

## MINOR PERMISSION TO WORK ON THE BALLOON LAUNCH FIELD

The Plano Amateur Radio Klub provides public service communication during the Plano Balloon Festival. This service principally is provided to support the balloon operations during all phases (pre-flight, flight, and post-flight). We track and account for each balloon and its ground crew from the time it enters the launch field until the flight activities are terminated (regardless of whether it actually flew), the balloon has been recovered by its ground crew and the balloon has been refueled. During non-flight times we also provide manpower and communications to the festival public safety operations as needed and requested, mainly to assist in locating lost persons. We do not perform security or police or first responder functions.

Our work on the balloon launch field involves confirming the arrival, inflation, and lift-off of each balloon, and the subsequent departure of each ground crew. This requires the ham operator to be in proximity to the balloons and their vehicles before, during and after launch. Anywhere from 50 to 100 balloons/vehicles may be on the launch field at the same time. Also, balloons and crews may be in different stages of launch at the same time (one balloon being inflated, another lifting off, and still another's crew departing the field). Consequently, there are some risks to the ham operator. These risks include moving vehicles (usually some form of light truck or van), tethered and moving balloons (a balloon at start of flight with pilot and passengers may weigh 1000 pounds or more), and the use of flammable gases (propane). The Plano Balloon Festival has an excellent safety record. Safety for everyone in all aspects of the balloon operations is of paramount concern. The balloon operations section is organized in a structured manner (including the Balloonmeister, his safety officer, his weather officer, on-field balloon launch directors, and limitation of the numbers/types of persons on the launch field) in order to achieve safe and efficient operations. To my knowledge we have never had a ham radio operator injured during and as a result of balloon launch field operations at any Plano Balloon Festival.

John Beadles, N5OOM  
Event Director  
Plano Amateur Radio Klub

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\_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to work with the Plano Amateur  
Name  
Radio Klub on the balloon launch field during active operations at the 2004 Plano  
Balloon Festival.

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Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date