

Fergus Falls Journal

Sunday, July 3, 2011

Writer, producer and director, Terry A. Degner, a 1964 graduate of Elbow Lake High School, takes us back in time to the trauma filled years before his adoption by a Wendell farm couple in his newly released memoir, "My Brave Little Man."

This memoir, a true story that had to be told, is the clear, unique voice of a survivor of the kind of childhood that is usually the undoing of less hardy souls. With novelistic flair and impressive detail, Terry chronicles his first eight years in a rarely visited slice of the country.

In 1950, a doctor in Duluth, Minnesota wrote in his medical file that a four-year old boy had been admitted to the hospital as a "rather severe behavior problem."

"This is," the doctor noted, "a broken home and the mother-child relationship is not good."

That boy is the author of "My Brave Little Man."

The story tells of how he had been shuffled from one nesting arrangement to another for all of his short life.

In spite of a dysfunctional family life, he had been relatively happy. The real problems started when the author's mother dropped him and his two, younger siblings off at an orphanage.

A week later, they ran away to find their mother, and he ended up at the hospital in a straight jacket. Thus began the author's journey of triumph over multiple misfortunes.

Degner, who now lives in Eden Prairie, Minnesota is a husband father and grandfather.

For more than 23 years, he designed, wrote, directed and edited hundreds of video sound, and multimedia productions; including children's shows, documentaries, dramas, and training and promotional programs.

For 12 of those years, he owned and managed his own production company. In the early years, he worked in theater and he studied and taught television drama, with an emphasis on script development. One of his students was a young man by the name of John Ritter of Three's Company fame.

The 304-page book, published under the pen name of T.A. Degner, is available at the Victor Lundeen store or you can contact the author directly at terrya@bandipublishing.com.