



## About Rich Wilson

Born in Boston and now resident of Marblehead, Massachusetts Rich Wilson considers himself a professional educator, a sailor and adventurer. With graduate degrees from Harvard Business School and MIT, and a college degree from Harvard, Rich was a math teacher in Boston, a Trustee of both the Sea Education Association and The School for Field Studies (a Content Partner for sitesALIVE!), and an Overseer of the Boston Museum of Science.

Most importantly, he founded sitesALIVE! ([sitesalive.com](http://sitesalive.com)), a non-profit organization to connect classrooms to adventures and expeditions around the world. Believing that an ocean voyage, with its drama, uncertainty of outcome, and vast breadth of content, would make an ideal event from which to create a "learning adventure" to excite and engage students in Science, Geography, and Math, Rich created the project Ocean Challenge in 1990. He and one shipmate would tackle the clipper ship record set by *Northern Light* in 1853 during the Gold Rush from San Francisco to Boston by way of treacherous Cape Horn. They would be linked by newsletter and radiotelephone to schools during the 15,000-mile non-stop voyage.

Their voyage around Cape Horn would become part of maritime lore. Four hundred miles short of Cape Horn, driving under bare poles for three days in seas that built to 65 feet (official estimate), the 60' trimaran *Great American* capsized on Thanksgiving Day. In a first in recorded maritime history, the massive trimaran was then thrown upright by the sea an hour later. Seventeen hours later, in a dramatic midnight rescue, the giant containership *New Zealand Pacific* rescued Rich and shipmate Steve Pettengill.

Returning to Boston after an 18-day voyage aboard *NZP* to Holland, Rich visited a dozen schools that had participated in the "learning adventure". The effect of bringing his real world survival story into classrooms was so stunningly effective, that Rich decided to try for the record again in 1993. He and shipmate Bill Biewenga succeeded in that voyage.

More importantly, two new distribution channels for the Ocean Challenge Live! school program had been developed. 12 major market newspapers (including the Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Boston Globe, Philadelphia Inquirer, Detroit News, Denver Post, etc.) had agreed to publish a 12 part series written by Rich and Bill from *Great American II* at sea, each weekly featured tied topically to the Ocean Challenge Live!'s Teacher's Guide, via their Newspaper In Education (NIE) departments. And Prodigy, then the largest proprietary online service in the US agreed to produce Ocean Challenge Live!, the first truly interactive learning adventure. 100,000 adults and 100,000 kids followed regularly online, asking 200 questions per day (on average)!

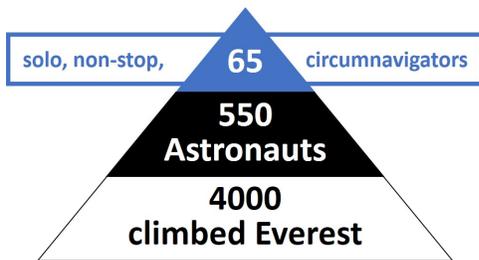
Upon Rich's return, PACT95, an America's Cup syndicate, sponsored Ocean Challenge, Inc. to produce an education program like Ocean Challenge Live! for the Science & Technology of the America's Cup. The program was published in 27 NIE programs, reaching 21 million readers and 300,000 students weekly for 11 weeks, and with a pioneering website on the new, fledgling Internet in January 1995. At the same time, the American Sail Advancement Program, similarly seeing what Ocean Challenge Live! had done, sponsored Rich and his team to produce a program to

promote awareness of sailing. Ocean Challenge partnered with Class Afloat, a high school class taking a full year of academic studies aboard the tall ship *Concordia*, while sailing around the world, to provide content from their round-the-world voyage for a curriculum in US schools of Geography, Social Studies, World History, and more. This program, Class Afloat Live! continued, live and interactive, each year for 9 years.

The program evolved into a series of educational programs now available through the sitesALIVE! Foundation and [sitesalive.com](http://sitesalive.com). Rich's mission is simple: excite, engage, and teach students.

Rich's two passions, education and sailing, earned him one of sailing's highest honors, the Cruising Club of America's (CCA) prestigious Blue Water Medal. Rich joins such luminaries as Rod Stephens, Sir Francis Chichester, Eric Tabarly, and Bernard Moitessier.

**About sitesALIVE!** – For 25 years, sitesALIVE! has been exciting and engaging students in learning, for science, geography, math, and history, by connecting them to live, real-world adventures, expeditions, and field research stations globally, and to the people at those sites, on land or sea, using print and online distribution of curricular-based classroom activities which are informed by scheduled deliverables from, and interaction with, the adventures, expeditions and field research stations. Founder Rich Wilson was the only American entrant in the Vendée Globe 2008-9, finishing 9th of 11 finishers of 30 starters. At 58 years old, he was also the oldest skipper in the fleet. He was the second American to finish the event sitesALIVE Foundation Inc., is a non-profit organization headquartered in Marblehead, Massachusetts, USA. For more information, go to [sitesalive.com](http://sitesalive.com). For more information about Vendée Globe and a map of the upcoming race route, please visit [vendee.org/en/presentation#route](http://vendee.org/en/presentation#route)



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