

Dave's mom, Evelyn Ward, was very close to Dave, but she was strict with him about school. She was generous with him, he never had to work while going to school—but he didn't expect a lot either. They lived in a nice house that had a pool, and Dave had a big room that had twin beds in it. He also kept his drum set in his room, and that's where we'd always go when we went to his house to goof around.

He used to go to his dad's place once in a while too—he really liked Shirley Jones and his little brothers. Sometimes he'd babysit for them—a thing he wouldn't ordinarily do, but he loved those kids—there was just Shaun and Patrick then.

LOVED RICHARD'S FAMILY

I think Dave used to be kind of lonely around his house, although he never said so. He used to spend much more time at my place, and I know it was because so much was going on all the time! Besides being a pretty large family, we were all very close.

My mother is a beautiful, understanding woman, and she loved Dave like he was one of us. He felt the same way about her, and he used to even call her "mom" like we did. Being an only child, Dave liked all the commotion at my place—we're a very outspoken group!

Dave never needed an invitation—he just came over. The main difference between our homes was that at Dave's house, we'd go to his room and talk about things we were going to do and so on, but at mine it was open discussion with everyone. I have the kind of family that will talk very openly about things with each other, and Dave was always included.

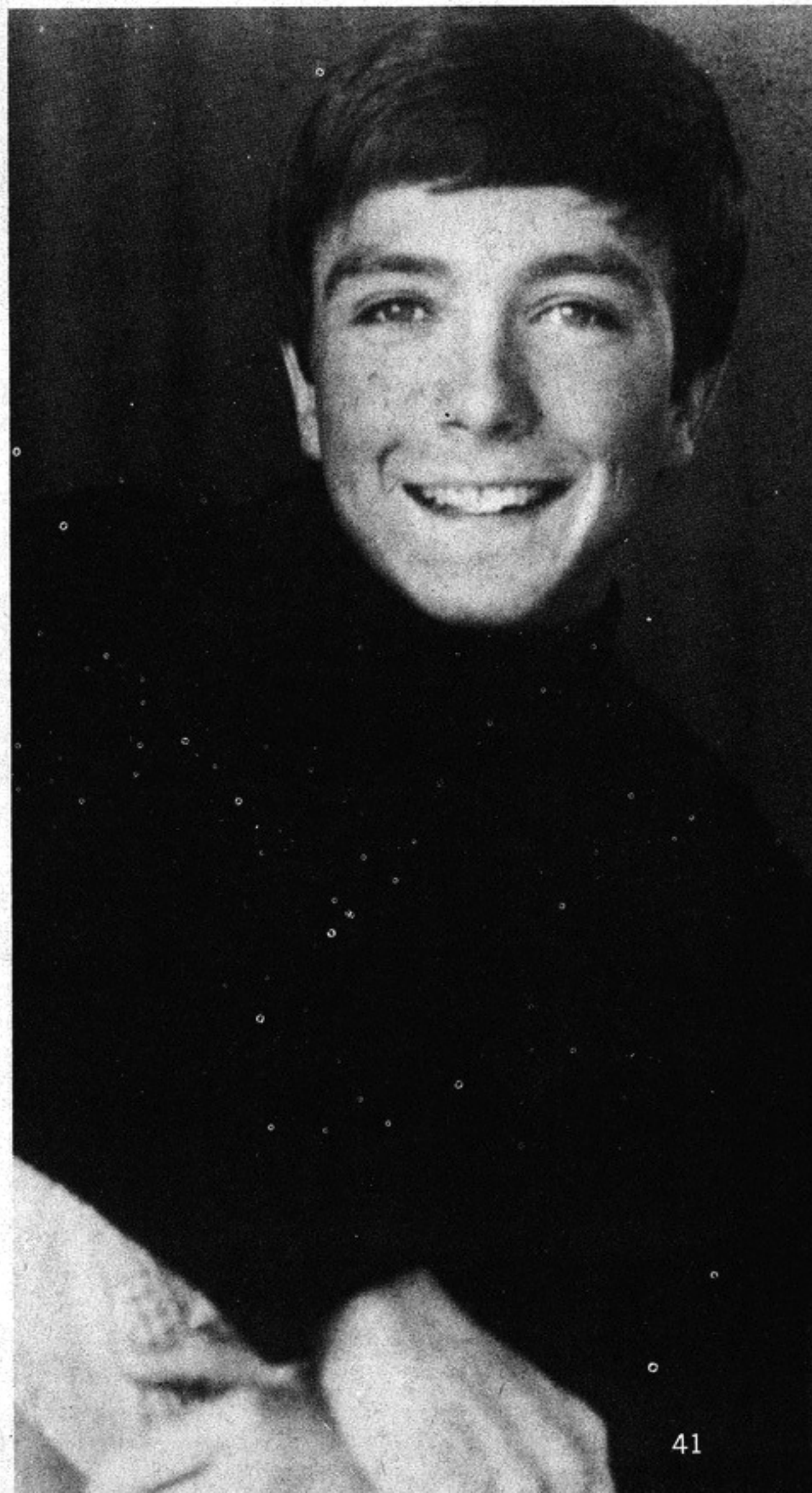
We used to take these great family vacations where we'd pile into the car and drive to the desert for three or four days, and a couple of times Dave came with us. Once we got there, of course, Dave and I went off on our own to see if we could meet some new girls. But we used to goof off a lot in the car on the way down.

One time, we had the radio playing real loud and Dave was sitting in the back seat humming to the music. All of a sudden he started to sing along with the record and my mother turned around with a look of surprise on her face. She'd never heard Dave sing before, and she was really impressed. "I didn't know you had such a beautiful voice, Dave!" she told him.

Dave didn't say anything, he just smiled. Sometimes I think he knew even then that someday it would be *his* voice coming over the radio!



DAVID ALWAYS SPENT lots of time with his young brothers. Above, he's at the beach with Patrick. The photo below shows David in one of his first publicity stills.



NEXT MONTH: In the final chapter of his story, Richard talks about David's first professional appearance, the beginning of his career and how it changed him!