

The Scranton Times

Singer David Cassidy Still Gets His Fans Excited

BY TERESA TALERICIO
SEATTLE POST

BELLEVUE, Wash. — At 48, David Cassidy still qualifies as a heartthrob.

The former star of "The Partridge Family" visited Bellevue's Fred Meyer recently to promote a new CD and sign autographs.

Hundreds of screaming fans — even teen-age girls who discovered him on Nick at Nite reruns — lined up outside the store, waiting hours to meet him.

They brought faded Partridge Family records.

They sang "C'mon, Get Happy." They shared giddy memories of Cassidy in his heyday — that shaggy brown hair, that devilish smile, those tight bell-bottoms.

Shelley Murphy, a 33-year-old accountant, toted a battered Partridge Family lunchbox from her school days.

FIRST IN LINE

Murphy, the first person in line, waited six hours to see the

1970s teen idol. She wore a mini-dress and platform sandals. She primed her long blond hair, using the store window as a mirror.

"I was 4 years old and David Cassidy was my first 'boy-friend,'" she said. "I've been waiting 30 years to see him, to ask him to kiss me. I'm so giddy!"

Alas, somewhere deep inside the Fred Meyer, Cassidy was still wrapping up interviews with Seattle media.

A trim, muscular man, he

wore a black, long-sleeved shirt, black jeans and black boots. He sipped on bottled water and bantered with reporters. He seemed shorter in person, but his blue eyes still sparkled.

He was interrupted occasionally by the crackle of a cashier's voice — "Price check, please!" — over the store's speaker system.

Cassidy rolled his eyes and threw up his hands.

"I can't do this," he complained. "I can't do it. I'm really, really sorry."

Store managers rushed to silence the offending intercom.

Cassidy didn't want to talk about the TV show that catapulted him to fame, even though that's what the hundreds of waiting fans loved him for best.

"I feel blessed to have lived that life," he said. "I loved 'The Partridge Family'. I have fond memories of it. But I was thrilled when I walked away from it."

Today, he performs in "EFX," a Las Vegas musical. He has also appeared in Broadway shows such as "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" and "Blood Brothers."

His new CD, "Old Trick New Dog," includes remakes of hits such as "I Can Feel Your Heartbeat" and "I Think I Love You," a

song so immortalized in 1970s pop culture that Katie Couric sang it to him during an NBC "Today Show" interview.

"Those songs forever changed my recording life and career," he said. "But it wasn't the whole slice of the pie."

Today, he lives in Las Vegas. He is married and has two children. Cassidy reflected on the intense fame that he experienced as a 22-year-old.

"Having all that — the fame and adulation and women and all that stuff they talk about — doesn't make you happy," he said. "You have to make yourself happy."

Outside, fans grew restless. They sang "C'mon, Get Happy" at the tops of their lungs to revive themselves and lure out the Partridge hunk.

Store managers escorted Cassidy through the Fred Meyer — past the shopping carts, the aisles of potato chips, the soda-pop displays — to meet his public.

The screaming started as soon as fans caught a glimpse of him making his way through the jewelry department. "Oh my GOD!!" women squealed. "David!"

Cassidy waved and flashed a dazzling smile.

Rules for meeting the celeb were strict. He would not sign anything other than his new CD, much to the dismay of fans who brought old LPs and Tiger Beat magazines.

And, sorry, no kisses.

Murphy, the first one to meet Cassidy, seemed dazed after her brief encounter with her old heartthrob.

"He looks really good," she said. "I wish I had gotten a kiss, though."

SISTERS SQUEAL

Jenn Yeager, 15, and her 13-year-old sister, Crystal, squealed and trembled and giggled as if they had just met Leonardo DiCaprio.

They fell in love with Cassidy after watching "The Partridge Family" reruns on Nick at Nite.

"He's hot," Jenn Yeager said. "He's gorgeous and I love his music."

Karin Rommel, a 30-year-old human resources representative at Boeing, beamed as she left the store.

"I just loved it," she said. "I congratulated him on all his new success. I think he deserves it. He's beautiful. He's very handsome. And he's got a Kodak smile."