Born/raised in Lakewood, California, the son of Dutch immigrants. Resident of Wrightwood, California since 1992 (28 years). Owner of Grizzly Cafe since 2003. Wife, Debi (owner of Golden Acorn (since 1992) & new GA Mercantile). Family includes 3 children & 7 grandchildren (from 6 to 16), all Wrightwood residents.

Leo’s professional experience over the last 35+ years includes working on compound issues with diverse objectives and complex budgets. His first job as a box boy for Vons Supermarkets evolved over 20 years into the position as Director of Operations at the Corporate level. With the sale to Safeway, he took a position as the Vice President of Operations for P & C Supermarkets in New York. A few years later, the opportunity arose as Director of Quality Assurance Worldwide - Catalina Marketing Company, which allowed him to travel domestically and internationally. Leo’s final employment was with UST Global, where his IT responsibilities worked in the Retail and Healthcare sectors.

Their original business, the Golden Acorn on Park Street, led to a desire to open the Grizzly Cafe, with the main goal to provide a high quality, family dining experience for both residents and visitors to Wrightwood. They are very proud that they are one of the destinations of Pacific Crest Trail hikers, car and motorcycle clubs, wedding parties, and the occasional celebrity.

But what has grown out of a business has been the tentacles into a community that they love. Beyond sponsoring youth sport teams, Music in the Pines, feeding Honor Students at Wrightwood Elementary, and building the scoreboard for Little League. Their family contributes to the Veterans of Foreign Wars Annual Dinner each November, helped feed Cal Trans workers as they worked on the widening project on Highway 138, and most recently stayed in town to feed firefighters, sheriff, and forestry teams as they battled the 2016

Wrightwood fires.