

credits to enter the class he wanted to enter, so it was decided he would enroll in Rexford's summer school and amass the necessary credits to start the *fall semester* at Rexford School.

DAVID LOST — A FLASHBACK!

Before I continue with my story—I've just remembered a particularly interesting episode that took place when David was three and a half, and I'm going to "flash back" here so you can share that memory with me.

At that time, we lived in a garden apartment in Rutherford, New Jersey. There was a yard in the back of the apartment and there was a big bay window overlooking the yard. When I worked in the back room, and David was in the backyard, I could keep an eye on him through that big bay window. One day I was sitting by the window, studying a script. Occasionally, I'd look up and see David playing in his sandbox. At one point, I looked up and—quite suddenly—David had *disappeared!*

I don't know why, but inwardly I panicked a bit! However, I calmed myself, got up and went out to the backyard to take a look. I couldn't see David anywhere and when I called and called, there was no answer!

David's dad, Jack Cassidy, and I were still married at the time and Jack was in New York City working on a show. I went across the driveway to the house of David's buddy Hal, but David wasn't there. At that moment, I saw Jack drive up and I told him what had happened. Now I was beginning to panic *outwardly*.

Nearby, there was a bridge over a little inland waterway. There were boats tied in the waterway and Jack and I decided *that* might be a likely place for David to go. For a ghastly moment, I had visions of my beloved child bobbing up and down in the inlet—crying for help! Jack went towards the waterway to look for David, and I decided to scour the neighborhood. After about 30 minutes, I came back—and Jack came back—and we were both empty-handed! At this point, we were in an absolute daze of fear. Suddenly a ringing of the phone reached our ears. We both ran into the house I got to the phone first and picked up the receiver.

"Hello," the voice said. "Are you the mother of a three-year-old child whose name is David Bruce Cassidy and who lives on Union Avenue here in Rutherford?" Before I could answer, the voice continued, "David Cassidy—whose father is Jack Cassidy, who's starring in the musical *Wish You Were Here?*"

Suddenly I began to laugh hysterically, partly from relief and partly from total amusement at what the man on the other end of the phone was saying.

"Yes, yes — this is David Bruce Cassidy's mom!" I nodded briskly at Jack to indicate that our son had been discovered!

"Well," the voice continued, "David Cassidy is down here at the police station having an ice cream cone and as soon as he finishes it we will drive him home."

"Oh, thank you, *thank you*, Officer!" I said, "Thank you *very much!*" I hung up the phone—and tears of joy were rolling down my face.

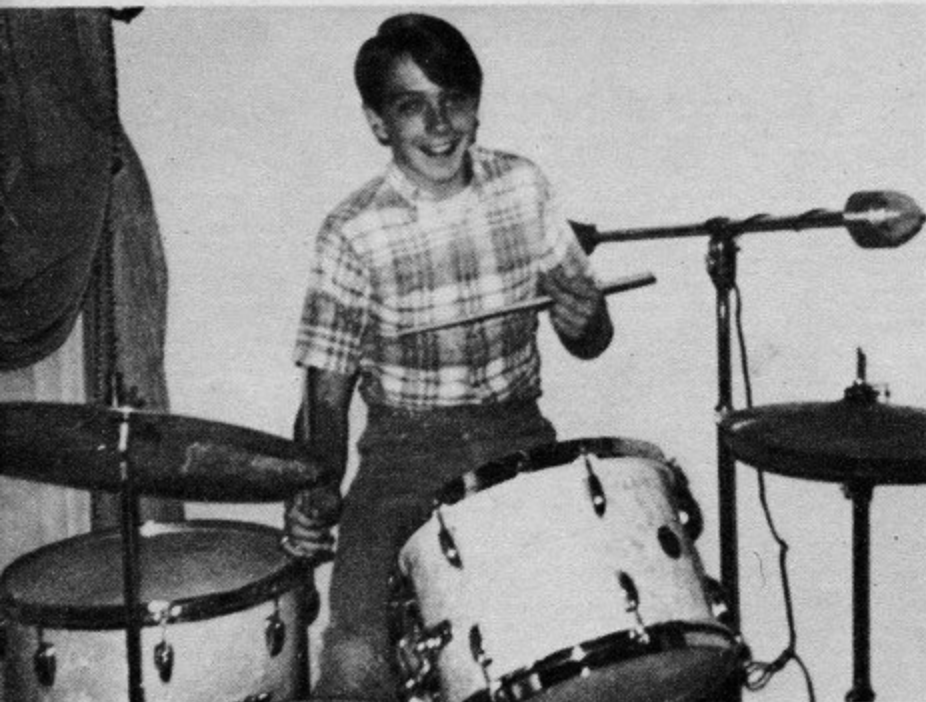
Within a matter of minutes, a police car drove up to our house and two big policemen got out. They held the car door open for my son David, who was doing everything he could to keep a stiff upper lip. Well, *I* couldn't keep a stiff upper lip. I swept down, grabbed David in my arms and hugged him to me. As I looked at his stern little face (he was trying desperately not to cry), I saw him swallow hard as he blinked back the tears.

Jack and I thanked the policemen again and they drove off. Once we had David inside, as calmly and casually as I could, I asked, "David, where did you go?"

"Oh, uh—I went for a walk," he explained, looking a bit bashful. Then David went on to tell us that he had walked this little girl home (where he found her, I don't know). She wasn't a neighborhood girl, so it was quite a walk. (By the way, David was girl crazy in *those* days too!) Somewhere along the way, David spotted a merry-go-round and, unable to resist it, he went over and spent awhile watching it go 'round and 'round. Later, he became completely confused and couldn't remember which way he'd come there and, of course, didn't know how to get home. A passerby finally stopped and asked if he could help. David asked to be taken to the nearest police station. (We had always told David that if he ever got lost *not* to ask any stranger to take him home—but to ask to be taken to the nearest police station.)

It turned out that David was the "main event" for the policemen that day. It was a quiet afternoon and they were more than delighted with their little "lost boy". They were amazed that David was so efficient at giving his name, address, etc.—just like a soldier would give his name, rank and serial number—and so they actually had him sit around for a while and fed him ice cream while they listened to him talk about his famous dad!

more



Here's David with a set of drums his pal Sal Mineo gave him. He used to practice for four hours every single day!



At 13, David had this picture snapped for his Emerson Junior High yearbook. He was just getting into long hair.