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Last Night In Review

Cassidy's OK In His League

BY MARK STARR

When David Cassidy sings his own kind of music, the bubble gum schlock rock that has made him an idol of the pre-pubescent, the result is tolerable.

With his mediocre voice cloaked in a very tight and competent eight-piece backup, songs like "I Woke Up In Love This Morning" and "I Think I Love You" are . . . well, tolerable.

But when Cassidy leaves that safe territory and does songs originally recorded by real rock and roll artists, it is downright offensive.

The most intolerable moment in Cassidy's concert yesterday at the Rochester War Memorial was when he tackled the beautiful Crosby, Stills and Nash song, "Everybody I Love You."

Just because the song has the words "love you" in it is no excuse for him to sing it. What was originally sung with precise, delicate harmonies, he turns into a drone.

But on the credit for Cassidy, the hour he's on stage he works hard, giving the surprisingly small turnout of about 4,000 all the opportunities for shrieks and heart throbs they could ask for.

He struts, jumps and wiggles back and forth across the stage with an exquisite, glued-on smile that is the Mona Lisa of the pop music world.

The crowd was exceptionally well-behaved, shrieking for brief moments during and at the end of songs, seemingly more often from a sense of the obligatory and what was expected of them than from the conviction.

That isn't to cast aspersions on the sincerity of the audience's devotion to the 22-year-old superstar. It showed that by gobbling up the \$2 posters and the \$1 programs and "I Love You David" buttons and pennants.

But there wasn't any true frenzy, something more than arms outstretched for David or a few lovesick calls to him. Not until the finale did a few young girls, their passions unleashed, hurtle their bodies toward the stage only to be driven back by security guards.

All in all, David Cassidy's show has to be called a successful one.

For the pre-adolescents, it's the musical experience of their lives while for those with a little more musical taste, it is at the very least amusing.

David is Worth the Waiting

Tom Flynn is news production editor for the Democrat and Chronicle and The Times-Union. He's also the father of two David Cassidy fans, Ellen Lee, 7, and Elizabeth Ann, 3. Following is a father's point of view after sitting through the Cassidy concert yesterday at the War Memorial.

By TOM FLYNN
At last, the long wait is

Happenings

over. The War Memorial crackles with anticipation. Two small bodies unscrew themselves from the chair seats. The concert, scheduled for 3 p.m., starts at 3:17 p.m. with a pleasant duo, Kim Carnes and Dave Ellingson.

But they know, and so do the kids, that the REALLY BIG MOMENT is reserved for

David Cassidy.

A few songs and a short intermission and now it's 4:05 p.m. It's also extremely warm in the War Memorial where the air conditioning system seems to be comprised of small insects winging across the great hall.

Lights start to fade; screams start to build. The master of ceremonies grabs

the mike and booms through the ominous bank of speakers:

"He's right there, behind the curtain. But just remember, everybody stay in your seats! It's a fire law and the show will stop if you don't."

"AND NOW . . . HERE HE IS . . . DAVID CASSIDY!"

A vision in a white leather jacket, flowered shirt and tan bell bottoms flashes onto the stage and electrifies his fans with that cherubic smile. The

Please turn page

DAVID CASSIDY

From 1C

scene is bathed in blue light. "DAVID . . . DAVID . . . WE LOVE YOU, DAVID!"

The eight musicians and their monstrous cluster of speakers fight hard, but lose willingly to the waves of shrieks, wolf whistles and screams.

The noise parallels the crackling in a large hen house when it's discovered the chief rooster has died of over exertion. But now the pitch changes and you're in a wind tunnel testing engines for 747 jumbo jets.

David flits back and forth across the stage, bent forward like a man suffering stomach cramps. The chestnut hair sweeps up and cascades down. The audience is transfixed, hoarse throats momentarily stilled.

For the adults in the crowd there's no deciphering the words in the first few numbers. It's an ongoing rush of noise and a continuing love affair.

Flash bulbs and strobe lights blaze across the darkened auditorium. Some clown in the upper rows lights a cigarette and is quickly chastised by an alert usher.

The older of our two teenyboppers waves her carefully written note towards the stage. Surely David, through that flaming spotlight, has seen the message of adoration and her telephone number. David is careful to let each fan know he saw him.

The junior member of our rooting section bounces up and down in unison with the

clamor. Eventually she asks for a glass of water. That's a great idea but it's overruled by the lady of the house. She's afraid I won't come back.

There's a momentary crisis when the microphone goes dead, but the respite lasts only two minutes and audio waves again engulf the crowd.

The audience is well-behaved but there were a few temporary diversions watching uniformed security guards grab shadowy figures trying to hurdle the footlights. A few articles of clothing rain down on the stage. David grins, the crowd goes berserk.

He wheels around, grabs a towel and wipes sweat from the finely-chiseled, beardless face. An arm shoots out and the contortions and twisting picks up speed. All across the auditorium, in waves, bodies leap to their feet and a forest of young arms, pennants and pictures fills the air.

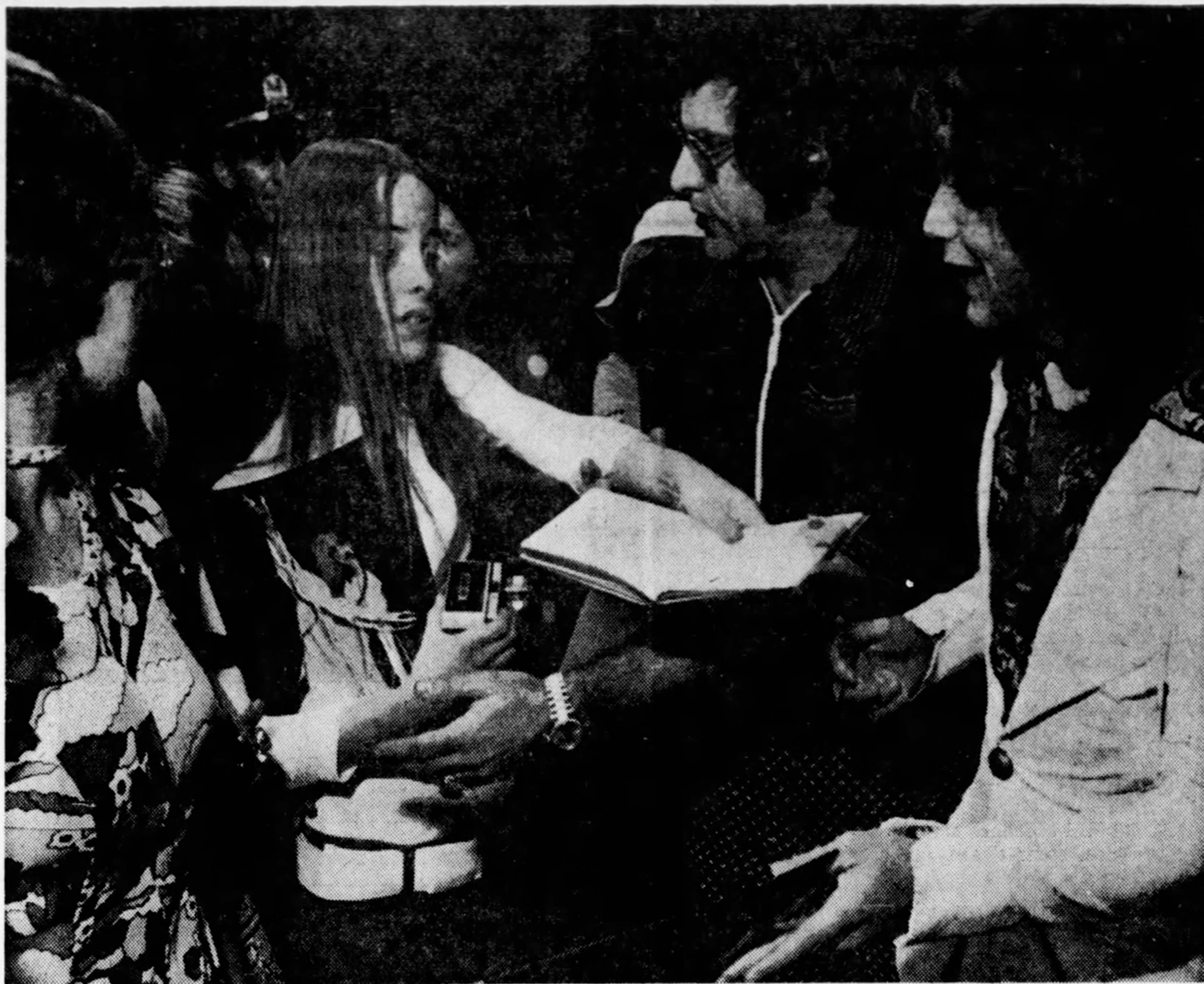
It's 5:01 p.m. and David asks: "Are you READY?" The mandate is unanimous and he churns into the final number.

"I THINK I LOVE YOU; I THINK I LOVE YOU; I THINK I LOVE YOU."

Someone turns a faucet, the music slices to a halt, David throws a kiss to the masses and vanishes. In less than two minutes he will be in his hotel room.

The young faces are aglow with ecstasy which even the blinding afternoon sun can't duplicate.

It's over and he's gone. But not forgotten.



David Cassidy and promoter Dick Klotzman deal with autograph-seeking fans following the concert.