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Hearts still throb for '70s star David Cassidy

By **FRANK HALPERIN**
Courier-Post Staff

David Cassidy's fans have never had to *think* about whether they love him — they *know* they do.

The love affair began in 1970, when Cassidy began playing Keith Partridge, the oldest son and resident heartthrob on *The Partridge Family*.

With each episode, he led his sitcom family (headed by Shirley Jones, his real-life step-mother) in song — joyful bubblegum pop like "I Think I Love You," "I Woke Up In Love This Morning," "Doesn't Somebody Want To Be Wanted" — which soon sparked mass hysteria among America's young and innocent.

They loved him. Their appreciation knew no limits.

They begged their parents to buy them tickets to see Cassidy in concert, which helped him

sell out Madison Square Garden and the Houston Astrodome — as well as arenas around the world. The pubescent appetites were insatiable.

Everything they owned was Davidized: the lunchboxes, the bedroom posters, the paperback scrapbooks ... the kids of America (and beyond) helped make him the No. 1 teen idol of the 1970s.

And they still love him! At 56, Cassidy continues to get fans happy.

The pukka shells and the shag locks may be gone, but his enthusiasm for creating and performing have not waned — and neither has his popularity, as new generations of fans continue to discover his work.

On Tuesday, *David Cassidy Part II: The Remix* (180 Music) will be released exclusively to Target stores nationwide.

The CD showcases such Cassidy-driven *Partridge Family*

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hits as "Point Me In The Direction Of Albuquerque," "I'll Meet You Halfway" — and, of course, "I Think I Love You" — mixed to contemporary dance beats.

Recently, on the phone from his home in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Cassidy spoke about the new CD and his appearances tonight at the Commerce Bank Arts Centre in Sewell and Saturday at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank.

Q: How do you look back on your *Partridge Family* years, and your years as a teen idol?

A: I was working seven days a week, 16 to 18 hours a day, for five years. I worked all day on *The Partridge Family* set, and all night recording *Partridge Family* songs, as well as my solo records. On the weekends, I'd be out doing concerts. I've always loved working. I've always loved what I do. My work is what's always driven me — not the fame, not the money.

Yet I know the impact I've had on our culture. When you're on the cover of every magazine in the world — from *Life* to *Rolling Stone*, and there are thousands of people everywhere you go, you're obviously conscious of the impact you've had.

Now, more than ever, it



Photo provided

'Partridge Family' alum David Cassidy belts out tunes at 8 tonight at the Commerce Bank Arts Centre in Sewell.

comes back to me in spades. The amount of goodwill that's shown by people whose lives I've been fortunate to touch means more to me now than ever before. To know that you've inspired people, and made them happy — that's always been my job, and that's the beauty of it.

Q: Tell me about your latest CD, *David Cassidy Part II: The Remix*.

A: It's by far the most daring and exciting project I've done in quite a few years. It's a contemporary record — people have described it as having a "house music" sound. My son (Beau, who's 16) and two of his friends were here when I got the first mastered copy of it. I said to them, "I want you guys to be

IF YOU GO

- **Who:** David Cassidy
- **When:** 8 tonight
- **Where:** Commerce Bank Arts Centre, 519 Hurffville-Cross Keys Road, Sewell
- **Tickets:** \$28, \$38, \$48, \$98. Call (856) 338-9000 or visit www.ticketmaster.com
- **When:** 8 p.m. Saturday
- **Where:** Count Basie Theatre, 99 Monmouth St., Red Bank
- **Tickets:** \$25, \$45, \$65, \$100. Call (732) 842-9000 or visit www.countbasietheatre.org

honest. Tell me what you think of this." And all three of them said, "Man, that's pretty cool!"

Q: What do you remember about growing up in New Jersey?

I have a lot of great memories. My parents (actor Jack Cassidy and actress Evelyn Ward) divorced when I was 5 years old, and I lived in West Orange with my mom and my grandparents until I was 11.

I would spend several weeks during the summer visiting my father, who was doing summer stock theater in Lambertville, and in Bucks County, Pa. My mom was also doing summer stock in Lambertville, and she, my grandparents and I would go down to the shore — on the West Coast, everyone calls it "the beach," here they call it "the shore" — we'd go to Asbury Park, Belmar and Red Bank. I also remember my uncle and my mother took me for a summer weekend in Cape May. I have a lot of great summer-time memories in New Jersey, as opposed to two-feet-of-snow memories.

Q: In addition to the songs people would remember from *The Partridge Family*, what can audiences expect to hear at your Jersey shows?

A: I'll be taking people on a musical journey. I'll be doing some acoustic songs ... in the 1970s, I got to know John Lennon quite well, and played music with him. We'd play early Beatles' songs — I'd do Paul McCartney's parts — and I think I may do a few of them, as well as some songs from my solo albums, like *The Higher They Climb* (1975). I think the audiences will be pleasantly surprised.

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