

Sun-Current

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Eden Prairie resident and author T.A. Degner will be signing copies of his childhood memoir, "My Brave Little Man," starting at 2:30 p.m., Sept. 17. at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 14880 Florence Trail, Apple Valley, Minnesota.

In 1950, a doctor in Duluth 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 a broken home and the mother-child relationship is not good." That boy is the author.

He had been shuffled from one nesting arrangement to another for all of his short life. First, he had lived with his grandparents on their rustic farmstead in the heart of Minnesota's northwoods, then with his intellectually disabled mother and a mostly absent alcoholic father, and finally with a boorish relative. 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.

Eight years later, while lying on the banks of a river on his adoptive parents' farm south of Wendell, Minn. and inspired by the many Charles Dickens novels he had read, the author promised God he would share his story with the world. "My Brave Little Man" is the fulfillment of that promise.

Degner is a husband, father, and grandfather of fifteen children.

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