



## Speaker Notes: Meet Marvin Payne

Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council Inc.

Annual General Meeting, May 4<sup>th</sup> 2013

Good evening. My name is Marvin Payne. It is a pleasure to be your guest speaker for this evening and to be a part of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council Inc.. Literacy has helped me in so many ways. I have so much to be thankful for. I have come a long way and with so many people who has helped me. I never thought I would be standing in front of all of you guys today doing this. But, here I am. I thank you for giving me a chance to do so. It is great to be a part of this Laubach Literacy Group. Thank you so much.

I would like to share with you how the Laubach Literacy reading program has helped me in my life. My story begins in George's Brook where I started school and stayed until grade 2. It was in grade 2 that it was decided that I would need to attend special education classes and because these classes were not offered in George's Brook, I would have to attend the Seventh Day Adventist School in Lethbridge. I didn't mind this so much as a lot of my friends went to this school.

However, the special classes weren't doing me any good and I was sent back to George's Brook in grade 4. Well, actually, I had to go to the Shoal Harbour school as I was not too old for George's Brook! In grade 5, I was once again placed in special education class. I used to get bored of learning the same things over and over and over. Watching my peers advance through subjects and topics seemed exciting to me, but I never got to move on in my classes. I would get homework but I couldn't do it. My parents were not educated so they couldn't help me. The school tried to get me some help from other students but this didn't seem to help me all that much either. Eventually, I moved on to high school.

I thought high school would be different, but, after three years in special education class, the books never changed and the lessons stayed the same. I lost interest and I quit school in Grade 9/10. About a month after quitting, I got a job clearing snow at the hospital. I did that for about a year. After this I had several jobs and I went to night school for upgrading. This helped me to advance in my literacy.

This led to a job on a 'Pole boat' which lasted only a week or so, so I went to school and did a plastering and painting course. The book work gave me trouble as my literacy was still very low. But in the practical work, I would get 70 and 80% on all the tests. This was very much thanks to Judy Chan who helped me by audio taping a lot of the material for me so I could study. After this, I attended a 'Learning Centre' for about a year but the funding got cut and so it was no more.

I met Dave Watson, many years ago because we both enjoyed a good game of darts! Dave asked me if I needed some help with my literacy and of course I jumped at the chance. We would get together twice a week and he helped me a great deal which gave me the push I needed to go back to the Discovery Centre and try to complete my schooling once again.

Soon, I became a student of the College of the North Atlantic. I was there for four years but my funding was cut because they said I wasn't making enough progress to warrant the investment.

Today, I am very active in my community. I am on the volunteer fire department. I volunteer with the local Laubach Literacy Council and I sit on the provincial board of the Newfoundland and Labrador Laubach Literacy Council. I am also first aid certified. I haven't discarded the dream of getting my grade 12 one day.

Again, thank you so much.