

STAR TREK LEGACY AWARDS



Dr. Martin Cooper



Dr. Mae Jemison



Jeff Bezos

After a full day of panels and actor presentations on Saturday, September 9, the EMP Sky Church was transformed into a banquet hall. Best of the highlight event of the weekend, the formal banquet provided fans with the opportunity to mingle with Star Trek actors and other conference presenters. Each ticket holder had a table number and some fans had the good fortune of sitting at a table with an actor or actor dignitary. Unfortunately, my table (17) was half empty without a celebrity in sight, but my disappointment didn't last for long because my tablemates (Frankie, Billy, Phil, Lisa and Wendy) were so interesting. We shared in a fantastic hour of conversation during the banquet prior to the evening programming, and I was once again reminded that Star Trek fans are some of the most wonderful people on the planet!

After the meal, several guest speakers entertained the crowd, including Tim Rusk, J.G. Hertzler, John Billingsley, Garrett Wang, Dr. Seth Shostak, Gary Lockwood, Richard Steven, Walter Koening, and Rod Roddenberry. Marc B. Lee then introduced the Star Trek Legacy Awards which recognize those individuals who, inspired by Gene Roddenberry's powerful vision of the future, have made a significant contribution toward creating a future worth living. A future that is full of optimism, hope, achievement and challenge. A future that proudly proclaims man's ability to survive in peace and reach for the stars as his reward. Sponsored by STARTREK.COM and Planet Xpo, the Star Trek Legacy Awards were given to three exceptional individuals.

George Takei presented Martin Cooper, the father of portable, cellular telephony, with the first award for his contributions to worldwide communication. In a very moving tribute, Nichelle Nichols accepted the award on behalf of Dr. Mae Jemison, the first woman of color to go into space, who was unable to attend the banquet. Walter Koening presented the first Star Trek Legacy Award to Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com and Blue Origin. In his acceptance speech, Bezos thanked his parents (absent in attendance) for their undying support. Bezos is a life-long Star Trek fan and shared the paper communicator and tricorder he made as a boy, which his mother saved for him. He also let us know that he is passing on his love of Star Trek by showing photos of his own children watching an episode of TOS!

As the evening drew to a close, Nichelle Nichols took the mic and introduced Wanda Doolan who thanked the fans for their continued support of her husband, James "Scooby" Doolan. She invited us all to visit the Celestis booth to compose a tribute to Doolan who will be aboard the next two memorial space flights, the first of which will launch in October.

The final surprise of the evening came from the UP Aerospace team who invited all banquet attendees to sign the blue nosecone of the Spacelab XL that had been on display during the conference. The rocket carrying all our signatures will launch on September 25.

