

[<< Back](#)

## LEAC in High Demand This Week

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By Laura Gibbs 13 News ROCKFORD -- This past week the Law Enforcement Aviation Coalition, better known as LEAC has been very busy. "Air One" responded to calls in Boone County, Kenosha County, and for the first time Rockford. LEAC is the only helicopter in Illinois to have so much advanced technology on board. Now it seems that law enforcement agencies are recognizing LEAC's capabilities. On Monday, LEAC flew twice over Boone County and Kenosha County. Each time the assignment was different. LEAC Pilot Randy Olson Olson says, "We're looking for casualties. The second phase of that is looking for damage. Most communities want to get government grants or be reimbursed so the air video does a lot better job of displaying what the damage was." Thursday, Rockford police ended up using LEAC's free services on 3 different occasions. The original call came in to help find 71-year-old Morris Dawson who disappeared Monday from the Luther Center. Sgt. Greg Lindmark with the Rockford police department says, "They were able to search the river banks, the river and also the railroad area along South Main was searched by them." At this point Dawson is still missing. But LEAC remained in the air to help track down Demichael Foat, a murder suspect. Then the chopper was off to a home invasion on Auburn Street. Olson tells 13 News, "We were on scene and we covered the site till the squads got there." Deputy Chief Lindmark says LEAC did an outstanding job and can do things at 500 feet that can't be done on the ground. Olson goes on to say, "You got to get people used to using us and once they've used us once nobody's ever used us once and not called us back the second time." Olson adds that they have night vision and cameras that can zoom in so tight it can actually read a name tag on a shirt. LEAC is busiest between midnight and 5 a.m. In 2007, the volunteers and helicopter were sent on 50 different missions.



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