

Germans enjoy Kansas journey

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On the last leg of a three-year hinterland, Detlev Henschel and companion Katrin Frommhold are walking across America.

Their goal is to experience the culture and meet Americans to share with the people in Germany and other European countries the good news.

“Everybody is afraid of America because of all the bad news (war and politics) published about it,” Henschel said.

To get an impression of how it was 130 years ago, they planned their route to see the historical sites of America.

On March 4, they left Los Angeles following Route 66 and were hoping to see the Santa Fe Trail along the way. Instead they mostly have found only markers and disappointment.

“You have to use lots of imagination because your farmers have plowed the ruts over for the past six generations,” Henschel said. “Americans should be proud of their heritage and not plow over historical sites.”

For the most part, Henschel and Frammhold have found their experiences with the people to be rewarding and interesting.

“We admire the police doing their jobs. They stop to offer assistance or rides. A sheriff came to help when our car “drowned overnight” during a severe thunderstorm,” Frommhold said.

Henschel and Frammhold plan to reach St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, the end of their journey, around Nov. 4.

In 2005, the first year of his hinterland, he walked in Japan. The second year, Frommhold joined him for a trek through the Australian Outback via a Bushcamper Hi-Top (4-wheel drive vehicle). Since they were unable to bring the Bushcamper with them, they rented a fully-equipped van, which Frammhold drives as Henschel walks a scheduled 23 miles per day. Each morning, Frammhold drives ahead a few miles then walks back to meet up with Henschel to get in a couple of hours walking time.

Their evenings are spent compiling the information they have collected during the day. When they have Internet access, they update their web site with the latest news and photos.

Henschel has written five books from his past traveling adventures and plans to write three additional books with the information he is collecting during his three-year hinterland. He would like to find an English-speaking publisher as he plans to stay in the United States after reaching his current destination.

Henschel is a self-employed scientist and inventor. Sponsors for his travels include Lieca, Ecco, Ortlieb and Panasonic.