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MILLIKIN UNIVERSITY

MAKING STUDENTS 'FEEL SEEN AND VALUED'



JOSEPH RESSLER, HERALD & REVIEW

Dean Pribbenow reacts immediately after his investiture as president of Millikin University at the Kirkland Fine Arts Center in Decatur on Friday, April 10.

Pribbenow formally inaugurated as university's 17th president

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DECATUR — Even when both of you are university presidents, your big brother can't resist ribbing you a little bit.

Dean Pribbenow was formally inaugurated Friday as the 17th president of Millikin University with nearly all his close family in attendance. His eldest brother, Paul C. Pribbenow, who is president of Augsburg University in Minneapolis, delivered the Presentation of the President, "Called for a Moment Such as This," with some gentle brotherly teasing.

Paul Pribbenow is the eldest of the six siblings of the Rev. Jerome and Elsie Pribbenow. Elsie is deceased, while the siblings' dad, retired now after "three attempts," watched the ceremony on the internet from his home in Madison, Wisconsin.

"Dean was the youngest child for several years, and he enjoyed that status as the baby of the family," his elder brother said. "That is, until Mom and Dad announced there were more on the way. The twins, Brad and Beth, born when Dean was 7 years old, are here today, and to tell you the truth, I'm not sure Dean has ever recovered."

As "cradle Lutherans" and the offspring of a pastor, the six children were raised in the faith with the idea that people are called to serve, and Millikin's new president, Paul Pribbenow said, is prepared and equipped to do just that. Because of their training in the faith, they approach their work as not just a job, but a way of life.

"Dean does love you all," he said. "If he didn't, he wouldn't be here."

The Rev. Brad Pribbenow, the youngest brother in the family, who serves as dean and professor of the Old Testament at Lutheran Brethren University, offered the invocation.

"Grant him a faithful heart, sound judgment and steadfast trust in You," he prayed. "Let his work be shaped by truth, guided by humility, and carried out in love for his neighbor."

The two brothers shared a hug as Brad Pribbenow returned to his seat.

Interim Provost Nancy Curtin, who acted as master of ceremonies, said Dean Pribbenow is "the right person at the right time in the right place."

"Dean listens and demonstrates perspective-taking," she said.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Panel looks at issues in Decatur, Macon Co.

Neighborhood organizations: If you need police or fire help, call

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DECATUR — If one message rose above all others in the annual Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations' Public Safety Panel, it was this:

If you need police or fire, call them. That's what they're there for and you are not "bothering" them.

If you saw something that could help solve a crime, call them. If you have something on your doorbell camera you want them to see, call them. If you think it's too minor to mention, call them. Let them decide. Sometimes, said Decatur Police Chief Brad Allen, that one little piece is the one piece they need.

Allen said Decatur had nine homicides in 2025, less than the 15 in 2023 and 16 in 2022. Seven of 2025's homicides were gun-related.

There have been 20 shootings this year as of the end of March. Police take a proactive approach to combating violent crime by keeping an eye on known offenders and regular patrols in the city's hot spots, but they also need the community's help, the police chief said.

"We get out into the community and try to work with the community as a whole group to change things," Allen said.

Crime in the county outside of the city is mostly property crimes, said Sheriff Jim Root: burglaries, theft of copper, the sort of thing that is expensive and damaging to individuals and business, but far fewer violent crimes and shootings.

The Decatur Fire Department, said Chief Neil Elder, has seen a steady increase in calls over the last few years, with more than 15,000 last year. Many of those were for emergency medical services or lift assists for people who couldn't get up on their own, but one major problem is fires in derelict houses.

Demolition is expensive, and the city can only afford to demolish so many a year, leaving the rest subject to arson or accidental fires started in other ways, he said.

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SPACE EXPLORATION

Artemis II astronauts return with a splash

Mission revealed swaths of the moon's far side never seen before

MARCIA DUNN
Associated Press

HOUSTON — Artemis II's astronauts closed out humanity's first lunar voyage in more than half a century with a Pacific splashdown Friday, blazing new records near the moon with grace and joy.

It was a dramatic grand finale to a mission that revealed not only swaths of the lunar far side never seen before by human eyes, but a total solar eclipse and a parade of planets, most notably our own shimmering Earth against the endless black void of space.

The four astronauts set NASA up for a moon landing by another crew in just two years and a full-blown moon base within the decade.

The triumphant moon-farers — commander Reid Wiseman, pilot Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Canada's Jeremy Hansen — emerged from their bobbing capsule into the sunlight off the coast of San Diego.

In a scene reminiscent of NASA's Apollo moonshots of yesteryear, military helicopters hoisted the astronauts one by one from an inflatable raft docked to the

capsule, hauling them aboard for the short trip to the Navy's awaiting recovery ship, the USS John P. Murtha.

"These were the ambassadors from humanity to the stars that we sent out there right now, and I can't imagine a better crew," NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman said from the recovery ship.

NASA's Mission Control erupted in celebration, with hundreds pouring in from the back support rooms. "We did it," NASA's Lori Glaze rejoiced at a news conference. "Welcome to our moonshot."

Their Orion capsule, dubbed Integrity, made the entire plunge on automatic pilot. The lunar cruiser hit the atmosphere traveling Mach 33 — or 33 times the speed of sound — a blistering blur not seen since the 1960s and 1970s Apollo.

Tension in Mission Control mounted as the capsule became engulfed in red-hot plasma during peak heating and entered a planned communication blackout. All eyes were on the capsule's life-protecting heat shield that had to withstand thousands of degrees during reentry.

Watching the drama unfold nearly 2,000 miles away, the astronauts' families huddled in Mission Control's viewing room, cheering when the capsule emerged from its six-minute blackout and again at splashdown.



NASA

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The Artemis II Orion capsule splashes down Friday in the Pacific Ocean.