



## ... And a Partridge in a Hertz Rent A Car?

**W**hen David Cassidy, that '70s icon as squeaky-clean Keith Partridge of The Partridge Family, finally puttered into Bloomington on a sunset late Monday afternoon, he was at first a little difficult to recognize.

He wheeled up in a Hertz Rent A Car.

Whaz? Huh? What's-going-on-here?

There was no multi-colored "hippie-bus" bobbing down Greenwood Avenue toward WBNQ radio, Ruben Kincaid manning the wheel, Danny Bonaduce strumming the guitar, Susan Dey smiling from behind the keyboard, Shirley Jones miming the words and Keith — yes, lovable, squeezable, blood-pressure-elevating Keith — wooing all the rest of the world.

**Hardly.**

Cassidy simply pulled himself out of the passenger side, took off a black baseball hat, gyrated the head once to poof up the hair and loosen the bangs, and let out an exasperating 12-hour-day shrug.

"Pffffeww," he said, rather eloquently.

These days, David Cassidy could be making deodorant commercials.

There were no curtain calls, no commercial breaks or harks for another chorus of "I Think I Love You," that '70s anthem for society's last real "wholesome-enriched" generation when TV shows still even had the word "Family" in them.

"Darn, I'm bushed!" said Cassidy, inadvertently evoking the perfect verb.

This was David Cassidy, circa 1992.

"Keith Partridge was part of me 20 years ago," he announced rather sternly. "He's someone I've left."

Then we began talking about Keith Partridge again.

Some people spend a lifetime trying to find their own Warholian allotment of 15-minute fame/fortune.

David Cassidy, for the longest time, has tried to relieve himself of his — unsuccessfully.

**THERAPY, HIDING, A** self-proclaimed "metamorphosis," more therapy, his father's (Jack Cassidy) apparent suicide and years of "trying to shake Keith Partridge" have led him here to Illinois and last night's date as opening act at the Illinois State Fair

for The Beach Boys, another '60s/'70s artifact.

He was there to sing, promote his "comeback" and ballyhoo his new song, appropriately titled, "For All The Lonely."

David Cassidy could be one of them himself.

Attempting a David Cassidy comeback in a Keith Partridge body can be a lonely, grueling, uphill chore.

"For entertainment, I sleep," he quips.

And the grind these days is endless.

Monday for instance, when a car breakdown during his Indianapolis-to-Bloomington trek occurred near Champaign, Cassidy took it upon himself while at a gas station for repairs to personally call a Champaign radio station to ask if "they'd mind" if he'd "stop by for a possible interview."

Recognizing him at the door also was no problem.

Except for a slight draw around the eye and wear in the face, Cassidy, age 42, looks exactly like Keith Partridge, age 19.

Same great hair. Same good-boy image. Same refreshing optimism. Same 28-inch waist. ("I run a little and work hard on stage, which keeps it off.") And the Partridge legacy is the same as well.

Try as he might to defuse his own notoriety — he spent 15 minutes Monday evening chatting on-air with WBNQ's Scott Robbins about his new CD, the homeless and rebuilding LA — off-air, once plopped on a

couch in the lobby at the radio station before the rest of the media, he was forced to retreat again.

He fielded a question about Danny Bonaduce. He was asked about his stepmother, Shirley Jones. He told a joke about the Partridge Family bus. I of



David Cassidy, 1992

me? You say that in the past tense."

course, being above all this, only wanted to know if Susan Dey's braces back then bugged him at all.

At one point, while signing autographs and posing for pictures, WJBC/WBNQ news person Colleen Reynolds even piped — "I *really, really* loved you then."

To which Cassidy replied: "You *loved*

"Well, you know what I mean," said Colleen.

And we all did. Especially David. Did we ever.

It can be tough to be somebody while still being somebody else.

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