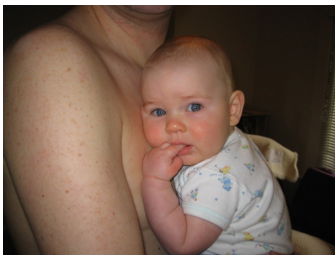


Being Back

Written by
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I went to high school in [Orillia](#) and as a teenager; I could hardly wait to leave the "dead-end, little town". Funny thing is that I went back there a couple of years later and settled down and had a family, learning that Orillia had a lot more to offer than I initially thought. My children were all born at the local hospital, Soldier's Memorial and even though as a family we moved out to Horseshoe Valley, they all went to high school at one of the Orillia schools. Returning to Orillia this time is like putting on some comfortable slippers and I am settling in as if I never left.

Today, I had some errands to run and my first order of the day was to get some cat food at the "new" Pet Value store out near Wal-Mart. When we left here in December 2003, the only Pet Value store was in town so this was a new find for me. Afterwards, I stopped at Zehr's to pick up some groceries and to my delight, discovered how much the organic produce section has expanded since leaving here almost a year and a half ago. I took the time to commend the produce manager for their foresight and was intrigued to learn from him that the shelf life of the organic produce is greater than that of the regular stuff.(contrary to what most of us think!) He also told me that organic produce has dropped in price, making it much more affordable and we discussed how much better the nutritional value of it is compared to its conventional counterpart which is laden with pesticides and herbicides.

I then went downtown which when I first drove through it a week ago seemed to be "dying" at first glance and I was pleased to see that there is still plenty of life there. I really hope that the city council will do whatever they can to help the local businesses and encourage folks to frequent them. I like the ambience of this "dead end, little town" and realize now that my teenage perception is not at all accurate. I guess what I am saying is that even though I no longer reside here and don't see myself ever settling here again, it is nice to be back!