

A brave new biosphere

ORACLE, Ariz. (AP) — Four men and four women on Thursday embarked on a two-year journey inside a stationary glass ark — a fast-food-free trip into what they hope will be an environmentally sounder future of planetary colonies.

The eight are stewards of Biosphere II, a self-sustaining environment materially sealed off from the world they call Biosphere I — the Earth. The private, for-profit project is intended to develop technology to colonize space as well as to understand and improve the earth.

After the brief ceremony, the crew members ranging in age from 27 to 67 waved to onlookers, exchanged final hugs and kisses with relatives and

stepped through airlocks into the 3.15-acre compound that rises out of the desert 30 miles northeast of Tucson.

After the doors closed, the crew stopped to wave briefly through a window, then disappeared into the main building.

The glass-and-steel geodesic-framed complex is the size of three football fields. Inside it can be found: a rain forest with waterfall; an ocean with coral reef; savannah; marshes; a farm; and a modern human habitat.

From it, the "biospherians" will guide the fortunes of 3,800 plant and animal species on which they'll depend for their food and with which they'll share air, water and waste recycling. Planners wanted to use solar panels, but because of the expense, opted for generators powered by natural gas — the only im-

port from the outside world.

Communications apparatus will tie them into a control center a few hundred yards away, and to the rest of the world. Space Biospheres Ventures, the developer, allows paying tourists to visit, though they can't penetrate the seals that contain the environment.

Black democratic rivals to meet

WASHINGTON (AP) — Virginia Gov. L. Douglas Wilder and Jesse Jackson, potential rivals for the Democratic presidential nomination and for black votes, have agreed to meet Saturday at the governor's mansion, aides said Friday.

Jackson spent part of this week in Virginia drawing attention to inequities in the state's school financing system, a

trip many viewed as an attempt to embarrass Wilder.

The two black leaders are planning a 9 a.m. breakfast on Saturday.

"Politics will be discussed, and I wouldn't be surprised if presidential politics came up," Virginia Democratic Chairman Paul Goldman, a Wilder adviser said.

"They've been friends for a long time and I don't consider this a rivalry at all," Goldman said. "They are two individuals who both know we need a break from the politics of the 1980s."

Frank Watkins, a Jackson spokesman, said Jackson would talk about some of the causes he has been promoting, including equity in school financing, same-day voter registration and statehood for the District of Columbia.

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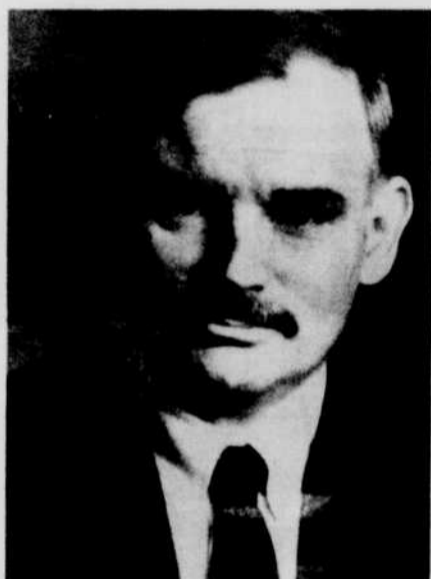
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1991 CONVOCATION

Sponsored by the School of Journalism

Following the convocation lecture, members of the university community will join Dennis for a panel discussion on First Amendment issues. The panel will be moderated by journalism dean Arnold Ismach. Other panelists will be

Tim Gleason
Associate Professor, Journalism

James Klonoski
Professor, Political Science

Paul Holbo
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Lauren Kessler
Professor, Journalism

Christopher Blair
Editor, *Oregon Daily Emerald*

Public Reception, EMU Ballroom, 5:30 p.m.

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