

# RADIOS

## From A1

"We want to be sure to respect their property," Ward said of area ranchers and other property owners. "We want to be good neighbors. And we want to assist the out-of-town folks" flying the balloons.

He said there have been a few instances when a pilot had to "walk" his/her balloon

a few yards to get closer to a road where the chase vehicle could retrieve it.

"They generally can 'goose' the envelope [the bag containing hot air] 300 to 400 yards," Ward said.

The BBARC members will also operate the concession stands at the bash's concluding event, the Sunday night balloon glow and "fire concert" at Buck Stadium. Ward said this is one of the club's

major fundraising events, since the organization is self-supported by its members.

After the Labor Day weekend festivities, the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club will provide communications at the mid-September Cyclefest, a major bicycling event held each year in Fort Davis, and at the Heaven to Ride, a one-day motorcycle event covering 300 miles of Far West Texas.

The radio club can cover such far-flung events because it has repeaters stationed atop some of the Big Bend region's biggest peaks — Elephant Mountain between Alpine and Terlingua/Study Butte, the Twin Sisters west of Alpine, the Glass Mountains near Marathon and in far southern Brewster County.

"They're all linked together; we can cover from Big Bend National Park to north

of Interstate 10," Ward said.

Additionally, members always have their hand-held and mobile units.

Balloonists, rest assured that no matter how far you fly your craft, the BBARC will find you.

Sierra La Rana, a resort/residential ranch 2 miles south of Alpine on State Hwy. 118, is the launch site of the 16th annual Big Bend Balloon

Bash. If the weather is right, launch will take place at 7:30 a.m. each day.

Besides the balloon bash, Labor Day weekend will include concerts at Railroad Blues in Alpine and Padre's in Marfa, and the three-day Marfa Lights Festival, also in Marfa.

For more information, call the Big Bend Balloon Bash at 432-837-7486 or the City of Alpine at 432-837-3301.