

## Separate walks Saturday bring attention to Diabetes

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Georgetown County will kick off Diabetes Awareness Month with two diabetes awareness walks Nov. 5. Organized by Carvers Bay High School senior Elizabeth Powell, the Type 2 Diabetes Awareness Walk (1.5 miles) begins at 8 a.m. at Hopewell AME Church in Georgetown's Choppee community. After the walk, participants can receive free blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes screenings from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Gospel

groups will sing, a guest from the Medical University of South Carolina will speak on diabetes prevention and a chiropractor will be available for consultations.

Georgetown County Diabetes CORE Group, Furman University's Riley Institute and MUSC Reach-2010 are sponsoring the event.

Though the event is free, Powell said, donations "are always welcome."

Powell added she encourages people of all ages to attend the "fun and educational" event. "This will be a fun event that people will enjoy," she said. "And it can also help people get checked for diabetes and raise awareness."

The second diabetes awareness walk will be the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) Walk, organized by Charlene Britt and Cathy Cunningham, It begins at 10 a.m. at the Georgetown High School track field. Activities will include donated food, a moonwalk and slides.

Children from Maryville, McDonald and Kensington Elementary schools will walk for pre-pledged sponsorship funds. All money collected will benefit JDRF and the search for a Juvenile Diabetes cure.

A representative from JDRF will have a table set up.

Britt said she helped create the walk to raise awareness of juvenile diabetes, a growing problem in Georgetown County.

"We just want to get something like this established in the area to raise awareness about juvenile diabetes," she said.

Both Powell and Britt said they had personal reasons for organizing these walks.

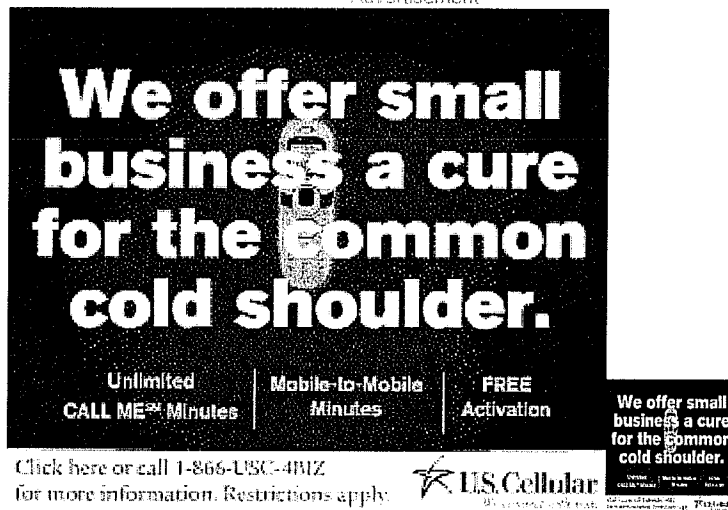
Powell, who used a \$300 grant from The Riley Institute to fund the service project, said she has family members with Type 2 diabetes.

"My grandmother and my great-grandmother had Type 2 diabetes and suffered from it, so the disease runs in my family," she said.

Britt also said she created the walk because a diabetes diagnosis changed her son's life.

"My son was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. It was a shock because it doesn't run in my family at all," she said.

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Awareness, too, is an issue both Powell and Britt want to address.

"Type 2 diabetes is a serious problem in Georgetown County, and people really don't know much about it," Powell said.

"We want to express the need for exercise and healthy eating to prevent the disease."

Britt said juvenile diabetes also is a little-understood issue that affects more and more children.

"I didn't know what was wrong with my son until they diagnosed him with juvenile diabetes," she said. "So we're doing this walk to raise awareness in the community about this disease."

Call Florene Linnen, founder of Diabetes CORE, at 546-6887 for information about the Diabetes Awareness Walk. Call Britt for information about the JDRF Walk.