

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

C-Leg® User Begins Walk Across Germany

For 74-year old Roland Zahn, it's about more than simply going the distance

On March 21, 2011, Roland Zahn began a 620 mile hike across Germany. The route will take the 74-year-old from his birthplace in Leipzig to Tübingen, the city where his right leg was amputated in 2006. He plans to complete the route in 104 days, but stresses this is about more than simply going the distance. He calls his project "Exercise Helps", something he knows from his own experience. After his amputation, he was reliant on a wheelchair for a year and believed he would never be able to go hiking again. It was his landlady who eventually persuaded him to give a prosthetic leg a go. "Mr. Zahn, just take a stroll around the block!" she said to him.

"The strain of walking even a short distance was enormous," says Zahn, recalling his first steps. "But even by the second attempt the next day it was much easier to go twice as far, and I built my strength up month by month."

Now, he has come to the conclusion that many of the approximately 200,000 amputees in Germany have not received sufficient information regarding the possibilities that technological devices could offer them. Zahn himself has been using a C-Leg® microprocessor knee since spring 2010 and benefits from the microprocessor technology that adapts to a person's movement 50 times per second and significantly reduces the chances of a fall. Thanks to that stability, he was able to prepare for his 620 mile trek with a 20-day hike along part of the Green Belt between two German states, Thuringia and Lower Saxony/Hesse, in September 2010.

"The Green Belt was a real discovery for me," says Zahn, speaking of the untouched nature area which, until 1989, formed the border between East and West Germany. "Hiking is prevention, therapy and pleasure all rolled into one, and I want to complete a personal challenge and reach Tübingen on July 6."

Zahn hopes that his hard work will help educate and spare other amputees the ordeal of bottoming out after their operations like he did. He will be giving presentations at the end of each stage of the journey to encourage others to believe in their ability to regain their mobility and to

develop a new sense of self-confidence in order to talk about their issues with others in the same situation. With this in mind, he hopes to encourage people along his cross country trek to found regional self-help groups, and is planning talks in selected medical supply stores to spread his message.

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Minnesota-based Otto Bock HealthCare LP was established in 1958 as the Americas corporate headquarters of Otto Bock HealthCare GmbH, based in Duderstadt, Germany. Otto Bock has more than 4,000 employees worldwide and produces over 40,000 types of prosthetic and orthotic components, mobility and rehabilitation products, and is the U.S. leader in delivering continuous passive motion (CPM) services and related therapies. (www.ottobockus.com)