

Link

THE MAGAZINE OF
HOWARD PAYNE UNIVERSITY
FALL 2012

HPU ALUMNI

RAY HILDEBRAND

AND JILL JACKSON

LANDON, ALSO

KNOWN AS

PAUL AND PAULA,

RETURN TO

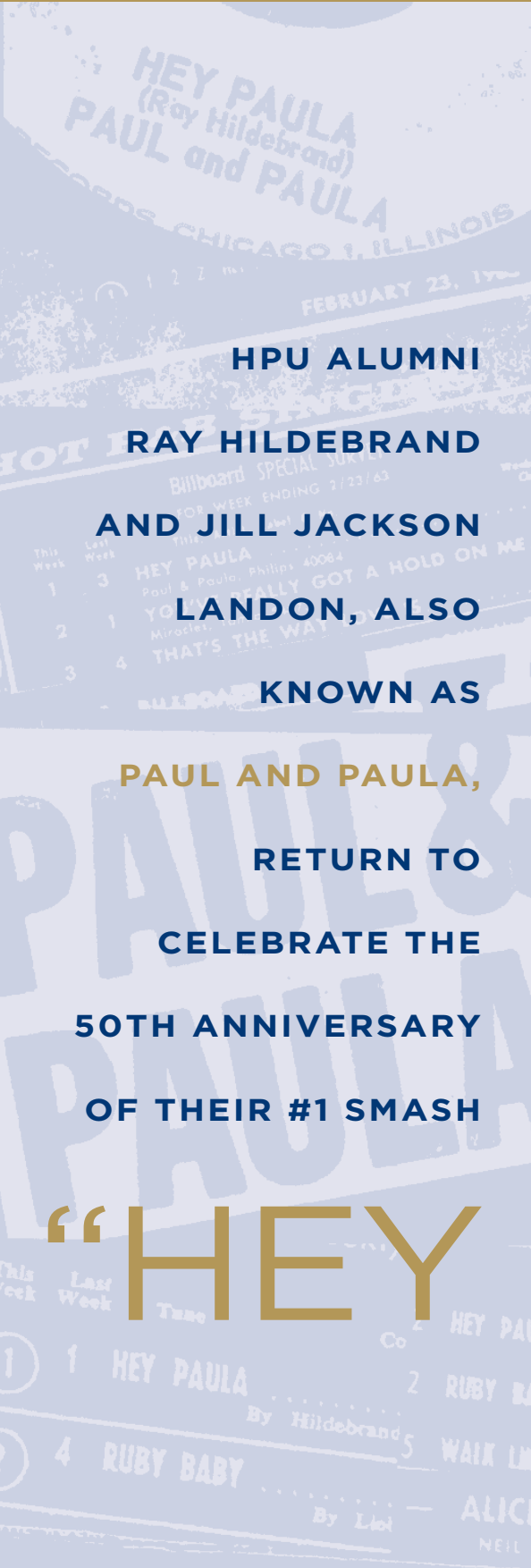
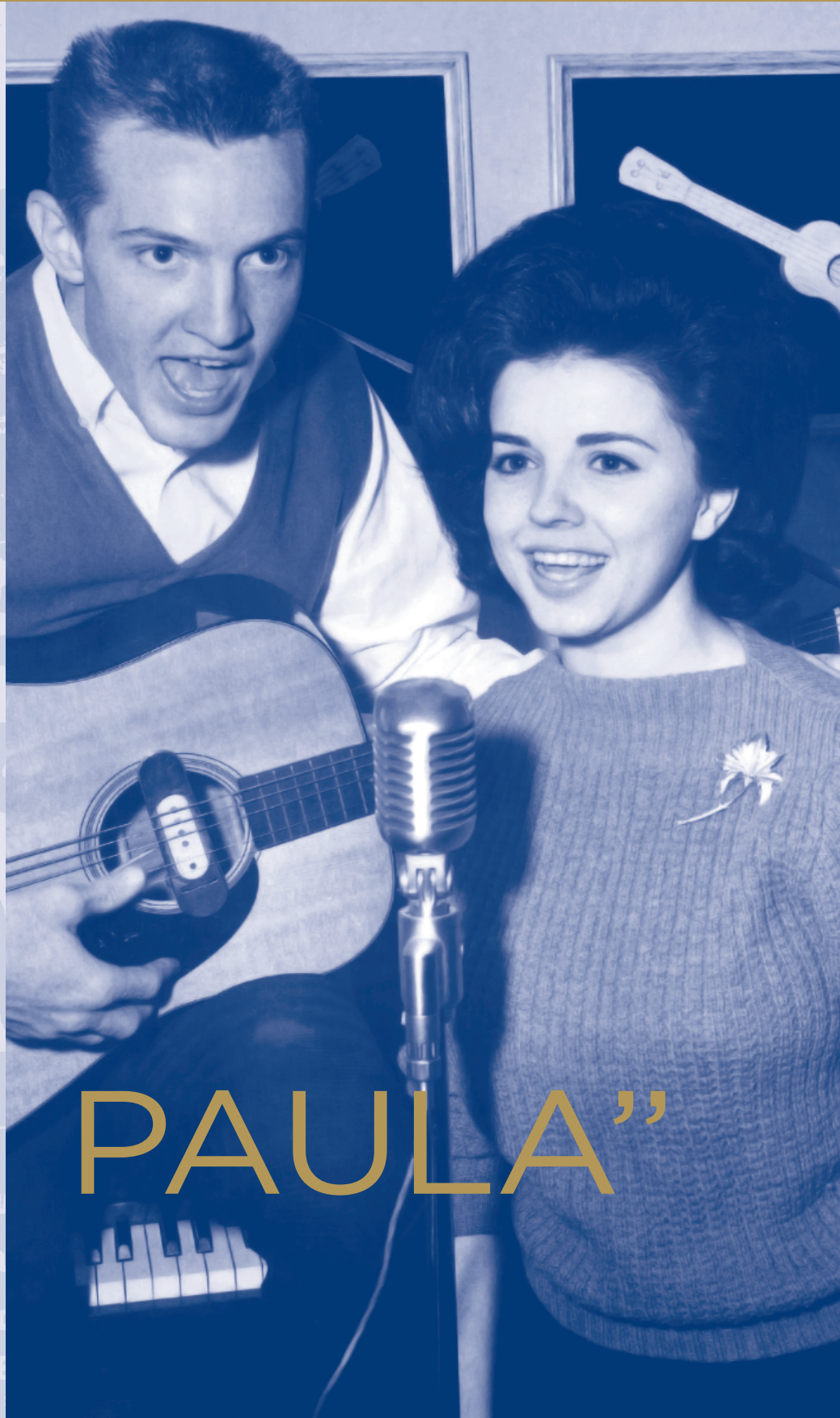
CELEBRATE THE

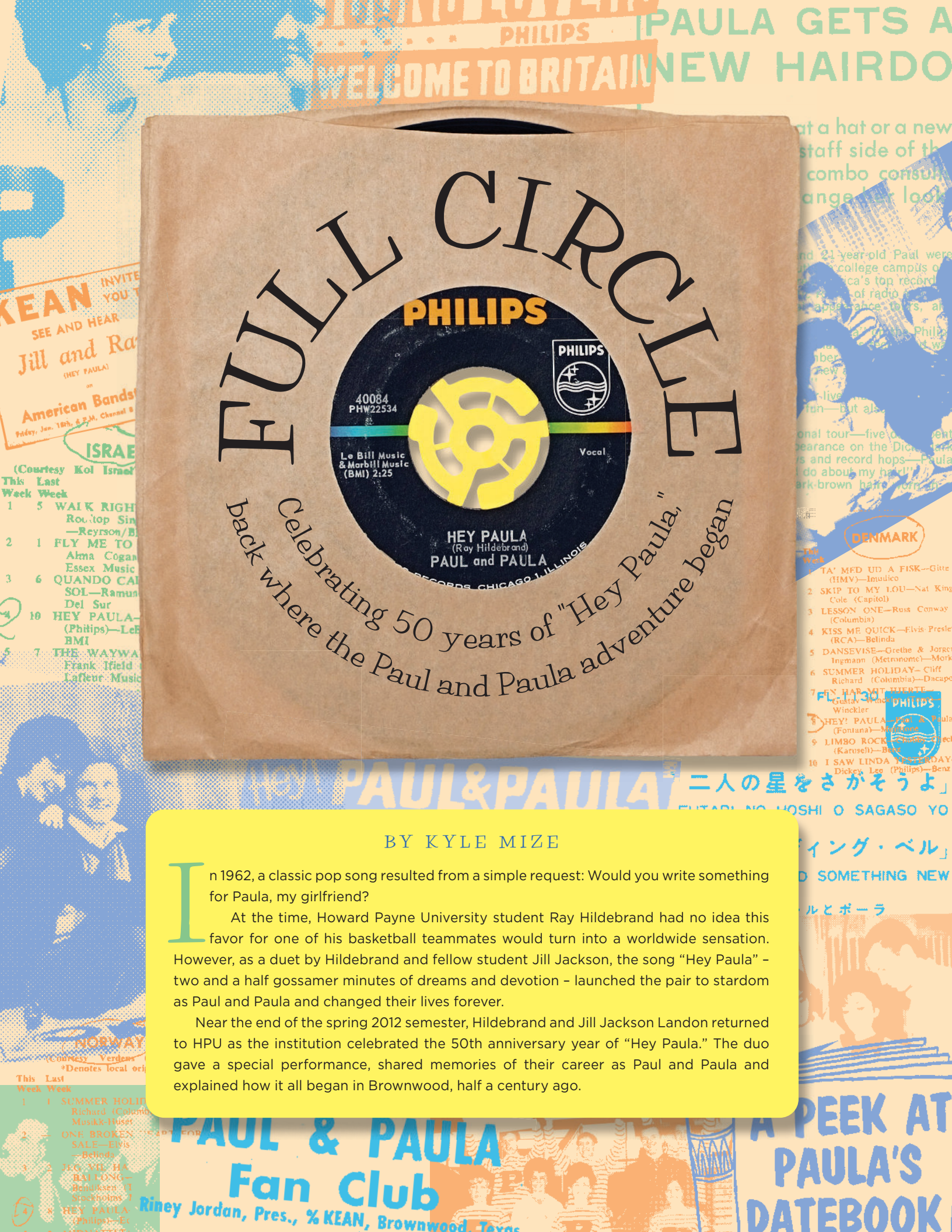
50TH ANNIVERSARY

OF THEIR #1 SMASH

“HEY

PAULA”





WELCOME TO BRITAIN PHILIPS

PAULA GETS A NEW HAIRDO

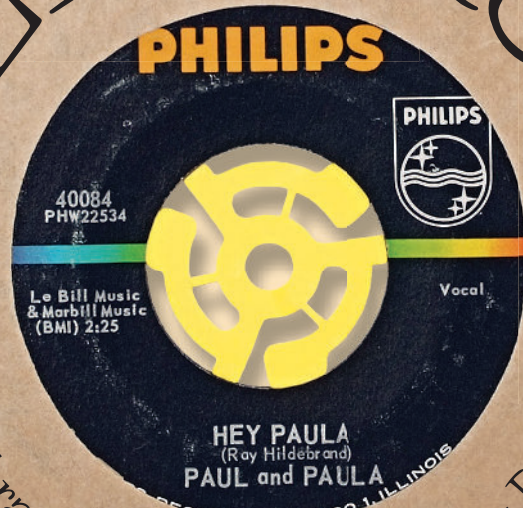
KEAN INVITE YOU TO SEE AND HEAR Jill and Ray (HEY PAULA) on American Bands Friday, Jan. 18th, 8 P.M., Channel 9

ISRAEL (Courtesy Kol Israel) This Last Week Week 1 5 WALK RIGHT Roundtop Sing —Reyerson/B... 2 1 FLY ME TO Alma Cogan Essex Music 3 6 QUANDO CAM SOL —Ramun Del Sur 4 10 HEY PAULA —(Philips)—LeB BMI 5 7 THE WAYWA Frank Ifield Laffeur Music

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FULL CIRCLE



Celebrating 50 years of "Hey Paula," back where the Paul and Paula adventure began

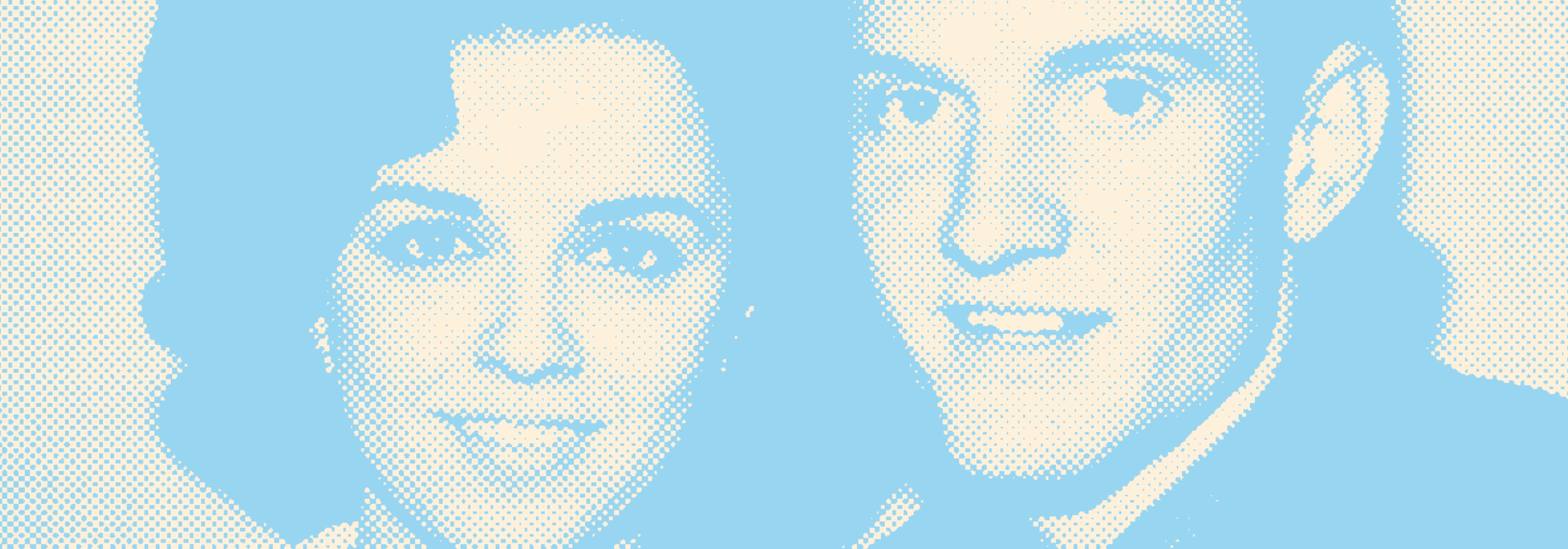
BY KYLE MIZE
In 1962, a classic pop song resulted from a simple request: Would you write something for Paula, my girlfriend?
At the time, Howard Payne University student Ray Hildebrand had no idea this favor for one of his basketball teammates would turn into a worldwide sensation. However, as a duet by Hildebrand and fellow student Jill Jackson, the song "Hey Paula" – two and a half gossamer minutes of dreams and devotion – launched the pair to stardom as Paul and Paula and changed their lives forever.
Near the end of the spring 2012 semester, Hildebrand and Jill Jackson Landon returned to HPU as the institution celebrated the 50th anniversary year of "Hey Paula." The duo gave a special performance, shared memories of their career as Paul and Paula and explained how it all began in Brownwood, half a century ago.

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This Last Week Week 1 1 SUMMER HOLIDAY Richard (Columbia) Musik-Höser 2 1 ONE BROKEN SALE—Elvis —Belinda 3 2 JEG VIL HA BAI LONG—Bibi Stenoi (1 Stockholm) 4 8 HEY PAULA —(Philips)—Et

PAUL & PAULA Fan Club Riney Jordan, Pres., % KEAN, Brownwood, Texas

A PEEK AT PAULA'S DATEBOOK



"I wrote 'Hey Paula' right up there," Ray Hildebrand shouts as his lean frame bounds across Fisk Street. He points excitedly to an upstairs window of HPU's Elliston-Cassle Wellness Center, where he lived during the summer of 1962 when the building was Jacket Gym and he was a lifeguard at the campus pool.

He has just arrived on campus after making the trip from his home in Kansas. In a t-shirt and shorts, the gregarious Hildebrand is still nimble and healthy. One can easily recognize that he was a basketball player in his college days.

Thinking back to what first brought him to HPU as a transfer student in 1960, Hildebrand credits the encouragement of his friend Ed Markham, who was an HPU student and fellow hometown boy from Harlingen. Markham's father, Meeler, also actively rooted for Hildebrand to experience what the institution had to offer.

"Meeler was a graduate from here, and he told Ed one day, 'If we can just get Ray to Howard Payne, he'll find his way from there,'" Hildebrand recalls. "When I finally got here, I saw what they meant."

What Hildebrand found at HPU was a sense of belonging and a greater awareness of God's presence and purpose.

"Somebody said that Howard Payne was a college where everybody is somebody, and that's not an overstated thing. I get the impression that it's still that way. They'll take you like you are, and I needed someone to take me like I was," he says, chuckling.

"When I came here, I could feel the prayers of the saints of the past and that people still prayed for this school."

HPU's faculty welcomed him and provided the support and challenges he needed in order to grow. Basketball coach Glen Whitis also looked out for the young man.

One summer, knowing Hildebrand was short of money and needing a place to stay during those months, Whitis offered him a job at the campus' swimming pool and lodging upstairs in the gym. While unorthodox, the accommodations were just fine as far as Hildebrand was concerned.

In the solitude of the gym's upper reaches, he had an ideal environment in which to work on songwriting. Having grown up with musical parents, he began singing and harmonizing at an early age. However, the process of writing songs was still relatively new to him.

"I always liked English, English literature and history," he remembers. "I began to write poetry in high school and college. I heard so many songs in church and began to see how they were written. Slowly but surely, I picked up a guitar and started adding some melodies and pretty soon I had written two or three songs."

Then, one day, a friend from the basketball team made a request.

"This fellow Russell Berry asked me to write a song for his girlfriend," Hildebrand says. "I began to write this little song above the gymnasium at Howard Payne that summer of 1962."

Soon stumped as he wrestled with melodies, sentiments and rhymes written on behalf of someone else, Hildebrand decided to start over. Regretting a recent breakup with his own girlfriend, Judy Hendricks, he poured his feelings for her into the new song, sharing his dreams for a marriage filled with love, commitment and happiness.

Before the song was finished, though, there were still a couple of important changes to be made. Winston Hughes, another teammate, heard Hildebrand play an early version of the song and offered a suggestion.

"He said 'You ought to let the girl sing back to the guy, too,'" Hildebrand recalls. "I thought, 'That's the dumbest thing I ever heard in my life!'"

Laughing at his initial shortsightedness, Hildebrand acknowledges the importance of turning the song into a couple's conversation. However, he remembers the revision created a new challenge: if the name "Paula" is addressed in the song, what guy's name should be used? After all, there aren't many rhymes for "Russell."

Disney star Annette Funicello had a hit song called



Several people involved with the origin and success of "Hey Paula" were HPU students at the time. As pictured in the 1962 *Lasso* yearbook are (from left) Ray Hildebrand, Jill Jackson (later Landon), Ed Markham, Russell Berry, Paula Rowlett (later Berry), Judy Hendricks (later Hildebrand), Winston Hughes and Riney Jordan.

"Tall Paul" that Hildebrand often heard that summer at the swimming pool. Liking the similarity of the names "Paul" and "Paula," Hildebrand knew his song's ingredients were finally in place.

"So that's what happened," Hildebrand remembers. "I wrote this song for a girl named Paula for my friend Russell, but the feelings and the words were all from my feelings for this girl I had broken up with – but who later became my wife!"

"A lot of good memories," says Jill Jackson Landon, sitting in HPU's recently renovated Mims Auditorium after traveling from her home in California. "I love being here. I'm so proud of the campus. So much has been done, and it's still a wonderful place. It embraces you."

Today, Landon remains youthful and stylish, carrying herself with a graceful, dignified bearing that must have served her well through the rigors of show business. Together, she and Hildebrand still project the kind of visual and stylistic contrasts of a classic pairing – petite and rangy, regal and folksy, reserved and outgoing – that a marketing executive would have concocted if Landon and Hildebrand had not found each other first, so many years ago.

When she was a senior in high school, Landon moved with her family from Arkansas to Brownwood. Though the adjustment to a new city in the final year of high school had its challenges, her transition was made easier by the warm welcome she received from new friends at Brownwood High

and especially from her local relatives, the Nettleships. Landon's aunt, Irene, taught piano and cousins Larry and Peggy attended HPU.

Landon's idyllic memories of early-'60s Brownwood include get-togethers with friends, going to the movies and cruising to now-gone Lyons Drive-In for burgers and Coke.

"It was fun. People were wonderful. I just thought there was no place in the world like Brownwood, Texas," Landon recalls. "I loved being from here."

Her family was very musical and both parents encouraged her budding singing ability. Her father, Ralph Jackson, often heard songs on the radio and brought home the sheet music for his daughter. Her mother, Loris, made clothes for Landon to wear in recitals. The Nettleships' nearby home, which also served as a boarding house for Ray Hildebrand and other HPU students, became the meeting place for sing-alongs and other informal gatherings.

Upon graduation from high school, Landon knew HPU was the place for her. Soon after enrolling, she drew the attention of other singers on campus. Hildebrand remembers how their paths crossed.

"I sang with a group called the Prisoners," he says. "We wore prison uniforms and were always 'behind a few bars and looking for the right key.' We played gigs and Jill was often there. She was one of the excellent singers on campus, and we'd bump into each other at gigs and at her aunt's house. She knew that I played the guitar and we liked each other."

This local music scene gave Landon an environment in which to hone her performing skills, influenced by popular singers of the day.

"I loved Teresa Brewer and Johnny Mathis," she remembers. "I had a lot of big dreams of doing something like that when I was young."

She took a major step in that direction when she was offered her own radio show on local station KEAN for 15 minutes each Sunday afternoon. She invited Hildebrand to join her as a duet partner and he was more than happy to offer his support – as well as a little good-natured mischief.

"He would get there and start making me laugh," Landon says, "and so I would go home and say, 'Mother, I'm so sorry,'

"It was fun. People were wonderful. I just thought there was no place in the world like Brownwood, Texas," Landon says.

because we laughed the whole time! But that's how we really started singing together."

For one of these broadcasts, the duo performed Hildebrand's newly written song, which was then called "Paul and Paula." KEAN disc jockey and fellow HPU student Riney Jordan relayed news of the public's reaction.

"He said, 'The phones lit up, it's a hit and you've just got to do something with this,'" Landon remembers. "So, we took his advice."

Thanks to Jordan's support and his heavy airplay of a taped performance of the song, local buzz continued to build. Landon's mother, fervently convinced of the song's potential, began scouring the region for a record producer.

Her research turned up the phone number for Fort Worth-based session guitarist Marvin Montgomery, who was an associate of Major Bill Smith, producer of the recent hit "Hey Baby" by Bruce Channel. Montgomery told her that he and Smith had a recording session scheduled for an upcoming Saturday evening in the basement of a Fort Worth radio station. There was a chance she could meet Smith then, but Montgomery could offer no guarantees.

That autumn Saturday, with hope and confidence but without any assurances that they would even see the inside of the studio, Hildebrand, Landon and her parents began the two-hour drive to Fort Worth.

Once they arrived at the little studio, the four found seats in the waiting area. Hours ticked by. Hildebrand and Landon had practiced their song, ready for any opportunity.

When the 6:00 p.m. start time for the recording session came and went without the arrival of the scheduled singer, Hildebrand and Landon received their big break. Smith, with backing musicians on the clock and time wasting, found the young college students in the lobby and gruffly offered them a quick chance to audition.

"I took the guitar and played a little of the song," recalls Hildebrand, "and he said, 'Let's record it – right now! I'm paying these people and we're going to come out of here with something today, even if it's 'The Star-Spangled Banner!'"



Record producer Major Bill Smith, on tour with Paul and Paula

However, before the song was recorded, some cuts had to be made. From Smith's point of view, the song Hildebrand wrote was too long.

"He said, 'You know any six-minute songs on the Top 40? That's 'cause there aren't any!'" Hildebrand remembers. Montgomery then rearranged the song, cutting out several sections and restructuring the remaining pieces to be more in line with the standard pop-song structure of the day.

(Ever thrifty, Hildebrand and Landon later took the pieces that had been cut and added two new verses. This version became "Young Lovers," the duo's second hit single, which ultimately climbed to #6.)

Inside the studio, the 5'1" Landon had to stand on Coke crates to reach the microphone. The duo put on headphones to hear the backing musicians, ran through the song – probably just three times, by Hildebrand's estimation – and that was it.

Next, the duo was informed that they needed a song for the flip side of the "Paul and Paula" 45 RPM single. They had only prepared the one song together, so Landon nervously offered one of her own.

"I said, 'Well, I have one, but I don't know if you want to hear it,'" Landon recalls, laughing. She volunteered a song she had written called "Bobby is the One," which was quickly recorded as a solo.

"If it'd been a hit, I wouldn't be sitting here!" Hildebrand says. "It could have been. If you listen to it, it's a very beautiful song."

The speedy recording session now complete, the duo signed contracts and then finally had a chance to pause and reflect on a long day's exciting finish.

"It was a hoot," Hildebrand says.

"I think it was just meant to be," adds Landon. "It was just one of those things that we were meant to sing – together."

A few weeks later, Landon received a phone call from Major Bill Smith, informing her that they had a hit record.

"I said, 'I don't know what that means,'" Landon says. "We knew nothing!"

After Smith told her that the song's popularity was building, she jumped into her mom's car and rushed over to HPU to share the news with Hildebrand. She finally found him in the library.

"He said, 'What does that mean?'" Landon recalls, laughing. "I said, 'I guess it's good!'"

"They changed our names," Hildebrand recalls. "Then they said, 'You're sweethearts, so act like it!'"

Originally issued by Smith's independent label LeCam Records, the "Paul and Paula" single had been aggressively promoted by Smith to regional radio stations across the country. As the song's popularity grew, it attracted the interest of Mercury Records, whose executives made a deal to acquire the recordings, along with the duo's contract.

While Smith remained the pair's manager, Mercury reissued the single through its Philips Records subsidiary. With the benefit of the large company's promotional strength, the song then reached a much larger audience, climbing to #1 across the country. The song was a smash in the U.S. and ultimately around the globe, selling millions of copies.

However, before the single was relaunched, more revisions were made.

"They changed our names," Hildebrand recalls. "We called the song 'Paul and Paula' by Jill and Ray, and they called it 'Hey Paula' by Paul and Paula, which is better marketing. Then they said, 'You're sweethearts, so act like it!'"

Though the two friends were not romantically involved, Hildebrand and Landon – as Paul and Paula – were advertised as a couple and instructed to play their roles in interviews and other promotional appearances. The pair had mixed emotions about the charade.

"It was lying," Hildebrand remembers. "It was kind of tough."

"People still think we're married," Landon says. "We were good actors, huh?"

Hildebrand adds, "People ask us, after 50 years, 'Did Paul and Paula ever get married?' 'Well, yeah.' Then they'll say, 'I knew it!' They don't stick around and ask the rest of it. We didn't get married to each other, but we did get married."

Top left: In the studio for an early publicity photo

Bottom left and right: Meeting music legends Patsy Cline and Roy Orbison

As their fame grew, the duo enjoyed many of the perks that came with their newfound celebrity status. Being stars for a large record company meant fancy clothes, world travel, cheering fans and surprising amounts of money – quite an adjustment for these two college students.

"You were in the big leagues when you were with a label like that," Landon says. "It was great to be able to afford to do nice things for my parents. The whole thing changed our lives. When Ray and I went to London, we flew into the airport and there were hundreds of people there. I looked at Ray and he looked at me, like 'What in the world is going on here?'"

"We must be stars," Hildebrand said.

The runaway success of "Hey Paula" meant more new music was needed to capitalize on the demand for Paul and Paula. During breaks from concert tours, recording sessions were booked in Nashville with some of the era's top studio musicians, such as Jerry Reed, Ray Stevens, Boots Randolph, the Anita Kerr Singers and the Jordanaires. Work usually began in the afternoon and ran until midnight or later, depending on how much progress was made.

Ultimately, three Paul and Paula albums were recorded: *Paul and Paula Sing for Young Lovers*, *We Go Together* and a Christmas album titled *Holiday for Teens*. Songs written by Hildebrand and Landon were included along with material written by other songwriters. While the duo would have preferred more input in song selection for the albums, they enjoyed getting to know the musicians and learning the particulars of big-time recording. The frantic pace, though, continued unabated.

"I think albums today take months to get together, but we did our first one in a week," Landon says. "And then we got right back on the road."

Crisscrossing the country in early 1963, Hildebrand and Landon met a number of stars whose performances the young duo had grown up enjoying. Appearing on *American Bandstand* and meeting host Dick Clark were special thrills.

"When we got the call to do *American Bandstand*, I just couldn't believe it," Landon recalls. "I remember walking into the studio and he was sitting at a desk. I thought, 'There's Dick Clark! I can't believe I'm even standing in the same room.' He was always very, very kind to us, and very supportive."

The duo's hectic schedule occasionally provided opportunities for camaraderie with fellow entertainers. Special friends included Jimmy Clanton, Dick and Dee Dee, Brian Hyland, Ruby and the Romantics, Johnny Tillotson, Bobby Vee and others. From card games on long bus rides to impromptu basketball games during afternoon lulls in the itinerary,

Hildebrand and Landon enjoyed sharing experiences and forming bonds with their extended show-business family.



More famous than the Beatles

On an overseas tour in 1963, Hildebrand and Landon arrived at a London studio for a scheduled appearance as Paul and Paula on the BBC variety program *Pop Inn*. When the show ran long and time ran short, the producers had a decision to make: go with a budding young group from Liverpool or opt instead for the popular American duo with the hit “Hey Paula.” Paul and Paula got the nod, but the Beatles didn’t go home empty-handed: they were granted their request for a photo with the two stars!

At this point, the Beatles were several months away from their U.S. breakthrough in early 1964. Hildebrand and Landon remember them as “very cordial” and recall the meeting with amusement.

“We chuckled at the name,” Hildebrand remembers.

“They had long hair,” Landon adds, laughing.

Two years later, after her move to California, Landon was invited to a celebrity gathering in Los Angeles hosted by the Beatles, who were now major stars worldwide. At one point, Landon was seated on a piano bench when she noticed someone had sat down beside her.

“I looked over and Paul McCartney started playing ‘Hey Paula,’” she recalls. “He played it beautifully and played it all the way through. Then he said, ‘My goodness, we’re Paul and Paula!’ It’s still a fun memory.”

Pictured from left: Ringo Starr, Paul McCartney, Ray Hildebrand, Jill Jackson Landon, George Harrison, British comedian Arthur Askey and John Lennon



However, the pair quickly learned that life on the road would never offer many chances to slow down and savor the moments that were hurtling past.

“It just happened so fast,” says Hildebrand quietly. “I’d think, ‘I want to stay here a while,’ but then someone would say, ‘I’m sorry, you have to keep going.’ We ate as many meals on the airplane as we did on the ground, just about, just trying to get to the next gig. We were on a dead run.”

The weariness was evident in a subsequent appearance on *American Bandstand*. Following a charming performance of their third Top 40 hit, “First Quarrel,” Hildebrand and Landon talked on camera to Dick Clark about their homesickness after months on the road. While continuing to be grateful for their success, the toll was increasingly heavy.

Though Hildebrand and Landon were stars, they were still two young college students, longing for home. Hildebrand remained lovesick for Judy Hendricks. Singing “Hey Paula” at each concert could only have been a constant reminder, since the young woman back in Texas had inspired the feelings he put into the song in the first place. Additionally, the duo found fame potentially disorienting and treacherous.

“Suddenly you were blasted away from all your moorings, your family, your friends,” Hildebrand says, “and if you didn’t have your life somewhat together – morally, emotionally and everything else – you weren’t going to get any help now. You’d better grab the Gideon Bible in every hotel room and hold onto it, because you’re flying, you’re moving and

everybody’s telling you you’re the greatest thing. And you’d better not believe your press clippings.”

He sees parallels between Paul and Paula’s success and the instant fame of some of today’s entertainers.

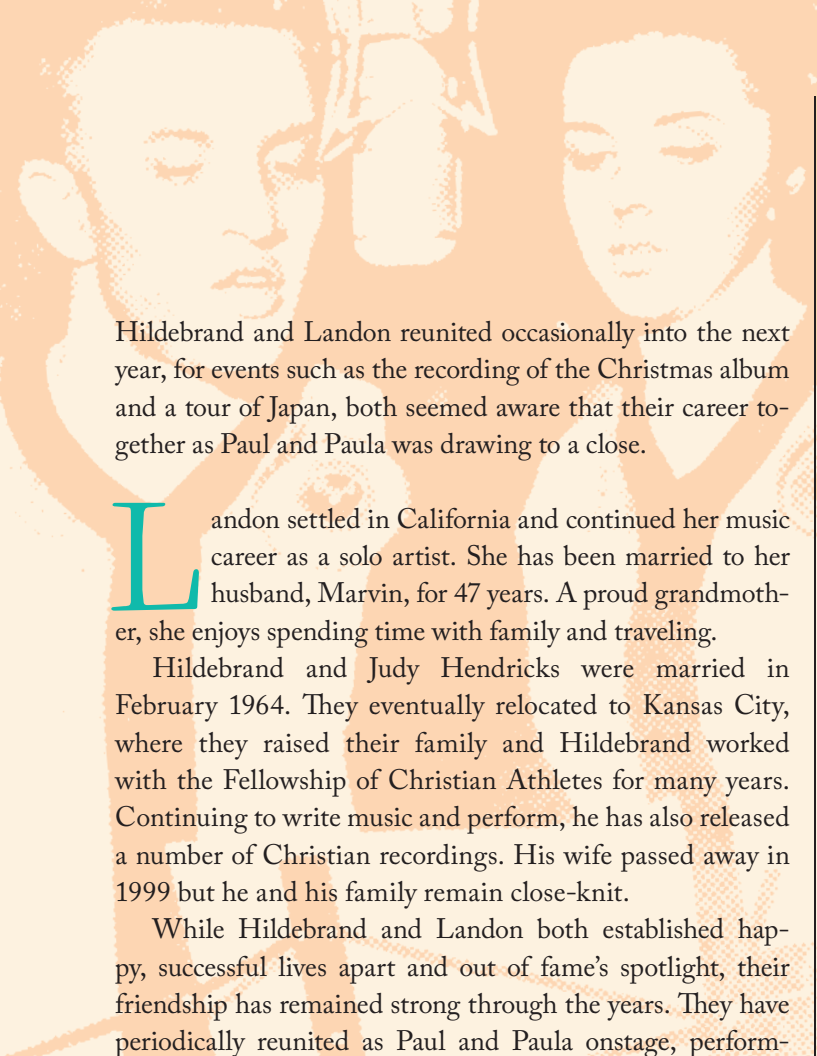
“So many people are in love with *American Idol* and all the other things,” he says. “These kids think, ‘Whoa, if I could just do that,’ and that’s true – there are some benefits, but you’d better be grounded because it’s tough. You play a role but that’s not real life. That’s just show business, up on the stage. You can’t live there.

“If you know God and His Son, you can make it through all this other stuff, but you can’t make everybody else be that way.”

Landon adds that the strong ties of home and family in Brownwood helped provide much-needed perspective.

“I took the whole experience for what it was, and I made the best of it,” she recalls. “Then I would come home, and Mother would say, ‘Jill, make your bed, clean up your room and hang up your clothes.’ That’s basically what I did. When I had to become Paula, I was Paula – and then I went back home and was Jill.”

Eventually Hildebrand, worn out by the tension between a show-business career and the pull of love and life back home, made his choice. He quit during a Dick Clark Caravan of Stars tour in the summer of 1963 to return to Hendricks and his HPU education. (Clark himself filled in for Hildebrand as Landon’s duet partner for the tour’s remaining shows.) While



Hildebrand and Landon reunited occasionally into the next year, for events such as the recording of the Christmas album and a tour of Japan, both seemed aware that their career together as Paul and Paula was drawing to a close.

Landon settled in California and continued her music career as a solo artist. She has been married to her husband, Marvin, for 47 years. A proud grandmother, she enjoys spending time with family and traveling.

Hildebrand and Judy Hendricks were married in February 1964. They eventually relocated to Kansas City, where they raised their family and Hildebrand worked with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes for many years. Continuing to write music and perform, he has also released a number of Christian recordings. His wife passed away in 1999 but he and his family remain close-knit.

While Hildebrand and Landon both established happy, successful lives apart and out of fame's spotlight, their friendship has remained strong through the years. They have periodically reunited as Paul and Paula onstage, performing for audiences of all ages at oldies shows and other events across the country. In 2002, they returned to their alma mater to serve as grand marshals at HPU's Homecoming.

Now five decades removed from their initial success, Hildebrand and Landon are humbled by the response "Hey Paula" continues to receive. The administrator of Hildebrand's songwriting catalog has estimated that, based on royalty information, the song has aired somewhere in the world virtually every day since its initial wave of success. Landon has been told of numerous weddings in which the song has been played and other examples from lives in which the song has special meaning.

"People will walk up and say, 'I was having such a bad year, my home life was bad, my marriage was bad,' all sorts of things, and they'll say, 'I heard "Hey Paula" and it lifted me up. It just made me feel like there was hope,'" Landon explains, with tears in her eyes. "And that still happens."

Both members of the duo feel blessed by the public's ongoing affection for their signature song.

"We're both Christians," Hildebrand says. "I think we have a great appreciation for what it was and what it is."

When asked what qualities in "Hey Paula" strike such an emotional chord for listeners, Hildebrand shares a key aspect of the song's appeal. He believes that his feelings for Hendricks and a hopeful dream of selfless, lifetime commitment – "getting from 'I' to 'we,'" he says – combined to express a positive, relevant message.

"I just thought, 'What is your biggest desire?'" he recalls. "The chorus of the song says it: 'True love means planning a life for two, being together the whole day through.' Not your own plans, but somebody else's plans."

Continuing, he softly sings, "True love means waiting and hoping that soon, wishes we've made will come true, my love," before stating simply, "I think I accidentally wrote some things that a bunch of people felt."

Once the song Hildebrand wrote was brought to life by the duo's winsome vocal performance, what "a bunch of people felt" made the song a massive hit and ensured its lasting place in the history of pop music. HPU was proud to welcome Hildebrand and Landon back to campus near the close of the spring 2012 semester to celebrate the 50th anniversary of "Hey Paula" and honor the distinguished former students' success. While on campus, the pair made a special presentation of their own: framed gold and platinum records, with an inscription that reads in part:

If we could go back, there is one thing that we would not change: being students at Howard Payne in the early '60s and the Godly, Eternal influence that HPU continually has on our lives.

Love Always

Jill and Ray

The full day of activities was capped by a special evening reception at which Hildebrand and Landon – Paul and Paula, together again – shared songs and memories. The Mabee



Paul and Paula in Japan





Back at HPU for the "Hey Paula" 50th anniversary celebration, the duo presented gold and platinum records to the university (above, with Dr. Bill Ellis, president) and gave a special performance. (Photos by Coby Kestner)



"We've had such a wonderful day," Landon said. "It's been so great to come home."

University Center's expansive Bullion Suites area was filled with an enthusiastic crowd of HPU alumni, students, faculty, staff and board members, as well as media representatives, area residents and other friends. The audience included Russell Berry – who originally asked Hildebrand to write the song that became "Hey Paula" – and Berry's wife, Paula, the focus of Berry's affection then and now. Landon's husband, Marvin, was also in attendance, as were cousin Larry Nettleship with his wife, Kay, and cousin Jim Maxcey and his wife, Julie.

Hildebrand and Landon walked out to a warm welcome and ran through a lively, engaging set of songs that celebrated the era that produced the duo. "Michael" and "Cotton Fields," made famous in the early '60s by the Highwaymen, displayed Hildebrand's early love of folk music. A wide-ranging medley of '50s pop hits recalled the era of malt shops and cruising the drag, while their performance of Johnny Otis' "Willie and the Hand Jive," complete with hand motions, prompted laughter and participation from the audience.

The pair gave Marvin Gaye and Kim Weston's early-'60s Motown hit "It Takes Two" an energetic workout, with the song's lyrics taking on added resonance from Hildebrand and Landon's decades of friendship and shared history. Versions of Buddy Holly's "True Love Ways" and Elvis Presley's "Can't Help Falling in Love" saluted early musical influences.

Landon shared a story from decades ago in which her mother would ask before concerts, "Jill, are you going to sing the Elvis song?" She always assured her that she would.

Visit www.rayhildebrand.com for more Paul and Paula information, CDs and other items, including *The Hey Paula Story*, Ray Hildebrand's new book.

Now, back at HPU, she sang the favorite ballad as a special tribute to her mother's memory.

Hildebrand performed his solo gospel hit "Say I Do," introducing it as the most recorded of all the songs he has written. In this unadorned voice-and-guitar arrangement, the song's message shone clearly and brilliantly.

A video presentation of their 1963 "homesick" appearance on Dick Clark's *American Bandstand* was shown, giving the audience a fascinating, time-capsule glimpse of the duo at the peak of their fame.

After the clip, Hildebrand and Landon thanked the audience and expressed their feelings about being back in Brownwood and at HPU.

"We've had such a wonderful day," Landon said softly. "It's been so great to come home."

Finally, with the bittersweet inevitability that "Hey Paula" would mean the end of the show, Hildebrand and Landon began the final song of the evening.

For the next few moments, five decades were rolled back. After hit records, high-profile tours and subsequent years of even greater personal meaning, Paul and Paula were again simply Ray and Jill, at home on the HPU campus, singing their song for a roomful of friends and family.

Fifty years after it was written less than half a block away, "Hey Paula" once again offered its delicate but ageless pledge of devotion. ■