



Voyager Aircraft's non-stop and unrefueled flight around the world in December of 1986 placed Mojave proudly on the map and placed Dick Rutan in the history books. In May of 2000, Dick Rutan was a last minute addition to a sightseeing airplane trek to the North Pole. The biplane, a Russian AN-2 Antonov, landed beautifully on the glass-like ice, but within seconds, the joyride was headed for disaster. Unseasonably thin, the ice quickly began to stress and crack under the weight of the plane. A quick power-up to 'go-around' and locate a thicker spot on the ice resulted in the aircraft suddenly dipping nose first through the ice, sinking toward the freezing ocean, and certain death. The wings of the AN-2 suspended the aircraft so the crew could retrieve their survival equipment that was packed in the rear of the sinking plane.

For more than a dozen hours, the crew was stranded at the top of the world. In the distance, they heard a faint engine and soon would see the Twin Otter from First Air that would rescue them and return them to their families. In 1998, Dick Rutan attempted to make the first ever flight around the world in a balloon in the Global Hilton. That attempt ended three hours after takeoff. The balloon's helium cell ruptured (due to a manufacturer's defect) while the team floated at 30,000 feet. When the crew was at a safer 6,000 foot altitude, the crew dramatically bailed from the crippled craft. The capsule landed unmanned in Texas and burst into flames. Within minutes of landing on terra firma, Dick pledged to try again, and built a second capsule called World Quest. This, with a new constrained volume helium lifting system (super pressure style) held promise Dick would indeed succeed in balloon world flight. The World Quest Project ceased when a...

**Dick Rutan**

### Speech Topics

- Overcoming Adversity
- Motivation
- Attitude

