

REAGANOMICS

Several years ago, the Reaganomics were covering Billy Idol's 1982 hit "White Wedding." At the part near the end that required lead singer Keenan Blanke to scream, "It's a nice day to start again," he held the note too long, lost consciousness and fell back onto the drum set. The other band members were stunned. "Paul [Shammel], the guitar player, and I just looked at each other and said, 'Oh my God,'" recalls bassist Sully Caradonna. "He jumped back up and was pretty surprised by the whole thing. People in the audience thought it was part of the show."

Other than that and a few other minor mishaps, it's been pretty smooth sailing for the popular '80s cover rockers, who average roughly 60 to 70 shows per year in Central Ohio and elsewhere. And though they're "busier than ever," Caradonna says, the five group members have kept their day jobs. (They're wary, though, of saying where they work, although one of them is a church youth minister.) "We all have families and careers that we deal with. The band has been kind of a weekend thing for us," says Caradonna, one of the two original members since its debut in 1996.

For a group so devoted to an era of over-the-top fashions and bright colors, the quintet opts for aesthetic subtlety while onstage—donning black T-shirts and trousers instead of leather. And rather than crowding around the TV to catch "Cheers" reruns in their free time, Caradonna says their interest in the '80s remains primarily with the music. "Most of the guys in the band like 'South Park,' but I can't really relate to that show," he says with a laugh.

—Ben Zenitsky

Cocktails at the CONSERVATORY

On most days, the **Franklin Park Conservatory** closes its doors at 5 pm. However, on Thursdays, the palm house opens again from 5:30 to 10 pm, offering drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Each month, there's a new theme: May's is Lilacs & Lemondrops, while June will feature Marigolds & Mai Tais. "It's kind of amazing the crowd we get," says David Brauer of the conservatory's special events department. "We will see the after-hours corporate crowd and then it switches over to a younger, more casual crowd about halfway through the evening."

A full bar is available. Drinks run between \$3 and \$6, while a plate of hors d'oeuvres is \$5. Flower Hour, from 5:30 to 6:30 pm, offers \$1 off all drinks.

The Reaganomics perform at the Frog Bear & Wild Boar.

