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Music

What a great name for a band!

By Pam Sitt

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What's in a name?

A good story, for starters. Especially when you get to choose your own. We picked six Seattle bands whose names were so ear-catching that we had to ask: Where'd you get that? A dictionary. A TV special. An African safari. Who knew?

Read on for our answer to Behind the Music: Tell-all tales of the makings of local bands Carissa's Wierd, Dope Smoothie, Raft of Dead Monkeys, 764-HERO, Beautiful Soup and Ellen Says No.

Ellen Says No

It was a year ago, May. Four twentysomethings had just formed a band and were sitting around playing poker, tossing cards and band names around.

"We came up with some horrible, crazy names, like JFK-Y Jelly and Rage Against Mr. Clean," recalls Ryan Hooper, lead guitarist for Ellen Says No.

Hooper's cousin, Ellen, was there.

"Every name we came up with, she was like, 'No. No. No.' Finally, out of frustration, I said, 'Well, how about Ellen Says No?'"

Everybody laughed. Fast forward to two months later. "We were putting out a demo, and we had nothing better than Ellen Says No, so we went with that."

Introducing, then, Ellen Says No: Jon Stewart (lead vocals/guitar), Jeff Hatchel (bass), Brandon Gebhardt (drums) and Hooper.

As for Ellen, now 22, Hooper says: "She's a combination of flattered and completely embarrassed." Ellen Says No is scheduled to play the Ballard Firehouse on Sept. 3 and the Rain Dancer on Sept. 14.