Written by Emily Heninger
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Jason Parris, the booking agent for the Rock Island Brewing Company, knows there is something special about the local bar. "The room feels and looks like a New York club," said Parris. "You can see the history in the room with all of the black-and-white photos of people who have played here. You can definitely see that it's been around for 30 years."

On July 31 and August 1, RIBCO (at 1815 Second Avenue) will commemorate its 30th anniversary. Bands including Driver of the Year, Cheese Pizza, Jim the Mule, and Keep Off the Grass will perform at the two-night celebration, along with reunion performances by Tripmaster Monkey and Einstein's Sister.

The alt-rock band Tripmaster Monkey will play without its original bassist, Wes Haas, who will be replaced by Pat Stolley. The group got its start in 1987 playing Quad Cities-area venues, including RIBCO, and eventually signed with Warner Brothers' Sire label (later switching to Elektra). The band released two full-length albums and broke up in 1996 -- although it has since played a few reunion shows.

Tripmaster Monkey's first performance at RIBCO was for the wedding of two local radio DJs whose ceremony was held on the stage. Chris Bernat, lead vocalist for the band, said, "So that got us into RIBCO, and I remember thinking, 'Wow, this is our big break here!'"

For many local musicians, playing at RIBCO is a rite of passage. "RIBCO was one [club] where, if you live here, you have your sights set on at an early age," said Bernat. "You're like, 'Well, *tha t's*
the club.'"

Kerry Tucker, guitarist for Einstein's Sister, said that RIBCO was instrumental in his band's success. "We owe so much to Terry [Tilka] at RIBCO and to the RIBCO staff," he said. "The very first gig we ever played was there, [and] we had all of our CD release parties there."

[redacted] RIBCO.com [redacted]