

Cassidy planning new 'Partridge Family'

By Fred Shuster
Los Angeles Daily News

For fans of "The Partridge Family," it's time to get happy — again.

David Cassidy, who was launched into the teen-idol stratosphere while playing shaggy-haired Keith Partridge on the television show in the early 1970s, is reviving the series.

Cassidy will be co-executive producer of the reality-themed "In Search of the Partridge Family" for VHI and a half-hour pilot for the rejuvenated sitcom to follow.

Cassidy and fellow "Partridge" cast members Shirley Jones and Danny Bonaduce plan to cross the country looking for a next generation of Partridges. The star search begins airing in September.

"We want to do it right," Cassidy says. "I've been carrying the torch for the last 25 years, and I want to make sure the show will be funny and have integrity."

That show was "The Partridge Family," broadcast on ABC from 1970 to 1974.

The series, about a fatherless family of six who forms a rock band and tours the country in a

psychedelically painted school bus, never drew blockbuster ratings, but was a huge hit with young viewers and others who found it entertaining.

Cassidy played Keith, Jones was the mom, Susan Dey played Laurie, and Bonaduce was red-haired muffin Danny Partridge.

"It caught people's imagination," Cassidy reflected. "Here was this family bonding over music. Yes, there was bickering and conflict, but for people who were in unhappy homes, they really identified with the show."

Cassidy's career soared to spectacular levels, and although his original fans grew older over the decades, he continued to headline concerts and work in theater and TV. Now he seems to be coming full circle.

"I've turned down an awful lot of money to do a network reunion special in the past," he said. "This new show is not that. This is a scripted show with a new cast. We'll be looking for talent — not just singers, but actors who can sing and play and are musical. We want people who are intriguing and engaging. We're going for talent, not look-alikes."