

Video's Prince Valiant

By MARILYN BECK

HOLLYWOOD — It's been a bang-up year for 20-year-old David Cassidy and, in some respects, he's still trying to adjust from the shock of it all.

He's gone from a cottage furnished, in large part, with apple crates and a bare mattress to a high-on-a-Hollywood-hilltop, three-level luxury home with sunken tub and custom-made furniture.

He's this year's Bobby Sherman (a comparison he tries hard not to mind too much). He's this season's video Prince Valiant, built into an overnight success by his "Partridge Family" exposure and Screen Gems' promotional campaign to make David the teenybopper's delight.

The campaign, David must sometimes feel, has worked even too effectively.

He can't do his own grocery shopping any longer. When he steps into the market, he's mobbed by fans.

His attendance at movie theaters is taboo, also.

"The last time I went to the movies, they were crawling all over the seats, mothers and kids, trying to get at me."

He smiles when he talks about such experiences, labeling them, "A nice inconvenience," yet you know he's learned very fast that fame does have its price.

A visit to Disneyland? Impossible! It would be instant hysteria as soon as the bubblegum brigade discovered the brown haired, hazel eyed, five-foot, eight-inch 130-pound idol was in their midst.

It's like that most everywhere he goes. When he was grand marshal at a Cleveland parade, all he could see, when his float came to a halt at the end of the parade route, "was thousands of screaming girls, pushing against each other, trying to reach me."

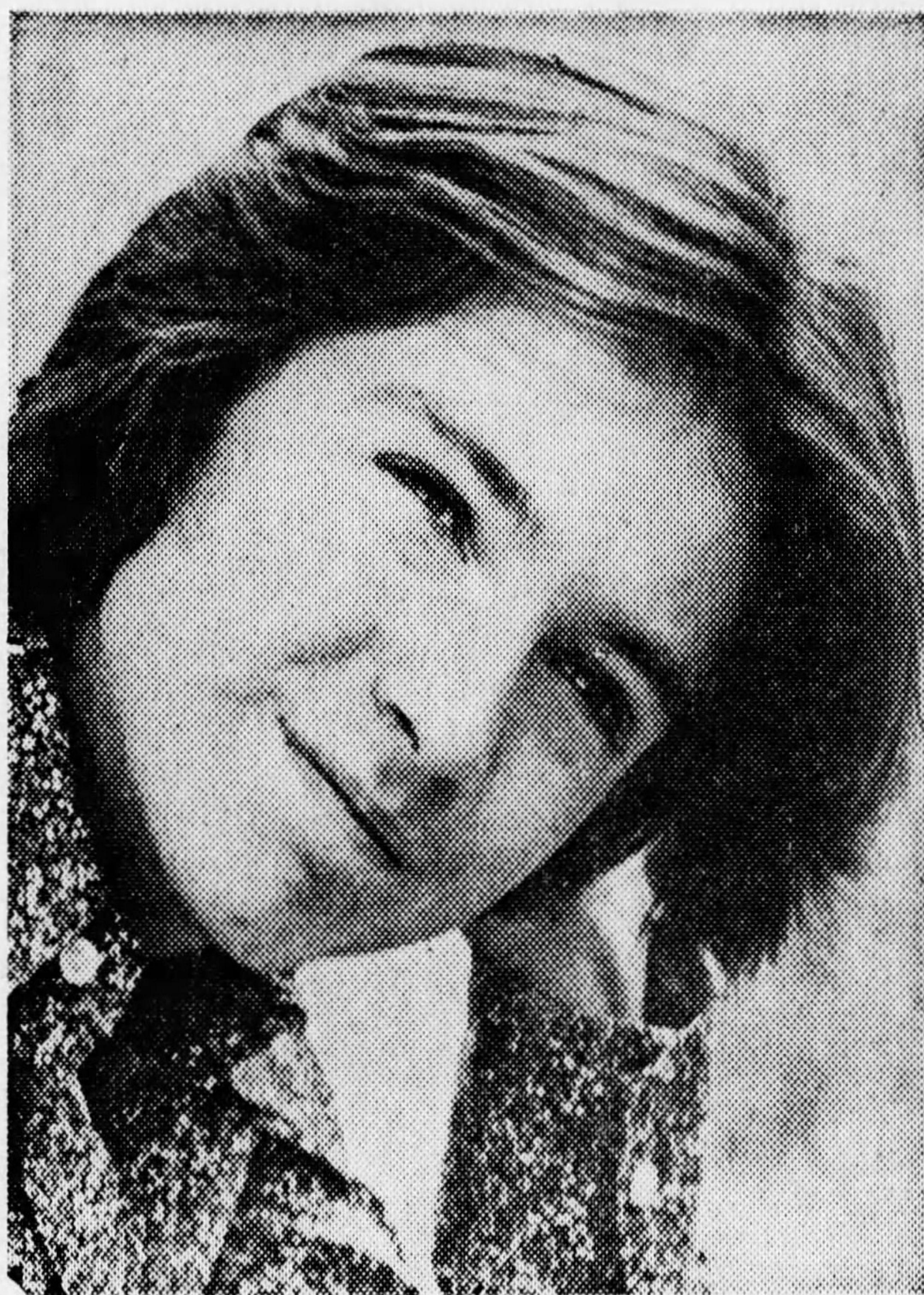
David maintains that the only similarity between himself and Bobby Sherman is that they share the same sort of audience, "Girls from infancy to about 16, with the largest portion of them 8 or 9."

He's already, in this year of the Partridge, gotten two single records on the charts, and plans his first concert tour before the hiatus of his ABC series is completed.

Soft-spoken and with a gentleness about him that makes one wonder how he's been able to cope with the pressures of the filmland rat race with no obvious scars, he admits that there are times when he must escape from it all.

"I cut out whenever I get the chance. A few months ago I packed my guitar and my sleeping bag and headed for Carmel, Big Sur and Lake Mead with another buddy. After a while the city starts to get to you, to pull you down."

He was raised in New York and Los Angeles, yet dreams, when the Partridge Family eventually fades from the tube, of settling down on a farm 'way out in the



David Cassidy

country and commuting to acting commitments in the big city.

Right now he has no burning ambition to guest on other situation comedies, "Unless something really stimulating comes along. And as for films. I won't act in one just for the sake of making a film. It would have to be something good."

He pushed a lock of hair back from his forehead and said, smiling, "Maybe I'm getting too big for my britches when I say I want to pick and choose, but seeing I've got a steady job, I can say it."

It comes easily to him, talking about his life and his aspirations.

He's wanted to be an actor ever since age three, when his mother took him to watch his father, Jack Cassidy, in a stage performance in New York.

"We were sitting in the first row of the balcony," David recalls, "And I jumped up and called out, 'That's my daddy!' "

And that's their boy who's making audiences take notice these days as he goes through his paces with his step-mother Shirley Jones (Jack's current wife) and the rest of the Partridge Family gang. That's David Cassidy, this year's video idol.