

Paul Bunyan hopes to become a giant in the Maple industry

By Ruth Walker

Staff Writer

Paul Bunyan's Sugar Camp is the "new kid on the block" or more aptly the new maple camp in the woods. In an industry where the tradition is often decades old, maybe even generations old, and family camps have been handed down from father to son or daughter, often several times, Paul Bunyan is just beginning its traditions and history. Owned by Molly Enos, a young woman with a plan and a vision for a future in the maple industry, Paul Bunyan opened its newly constructed, 1500 square foot camp this year in Rockwood. They tapped approximately 4,400 trees this year and plan to reach 7,000 next year.

Molly and her family had been boiling sap and bottling syrup in their garage across from their present location for a few years as they learned the business. The farm on Gebhart Road where they are located was already in the family and Molly feels that it is a great location, both locally and also in a broader marketing area. She attended conferences in Vermont and New York, also big maple producing areas, to learn from their experts. She toured farms of many sizes to see firsthand how sap was turned into products in different camps and get ideas of how people were doing things.

The name for the new business was chosen in honor of Molly's father, J.R. Enos, who owns and operates Paul Bunyan Tree Service. Her family includes Dad, J.R.; Mom, Aimee; and two younger sisters, Elle and Anna. Lynn Baer, who was just named Maple King and who is a fifth-generation maple producer, was in charge of the boiling at Paul Bunyan this year.

Molly is putting her college education to good use in marketing the camp's products. She graduated in May from Cabrini College in Philadelphia with a BA in Communications. She is focusing on packaging and advertising and is hard at work promoting her camp and the maple industry in many locales.

Products from Paul Bunyan Camp are sold at retail locations, restaurants, and wholesale markets in the Pittsburgh area and at local Farmers Markets in Ligonier and Somerset, and are available on the internet at [www.paulbunyanmaplesyrup.com](http://www.paulbunyanmaplesyrup.com). Internet sales have taken products from this camp to at least 22 states and a few foreign countries.

Molly recently demonstrated at a food and cooking show, "Farm to Table" at the David Lawrence Convention Center, one way she is delivering the sweet news about Somerset County maple syrup to many people. She is offering products besides syrup. Some of these include maple cream, maple sugar, maple candy and maple drops. The packaging for these products is creative and presents the image of high-quality, gourmet foods. She has even added a pancake mix that comes from an old family recipe which customers can purchase to make their own pancakes for under the syrup. Special gift packages are available and can be customized. Paul Bunyan Camp recently won 1st Place in the Gift Pack Class of the Maple Festival's product judging contest.

Molly tells a story that may be the beginning of her maple career. When she was younger, the family decided to try making syrup. They gathered sap and boiled it down to about one gallon of pure syrup. Anxious to taste the result of their labors, her dad burned his tongue on the hot liquid. From "This might be a unique hobby idea" has grown a

bigger dream that this will be a business and career in the maple industry. Molly believes that “there is both a science and an art to making maple syrup, it is a true work of art.”

“It has been a terrific season and I am very thankful for everyone that has helped me get to where I am with the business now. Without the support of my family and friends it would not have been possible. Especially, my Dad, JR Enos. We are thankful for the runs that we have had and hope that next year is great as well,” states Molly. Just as the legendary Paul Bunyan left big footsteps wherever he walked, Paul Bunyan Sugar Camp with Molly Enos in charge will also be making big steps.