing partnership with sculptor Neil Young.

See Page 2 for Details!

LIFTT Receives Grant from Otto Bremer Trust

Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow (LIFTT) is pleased to announce a grant received from the Otto Bremer Trust, in the amount of \$60,000.00. to support LIFTT's general operations.

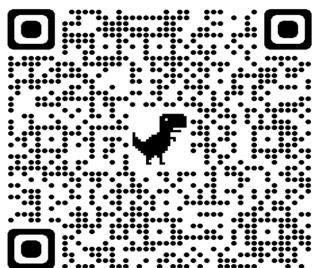
According to Carlos Ramalho, LIFTT's Executive Director, "this grant provides LIFTT with unrestricted funding. The grant will supplement the resources usually used to pay for its daily expenses. It will allow us to expand, improve or pursue new projects."

"LIFTT is very grateful to the Otto Bremer Trust for this generous grant, which will allow us to continue to provide services to the persons with disabilities living in southeastern and south-central Montana. We hope many other foundations and donors will acknowledge the importance of what LIFTT does and help." Ramalho said.

If you are interested in donating to LIFTT you can do that through <https://liftt.org/get-involved/donate-support/> or contact Executive Director Carlos Ramalho at (406) 294-5190 or carlosr@liftt.org.



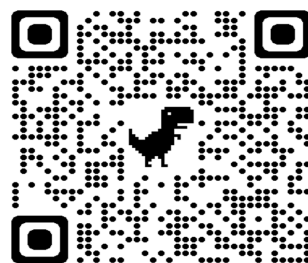
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Neil Young: Sculpturing the Past and Future



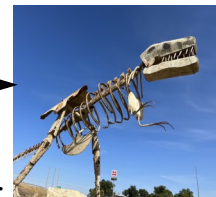
Sculptor Neil Young (standing) is currently mentoring LIFTT consumer Jadon Bergstrom (seated)

Renowned sculptor Neil Young is mentoring the younger generation in Glendive. Neil was born in Minnesota in 1951 and moved to Montana on his own when he was 12 years old. He worked on some ranches throughout his life.

He has a degrees in fine arts and aircraft mechanics. According to Neil, his hobbies now include "recycling the recyclable." In 2018, he was diagnosed with throat, eye, lung, and brain cancer, progressing one after another. "It was tough," he recalls, "but I recovered and have been doing well since 2020."

Neil uses an electrolarynx to talk, but that does not prevent him from communicating well with everyone. Neil is very inventive and creative. Among his many gifts is the ability to transform metal scraps into beautiful sculptures.

One of his most well-known pieces is the "Welcome to Glendive" Dinosaur that sits in front of the Crossroads Cenex on Highway 16 just south of I-94 exit 213.



Neil is now mentoring LIFTT's young consumers boys and girls living with a disability. Currently, he is working with one young man Jadon Bergstrom.

LIFTT and Neil are making plans for the future. They plan to build a sculpture studio in our Glendive office where the community will interact with him and learn that there is a sculptor inside all of us! Thanks, Neil! We are happy you are part of LIFTT!

Director's Corner: A New Dawn in 2023!



Thanks to our devoted grantors, team, consumers, board members, and the community, LIFTT experienced positive growth during 2022. We're now a Center for Independent Living and Public

Health (CILPH), have become fully electronic/digital, and are on the verge of launching an aggressive outreach program to serve all eighteen counties of our service area fully.

We plan to expand our presence in all counties of our service area including the Native American reservations, recruit and retain new talent, make our operations more sustainable through new public and private funding.

As we expand our operations, LIFTT's team and consumers have become

more vibrant and optimistic, a mood reflected in their enthusiasm over LIFTT's new programs and projects, such as our new ADA-accessible website and APP launched in 2022.

We believe a new dawn is breaking over LIFTT because we have overcome the notion that barriers could never be removed. I have maintained that in 2023 I will continue to inspire and promote change, strong enough to break through barriers that prevent the independent living from becoming a concrete reality.

In 2023, LIFTT will continue to foster the independent living and public health of the disabled community. LIFTT will be on the forefront of Montana's independent living, disability rights and advocacy, personal care assistance, and transitions,

It is in the same spirit that LIFTT is now set to contribute even more positively to independent living in collaboration with the other Montana CILs and organizations. In our age, no single organization can promote independent living by itself and solve the challenges the disabled community faces without supporting one another.

LIFTT has pledged that in 2023 we will continue to fulfill our mission and vision, work for the revival of the independent living movement, increase Montana's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and promote the peace, happiness, and prosperity of our community.

We wish you happy holidays!

Carlos Ramalho, Executive Director

Rising Above the Waters:

Kimbrough Fund helps Carbon County family after June floods

On June 12, 2022, due to snow melt and heavy rains, the Rock Creek and the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River overflowed, causing property and infrastructure damage in Carbon County.

Among the destroyed houses is one located in Fromberg, belonging to the Shaw family all of whom have disabilities: the mother Rebecca has Environmental Sensitivity, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Depression, Anxiety/Panic Attacks, and Bi-Polar Disorder. While the father Robert and sons Nathan, Asher, and David are all on the autism spectrum.

The Shaws lost almost everything and came to LIFTT for assistance. John Robison, Independent Living (IL) Specialist & Outreach Coordinator, was assigned the case. He diligently worked with The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), Carbon County Public Health the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the LDS Family Services, local churches, and Fromberg High School.

The flood inundated their basement, and the house became uninhabitable, forcing the Shaws to spend two days at the Fromberg High School. After the waters receded, they returned to their property, where they lived temporarily in a small utility trailer without running water, heat, and refrigeration.

Using funds from the Jackie Kimbrough Emergency Fund, LIFTT was able to assist the Shaw Family. Among other things, LIFTT paid for the repair of their vehicle, a Chevy Suburban allowing them to bring, from out of state, a bigger camper style trailer to their Fromberg property.

The Shaws are currently living in the camper trailer. After completion of the reconstruction of the house, before Winter 2022-2023, they will be able to move back in. The Shaw family is grateful to FEMA and Carbon County for their assistance reconstructing their home.

This disaster affected the whole Shaw family, causing not only disruption but trauma. However, parents and children took advantage of this experience to grow, access valuable resources, and preserve their independence. They are together, soon will move back into their home, and move forward toward their future. LIFTT and the other organizations will continue to partner with the Shaws to help them rebuild their lives.

A LIFTT for the long haul!

Using funds provided by LIFTT's Jackie Kimbrough Emergency Fund, The Shaw family of Fromberg was able to get their Suburban (right, standing with it are two of the Shaw's sons) repaired and haul a camper trailer (far right) from Oregon back to their property for the family of five to live while their home is repaired following extensive flood damage in June 2022.
(Photos submitted by the Shaw Family)





1201 Grand Avenue, Suite #1,
Billings, MT 59102
(406) 259-5181

We are on the web @
www.LIFTT.org



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LIFTT's Mission— Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow, Inc. is a Montana non-profit organization committed to empowering persons with disabilities to live freely and equally in Southeastern Montana through the provision of independent living services which reduce societal barriers.

Peer Support Group

Would you like to connect with others living with disabilities?

Join the weekly fellowship of LIFTT's online peer support group. Whether it's games or supportive deep discussion, you're sure to enjoy the new perspectives and the positive sense of belonging. **Join LIFTT host Tanya Thomas for our online peer support groups every Thursday at 3pm.**

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/93017341646>
Meeting ID: 930 1734 1646
One tap mobile +13462487799, 93017341646# US

LIFTT is a not-for-profit agency governed by a consumer-led Board of Directors whose lives have been personally impacted by a disability.

LIFTT is funded in part through contracts and grants from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services and the Administration for Community Living, United States Department of Health and Human Services. The statements herein do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Montana DPHHS, ACL, or HHS.

BILLINGS OFFICE: Main: 406-259-5181 Email: <http://www.liftt.org/contact/>

Carlos Ramalho, Executive Director, 406-294-5190, carlosr@liftt.org
Karie Godfrey, Finance Manager, 406-318-8336, kariieg@liftt.org
Dianne Booth, Payroll Specialist, 406-294-5193, dianneb@liftt.org
Marilyn Gone, Admin. Assistant, 406-294-5187, marilyng@liftt.org
Collette Ostermiller, Admin. Assistant, 406-294-5187, colletteo@liftt.org

Self Direct Personal Care Assistant Program

Freda Mook, PCA Program Supervisor, 406-294-5182, fredam@liftt.org
Lanette Brown, PCA Program Facilitator, 406-294-5184, lanetteb@liftt.org
Valerie Rowison, PCA Program Facilitator, 406-294-5208, valerier@liftt.org
Kasey Mook, PCA Program assistant, 406-606-1762, kaseym@liftt.org

Independent Living Program

Freda Mook, IL Program Supervisor, 406-294-5182, fredam@liftt.org
Steve Woodard, Data & Quality Control, 406-294-5185, stevew@liftt.org
John Robison, Outreach/Community Health Worker, 406-294-5188, johnr@liftt.org
Larry Ketchem, IL Specialist, 406-294-5189, larryk@liftt.org
Tara Robison, IL Specialist, 406-294-5192, tarar@liftt.org
Tracy Smidt, IL Specialist/Community Health, 406-294-5183, tracys@liftt.org
Jed Barton, Communications/Government Affairs 406-294-5186, jedb@liftt.org

Peer Program

Tanya Thomas, Peer Coordinator, 406-690-6324, tanyat@liftt.org

Glendive Office: Main: 406-948-8500 ,120 S. Kendrick Ave., Glendive, MT 59330

Jen Hawkinson, Senior IL Specialist/Manager, 406-948-8503, jenh@liftt.org
Tonnette Jensen, IL Specialist/Assistant Manager, 406-948-8505, tonnettab@liftt.org
Nancy Grigsby, IL Specialist/Community Health Worker, 406-948-8501, nancyg@liftt.org
Litta Bergstrom, IL Specialist, 406-948-8504, littab@liftt.org