

# ZZ Top's first paying gig took place at Elks Lodge in Beaumont

## SOUTHEAST TEXAS TALES

By Sarah Moore

ZZ Top is considered a Houston band, but with its induction into the Museum of the Gulf Coast's Music Hall of Fame in 1998, Southeast Texas claimed it as one of their own.

There is ample justification for the claim.

Not only did the band (known as the Moving Side-walks in its first incarnation) cut its teeth playing gigs in and around Southeast Texas in the early '70s, its very first paying gig was in Beaumont.

In February 1970, ZZ Top played at the Elks Lodge on old U.S. 90, a gig booked by Beaumont radio personal-ity Al Caldwell of KIVI, who also broadcast the band's first recordings.

Southeast Texas liked what it heard, and the band became a regular at The Town House in Groves.

In an interview with The Enterprise at the time of the

ZZ Top, page 5A

The Enterprise wasn't at the Elks Lodge in February 1970 for ZZ Top's first paying gig, but our camera has caught them at much larger concerts, such as this March 2000 sold-out show at the Montagne Center.

Enterprise file



# ZZ TOP: Band played a prom at Little Cypress-Mauriceville HS in May 1970



Photo provided by LC-M  
 ZZ Top, looking quite a bit younger and substantially less hirsute, played the Little Cypress-Mauriceville prom in May 1970. The caption below the photo referred to them as 'Zee Zee Top.'

Continued from page 1A

Hall of Fame induction, guitarist Billy F. Gibbons returned the love the region had always shown "that little ol' band from Texas" with gratitude for the way the area's strong musical heritage helped shape their sound.

"When news of this honorarium reached us, we recounted such important developmental moments for the band, and we wanted it to be known that the slow bluesy side and the fast bluesy side of our sound has direct influences from the region," he said.

Many a Southeast Texas rock music fan carries memories of the "greasy, stripped down, knee buckling blues" the band is known for.

Angi Walker of Beaumont is one such fan. "I was (underage...ahem) in a little dive by Lamar and

they walked in and took the stage, it was so cool! Don't remember the name of the club but it was probably 1979?" she said.

According to The Selvedge Yard blog, the band even played a prom at Little Cypress-Mauriceville High School in May 1970.

Between the time they booked the gig and prom night, their star had begun to rise.

"They tried to get out of the contract, but the school couldn't find a replacement on such short notice so ZZ Top still performed... people were climbing through the windows, crashing the prom, just to hear the band play.

This was all at a really small school with a graduating class of around 100, maybe less," according to the Selvedge Yard.

SCMoore@BeaumontEnterprise.com  
 Twitter.com/Daily\_Tiger