

HE'LL MAKE YOU HAPPY

Ex-'Partridge' David Cassidy sings his hits at Harrah's

By **CHUCK DARROW**
Staff Writer

ATLANTIC CITY

Erstwhile teen idol David Cassidy is out on tour for the first time in a decade. And he has Harrah's Atlantic City to thank.

It was just about a year ago that Cassidy, 51, returned to the concert stage with an engagement at the bayside gaming hall.

"The response was so overwhelmingly positive that people started talking about having me go out on tour," says Cassidy, who yesterday returned to Harrah's for a two-night stand that concludes tonight.

Of course, it wasn't just Harrah's offer to bring him to its

Broadway-by-the-Bay Theater that set him back on the road. Timing had a lot to do with it as well.

Prior to last year's gig, Cassidy, who rode his role as teen rock singer Keith Partridge in "The Partridge Family" to international superstardom, had spent much of the previous half-decade headlining two Las Vegas production shows, "EFX" at the MGM Grand and "At the Copa" at the Rio. The reception he received in Atlantic City caused him to re-evaluate his career.

"I had been doing six shows a week, 48 weeks a year, and I

thought, maybe this is the time to go out and do what I haven't done in years, to go back to doing something I love to do," he says, adding the tour, which began this summer, exceeded his expectations. "It's been an amazing thing. I'm real pleased I decided to do this."

Performing in Las Vegas revues has been just one facet of Cassidy's recent career. During the same time frame, he has emerged as one of Vegas' leading producers. In addition to creating "At the Copa" (in which he co-starred with Sheena Easton), he also produces "The Rat Pack Is Back," which continues a successful run at the Sahara.

While he says producing ca-

sino shows gave him the platform to do what he wanted to do creatively and artistically, Cassidy ultimately became a victim of his success. When both shows were on the Vegas boards, he says, "I had 77 employees and was working all day in my office and working (on stage) all night."

"You cannot imagine the amount of work involved in producing, opposed to just being a performer. With the workload of having both shows, I found myself having no balance in my life," continues the married father of 10-year-old Beau Devin. "Now, I go out for a week, then go home for a week."

Last year at Harrah's, Cas-

sidy devoted a chunk of his show to material from "At the Copa." This time out, the repertoire is exclusively culled from his recorded material. Many of the songs he's been performing, including "I Woke up in Love This Morning," "I Think I Love You" and "Cherish," were voted on by fans via his Web site, www.davidcassidy.com. Although these tunes were obvious, other choices, like "No Bridges" and "Ricky's Tune," also were suggested and included in the program.

Putting the set list together, says Cassidy, proved to be a profound experience.

"It was cathartic, in a way," he says. "I got to go through the last 30 years of my musical life. It's like opening up a chest and finding all these jewels."

Cassidy's recently released LP, "Then & Now," is a top-seller in England. Look for a United States release next year.

Thursday marks the opening of Atlantic City's newest smorgasbord, the French Quarter Buffet at the Showboat. Part of the 'Boat's \$17 million restaurant expansion program, the 8,000-square-foot French Quarter is on the second floor on the former site of the casino's bowling alley.

The casino's brain trust is betting a couple of innovations will make the all-you-can-eatery a super success: One is the open kitchen, which allows customers to see the food being prepared as it's ordered, rather than just seeing it sitting in warming trays. The other is the opportunity for diners to enjoy dishes cooked to order.

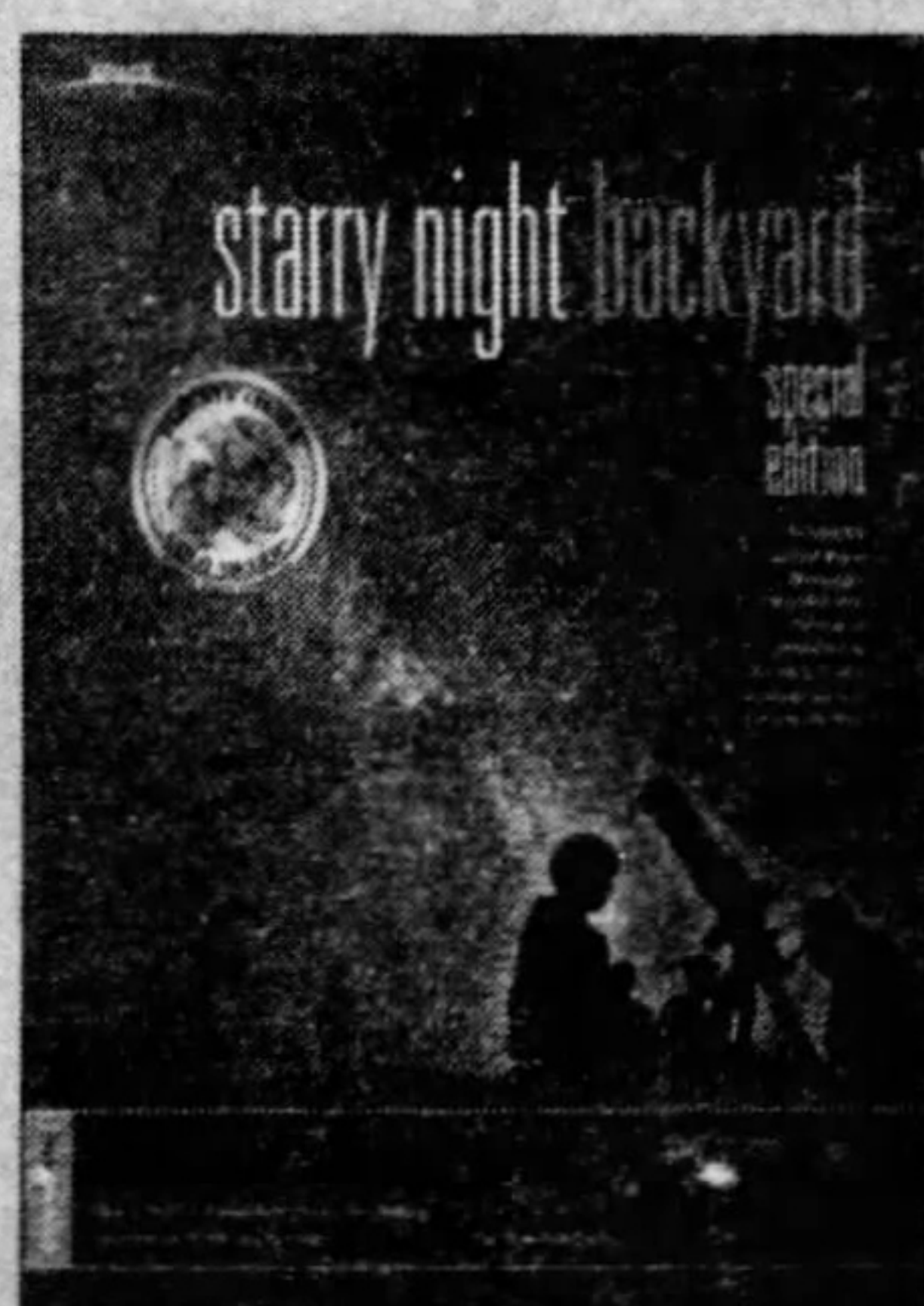
The buffet's daily menu includes carved prime rib, grilled steaks and chops, seafood and Asian and Italian offerings. Hours of operation are 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sundays through Fridays and 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Saturdays. Lunch is served until 4 p.m., dinner from 4 p.m. to closing. Cost is \$17.99 for dinner and \$14.99 for lunch.

For more information, call (609) 343-4000.

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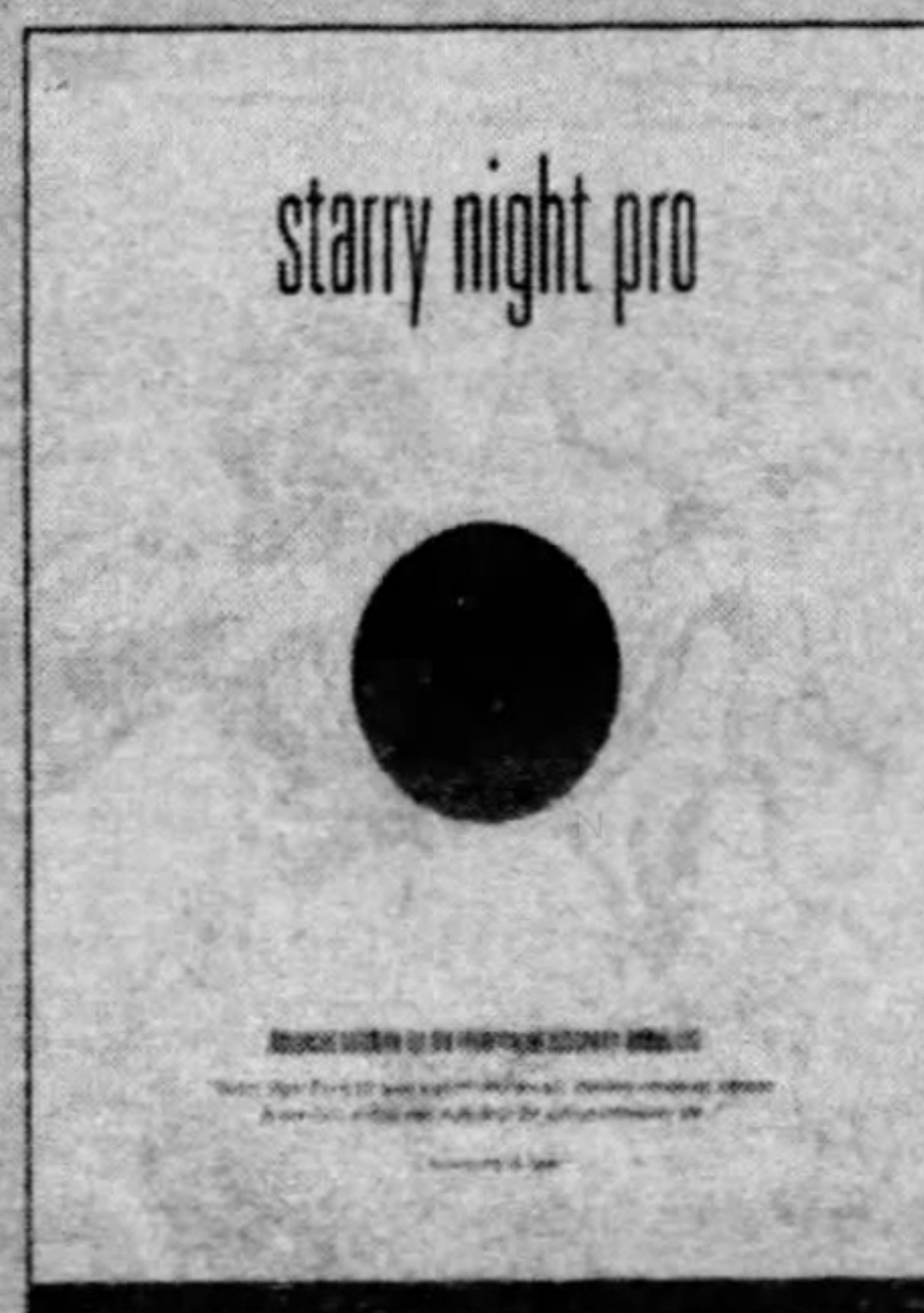


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