



ABC file photo

FAMILY AFFAIR: *The Partridge Family*, circa 1971, pose in their trademark bus: From left, Shirley Jones, Jeremy Gelbwaks, Suzanne Crough, Susan Dey, Danny Bonaduce and David Cassidy.

NO MORE IDOL CHATTER

■ David Cassidy once could elicit screams with a toss of his hair. But Keith Partridge was just too squeaky clean. Two decades later, the word Partridge no longer ruffles his feathers, and he's on the road again.

By STEVE PERSALL
Times Correspondent

David Cassidy's musical career hasn't been the same since he lost Rubin Kincaid as his manager. Fan magazines don't pester him anymore, teen-age girls don't sneak around his hotel room, and that psychedelic bus Kincaid made *The Partridge Family* travel around in for four television seasons has long been junked.

The music is different, and it doesn't have that immediate pop appeal of *I Think I Love You* or *Doesn't Somebody Want To Be Wanted* 20 years ago. Cassidy hustles through concerts and interviews these days with the ghost of Keith Partridge close behind.

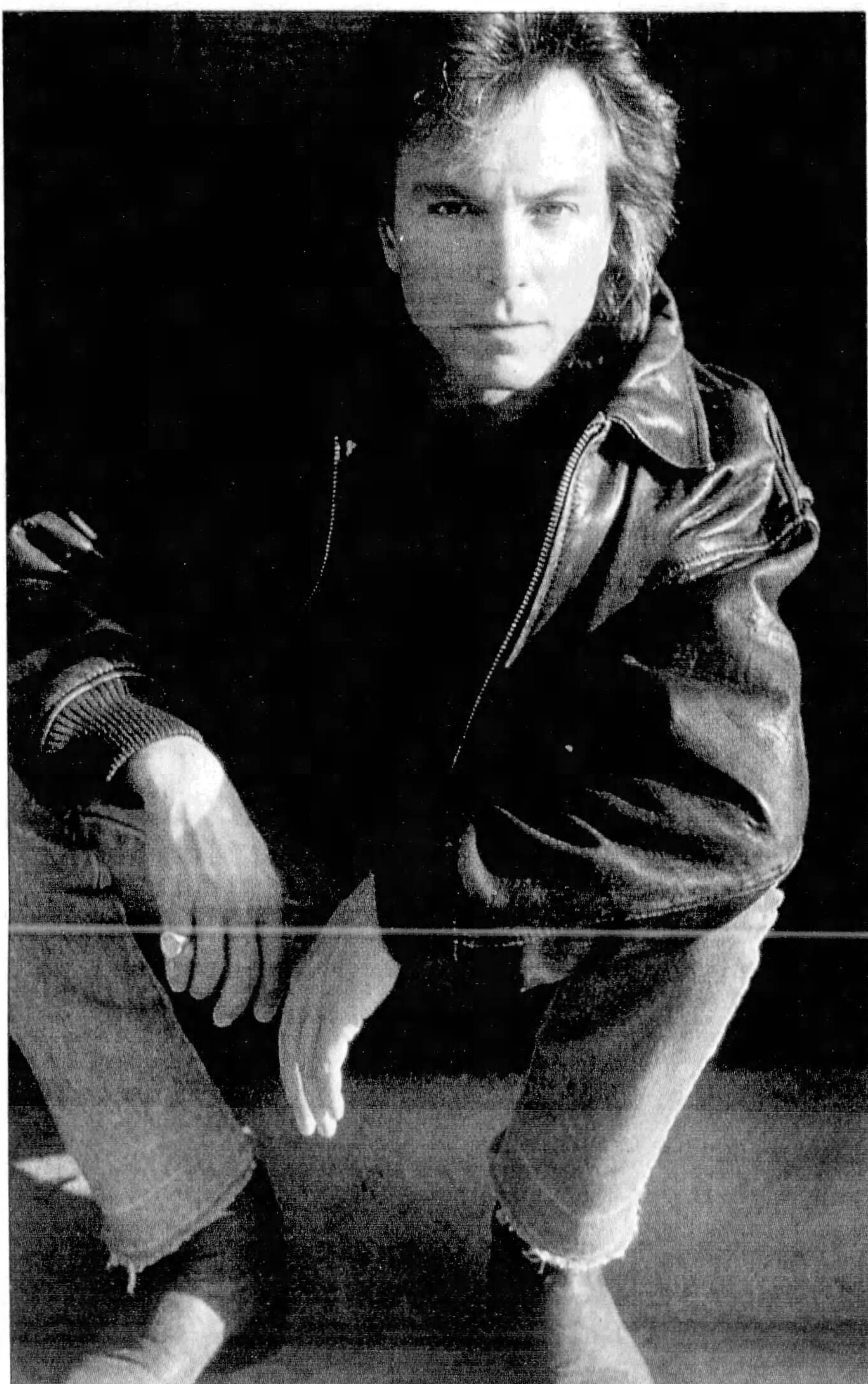
Cassidy was cooped up in *The Partridge Family* sitcom fantasy from 1970-74. As Keith, the band's lead singer and No. 1 son, Cassidy attained teen idol status around the world. That Partridge has been an albatross around his neck ever since.

Now Cassidy has embarked on his boldest attempt to prove himself as a viable rock 'n' roll act for the '90s — a national tour that includes Saturday's date at Ruth Eckerd Hall.

"Somebody coined a name for it the other day," Cassidy said recently. "They said this was kind of like my credibility tour. Okay, I'll buy that."

What Cassidy is trying to prove is that he's more than a pin-up performer. A 1990 album, his first in 12 years, showcased a blues/rock musician with a mature attitude. Few heard it, though, after its Enigma label filed for bankruptcy and couldn't promote the album.

So Cassidy decided to take his bid for contemporary acceptance



Publicity photo

directly to the people — even those who insist on categorizing him merely as a former teen idol.

"Whenever someone calls me that, it instantly strips away whatever credibility I've been able to establish in the last 20 years," Cassidy said. "When they found all those kids like Fabian in Philadelphia during the '50s, it became: 'pretty face, no talent.' That's what I had to deal with."

Along the way, Cassidy traded bubblegum pop for the hard-rocking kind of music his '70s television image wouldn't allow.

DAVID CASSIDY, CIRCA 1991: "Little did you know that when they said, 'Cut,' I walked into my dressing room and played John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers records."

AT A GLANCE

David Cassidy at Ruth Eckerd Hall, Saturday at 8 p.m. Opening will be comedian (and former *Partridge Family* member) Danny Bonaduce. Tickets are \$19 and \$22 and are available at the box office and all Ticketmaster outlets. Call 791-7400 (Pinellas) or 854-1538 (Hillsborough) for information.

Please see **IDOL** 3D