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charm.
 "We'd all go to a Chinese restaurant and 20 of us would order dinner for 10," Aldo said. "Then we'd put the bill in the middle of the table and blow. Whoever the bill landed in front of had to pay."
 "Those were fun times. No one had any airs then."

As newlyweds, things were tight. Their first home was a one-room upstairs; their first automobile a rather unreliable 1936 Chevy.

Their matrimonial union was partly forged in strong labor backgrounds. Aldo's father worked in the factory at Ford Motor Co. Lois' dad was one of the sitdown strikers in the 1930s.

They were the first in their respective families to go to college.

Aldo, who went to law school, worked for the Congress of Industrial Organizations that later became the AFL-CIO. After a career that included being editor of the Eastside Shopper, Lois produced publications for the American Federation of Teachers until her retirement.

Suburban family

A few addresses and four children later, the couple settled in then Farmington Township in 1960 where they immediately became active in the Democratic club.

As a Dem, Vagnozzi made two unsuccessful runs for township supervisor. In the late 1960s, he finished second and grabbed a seat on the Farmington school board.

"Lois had been a big help in the race," Aldo said. "I'd be sitting home and Lois would say, 'Get out there and campaign.'"

Walking door to door did the trick as he won by a mere eight votes.

Aldo since turned shoe leather campaigning into an art form. He won another term on the school board and later terms on city council.

In 1995, Vagnozzi became the Hills' first directly elected mayor. Lois became accustomed to sharing her husband with his public duties.

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'When we came out of the war, there was a coming of age at the time. We realized there was a lot at stake in the world. We realized you have to give back to your community.'

*Lois Vagnozzi
 —Farmington Hills*

ing of age at the time. We realized there was a lot at stake in the world," she said. "We realized you have to give back to your community."

The normally jovial husband with a perpetual twinkle in his eyes turns serious.

"It's brought us a lot closer," he said. "We don't argue over the little things anymore. You realize there are more important things."

Through sickness ...

She underwent 10 months of intensive chemotherapy. She's doing well for now, she said.

Lois does her own things like gardening.

She also keeps close tabs on the family's four children: Steve (and Darlene), Paul, Nancy (and Rick Fantaleo) and Barbara (and Howard Fleeter).

Altogether, the Vagnozzis have seven grandchildren: Michelle, 20, Angie, 18, Brent, 12, Alicia, 11, Casey, 5, Justin, 4, and Abby, 2.



A lifetime: Aldo and Lois Vagnozzi met in college and were married three years after they began courting. Here they are pictured on their wedding day 50 years ago.

Lately, Aldo and Lois have taken up water aerobics and gone on trips sponsored through the Hills Senior Center. At home, she will digest The New York Times and point out columns for her husband to read. She also critiques his performance at council meetings, especially the few times "he crosses the line," she said.

Her husband is a great writer, Lois said. When he's done as mayor, she'd like to see him write a book to capture much of the labor history that has

been lost.

As well as a talented newspaperwoman, she's generous, Aldo noted. He remarked how she returned a \$500 monetary award, which has evolved into a scholarship fund that allows people from union locals to attend journalism conferences.

The compliments go back and forth. So do the looks of love.

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ing under stepping district officials from making further allegations and requiring removal of such allegations from the school records.

Walled Lake Schools denies the charges and will soon ask that the lawsuit be dismissed, according to the district's attorney Bob Lusk.

Stern supervised a group of four students, including his son, on a sixth grade field trip to Chicago last year. Two of those youths, he said, were difficult to control and ran off several times when they entered different buildings.

"As a chaperone, our responsibility was to keep them in a group," Stern said. "These boys took off and we were chasing them."

Stern said he denied some of the boys' requests to do things apart from the rest of the group, and said their continual disobedient actions brought him to tears.

After returning from Chicago, one of the two boys told his parents of Stern's alleged physical and verbal abuse. The boy's mother, in turn, contacted school officials who conducted an investigation.

Since that time, Stern said, word of the allegations has not only spread around Meadowbrook and his neighborhood, but has snowballed. He said he's even heard of youths calling him a child molester.

"This is too far-fetched for even me to deal with," Stern said. "I've never been accused of manhandling a child. I've never been accused of abusing a child,"

WALLED LAKE SCHOOLS

Stern is accused of striking one of the boys in the head, kicking him in the back, swearing at him and smoking around him. The other youth backed up those claims.

Stern denies those allegations.

"At no time did I do anything out of line," Stern said.

But because Stern didn't formally report any problems and the children said they saw him smoking, he was prohibited from going on field trips for the next three years.

School principal Mary Biziorek conducted an investigation of the two students' claims. But Stern's attorney, Burton May, said Biziorek's probe was incomplete and biased.

That bias, May said, was demonstrated in several ways including the difference in time spent interviewing the parents — two hours with one of the alleged victim's mother versus 30 to 45 minutes with the Sterns, of which Biziorek herself was allegedly present for just 10 minutes.

The rest of the time, her secretary conducted the interview and took inaccurate notes, the Sterns said.

May said the lawsuit also includes charges of discrimina-

tion, claiming the district turned the parental matter into an ethnic issue between his Jewish client and the family of the boys, who are Chaldean.

The suit claims the school district disposed of the matter too quickly in order to avoid a situation they feared would turn into an ethnic-based conflict.

"I don't think it was race-related to start with, but I think it became an ethnic issue because the principal didn't nip it in the bud," May said.

"That's absolutely false," said attorney Bob Lusk who represents the district. "The gentleman who made the final decision is (then assistant superintendent)

Steven Gaynor, who is Jewish himself."

In their depositions, the Sterns said Gaynor did not act biased toward them, Lusk said. But May said Gaynor testified in a deposition hearing that he didn't conduct an independent investigation, relying instead on information provided by Biziorek.

"It's our position that she was discriminatory in the way she handled (the investigation) and his decision was wrong because it was based on biased information that she provided," May said.

Lusk said a full investigation was completed, and verbal and

written statements were taken from the Sterns and their eldest son by school officials before any decision was made.

However, Stern said the principal, who had only been at the school three months at that time, should have contacted the former principal to find out the backgrounds of himself and the two children.

Lusk said he is planning to file a motion for dismissal of the case in the next few weeks.

"We have taken several depositions in this case," Lusk said. "I am convinced there's no merit at all to the lawsuit."

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