fuel valves on the fuel tanks, and vent the fuel system. Once the fuel system has been shut off, and there is no risk of fire, the vent line can be activated to start the deflation. The crown line crewperson pulls on the crown line to assist in the deflation process and to help lay the balloon out in the desired direction. The pilot and crew should remember that it is virtually impossible to lay a balloon down against the wind. Other crewmembers may be stationed on the sides to keep fabric from draping over trees, bushes, and assist the balloon in coming down. Once the envelope is on its side, the crown line crewmember may move to the top of the balloon, and maintain slight tension on the load ring in order to continue the deflation. This crewmember should be reminded to leave gloves on, as the load ring is hot and may take some time to cool.

At this point, the balloon is ready to be "walked out," or "squeezed," meaning that the remaining air in the balloon is removed in preparation for repacking the envelope in the appropriate bag. The most common method is for the pilot or a crewmember to gather the envelope together at the throat, and, keeping their arms around the fabric, walk towards the top of the envelope squeezing the air out as they go. There is ample opportunity during this process to injure one's back. The person walking the envelope out should take care to not put excessive strain on their lower back during this process. There are some mechanical devices available to help in this process, and some pilots elect to use one of these, rather than put an individual's well being at risk. *[Figure 8-10]*

Figure 8-10. *Walking the balloon out with a "Squeeze-EZ."*

After the envelope is walked out and the crown line is secured, either in a separate bag or by folding it in half down the length of the envelope (which prevents tangling), the envelope is ready to be packed in its bag. The envelope bag, regardless of manufacturer, has a "flap" of fabric across the top. Some pilots prefer to pack the envelope so the flap is towards the balloon, while others prefer that the flap be away from the balloon. At first glance, this appears to be a random choice but there is sound reasoning behind it. If the balloon is usually launched from grassy, smooth fields, then it would be normal to have the flap away from the balloon. If, however, the balloon is laid out for inflation in areas with rocks, stubble, and other objects which may potentially damage the envelope, it is an accepted practice to pack the balloon with the envelope flap facing towards the balloon. Then, when the balloon is laid out on the next flight, it passes over the flap before contact with the ground and minimizes the risk of damage. *[Figure 8-11]*

Figure 8-11. *Packing the balloon. This pilot has elected to position the envelope bag near the basket and is bringing the balloon to the bag, rather than picking up the bag each time to move it towards the basket. Some pilots prefer this method, as it means less lifting for the crew.*

Crewmembers should be stationed on opposite sides of the bag at a 90° angle to the balloon. The pilot or designated crewmember lifts a section of the balloon and, with the crewmembers lifting the bag and bringing it to the envelope, place it in the envelope bag. This process continues until the envelope is almost completely packed and only the suspension cables are out. The suspension system is removed from the basket superstructure and secured, and placed in the envelope bag. The bag is closed and loaded on the chase vehicle.

Actions at this point are performed in the reverse order of the layout procedure. Generally, the envelope is secured onto the chase vehicle, the basket and burners are disassembled and secured on the vehicle, and a final check of the landing site is made to ensure that no loose items are left at the landing