

## **The Alzheimer Poetry Project**

By Teddy Jedry

In September of 2009, some of the members of the Sauk County Writer's Club attended a program on the Alzheimer Poetry Project. This project was started in New Mexico by poet Gary M. Glazner. The Alzheimer Poetry Project reaches out to people living with Alzheimer's or other memory related issues. A branch has been started in Baraboo. We visit various facilities in the area to read and recite poetry to residents.

To prepare for this project, we attended several workshop sessions run by Gary Glazner, Director, Alzheimer's Poetry Project. His enthusiasm for what has been his life's work has motivated us, and our love of poetry inspires us to work with the elderly. We invite their participation by reciting a poem and then encouraging the residents to repeat the lines after us. Often there is a spark of recognition for a certain poem, one they may have learned in school years ago. They sometimes respond by reciting the poem along with us. The poems provide stimulation for their minds.

Those of us involved in the Alzheimer's Poetry Project leave these sessions with a wonderful warmth in our hearts at having interacted with the residents, enhancing their lives with the love of poetry.

Anyone can become involved and share poetry with those who are memory impaired. Seek out a group or start one of your own. The small amount of time you invest will be returned to you a thousand fold. All that is required is a love of poetry and a love for the elderly.

If you are interested in starting a project in your community, please contact Gary M. Glazner, Director, Alzheimer's Poetry Project, 12 Highview Lane, Santa Fe, NM 87508 or email [peotmex@aol.com](mailto:peotmex@aol.com) or [alzpoetry.com](http://alzpoetry.com).