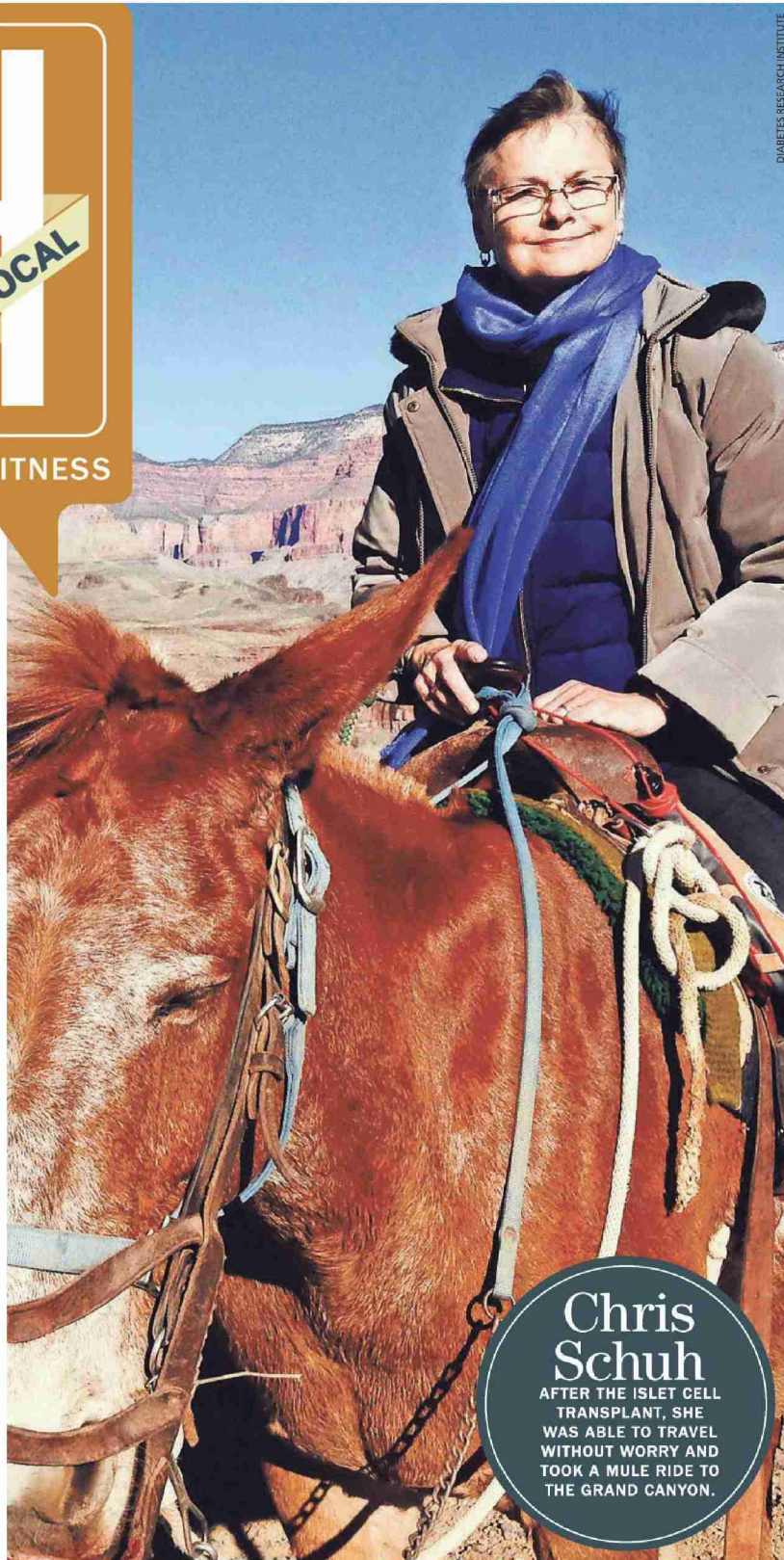




A MILESTONE IN DIABETES TREATMENT

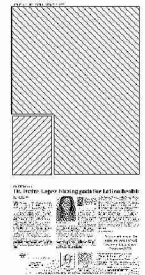
TALLAHASSEE WOMAN
CHRIS SCHUH CELEBRATES
10 YEARS OF LIVING FREE
FROM INJECTIONS



**Chris
Schuh**

AFTER THE ISLET CELL
TRANSPLANT, SHE
WAS ABLE TO TRAVEL
WITHOUT WORRY AND
TOOK A MULE RIDE TO
THE GRAND CANYON.

DIABETES RESEARCH INSTITUTE



SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT

Celebrating a significant 10-year milestone, Tallahassee resident Chris Schuh, 64, is grateful to be alive. Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age 30, Schuh received an islet cell transplant at the [Diabetes Research Institute](#) and has been living free from insulin injections for a decade. Schuh met with her DRI doctors recently for her celebratory post-islet transplant follow-up. She joins other DRI transplant recipients who have been living insulin free, some for more than 10 years, demonstrating that natural insulin production can be restored in diabetes patients.

“The fact that it has worked so long is an incredible delight! To not worry about testing my blood sugar every time I walk out the door, or having to test 10 times a day ... to not have to deal with the uncertainty of diabetes, it’s just plain old wonderful,” Schuh said. “I’m extremely grateful to be alive, and the only reason I am is because of the knowledge, care and expertise of the Diabetes Research Institute.”

Type 1 diabetes, also referred to as insulin-dependent diabetes, is an autoimmune disorder in which the body’s immune system mistakenly sees the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas as foreign and destroys them.

The Diabetes Research Institute at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine is the largest and most comprehensive research center ded-

See Diabetes, Page 6C

icated to curing diabetes. A pioneer in islet cell transplantation, the DRI is aggressively working to develop a biological cure for all people affected by diabetes. To patients like Schuh, this life-changing procedure couldn’t have come soon enough.

“My body became resistant to insulin,” she said. “No matter how strict I was with what I ate, or how detailed I was with the records I kept, it didn’t matter. My (blood sugar) numbers were always high, which is poison to your system.”

Now retired, Schuh spent her career as an executive of a statewide Florida association that required traveling — something that was too dangerous to do on her own.

“I couldn’t travel alone. Stress makes your blood sugar go low, taking too much insulin makes you go low, activity can cause you to go low — I would never know when that was going to happen,” she said. A low blood sugar, also known as hypoglycemia, can be a dangerous condition that can cause

fainting, seizure, coma or even death.

Worried that she wouldn’t live to see the age of 50 or even see her daughter off to college, Schuh found a glimmer of hope when she read a small item in the newspaper that was calling for clinical trial patient applications. She recalled, “That little three-inch column in the paper helped change my life!”

After checking with her endocrinologist, she wholeheartedly applied to be a candidate for the DRI’s islet transplantation clinical trials. After an intense screening process, she was accepted as a participant and was called for her first infusion of insulin-producing cells.

Although she lived decades of being on a rigid schedule of eating at specific times, which was always matched with insulin intake, Schuh remembered a feeling she had never really felt before shortly after the transplant.

“I finally felt hungry. Something as simple as eating food became a whole new experience,” she marveled.

She was insulin free for a short time after the first transplant but needed another infusion of cells. After that second transplant, she has now been free of insulin injections for 10 years, which is a significant benchmark.

“I feel alive and vibrant,” Schuh proclaims today. “Nothing is holding me back. I’ve taken master gardening classes. I rode a mule into the Grand Canyon. I’ve traveled the world without worry. I swam with dolphins ... and I never thought I’d make it past 50,” she said, due to the severity of her diabetes and hypoglycemic reactions.

“One thing I want parents, kids, and all others affected by diabetes to know is that the cure is coming. Do not dismay. It will happen in our lifetime,” said Schuh, who firmly believes in and supports the Diabetes Research Institute’s singular mission — to find a biological cure for diabetes. Building on these promising outcomes, the DRI is developing the DRI BioHub, a bio-engineered “mini organ” that mimics the native pancreas. While various BioHub platforms are being tested in preclinical and clinical studies, the DRI is also developing strategies to eliminate the need for anti-rejection drugs and reset the immune system to block autoimmunity.

For those interested in learning more about clinical trials or the work of

the Diabetes Research Institute, call
1-800-321-3437 or visit Diabetes
Research.org.



DIABETES RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Chris Schuh gets an islet heart plaque at the Diabetes Research Institute.