

BETWEEN US!

Hi, there! So many nice things have happened to me lately, with my vacation and all, that it's hard to tell where to begin!

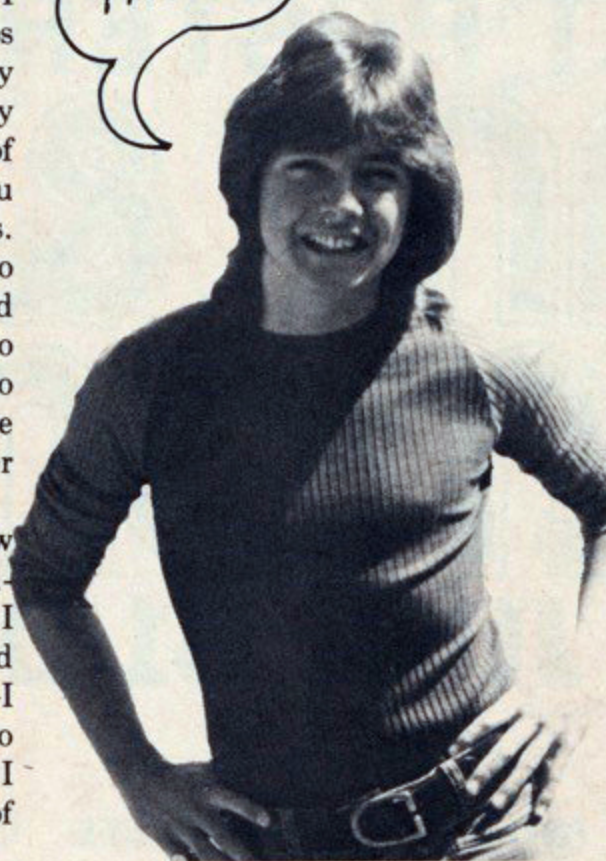
Maybe I should tell you how I spent Christmas, first. I was in Los Angeles then, so I spent it with my father and Shirley and my brothers. I did a whole lot of Christmas shopping, just like you did, and we all exchanged presents. The funniest present I gave was to Ryan. It was a battery operated car, but Ryan's been growing so fast that it was too small for him to sit in. I had to take it back to the store and exchange it for a bigger one!

After Christmas I went to New York to visit my mother and grandfather, and on New Year's Day I flew to Rome. I was traveling kind of light for a European vacation—I only had about two shirts and two pairs of pants with me—but I packed just right for *my* kind of European vacation!

You see, I wasn't planning on staying at fancy hotels or eating in fine restaurants. I wanted to see each country the way someone who lived there might see it. So when I got to Rome I hired a Volkswagen camper which became my "wheels" and my hotel for most of my vacation!

The first thing I did was do some sightseeing around Rome—and that's when it happened! I mean, that's when my camper was robbed and I had to spend three days waiting in the American Consulate to

Hi There!



get my travelers checks and my international driver's license replaced. (You can read all about *that* in the May issue of FLIP!) So I didn't see too much of Rome, after all.

And, since my cameras were stolen, too, I couldn't bring back any pictures from my trip.

When I left Rome, I headed for Northern Italy and saw towns like Milan, Florence and Paduva (no, I'd never heard of Paduva before, either, but it was a beautiful place!). Then one day I found my-

self in a tiny ski resort I never knew existed.

I liked the other skiers I met, too. None of them recognized me, of course, since *The Partridge Family* isn't shown in Italy, but we had some great times together. I remember one time I had 13 of my new ski buddies packed into the camper, and I started driving us all up a hill. Man, we almost didn't make it—those little campers aren't too powerful!

I had such a good time skiing that before I knew it, almost five weeks had gone by. So I said goodbye to my new friends, got back into the camper, and crossed the border into France. I stopped in Chamonix, the famous ski resort, and—you guessed it!—I went skiing for another week. Then I started off on the longest drive of my whole vacation, from Chamonix to Paris, which is about 500 miles.

Since this was my first time wandering around Europe, I forgot to do a very important thing before I drove off—I forgot to convert some of my travelers checks to cash. You see, in the larger towns of Europe, just as in the U.S., stores and hotels will accept travelers checks and credit cards. But in the tiny villages I was going through on my way to Paris, most of the people had never *seen* a travelers check. They wanted cash—and I didn't have any!

Wow! What a place to run out of room! But I'll be back next month to finish my story! Love, David

BY DAVID GASSIDY
