

My recent travels had me singing our Blast Kids' favorite Song *"I Will Build a Boat"* over and over again in my mind. You see I covered 10 states in 8 days and visited the Titanic Museum in Tennessee and The Ark in Kentucky. The song's chorus states:

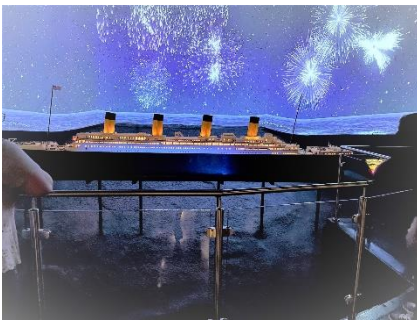
*"I stand up in faith, I'll do anything it takes
With Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades
I'll build a boat in the desert place
And when the flood and the water starts to rise, yeah
I'll ride the storm 'cause I got You by my side
With Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades
I'll build a boat, so let it rain"*

You might not know Brynjar Karl Kirgisson and neither did I a month ago. But I do now, and I think you should too. So here goes. When Brynjar was 10 years old he got inspired to build a boat. He attended Legoland Billund in Denmark where he saw models of all kinds of things created out of Legos. So, when he left, he was inspired to build a real-life scale of something. He decided to build the iconic ship Titanic. His dream will lead him to setting a world record for building the largest replica of the Titanic from Legos.



It required years of research, hours of preparation and planning, and hours of labor once the building actually started 700 hours to be exact. Help from his grandpa—an engineer, his mom an “expert in procurement” (56,000 Lego bricks to be exact.) But most of all it required commitment and perseverance. He is honest about his desire to give up on the project on more than one occasion. After all there were countless obstacles to overcome. Funding, a building site for the 6.33-meter replica (24 feet long and 5 feet tall), buy in by family and friends, and did I say perseverance. You see one of the things that might surprise you about this young man who has dreamed and accomplished so much is that he is autistic. When thinking about the three times he nearly gave up on his dream Brynjar stated: “I became frustrated and wanted to quit. Especially when the stern collapsed not once, but twice, then I seriously made an attempt to just stop this crazy project.” But in the end perseverance and determination won out.

I doubt that Brynjar ever knew what his vision, determination, and persistence would achieve. He traveled the world with the replica and spoke at many different events. A difficult feat in itself for an autistic artist. But along the way he discovered not only his voice but a greater purpose. Now he speaks not only to other autistic people but to all individuals about their abilities to accomplish much more than they can imagine if they only seek to discover what he calls their x-factor. Something that they are good at and passionate about.



Caden, my grandson, and I sat and watched a short clip about the building of the replica while visiting the Titanic Museum in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Then we walked into the next room to see the permanent resting place of this amazing accomplishment. Caden, not one to stand still long, was mesmerized. I stayed back with him and watched the wonder in his eyes. Almost at a whisper he asked me to take a picture of the ship. My mind knew this would not be the only ship that would fill him with wonder. Or the only story of someone who was persistent and faithful to a vision, a dream, a purpose to build a boat. Just a few days later we would visit The Ark and talk about the man of God who would build a boat over 50 years, many obstacles, under the watchful eye of his Heavenly Father.

Holding a newly acquired stuffed animal to remind him of the animals saved on the Ark I heard Caden whisper into its ear in his awe-filled voice; “did you see how big that boat was? Wasn’t that awesome?” I just walked behind him in silence careful not to interrupt the moment when God was speaking to his heart about the great things that can be accomplished when someone has a dream, determination, persistence, and the faith in God to sustain them through all obstacles.

August 5, 2023 we are all invited to gather together to **“Dare to Dream”** about the kind of *boat* that God is asking us to build. So that more and more people might launch out into the waters of faith right here in Franklin, Texas. Join me in declaring before our Father *“I stand up in faith, I’ll do anything it takes, with Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades I’ll build a boat, so let it rain”*