

Still a family man

David Cassidy will mix now with then at Dover Downs Slots on Saturday

By **GARY MULLINAX**
Staff reporter

David Cassidy is back on top again, but he won't deny that he had some low points in the 1980s, when nobody much cared that he was once very famous for playing teen-ager Keith Partridge on television.

Cassidy was broke. He was beaten down by drugs. People who used to bow and scrape before him now looked the other way when the former "Partridge Family" star came walking up.

But he is happy to tell us that he never, never got as close to the bottom as fellow-Partridge kid Danny Bonaduce did a few months ago when he entered the ring for Fox's "Celebrity Boxing." Even if Bonaduce (who played Keith's little brother Danny) did pound actor Barry Williams — Greg Brady! — into submission.

"Danny opened for me at a show a couple of weeks before he did that, and I told him, 'I love you to death, but you're going to have to stop doing stupid things that belittle you and who you are,'" Cassidy said.

"Never did I consider doing something like that. The fact is, I never embarrassed myself professionally or personally. You have to have integrity about yourself as a man."

Cassidy, 52, gave no sign of feeling

IF YOU GO

David Cassidy

Where: Dover Downs Slots, 1131 N. Du Pont Highway, Dover

When: 9 p.m. Saturday

Tickets: \$60 tickets still available

Information: (800) 711-5882

anything but good about himself when he was on the phone the other day to talk up his appearance at Dover Downs Slots on Saturday. In fact, he sounded a little like Lou Gehrig when he gave his famous "luckiest man alive" speech at Yankee Stadium.

After all, in the late 1980s and early 1990s Cassidy picked up his career with stage appearances on Broadway and in London's West End. By the mid-1990s, he was back in the celebrity stratosphere, thanks to his work with long-running shows in Las Vegas, including the extravaganza "E!FX," which earned Cassidy the city's "best all-around performer" award in 1996 and 1999.

"I love what I do. I'm one of the luckiest guys who lives," he said. "I can't tell you how amazingly enthusiastic the fans have been." He sees himself as "a man who has lived a very extraordinary life and who lives it every day and appreciates it more than anything. A man having a great time."

Cassidy is touring in support of a new album, "Then and Now," which features new arrangements of hits Cassidy had with both "The Partridge Family" ("I Think I Love You," "I Woke Up in Love This Morning") and as a solo artist ("Cherish").

Until recent

years he would not perform the early hits. But now he's confident the old songs won't make people forget all the things he has done as himself, not as Keith Partridge.

In fact, the new album was recorded in the same studio — even with the same microphone — as the "Partridge Family" hits. Many of the same session musicians performed.

Anybody who read Cassidy's 1994 autobiography "C'mon, Get Happy ... Fear and Loathing on the Partridge Family Bus" might wonder how he has managed to face his past after so many years trying to run away from it.

Among other things, the book documented his problems with his emotionally distant father, Jack Cassidy, an actor with a middling résumé who did not deal well with his son's success as Keith Partridge in the early 1970s. Cassidy had divorced David's mother and married actress Shirley Jones, who played Keith's mother on the TV show.

He also wrote that the show had made him wonder about the identity of this David Cassidy fellow.

"There was a fine line between me and the character I played and the music we played for that character," Cassidy said from Las Vegas, where he lives with his third wife and their 11-year-old son.

"At the time I was 19 and into Jimi Hendrix and B.B. King and Eric Clapton. People didn't know that the 'Partridge Family' music wasn't me. My picture was on the back of cereal boxes, and they put me in outfits I wore on the show. They were marketing that image and character, but it had the name David Cassidy on it. So in a sense it robbed me of my identity for a long time."

He seems reluctant to dwell on the negatives of his early career, or even to describe them as

"I wanted to do new material and

negative, maybe because so many his current fans were once fans of "The Partridge Family."

"I never associated those years with a bad time. Ever," he said. "People assumed that because I wanted to do new material and didn't want to talk about just the past, which people were preoccupied with. I had carved out a whole new career for myself."

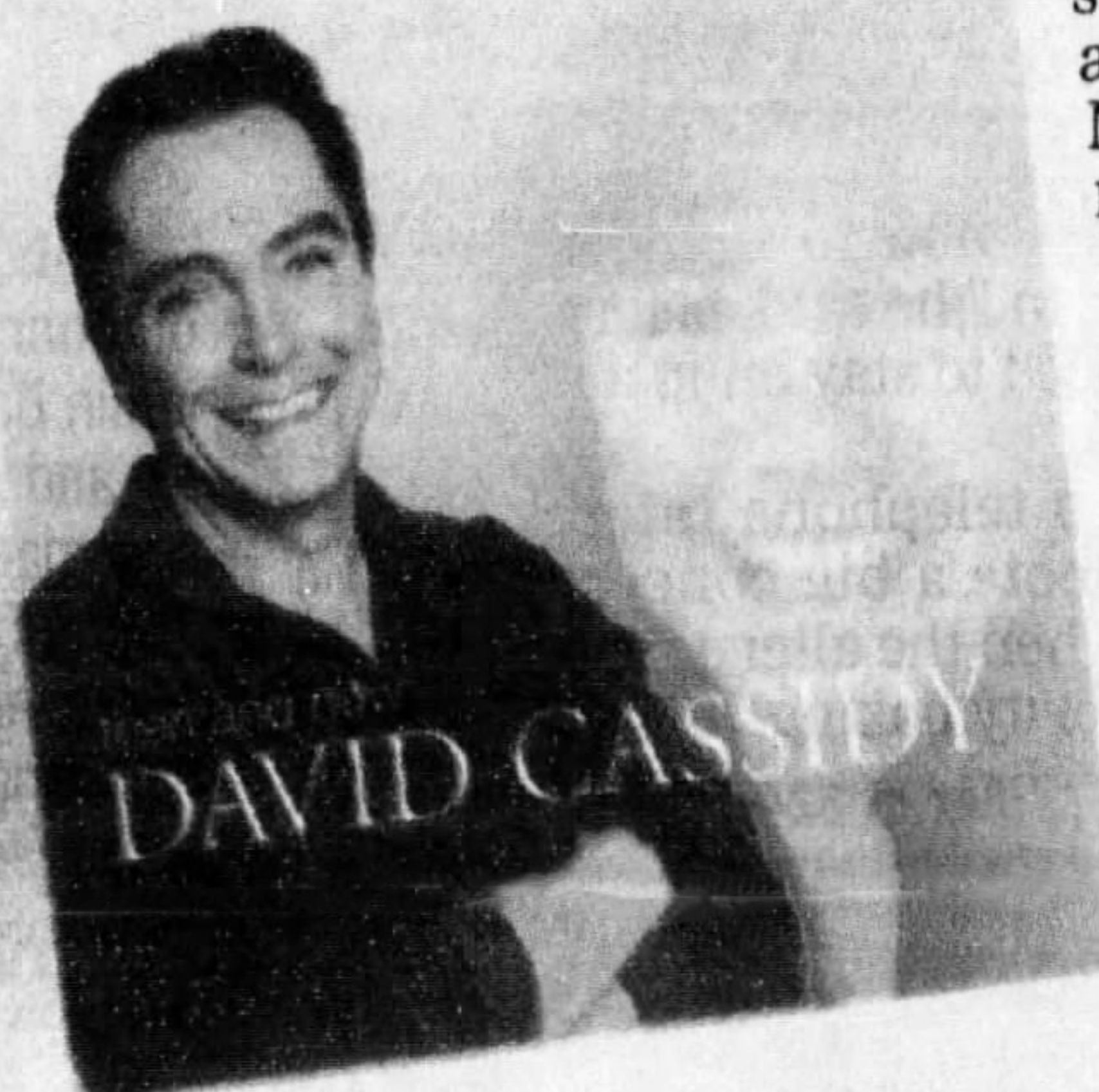
"The truth is," he said, "that the fans were always there for me, but the business wasn't."

Cassidy got out of his '80s funk partly the old-fashioned way — by seeing a therapist.

"I went through the process,

Teen heartthrob
David Cassidy during
his days on television's
"The Partridge Family."

News Journal photo illustration



David Cassidy's latest album, "Then and Now," was released earlier this year by Universal Music TV.