



Co-CEO and president of New Chapter, Tom Newmark and botanist and *Luna Nueva* manager, Steven Farrell at *Finca Luna Nueva*, Costa Rica

Photo: Sean Davis

A NEW CHAPTER FOR The Children's Eternal Rain Forest

by David Steinman

Tom Newmark knelt beside the jaguar paw print in the soft foam of the grass meadow that ran through a very small portion of *Finca Luna Nueva*, situated in the vast Arenal volcanic region of the Guanacaste province in Costa Rica. I've known Tom Newmark for some time now. I've seen him excited over many different things: his children's various successes in film and the arts and com-

merce; the popular acceptance and scientific and clinical validation of his category-leading Zyflamend, the rain forest herbal formula from his (and co-CEO and founder Paul Schulick's) company, New Chapter, of Brattleboro, Vermont, that has changed the nature of prostate cancer prevention in America; and even the many deep relationships he has formed with several of his comrades in arms in the natural products industry—but, frankly, I'd never seen Tom like this before: He was like a kid who was enjoying the fulfillment of a dream.

All of his dreams—the real dreams that go deep into the soul and that are really about the world and your children and their future—were coming true, manifested in one singular iconic print of a predator that had moved stealthily in the nighttime through the wildlife corridor at the edge of the Children's Eternal Rain Forest, which New Chapter, together with Whole Foods and other independent health food stores, has been championing. He put his hand beside it to get the measure and enormity of the print. "This was no ocelot, this was no puma," he said.

"Yes, it's big, and there's the dewclaw," said Carlos Arias, one of the two senior farmers (the other is his brother Walter) at *Finca Luna Nueva*, the 200-acre organic ginger and turmeric estate that New Chapter owns and operates, and that supplies herbs for their whole food nutritionals. He said in Spanish that he discovered its outline earlier that morning, and because the jaguar had landed in a soft patch of the earth, its claws, even its dewclaw, actually were showing (whereas most cat paw prints in harder earth would show only the retracted claws' outline). The paw print

(see the photograph) was hardcore evidence of a healthy breakthrough in the vitality of the rain forest in this region of the Central American nation.

Indeed, the jaguar is one of the largest of Central America's—and Costa Rica's largest—carnivores; it is an endangered species, once fairly common in coastal mangroves, lowland savannas, and wet and dry shrublands and forests up to about 3,500 feet elevation. But because of its highly visible tracks, the market for its pelts, its reputation as a killer of livestock, and its vulnerability to hound pursuit and other methods of hunting, this cat is

Photo: Sean Davis

Sign of Hope. Jaguar print at *Finca Luna Nueva*

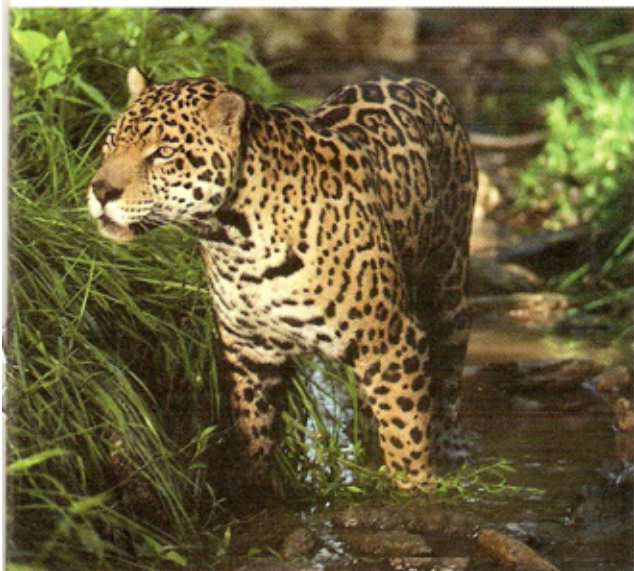


now rare except in parts of large reserves where hunting is prohibited. Nonetheless, here the jaguar had returned—and the wildlife corridor that New Chapter (along with Whole Foods Markets and tens of thousands of other Green Patriot consumers) had worked so hard to create by purchasing lands to be held in trust by the Monteverde Conservation League, was proving its worth quickly. Ironically, although Tom Newmark was certainly like a child this February morning during Costa Rica's dry season, it was a child's dream that made everything come true in the first place.

A CHILD'S DREAM

The Children's Eternal Rain Forest is the largest private reserve in Costa Rica—and it exists today because of the dreams of children across the globe. In 1987 at a small primary school in rural Sweden, teacher Eha Kern was helping her class learn about rain forests and the animals dependent on them for their survival. Nine-year-old Roland Teinsuu asked what he could do to keep the rain forest safe and help protect those special animals. Roland and his classmates talked to tropical biologist Sharon Kinsman, who just happened to be visiting in Sweden. She told them about the Monteverde Cloud Forest and how deforestation was starting to hurt a beautiful forest in the Tilarán mountains of Costa Rica.

The class decided to raise some money to buy a part of the forest. Then, at least in that one spot, no one could chop down the trees. The students worked with an organization called the Monteverde Conservation League and raised about \$1,500, enough to cover the expenses (surveying, title search, and legal fees) for buying about 15 acres of land.



Somehow, that small effort became viral. Suddenly, tens of thousands of other kids in classrooms across the planet wanted to help the rain forest, too. Thanks to fund-raising projects such as collecting aluminum cans and holding bake sales (using rain forest ingredients like ginger, chocolate, and vanilla), kids raised enough money to buy more than 50,000 acres of rain forest!

In the Children's Eternal Forest live sloths, monkeys, agoutis, coatimundis, kinkajou, margays, porcupines, hog-nosed skunks, armadillos, lots of bats, and, of course, top-level predators such as the puma and jaguar, according to an online information site. There are also gorgeous butterflies and other fascinating insects, spiders, iguanas and other lizards, frogs, and snakes. The forest is also home to 400 species of birds, including the Resplendent Quetzal, considered by many to be the most beautiful bird in the world.

The Children's Eternal Rain Forest (known also as CERF or, in Spanish, as El Bosque Eterno de los Niños [or, affectionately, as BEN]), located in the Tilarán mountain range in northwestern Costa Rica, encompasses steep, sinuous topography characterized by peaks and mountain ridges, valleys and canyons, as well as abundant rivers of rapid currents that drain both the Pacific and Atlantic slopes of the country, says the online site. CERF itself is approximately 22,000 hectares (54,000 acres); however, when combined with other contiguous and nearby public and private reserves and the Arenal National Park, the protected region forms a forest block under protection of about 50,000 hectares (110,000 acres).

Does this sound like a lot of land? Well, perhaps so from the human perspective—but to top-level predators like a jaguar or puma, it isn't very much land at all. In the Santa Monica Mountains in my own backyard of California, we now know that a single mountain lion requires 40 to 50 miles of range—and even that can be crowded or confining without migratory corridors to facilitate introduction of the same species of animals from different genetic lines.

Throughout the world, whether we're speaking of the Santa Monica Mountains, the Adirondacks of upstate New York, or the Tilarán range where I now stood in Costa Rica, we have built roads and farms and industry that cut off and isolate our largest predators. >>>



The beautiful Resplendent Quetzal

A New Chapter for the Children's Eternal Rain Forest continued

These key marker species of a healthy ecosystem become trapped; animals inbreed, attack each other (including their own mates, as recently happened in the Santa Monica mountains), and kill their own to make space, and eventually they all but disappear from the environment. Losing these top-level predators indicates that the balance has tipped too far in favor of destruction, industrialization and environmental degradation; not only are we losing a vital species that marks the health of our environment but, for many of us, we are doing damage to the human soul. I see it happening in the Santa Monica mountain range and have begun working there to support wildlife corridors, and Tom and the many experts he has brought to the rain forest where *Finca Luna Nueva* is located saw it happening in the Tilarán region; animals were being cut off by poorly planned farms, cattle ranches, towns, roads, and overpopulation.

Indeed, for the past few years, New Chapter has been nurturing this region of Costa Rica via its 200-acre certified organic biodynamic turmeric and ginger farm (where the company grows herbs used in its own formulas such as Zyflamend®), resting on the edge of the beautiful, pristine Children's Eternal Rain Forest. *Luna Nueva* is a global model of what sustainable organic rain forest farming can and should be, involving not only environmental but fair trade and community sustainability by opening up export markets for herbal medicines, and giving local farmers new ways of preserving their land and their ownership of it, while enhancing their profitability. With many visits and extended stays, Tom had come to see that the jaguar were being cut off and that they needed a corridor to move to larger, newer areas, which would result in an abundant, healthier and diverse gene pool for their own future generations.

Tom reached out to some of his friends at Whole Foods Market, specifically Michael Besancon, to raise money for a wildlife corridor extending from the Children's Eternal Rain Forest along the Chachagua River. Michael, who is president of Whole Foods Market—SoPac Region, in turn enlisted his colleagues Robin Rogosin and Marci Frumkin, who created an enlightened plan to support this wildlife corridor project. The Whole Foods Markets' stores in the SoPac Region—all 31 of them—designated a special day in which five percent of their net sales from that day would go to purchase additional lands bordering the Chachagua River wildlife corridor project. In addition, Whole Foods inspired their customers and worked with local schools to raise even more funds for this project, and through these initiatives, they raised more than \$150,000 for the Children's Eternal Rain Forest wildlife corridor project. The funds, along with additional contributions from New Chapter and other friends of the rain forest, were given to the Monteverde Conservation League—US, which is the U.S. charity that supports the conservation efforts in Costa Rica.

"We are battling against time, for the rain forest is rapidly shrinking while destructive practices are unabated," says Newmark. "Rain forests once covered 14 percent of the earth's land surface. That amount is now estimated at between 2 and 6 percent. Our last remaining rain forests could disappear within 40 years, and with them the irreversible loss of countless species. We are battling for our future: Our children and grandchildren may be able to forgive us for many offenses, but do we want to be known as the generation that destroyed the rain forests that once sustained life on our planet?" ■



Resources

The New Chapter line of products is available at health food stores nationwide. To learn more, visit www.newchapter.com or call 800-543-7279.

How You Can Help

Visit www.mclus.org to learn more about the Monteverde Conservation League, the U.S. support charity for the Children's Eternal Forest.

Also become part of the New Chapter family and vacation at *Finca Luna Nueva*. I stayed there, and I am taking my whole family back soon for another vacation.

The finca is the ultimate eco-resort. There, my children will participate in organic biodynamic farming, visit the Sacred Seeds project with more than 200 different rain forest plants preserved there, admire wildlife, including monkeys, rare birds, amphibians, and other creatures of the rain forest, while enjoying resplendent

lodging and organic meals. I highly recommend the *Finca Luna Nueva*. Visit them at www.fincalunanuevalodge.com.

And, of course, buy New Chapter whole food supplements so you can stay strong and healthy and fight for this planet. Start with Zyflamend and Berry Green® and their Every Man® and

Every Woman® probiotic whole food multiple vitamins for the ultimate in protection and vitality.

This is a GREEN Patriot Green 100 company, and when you support them, you can be sure they will invest your dollars into making this planet a better place to live for you and me and our future generations. —DS