

David Cassidy tells his story as producer of NBC biography movie

By Jay Bobbin

TRIBUNE MEDIA SERVICES

"The Partridge Family" has been a big part of his life, but it is hardly the whole tale.

David Cassidy proves that Sunday as one of the producers of the new NBC film "The David Cassidy Story" airing at 8 p.m. on KWQC, Ch. 6. Andrew Kavovit ("The Magnificent Seven") has the title role in the movie, which recounts Cassidy's estrangement from his father — fellow performer Jack Cassidy (played by Malcolm McDowell) — and his huge fame as an actor-singer during his "Partridge" run and beyond. Cassidy feels that popularity cost him personally, upsetting any chance to reach an accord with his father before the latter's tragic death in a fire.

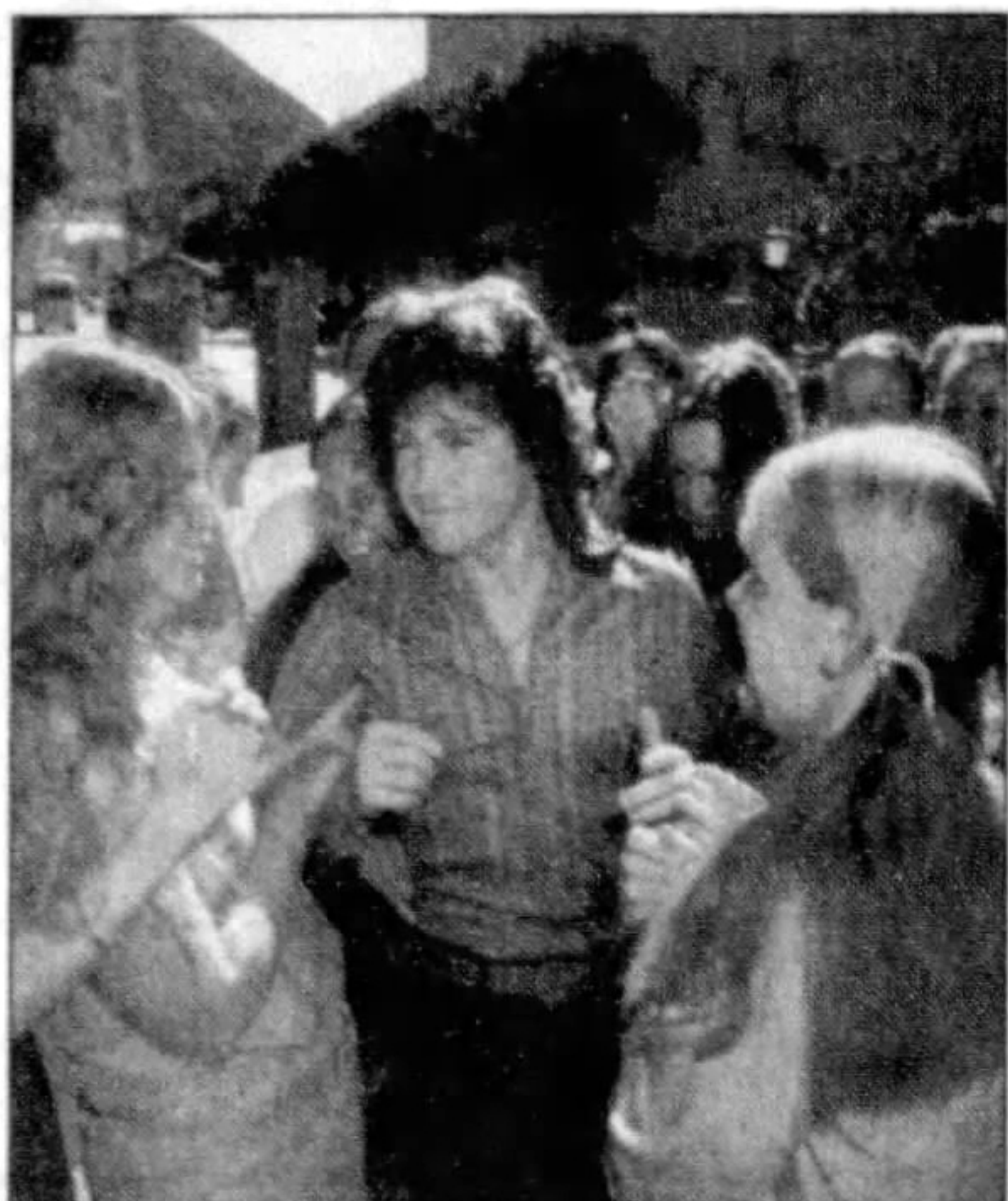
"As I got deeper into this project," Cassidy says, "I was able to remove myself from it in a sense and see (the events in it) from a different perspective. As opposed to it being about 'me,' it became more about 'David.' As a producer, I tried to look at it simply as a dramatic piece and to try to not take it personally.

"The more I reveal about myself," Cassidy adds, "the more I heal, I think. People are able to get the essence of who I am, so I want to tell the whole truth and nothing but. It seems to be compelling to the audience, and I know that if I'm watching something I know to be real, I find it much more interesting than a contrived story."

Cassidy has discussed his background on VH1's "Behind the Music," and it has also been detailed on "The E! True Hollywood Story" and the Fox special "TV Guide's Truth Behind the Sitcom Scandals." Additionally, he wrote the autobiography "C'mon, Get Happy ... Fear and Loathing on the Partridge Family Bus," but he doesn't feel "The David Cassidy Story" is overkill. "Some of the documentaries have been done without my cooperation," he maintains. "They've taken interviews I've done over the last 15 years, when some questions were asked almost as afterthoughts, so it's a little misleading.

"As life goes on, your feelings change about everything, but the one constant I've always loved is the connection I feel with the fans I've had. They have supported me for so many years, I'm very blessed to have that kind of loyalty and commitment. I try to give it back the best way I can, which is through my work. I want to bring light into people's lives. There's enough hate and negativity out there."

"The David Cassidy Story" is airing



Andrew Kavovit stars as David Cassidy in NBC movie, "The David Cassidy Story".

two months after ABC's "Come On Get Happy: The Partridge Family Story," Danny Bonaduce's view of what happened on the show's set. "That was just a battle of the network stars," Cassidy reasons. "ABC had that script on the shelf for more than three years, and they just wanted to take a hit at (NBC). I can't comment on it, because I never saw it, but our film is much more than the story of 'The Partridge Family.'"

Since much of "The David Cassidy Story" deals with the subject's relationship with his father, who allegedly was intensely jealous of his son's fame, Cassidy considers his tale a universal one. "I think viewers will connect to this as a story that's very common among fathers and sons, and people who come from broken homes. It should also provide insight for people who aspire to be famous."

Cassidy allows that his comfort in reconciling with his past owes to his very active present. He is now a Las Vegas staple, having done the live show "EFX" and the subsequent production "The Rat Pack Is Back!" He'll soon open as writer, producer and star of "David Cassidy at the Copa," with Sheena Easton as his leading lady. "The '90s were the most productive and successful decade for me by far," he reflects. "I ventured out of just being someone for hire and, through analysis, made it a priority to be happy and healthy."

Besides tracing his personal trials, Cassidy hopes "The David Cassidy Story" explains his professional success. "I'm certainly not the best-looking guy or the most talented," he concludes, "but what I have as an actor or a singer resonates with people. Maybe it's just honesty. I would like to think that's the case."