

KISS fans in Q-C support, celebrate classic rock band A3



'Marvel' makes historic debut A4



'Sons & Daughters of Thunder' looks at slavery A7

The

The Rock Island

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MOLINE, ILLINOIS

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GARY KRAMBECK / gkrambeck@qconline.com

Drivers on 19th Street at 7th Avenue wait for the traffic light to change Thursday in Moline. U.S. Census Bureau statistics suggest that traffic flow is better in the Quad-Cities than it is in other metro areas in Illinois and Iowa.

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Corn in Iowa. Soybeans in Illinois. Slow and snarled traffic in the Quad-Cities.

Which of these things doesn't hold true?

Quad-Citians don't hold back about the busyness — and quality — of their roadways. As the Interstate 74 renovation project barrels on, congestion on major roads likely will get worse.

But data from the U.S. Census Bureau suggest that residents of the Quad-Cities have less to complain about than residents of other metro areas in Illinois and Iowa do. In the Quad-Cities, commutes tend to be relatively short, and traffic tends to be lighter than it is elsewhere in the bi-state region.

In Rock Island County, a majority of people who leave home for work have a commute time of less than 20 minutes, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).

In Scott County, the average commute is 19 minutes long — exactly the state average.

In both counties, only about 2.7 percent of commuters travel

STIFLE THAT  
ROAD  
RAGE!

Q-C traffic flow is better than you might think

more than 60 minutes to work. Six times as many workers travel less than 10 minutes, according to the data.

"For the most part, we've got a fairly good level of service throughout the city," said Brian

Schadt, city engineer of Davenport. "When you think about driving around, it's not very often that you have to sit through multiple light cycles, unless there's an issue of some sort."

When compared to drivers

across the nation, Iowans have the seventh-shortest average commute, according to census data, whereas Illinoisians have the seventh-longest.

In Illinois, counties of similar size to Rock Island County occasionally have longer commutes. In Winnebago County, which contains the city of Rockford, the average commute time is almost 20 percent longer than the commute time in Rock Island County. In Sangamon County, which includes the state capital, the average commute is 12 percent longer.

Congestion in Scott County compares favorably to other counties across Iowa. According to recent data on major roadway congestion across the state, Scott County had a better vehicle-to-capacity ratio — a measurement of roadway congestion — than Polk and Linn counties, Iowa's most populous counties.

For Quad-Cities drivers, the relatively easy flow of traffic is a perk, especially as commutes grow longer nationally.

It also might be a boon to

See **TRAFFIC**, Page A2

Trump  
wants  
\$8.6B  
for wall

Budget request sets up showdown with Congress

LISA MASCARO  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump will seek \$8.6 billion in his new budget to build the U.S.-Mexico border wall, two administration officials said Sunday, setting up another showdown with Congress, which has resisted giving him more money for his signature campaign promise.



Trump

The request would more than double the \$8.1 billion already potentially available to the president after he declared a national emergency at the border in order to circumvent Congress once lawmakers refused his funding demands. That standoff led to a 35-day partial government shutdown, the longest in U.S. history. The officials confirmed that the request was part of Trump's spending blueprint for the 2020 budget year that begins Oct. 1. That document, which sets the stage for negotiations ahead, proposes boosting to defense spending to \$750 billion — and standing up the new Space Force — while reducing nondefense accounts by 5 percent, with

See **BUDGET**, Page A2

Brexit  
decision  
nears; deal  
or no deal?

JILL LAWLESS  
Associated Press

LONDON — After months of Brexit deadlock, this is it: decision time. At least for now.

With Britain scheduled to leave the European Union in less than three weeks, U.K. lawmakers are poised to choose the country's immediate direction from among three starkly different choices: deal, no deal or delay.

The House of Commons has a second vote scheduled Tuesday on a deal laying out the terms of Britain's orderly departure from the EU. Prime Minister Theresa May and EU officials agreed to the agreement in December, but U.K. lawmakers voted 432-202 in January to reject it. To get it approved by March 29, the day set for Brexit, May needs to persuade 116 of them to change their minds — a tough task.



May

See **BREXIT**, Page A2

Illinois' marijuana industry is booming

Minority-run businesses want in on the action

ALLY MAROTTI  
Tribune News Service

CHICAGO — Illinois' marijuana industry is flourishing. More residents are buying the drug for medicinal use, and the state is on the brink of legalizing recreational use of cannabis, potentially creating opportunities for a new wave of entrepreneurs.

But right now, businesses in line to reap the financial rewards are overwhelmingly male and mostly white.

Seventeen companies own li-

censes to grow and process marijuana in Illinois. Most have CEOs or executive directors who are white, but exact ownership information is unknown.

The state denied a Freedom of Information Act request for data on individuals with ownership stakes in dispensaries and cultivation centers, saying the information was confidential.

The makeup of the nascent industry is not lost on the few minorities in leadership positions at Illinois cannabis companies, who worry about their role in a field that could generate sales of \$224 million by 2022, compared with \$136.5 million for medical marijuana last year. Illinois' medical



Tribune News Service

Edie Moore, executive director of Chicago NORML, which works toward marijuana law reform, says there are high barriers for minorities trying to break into Illinois' cannabis industry.

See **MARIJUANA**, Page A2

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INDEX

Classified **B9-10**  
Comics **B8, B9**  
Crosswords **B9**  
Daily Record **A5**

Dear Abby **B7**  
Life **B6-7**  
Nation & World **A8**  
Obituaries **A4**

Sports **B1-5**  
Sudoku **B7**  
Television **A10**  
Viewpoints **A9**

WEATHER

High: **44** Low: **25**



Mostly sunny.  
Full report **A10**



VOLUME 140, ISSUE 123

D