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Midland Walkabout Volkssport Club celebrating 20 years

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The Midland Walkabout Volkssport Club will be 20 years old in March.

The club was founded by Jack Rogers, who had lived in Fredericksburg for many years and was active with walking clubs in the area. He then moved to the Midland area in December 2000. His wife apparently got tired of hearing him complain about there not being a club in the area and told him to start one. In March 2001 a notice was placed on a bulletin board at Midland College asking for people interested in forming a walking club. The rest, as they say, is history.

Alex Rose is the only original charter member still active in the club. Without the determination and drive of Rogers and Rose, the club would likely not have made it these 20 years.

Volkssport is a German term meaning "sport of the people." It began in Europe in 1968 and it was brought to the US in 1976 by Ken Knopp, a Catholic

deacon from Fredericksburg. He visited relatives in Germany who told him he was out of shape and that regular walking would be the best thing for him. He discovered that, even though most of his relatives were older than him, he could not keep up with them during daily walks.

Most volkssport events are walking events of 5K or 10K. Some areas may also include bicycling, swimming or cross-country skiing.

Rogers was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis when he was 34 years old. He recently celebrated his 90th birthday and credits his years of walking with keeping him going.

The Midland Walkabouts sponsor 12 walks ranging from the streets of Midland to Lake Colorado City State Park in the east, north to Carlsbad Caverns National Park in New Mexico and west to the Fort Davis area near the Davis Mountains.

There's a little something for everyone. For more information about the Walkabouts, email midlandwalkaboutclub@yahoo.com.