



OST photo Candra Brooks  
Osceola Public Library, Clarke County Animal Shelter and Iowa PBS hosted an event at the library Saturday. See more page 10.

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OST photos Candra Brooks  
Three Clarke County Veterans were awarded with Quilts of Valor at the Veterans Appreciation Supper last week. From left are Sherry Halls, Lyle Persels and Larry Noftsgger. Anita Foland, right, received a Quilt of Courage for her civilian service.

## Quilts of Valor, Courage awarded

### OST staff report

At the annual Veterans Appreciation Supper hosted by the Clarke County Veterans Affairs Commission, three local veterans were awarded Quilts of Valor - Sherry Halls, Lyle Persels and Larry Noftsgger. A Quilt of Courage was given to Anita Foland.

The Quilts of Valor Foundation was created in 2003 by Catherine Roberts of Delaware. Initially, the quilts were

awarded to service members who were injured or suffered from PTSD from fighting in the Middle East. In 2009, it expanded to include any service member or veteran, no matter when or where they had served. More than 394,000 quilts have been awarded across the United States, Germany, Iraq and Afghanistan. The quilts stand as a “tangible comfort,” to thank veterans for their service, sacrifice and valor, recognizing their fulfillment of

their duties.

### Halls

Halls graduated from Mormon Trail High School and attended AIB College in Des Moines for two years. She worked at Iowa Methodist Medical Center until she enlisted in the United States Air Force in August 1987, at the Des Moines MEPS. Halls attended basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, and was assigned to Chanute Base in Illinois. There, she trained

as an AirCrew Life Support Technician for two months.

From December 1987 to 1989, Halls was assigned to a duty station at Misawa Air Base in Japan. She was next assigned to Hahn Air Base in Germany from January 1990 to September 1991. In September 1991, Halls was transferred to Pope Air Force Base in Fayetteville, North Carolina, where she stayed until July 1998. Her following assignment was one year at Osan Air

Force Base in Korea. She was then sent to Elmendorf Air Force Base near Anchorage, Alaska, from 1999 to December 2006. Halls’ final assignment was Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Halls retired March 8, 2008, as a Master Sergeant E-7. She has been a business owner in Osceola since July 2008 and owns Earth Angels on the south side of the downtown square.

A special memory of

Halls’ service was being part of a joint task force - full accounting - that sent her to Vietnam to investigate military crash sites for remains of United States military members and the success she had in doing that.

Halls’ quilt was pieced and quilted by Linda Fuller Hewitt.

### Persels

An Osceola native, Persels entered the United States Navy November 1952 as a Naval

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## Raises approved for county employees

### Candra Brooks

#### OST editor

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Despite a suggestion from the public to “trim the fat” in the courthouse, the Clarke County Board of Supervisors approved pay raises for elected officials, deputies, non-union employees and employees at the jail at their Monday meeting.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, two citizens spoke against the proposed pay increases for the Fiscal Year 2026 salaries.

“I think your budget’s too high for the property

taxes, and I’m wondering have you done your own analysis for let’s say the courthouse people,” one citizen said, asking how the salaries compared to others in the community. “All of these elected people knew what they were going to be paid when they ran for office.”

It was questioned if the sheriff’s department was requesting raises because the courthouse employees were potentially getting raises, or if they felt their employees were not paid enough.

Another citizen suggested that budgets should be cut by 10%, and that there

are too many deputies in the courthouse. He questioned why the deputies couldn’t multitask, using the treasurer’s office as an example, where there is a deputy for property taxes and another for vehicle registration.

“Money is money,” the citizen said.

Clarke County Treasurer Jessica Smith explained that in the given example, those are two separate systems for the money received. When pointed out that having fewer people in the office would create more waiting for people trying to pay their bills,

RAISES | 2 ►

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Heather's love of teaching, books, dance, children, and Jesus has been the motivation for some of her favorite endeavors. They include homeschooling for twenty years, caring for nine children in foster care, adopting five children, co-founding two ministries, owning a dance studio, and writing. The most rewarding and exciting moments of her life include her roles as wife, mother of nine children, and dancing daughter of the King.

TRIOLOGY

FOOTLOOSE AND FULLY FREE

HEATHER FRY

FOOTLOOSE AND FULLY FREE

Lessons for Leaping into Freedom

contributed photo  
The cover of Heather Fry’s new book, “Footloose and Finally Free.”

## Local woman pens inspired novel

### Candra Brooks

#### OST editor

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Available online soon will be a book published by first-time author Heather Fry of Osceola - “Footloose and Fully Free.”

Initially written as a way to leave a legacy for her children, as well as to help close family and friends with biblical concepts, Fry saw that God wanted her to open her book up to all.

### Family life

Fry grew up on a vegetable farm in the Muscatine area. Her parents raised soybeans and field corn, but also grew large quantities of potatoes, watermelon, cantaloupe, tomatoes, green beans, pumpkins and cucumbers.

“I was fortunate to grow up in a loving family and work for my dad and uncles with my siblings and cousins,” Fry said.

Following high school, Fry attended Simpson College in Indianola where she majored in elementary education. It was there that she met and married her husband Joel and began teaching at a Christian school in Indianola. When they started their family, Heather stayed home and began homeschooling.

The Frys moved to Osceola in 2005, and that fall Heather began teaching dance at their home until the fall of 2013. It was that fall when the Frys were

BOOK | 2 ►



OST photo Candra Brooks  
The Osceola Rotary Club held their annual luncheon last Tuesday for the top Clarke academic seniors. Pictured from left are: Brody Feehan, Moyra Hicks, DeVante Caldwell, Micah Domina, Eric Francisco Pedro, Belen Rosales, Madelyn Sweeney, Rachel Jaurique and Alyssa Rater. Not pictured: Cooper Bahls.

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### Don't Forget

Graduation weekend

Clarke's graduation is this Sunday at 2 p.m.