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## Appreciative crowd gets upclose with Scrap Metal in Natchitoches concert

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NATCHITOCHES -- The crowd was small, but the energy was high and the cause was excellent Thursday night as new supergroup Scrap Metal unleashed original hits from the '80s and '90s on an appreciative crowd in Natchitoches.

The band, which includes members of popular groups from a decade or two ago, performed for Jude Jams 2007 in Prather Coliseum on the Northwestern State University campus. All of the net proceeds from the concert -- tickets were \$15 apiece -- go to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tenn.

ADVERTISEMENT It was a cozy crowd of a couple hundred people who got a very upclose view of the band, including once when Mark Slaughter, formerly of the band Slaughter, went into the crowd to shake hands, hug people and even hold up a couple of youngsters, all while singing. He can still hit the high notes on songs such as "Fly to the Angels."

Scrap Metal is a new band featuring Mark Slaughter, Gunnar Nelson of Nelson and Kelly Keagy of Night Ranger. On Thursday, the crowd got a bonus Nelson -- Gunnar's twin brother Matthew, who teamed with Gunnar to make up the pop duo Nelson in the early 1990s.

The Nelsons' hair is no longer pure blond and it no longer comes down to their waists, and as Gunnar noted, they've lost the Spandex that they sometimes wore during Nelson's heyday.

Also playing with the band on Thursday were guitar virtuoso Joel Hoekstra, who has toured with Night Ranger and The Turtles, and organist Teddy "Zig Zag" Andreadis, who has played with Guns 'N' Roses.

Keagy started off the show singing the hard-driving "Don't Tell Me You Love Me" and Slaughter followed with "Mad About You" as he took a stroll through the audience. Then came Nelson's "After the Rain."

Gunnar took the singing lead on most of the Nelson songs, as opposed to Matthew, possibly because he's listed as a full-fledged member of the band while Matthew may have just been helping out for the night. Gunnar's hair is a little blonder or otherwise you couldn't tell them apart.

### Find out more about Scrap Metal and TrueJams

For more information about Scrap Metal, visit [www.myspace.com/ScrapMetalBand](http://www.myspace.com/ScrapMetalBand).

For more information about TrueJams Charity, check out [www.truejams.com](http://www.truejams.com).

### Concert photos coming later today

Check back on our Web site, [www.thetowntalk.com](http://www.thetowntalk.com), later today for photos from the Scrap Metal concert in Natchitoches.

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Their father was rock 'n' roll legend Ricky Nelson, and they are the grandsons of television pioneers Ozzie and Harriet Nelson.

Scrap Metal had the crowd participate with clap beats and sing-a-longs. The audience was a mixture of Baby Boomers, college-age students and a smattering of teenie boppers.

On a few occasions, members of the band commented on the wonderful work done at St. Jude, explaining why they were enthusiastic about the concert to help a hospital that treats seriously ill children.

"It's about finding a cure" for cancer, said Slaughter. He is band co-founder and a board member of True Jams Charities Inc., a Louisiana-based charity that co-sponsored the concert along with NSU student fraternity Tau Kappa Epsilon.

Randy Ryder, president of True Jams, thought the band's performance was excellent, despite the relatively small crowd. Rydedr even performed on guitar with the band for a song.

Ryder also praised the work of St. Jude. At one point, he brought young cancer survivor Donny Meshell of Zwolle on stage to be introduced to the audience and to meet the band.

"Here's what it's all about," Slaughter said of Donny being in remission.

Perhaps the band members' three best-known songs are Nelson's "(I Can't Live Without Your) Love and Affection," Slaughter's "Fly to the Angels" and Night Ranger's "Sister Christian," and those seemed to be the ones the audience looked forward to -- and sang along with -- the most.

Keagy handled drumming most of the night, but he would leave the drums during some of the songs featuring his singing. Gunnar Nelson took a turn on the drums near the end of the concert.

Other well-known songs Scrap Metal played Thursday included Keagy singing "You Can Still Rock In America" and the Nelson twins singing "More Than Ever" and "Only Time Will Tell."



Slaughter said he knew college students in the audience could relate to his next song, and then he burst into "Up All Night Sleep All Day," which included a heavy dose of audience sing-a-long.

The band played for about an hour and a half and then came back for an encore in which they played songs from various artists, including the Guns 'n' Roses' version of "Knocking on Heaven's Door," with Andreadis finally getting a chance to take lead vocals. Also blended in was "Sweet Home Alabama."




After the concert, Hoekstra said the band enjoyed playing

"whether it's a crowd of two or 20,000." He noted Scrap Metal is just starting out and fans will learn more about them in the future.

The band members were personable, and some of them came out after the concert to chat with fans and sign autographs. They even performed a little roadie work, helping pack up their equipment.

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