



Legend Says Paul Bunyan Created The Grand Canyon By Dragging His Axe Behind Him

On June 28 we remember fondly the tales of big blue ox and a mighty lumberjack. It is National Paul Bunyan Day!

The character of Paul Bunyan originated in the oral tradition of North American loggers dating back to the mid-1800s. For at least 30 years, Paul Bunyan stories, some of which included motifs from older folktales such as absurdly severe weather and fearsome critters, were often told in the lumber camp bunkhouses.

[su_button target="blank" background="#4554f5" size="5" wide="yes" center="yes" icon="icon: star" icon_color="#f8f9fa"]Click Here For Other Stories And Videos On South Florida Reporter[/su_button]

First appearing in print in 1906, in a story published by Northern Michigan journalist James MacGillivray, Bunyan's character originated in folktales circulated among lumberjacks in the Northeastern United States and Eastern Canada. One account states that the tales began during the Papineau Rebellion of 1837.

Even the etymology of the name *Paul Bunyan* is unknown, but many think it could have been related to the Québécois expression "*bon yenne!*" that expresses surprise or astonishment.

Paul Bunyan was later popularized by freelance writer and adman William B. Laughead (1882–1958) in a 1916 promotional pamphlet for the Red River Lumber Company who was looking for a face for the advertising campaign. Laughead embellished greatly on the character's older exploits and added some of his own, such as Paul Bunyan's pet blue ox, "Babe". The writer also increased Paul Bunyan's body to impossible proportions. Despite this, however, the character quickly became a hit, and the Red River ad campaign made Paul Bunyan a nationally recognized figure. The character's name and image continued to be utilized in promoting various products, cities, and services over the following decades, and giant statues

of Paul Bunyan were even erected in several cities.

The Paul Bunyan legend tells that it took five storks to carry him as a newborn and as he was a little older and clapped and laughed, it broke windows. The legend continues that he sawed off the legs of his parents' bed, in the middle of the night, when he was only seven months old and that the Grand Canyon was formed as he and Babe the Blue Ox walked through dragging his axe behind him. The myth of the Great Lakes being formed by Bunyan needing to create a watering hole for Babe to drink from is another popular one told by many.

Sources:

[National Day Calendar](#)

[Days of the Year](#)