

## FOR YOUR AURAL PLEASURE...

SubPop Records: Because they didn't sign Hilary Duff

Erin McMillan  
Charger Staff

The holidays are quickly approaching and that means several things. Christmas lights, snow, school vacations and, hopefully, a number of fabulous gifts under the Christmas tree. What better time to get to know some new bands who can replace this year's underwear from Aunt

Martha with the yearlong treasure of good tunes. First is Ugly Casanova, whose name alone is a reason to love them. Signed to SubPop records in around 2000, Ugly Casanova is the side project of Modest Mouse's Isaac Brock. In fact, Ugly Casanova is almost entirely a mishmash of other band's members. Tim Rutili brings his musical skills from Califone and Red Red Mear, while Pall Jenkins lends his knowledge from Black Heart Procession. John Orth contributes from Holopaw, and Brian Deck is the



only band member not committed to other projects. Ugly Casanova does not have one particular sound. They range from melodic to bluesy to upbeat and downright twisted. Their one album, *Sharpen Your Teeth*, is full of unforgettable music such as "Spilled Milk Factory," "Things I Don't Remember," and



into a relaxed state even faster than a shot of tryptophan. His most recent release is this year's *Our Endless Numbered Days*. His best songs include "Muddy Hymnal" and "Weary

Memory." Also, Iron and Wine has a cover of the Postal Service's song "Such Great Heights," on the soundtrack to *Garden State*.

When the cold weather hits, just stay in the house and crank up Ugly Casanova. When the holiday craziness gets to be too much, chill out to Iron and Wine. There really is no better solution. The holidays are a great time to stop listening to bands like Taking Back Sunday that are mediocre at best and learn what music is really all about.

the ever appropriate "So Long To The Holidays."

The second SubPop records artist this month is Iron and Wine. Sam Bean is the entire band. He sings, writes and plays all the instruments; he does it all. He started writing in his Miami home in 1999 and since then he's produced three albums. He sounds like the lovechild that would come from Bush's lyrics and Nick Drake, which is not as strange as it seems. Simple, acoustic and drowsy he will lull anyone

## The "perks" of reading this book

Chelsey Littrell  
Charger Staff

*The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky is about Charlie, a fifteen year old high school freshman. His friend, Michael, commits suicide and he constantly blames himself for his aunt Helen's death. Now Charlie is all alone.

The reader witnesses Charlie's struggle through his first date, his first kiss, drugs and just living in the world of a wallflower. The letters to an unknown friend capture

Charlie's emotions, thoughts, and innocence. His stories are honest, funny, inspirational and devastating all at the same time.

In the course of his musings, "I walk around the school hallways and look at the people. I look at the teachers and wonder why they're here. If they like their jobs. Or us. And I wonder how smart they were when they were fifteen. Not in a mean way. In a curious way. It's like looking at all the students and wondering who's had their heart broken that day, and how they are able to

cope with having three quizzes and a book report due on top of that. Or wondering who did the heart breaking. And wondering why..."

With the help of two seniors, Samantha and Patrick, Charlie becomes his own person instead of just a wallflower.

Stephen Chbosky took learning "life's little lessons" to a whole new perspective. Some of the things Charlie deals with may not be appropriate for those who are not yet in high school.

## It's how baby birds would get their news

Kim Harwell  
DallasNews.com  
(KRT)

WHAT IT IS: VH1's weekly pop-culture wrap-up pairs the most-talked-about goings-on in the entertainment world (think the NFL-"Desperate Housewives" debacle



or the melee at the Vibe Awards) with snarky commentators who boast more hipster cred than household-name status (think comedian Sherrod Small or Modern Humorist founders John Aboud and Michael Colton).

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT: If you've been lying awake at night wondering what gap-toothed actor/writer Paul



have been wracking your brain trying to come up with five good reasons to see "Seed of Chucky," tune in to "Best Week Ever" for a little peace of mind. In just 30 minutes, the "BWE" pundits will have you up to speed on the favorite water-cooler topics of all your People-magazine-reading friends and colleagues.

WHY WE LIKE IT: Let's face it

I'm a busy girl. Even though it's my job to know which hot girl named Jennifer Ben Affleck is bedding this week or who is

currently ahead



in the Courtney Love-Anna Nicole Smith drugstore derby, I can't always find the time to keep abreast (ahem) of the latest Tara Reid wardrobe malfunction or Lindsay Lohan



post-Fez breakdown.

But with "Best Week Ever," I can stay on top of all the current celebrity detritus and still have time left in my hectic schedule for a run-down of the "40 Most Awesomely Bad Metal Songs Ever" or to tune in to "The Fabulous Life of Justin Timberlake." Thanks, VH1!

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