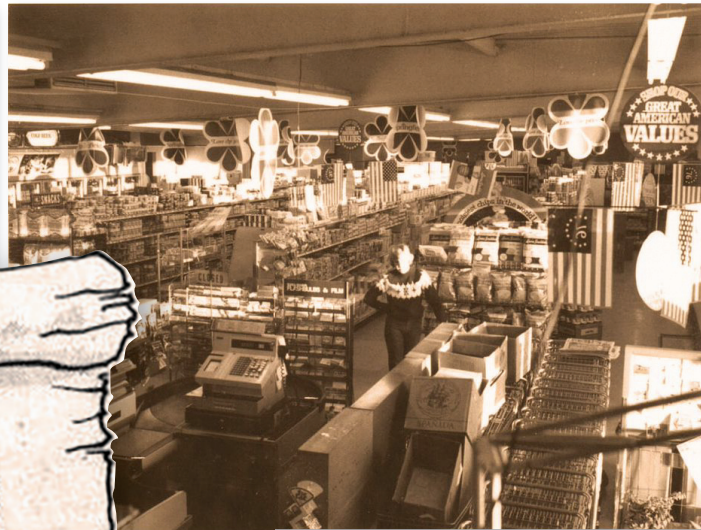


# The Old Store



To all friends and future friends of Lucerne Valley -

We have appreciated our developing relationship with the Regensbergs, the Thrushes, the other employees of Leo's Market, and certainly those residents we have begun to know. My first visit was in about 1930. I was impressed then and am impressed now.

We have visited quite often during the past seven or eight years. We love Lucerne Valley. Some of our fondest memories are talking with or driving around "scouting" the country with the late "Pete" Pederson, tractor operator, water witcher, realtor, and more.

To you we are newcomers. We know we need to earn your trust and respect. We will try our best to do this. Certainly we know that we have the enthusiastic support of the Regensbergs in what will be our effort to bring you a market which is super, but warm and personal. Gradually we will make many changes as we learn your desires and needs. Please help us with your suggestions and support.

Thank you for this opportunity.

*Ernie Gommel*  
Ernest and Barbara Gommel

The year was 1975, March 10, to be exact. The aliens had landed in a small desert town of Southern California, the kind of town that would qualify for those "funny" bumper stickers: "Where the H\_\_\_ is Lucerne Valley?"

What was on the aliens' minds? Do aliens even have minds? Were they "legal" aliens? (In 1975, they hadn't even invented "illegal" aliens yet, so they must have been "legal".) Actually, they were just alien to the desert, new to the language, to the climate, and to that sun - oh, so much sun - hot, very hot sun! And dust, dust that was unstoppable, seeping through every crack, every closed window, all the time as the wind blew so incessantly. Well, not all the time. Well, most of the time. Well, some of the time. Well, it blew when it blew.

When the aliens arrived, they found some strange things, like tall, green spiky tree-like things and short, roundish, greenish plants with sharp needles. Both could stick in the skin, drawing blood (do aliens have blood?). At night the coyotes howled. In the day, friendly bird critters that could run on roads might come calling at the house, expecting a meaty treat. In the spring, millions of colorful wildflowers covered the dusty, dry desert floor in that wet year. The aliens fell in love.

I remember that day the aliens arrived. In fact, I was one of them, and so were my dad (we called him Gommel), my mother (we called her Barb), and several others who have since gone on to other things. Sir William and Lady Jan remained on planet Reche Canyon, our home base, for the time being. Deborah Jean was soon to join the crew at age 17, the youngest alien amongst us.

We came to operate a grocery market, having been sent by our Commander who for reasons of His own wanted us to serve this dusty little desert town with a store. To our surprise, the larger of three stores in the town was the last one we would have chosen, based on our experience with small stores, but it was clear

to us that this was the one. It was out of our league, far from our comfort zone, and scary.

No one thought the store was for sale, but after several weeks of visits to the real estate offices here, when my dad semi-seriously told each one, "We want to buy Leo's Market, but we have no money", one of the real estate people decided to ask the owner if the store was for sale. To the great surprise of them all, the owner was tired (we can relate!), dealing with some health issues, and wanted out badly.

So here we were, with what we thought was a giant store, ready and willing to do what God wanted in this foreign (to us) setting. I remember doing the first couple of grocery orders with the former owner, in awe of the number of products on the shelves.

What brought this up in my mind just now? What brought it up was an email from David Rib, Plant Manager of Mitsubishi (Lucerne Valley's best friend!), announcing that our project of digitizing all of the Lucerne Valley Leaders was finally complete and available on a website of University of CA Riverside. The project took many hours of time and several years of haggling with the Daily Press to get the rights to our own newspapers which the DP inherited when it bought The Leader. They have since discontinued the Leader, after the big dog Gannett bought the medium dog (name unknown) that bought the little dog, the Daily Press, that had purchased the tiny dog, The Leader. Many thanks to Millie Rader, Chuck Bell, David Rib, and Mitsubishi, for

## Leo's Market

Market  
PATRONAGE IS ALWAYS APPRECIATED

**Canning Jars!**  
We Now Have  
A Good Supply

We suggest you  
buy them EARLY  
Lids and Caps are coming in, too.

*meat*  
AT ITS FINEST

**DON AND  
MARION  
THRUSH**

**Raid**  
Ant & Roach  
Liquid **67¢**  
16 oz.  
Aerosol **89¢**  
16 oz.  
Aerosol **75¢**  
11 oz.

Fresh  
Frozen  
Chicken  
Breasts  
5 lb  
Box **\$3.95**

Shoulder  
or  
Loin End  
**Pork  
Roast**  
**98¢ lb.**

Zippos  
**Burritos**  
**79¢** each  
15 1/2 oz. Pkg

**Filet of  
Turbot**  
  
**79¢ lb.**

**McCoy's  
Corned  
Beef  
Round**  
**\$1.19 lb**

### Tuna Sell-A-Bration!

**Starkist or Carnation  
or Chicken of the Sea**

Chunk, light tuna **49¢**  
Take Your Pick! 6 1/2 oz. Can

For you dieters!  
**Starkist**  
Solid White in Water **61¢**  
7 oz. Can

BUY A CASE

### CANDY

The ideal Gift for Easter

"Happy Easter" **\$1.39**

Telephones

Reg. \$1.79

A Great Selection of  
Many Other Types



For your Kitty

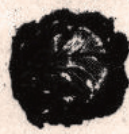
### Purina Choice Morsels

One of the finest Cat Foods!

Beef & Lobster Cheese & Egg Tuna  
Chicken & Kidney Liver and Tuna Shrimp

Big **52¢**  
12 oz. size  
Reg. **29¢**  
6 oz. size

Crisp Firm Iceberg  
**Lettuce**



**19¢** each

### PRODUCE SPECIALS

Juicy Grapefruit Sweet



8 lb. Cello Bag **65¢**

Large Tomatoes Tasty



**29¢ lb.**

SPECIALS EFFECTIVE THURS., MARCH 13, THRU SUNDAY, MARCH 16, 1975

OPEN 8 A.M. - 7 P.M. MON. - THURS. 8 A.M. - 8 P.M. FRIDAY & SAT. 8 A.M. - 5 P.M. SUNDAY



NEW OWNERS - Barbara and Ernest Gommel pause a moment in front of the Lucerne Valley Market to have their picture taken with part of the market staff. From left to right are Barbara, Linda Gommel, Donna Killion, Jo Whalen, Dottie Briscoe, Pauline Archer, and Ernest. The Gommels took over the market (formerly Leo's Market) on Monday, and are looking forward to a long and happy association with the people of Lucerne Valley.

pushing this through against many obstacles.

I looked up the March 1975, editions of the Leader to find our very first ad after taking over the Market operations on March 10, 1975, which is shown on this page. Typical of my dad, he addressed the community right out of the box, and then dove in to make sorely needed improvements.

Just look at the prices in that ad! Wow! And the brands that have disappeared. Amazing. I imagine that we wrote that first ad with the items that were in the back room of the store, since we had not been able to order on our own yet.

Thank You, Commander, for sending us here. Hopefully after 48 years, we are no longer aliens to this beautiful valley -- dust, wind, and spiky, sharp plants and trees included. Hopefully we ARE aliens in this broken world, just passing through, on our way to Your Kingdom. But that's another story for another time.

*Linda Gommel*

### On The Lighter Side . . . Contributed from the Web

