

## CLJF Group Video Shoot a Success!

The Classic Lear Jet Foundation will be the subject of a promotional video being produced by renowned videographer Tom Zwemke. As part of this video, Tom shot a short segment of all of us in front of 23-003. Even though the video shoot had to be rescheduled to January 19<sup>th</sup> because of weather, we had over 50 people for the group video. Everyone took advantage of the opportunity to look over 23-003 and visit with friends and tell a few stories! A big “Thank You” to all of you that braved the extremely cold weather to come out and support 23-003’s video! The video is now in the process of being edited. We’ll let you know when it’s finished and how to view it.



Tom Zwemke (standing right) setting up for the video shoot

## Restoration Officially Starts

The restoration of 23-003 officially started on December 30, 2023 with our first “Work Day”! Jay Thomas was elected to start the restoration by removing the first panel, the pilot’s nose avionics door. The team of seven volunteers then removed the nose avionics, gyros, oxygen and air bottles, etc. Interestingly, both the oxygen and air bottles still had a little pressure in them after all of these years! We found a few wasp nests that were luckily abandoned by their ‘inhabitants’ long *before* we opened the avionics bay!

Photos were taken as each part was removed for future assistance in their reinstallation/replacement. Bill Kinkaid logged each removed part (name, model and serial numbers, etc) in the Removals book before it was delicately placed into its storage container by Chris Marshall for safe and secure storage. A determination will be made on each part as to its serviceability, repair/recalibration or if it needs to be replaced.

In order to track the number of volunteer hours expended for the restoration, a ‘Volunteer Time Log Book’ was created to log everyone’s time. So when you volunteer be sure to add your name and time spent. It will be interesting to see just how much volunteer time was spent to get 23-003 back in the air!

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Jay Thomas unlocking the very 1<sup>st</sup> Dzus fastener



Jay Thomas with 1<sup>st</sup> removal, avionics door



Wasp nest remnants!



Bill Kinkaid (at table) logging parts and  
Chris Marshall placing them into storage



## 23-003 Volunteers Needed

If you would like to help with the restoration of 23-003 to flight status, please read on and sign up!

We will need lots of volunteers in all areas! Whatever you do, we can use your expertise!

You don't have to be a former or current Learjet employee to volunteer!

If you are willing to volunteer, please send us the following information:

- a) Name
- b) Phone number
- c) e-mail address
- d) How you would like to volunteer
  - a. Sheet metal, electrical, avionics, interiors, wiring, shop assistant, general support, administration, etc.
  - b. Any certifications that you have (A&P, paint, equipment operator, HAZMAT, DAR, DER, etc.)
  - c. When you are or are not available ( ex. Any time, Tuesdays only, no weekends, etc.)
  - d. Other info (Restrictions/limitations, specialty tools you have, need ride, etc.)

Please contact CLJF using one of these ways:

- 1) E-mail: [info@ClassicLear.org](mailto:info@ClassicLear.org) (**preferred method**)
- 2) Website: <https://classiclear.org/support/>
- 3) US Mail:

Classic Lear Jet Foundation  
626 S Tyler #75623  
Wichita, KS 67209

Also, we need a **"Volunteer Coordinator"**. This person will manage/maintain the volunteer database and contact the volunteers with the work specialties needed for a particular task. For example, if we need 3 sheet metal and 2 wiring people on Thursday, the Coordinator will contact those on the volunteer list to find people with these specialties and who are available to work.

Remember, because of the physical size of 23-003, we have to limit the number of people that can work in a particular area at any one time.

## Around The World Flight - Update

As first announced in our December 2023 RECHARGE, one of our biggest donors, Global Jet Care is planning a flight to circumnavigate the globe 'westbound' to set a new world record. Their flight, on behalf of Classic Lear Jet Foundation, is a fundraiser for the restoration of Lear Jet 23-003.

Preflight preparations are well underway for both the crew and the airplane, 36-055 N41GJ. Because of world events, a slight adjustment to the flight itinerary has been made. The westbound flight into the

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wind will now make stops in California, Hawaii, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Singapore, India, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Italy, Portugal and Canada.

Stay tuned for more information as we get closer to the April 4<sup>th</sup> departure and April 6<sup>th</sup> arrival!



Preparing for the flight are Joel Weber (official witness), John Bone (pilot), Bart Gray (pilot)

## Volunteer Spotlight: Kew Lewellen



I'm Ken Lewellen and I was hired into Gates Learjet on January 16, 1978 by Bill Ruark, Tooling Supervisor, as a Tool crib attendant/Tool Controller. I hadn't been there a year yet when my current supervisor, Gene Hinkle, asked me if I'd be interested in transferring to Tooling. My

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Manager, Charlie Williams, gave me the option to either go to Tool & Die or as a Plaster Pattern maker. I chose Tool & Die maker. We were tooling up for the Learjet Model 55 at the time and worked extensive hours on that program. Back in those days we laid out everything by hand from blueprints, lofts etc. I started out making DLT's (Developed Layout Templates) and then HB's (Hydro Blocks) moving on to PRP' Dies/Blank Dies for making parts. We made several kinds of Tools for that program. We also built tools for Learjet Models 24/25, 28/29, 35/36, 31, 60 and 40/45 and 75. We tooled up the GP 180 for Piaggio, a joint program with that company and for the C-21A U.S. Air Force program. Learjet tooling dept did allot of Aerospace programs for several companies; Martin Marietta, McDonnell Douglas, Rockwell, Boeing and Bell helicopter. There are not too many companies we didn't build tools for. We had a lot of programs over the years making all sorts of tools. From Tool & Die to Plaster Pattern and Jig Shop we did it all. I also worked in the Tooling Plotter room from 2003 until the day I retired. I worked in Tooling from 1/16/78 until 8/31/18. We were family out there at Learjet. We got the job done thru great Managers and Supervisors. My interest in the Learjet 23-003 is to keep the legacy of Learjet alive and helping future generations interested in Aerospace.

## Meet board member Joel Weber



I grew up in aviation and at a young age started working with my father in the family aviation business, Webco Aircraft, where I was introduced to many aspects of aircraft maintenance, fabrication, design, and operation. I learned to fly before I was out of high school, and it was then when aviation sank its claws into me never to let go. I worked mostly in the family aviation business until the age of 23, and then was hired into Learjet in 1989. Upon my father's passing in 2015 I took ownership of Webco Aircraft, and it still operates successfully today.



At Learjet I started out in the fabrication shop where I worked for about a year, then transferred into Planning where I worked for about two more years until I transferred into Engineering. Within the planning department, I was involved with the latter part of the Lear 31A implementation, and most of the Lear 60. Within Engineering my focus was design and certification of the Lear 45. I left Learjet in 1999, along with three other Learjet Engineers, to start an engineering/certification consulting business.

In 1999 the business, Millennium Concepts, was founded and was grown into a successful company, which still strives in Wichita today. While at Millennium Concepts I wore many hats relating to Engineering, Certification, Operations, and Quality Control, as did the rest of the partners. In 2001 I was granted FAA Designee status by the FAA. I stayed with Millennium Concepts until 2006, where I left the company and started another consulting company, WebAir LLC.

At WebAir LLC, I provided engineering consulting services, PMA consulting, and provided services in support of conformity inspections and airworthiness inspections as an FAA Designee. I continue to provide such consulting services through WebAir LLC today. As a consultant in 2006 I connected with Lee Aerospace, where I was hired to a full-time position.

I remain at Lee Aerospace today as the Director of Engineering & Certification. Jim Lee, the owner of Lee Aerospace and my good friend, supports my involvement with the Classic Lear Jet Foundation and the restoration of Lear Jet 23-003.

I believe that Lear Jet 23-003 is one of the most iconic aircraft ever manufactured in Wichita. This aircraft set the pace for the business jet market in Wichita and all over the world. I'm proud to be part of the team assembled as the Classic Lear Jet Foundation to bring this part of history back to life, where we will watch this iconic aircraft take to the skies above Wichita once again.

(Joel is the Vice President of Classic Lear Jet Foundation)

## **CLJF Merchandise is now at KAM!**

The Kansas Aviation Museum gift shop, Amelia's Landing, now carries some of the most popular Classic Lear Jet Foundation merchandise! You can visit the KAM gift shop at 3350 George Washington Blvd, Wichita, Kansas 67210 or by phone 316-683-9242. See their open hours on their website: <https://kansasaviationmuseum.org/>

Remember that your purchase supports the restoration of 23-003!!

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