

Nurse Julie Borisko: Making it great

by Sue Kanhai

Perianesthesia nurse Julie Borisko isn't at all comfortable in the spotlight, but she welcomes the opportunity to shine light on her talented colleagues.

"I can't say that I do anything special," she says. "Everyone here is special – no one more so than the rest. We work as a team and we all bring our own qualities. We work together and we try to make each day great for our patients."

Borisko works in the post anesthetic care unit (PACU), also known as the recovery room.

"We are the team that looks after patients when they come out of the operating room recovering from general anesthetics," she explains.

Borisko graduated in 1976 from the Toronto General Hospital campus of George Brown College. She was part of TGH's last graduating class before they officially became George Brown. In the 1980s, she added to her credentials, earning a certificate in critical care nursing from Humber College.

Her career began at Toronto General Hospital. From 1976 to 1990, she worked in intensive care and recovery – in a respiratory intensive care unit, a surgical intensive care unit (ICU) and a neurosurgical ICU and recovery room.

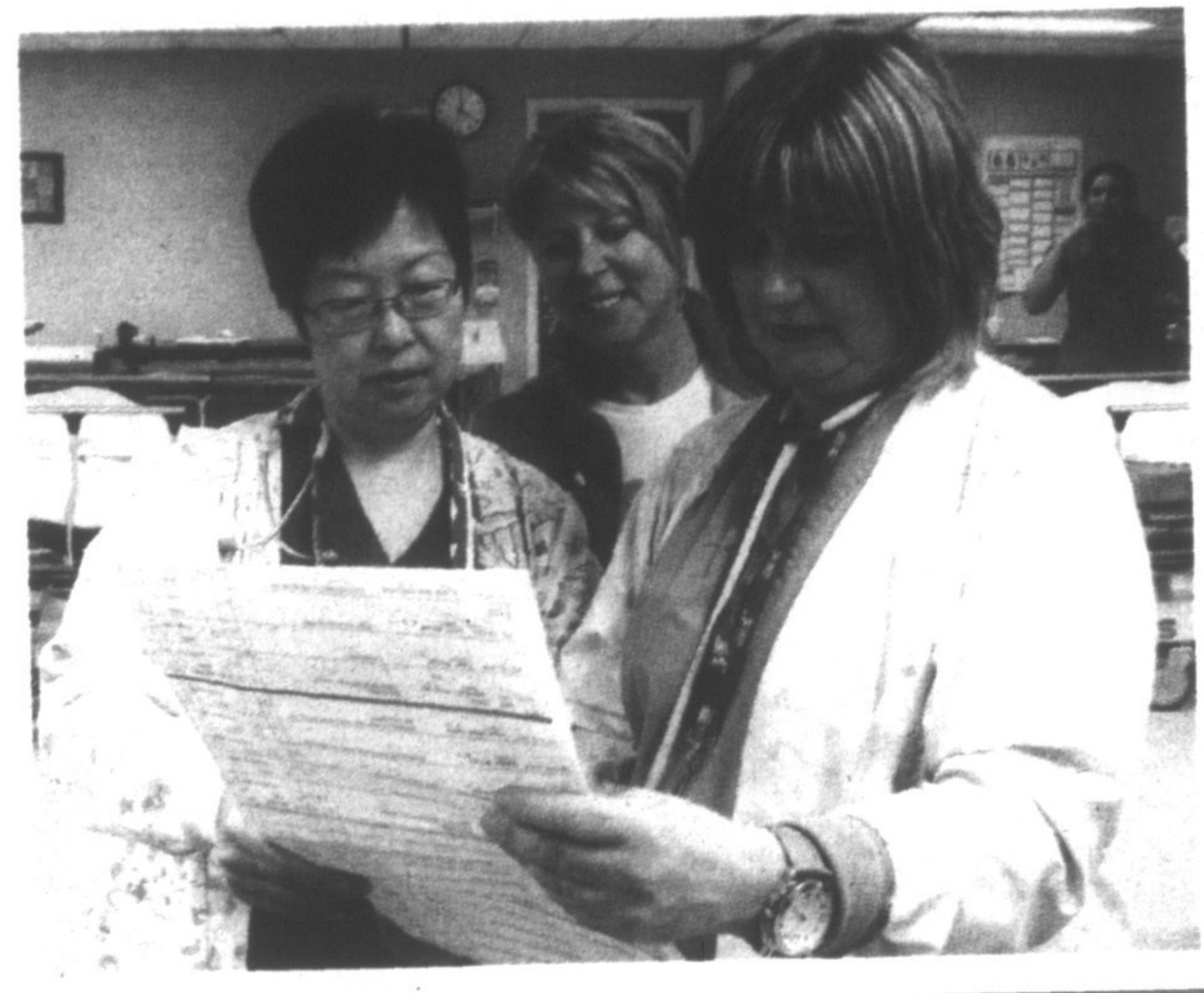
She lived in Markham for all those years and made the long daily drive back and forth to work. When a new hospital was slated to open up closer to home, she jumped at the chance to be a part of it.

"I was thrilled to be able to come up here," Borisko says. "After commuting so many years downtown to Toronto General from Markham, it was such a delight to come to a hospital that was so close. It was wonderful because even though I learned so much working downtown, it was time for a change and it was great to be so close to home."

Borisko started at MSH in January, just weeks before its doors opened for the very first time on March 5, 1990. She recalls meeting her new colleagues and setting up the unit with her fellow nurses, getting everything ready from the bedside tables to the monitors. She even remembers the very first patient in the ICU.

"It was so great to open up a brand new hospital," she says. She began in the ICU and in 2003 moved to the PACU.

Several years ago she won a Partners in Excellence Award, a recognition she was both thankful for and slightly embarrassed by. Her "friends and colleagues are all fabulous, skilled

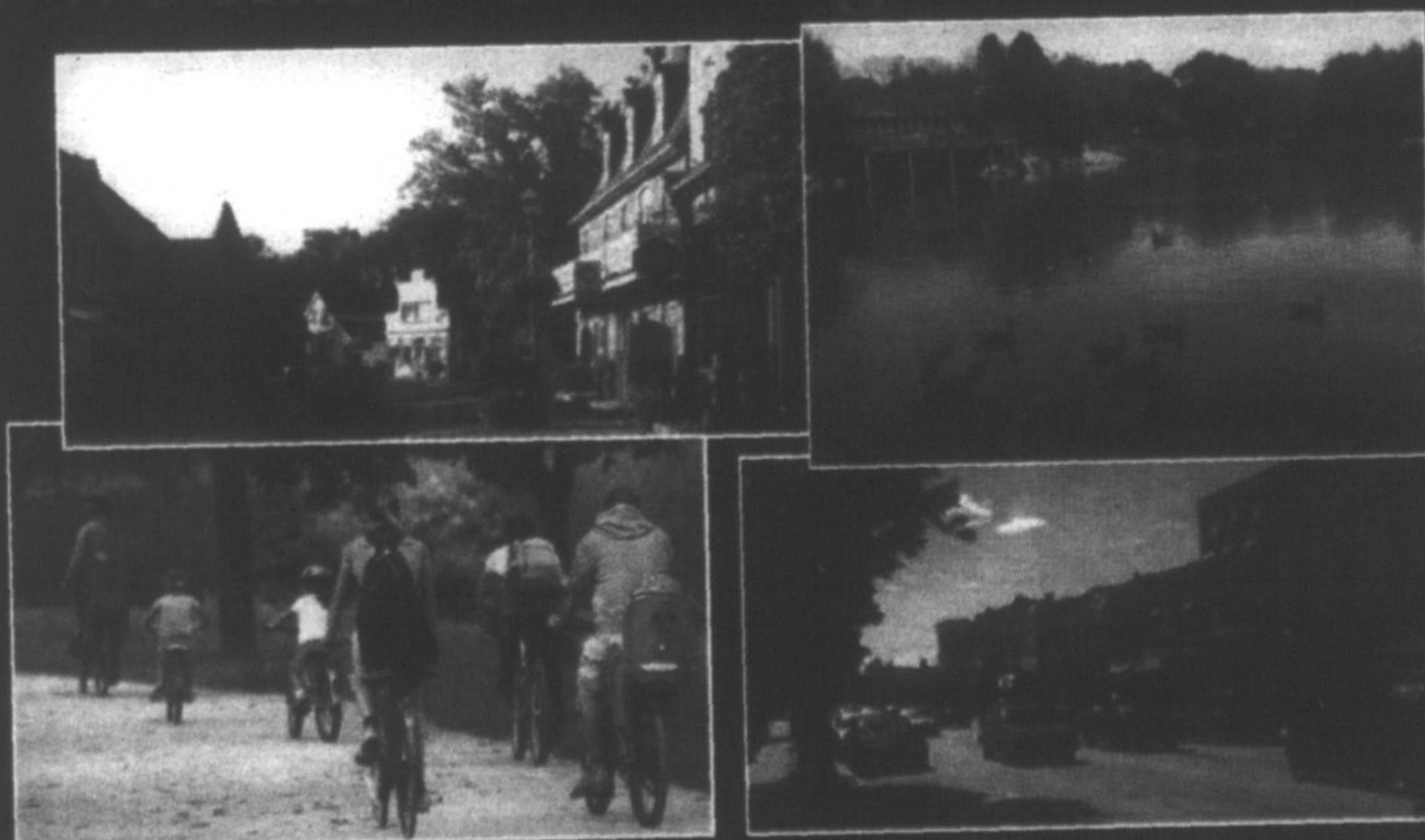


Post anesthesia care unit (PACU) nurse, Julie Borisko (right), reviews a patient's chart with colleagues.

individuals," she says and she felt odd being singled out. She proudly points out that all of her colleagues belong to professional organizations and are committed to continuously upgrading and updating their skills.

In her time at the hospital, Borisko's involvement has gone well beyond the boundaries of her job description. Currently the chair of staff relations, she serves as a liaison between senior management and non-unionized staff.

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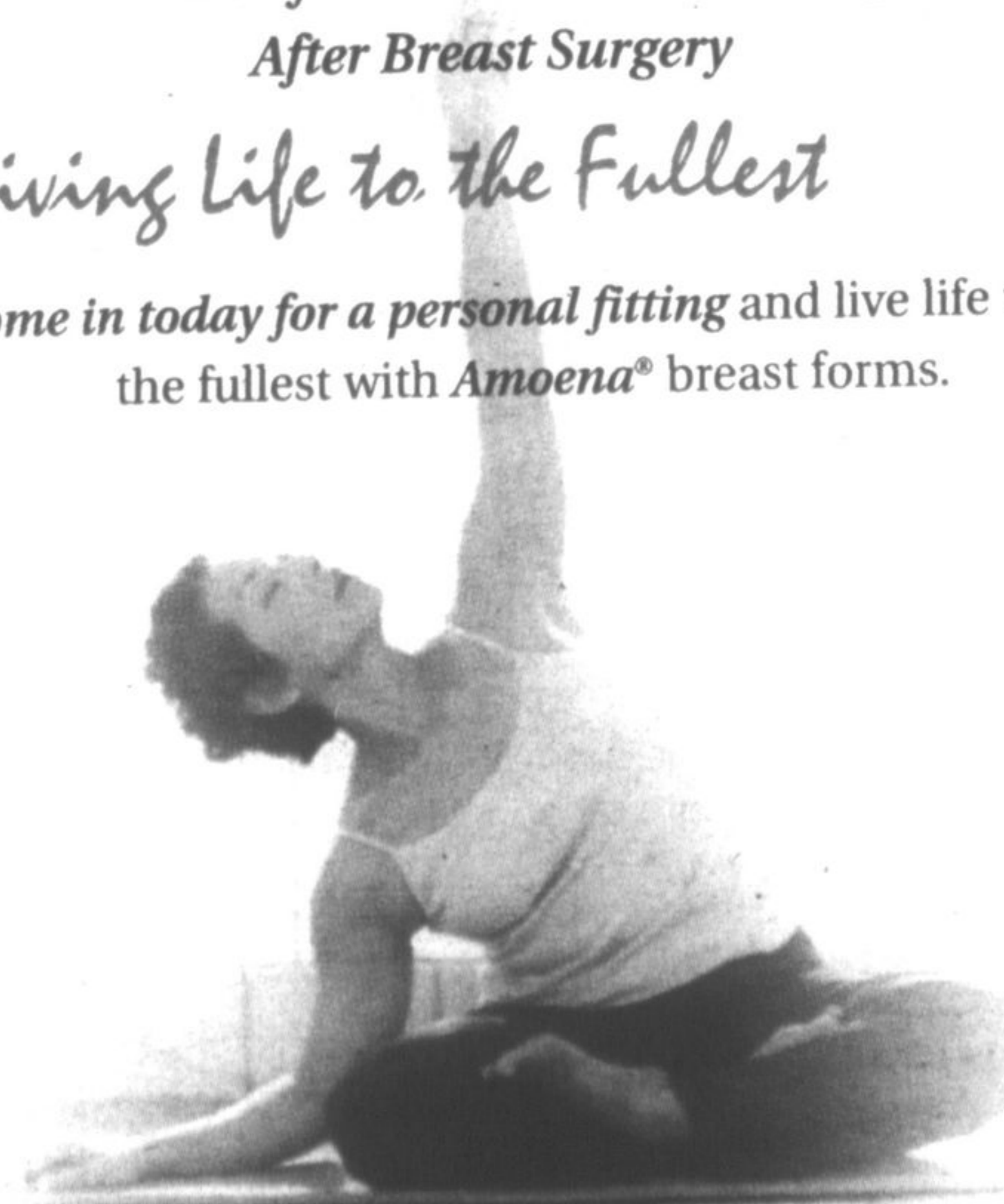
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