

A Cassidy family affair

By Jay Bobbin

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Jonas Brothers, move over: Here come the Cassidys.

They're older, but they're musically inclined, too — and they're merging their styles and talents for an ABC Family sitcom. "Partridge Family" icon David Cassidy and his half sibling Patrick have a familiar boss in executive producer Shaun Cassidy in "Ruby & the Rockits," premiering Tuesday, July 21.

The major players agree their personal histories inform the show. Patrick portrays a 1980s music sensation who left the limelight for a quiet family life, while the brother and former Rock-

its band mate played by David won't let go of his past fame. After David meets the teenage daughter (Alexa Vega, "Spy Kids") he didn't know he had, he seeks help from Patrick and his family (Katie Amanda Keane, Austin Butler, Kurt Doss) in giving her a stable upbringing.

Sons of the late stage and screen actor Jack Cassidy, Shaun and Patrick are brothers — Oscar winner and "Partridge Family" matriarch Shirley Jones being their mother — and David is their older half brother. (His mother is actress Evelyn Ward.)

"I know the arena of former pop stars and brothers and all that," states Shaun, who

also made "American Gothic" and "Invasion" for television. "There's a hint of autobiography in this, but I think most of my shows have an element of humor, even if it's dark humor. They're also about family, even if it's the complicated nature of family, so the theme that runs through my work is just being turned in a more obvious comedic direction."

Teaming him with Marsh McCall ("Just Shoot Me!") as its creators and makers, "Ruby & the Rockits" lets Shaun exorcise some of his feelings about having been a pop star ("Da Doo Ron Ron," "That's Rock and Roll") while he had a television presence on "The Hardy Boys" in the late '70s.