Message from Sandy McMillan, President, Trustees of Elmwood Cemetery

Dear Families and Friends,

Spring has certainly sprung early in Michigan this year! The mild winter and warmer March has lent a lushness to the grounds – the trees are flowering, migrating birds have returned, spring bulbs have come up and the grass is green and growing fast. I cannot recall the last time we had to cut the Cemetery’s grass in March! Please come down to visit us.

I am pleased to report that 2011 was yet another great year for Elmwood. The Cemetery’s endowment fund - that ensures the Cemetery is well cared for into the future – is healthy and has recovered from the downturn in the stock market a few years ago. In addition, the grounds, meticulously cared for by our staff, are a further testament to our success. As a result we are chosen time and time again each year by hundreds seeking a final resting place for themselves or their loved ones. Our staff prides itself on providing knowledgeable and compassionate service to our customers in need of advice.

I encourage you to contact our staff if you are interested in any of our available prime individual or large family lots.

Thank you for your continued trust in us.

So Much to Do and So Much to See...

Spring planting. If you, your friends or garden club are interested in adding to the beauty of the cemetery, there are many areas that are available for flowers. Please call Joan Capuano for more information.

Do you enjoy running, walking or biking with a group of friends? Please consider using Elmwood’s pathways. The office staff would be happy to make arrangements for a time that works best for you.

Bird watching on our grounds provides a natural environment for dozens of different species.

Artists are encouraged to come and sketch or photograph the many sculptures in the cemetery. If you have art of the Cemetery that you would like to share with our visitors, please contact Joan Capuano. We will consider them for posting in our office and on the website.

Tours and Events Please look inside to find out more about what’s happening at Elmwood!
The Historic Elmwood Foundation apologizes for any inaccuracies. Please contact Joan Capuano with any corrections or omissions.

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We are thankful for the many friends who supported the Historic Elmwood Foundation and Elmwood Cemetery in 2011.

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We also wish to thank those who prefer to remain anonymous. We are truly grateful to all our donors and supporters.
In June, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War held a dedication ceremony at Elmwood Cemetery to install a marker at the grave of Private Julius Rhaesa. Rhaesa was born in Luxemburg in 1836 and immigrated to the United States prior to 1861. He served with the German Unit of Co. A 1st Battalion Light Artillery, later known as the 29th NY Battery, from 1861 – 1862. He took part in the Washington defenses, Army of the Potomac. Rhaesa received a medical discharge “from over lifting whilst loading cannon and from exposure incident to the service contracted a disease of lungs, kidneys and rheumatism.” He married Louisa Fleck in Reading Pennsylvania in 1863 and by 1865 they were raising a family in Detroit.

Rhaesa was a cigar maker and operated a store on Michigan Avenue. He was very civic minded and a believer in what makes our country special. He was a founder of the Improved Order of Red Men and the first Great Chief of Records of the Great Council of Michigan, chartered 1872, the oldest fraternal organization in America devoted to inspiring a greater love for the United States of America and the principles of American liberty.

Rhaesa died January 8, 1881. His marker is located in Strangers Ground, immediately across from the sign post for Section 8.

Elmwood would like to thank the members of Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War for their tireless effort to identify and mark the grave sites of Civil War Veterans throughout the Detroit area and Ms. Judy Sheldon, a descendant of Julius Rhaesa.
Thank you to all who have donated to the Historic Elmwood Foundation. Your donations have enabled us to move forward with our mission. I hope you will consider donating this year by returning the enclosed envelope. Information on making a bequest can be found on the website, elmwoodhistoriccemetery.org.

The Foundation’s 2011 primary restoration project was the complete rebuild of the bridge between the pond and the new mausoleum. This roadway is a main artery as it leads from the gatehouse area up to the chapel and adjacent sections. As the pictures demonstrate, the bridge’s foundation began to crumble and immediate attention was required. If you visit the grounds, you will notice its beautiful craftsmanship. The restoration of the surrounding landscape will be completed this spring.

This year the Foundation Board has designated continued support of our community events and restoring two – three sections of roadway along the eastern side of the grounds. You may have noticed that last year’s heavy rains caused some flooding in the northeastern section. The Cemetery has utilized a hydrojet cleaning process in these drain lines, removing decades of tree roots. We certainly hope our summer is a bit dryer than last year but if it is not, it will be easier for you to move around the grounds.

The Foundation supports our Elmwood community through ceremonies on Arbor Day, Memorial Day, and Veterans’ Day, as well as through our annual Tree Lighting in December. In 2011, we also held a special dedication ceremony for a Civil War veteran. (Article on page 3)

Each year school children, special interest groups, and individuals visit Elmwood to take one of our tours or to participate in our special programs. The tours are one way we share the lives of those laid to rest here, and discuss Detroit’s history, art, architecture and environment. The dates of our tours and upcoming events are noted in this newsletter. Please try to join us! We will send notices of special events via an email blast. If you have not yet supplied the office with your email address, please do so.

Please keep in mind that membership in the Foundation is achieved by making a donation. In addition to knowing that all donations go directly toward community events and restoring this gem that is Elmwood, you also receive free admission to a tour. If you are not yet a member, enrollment information is provided in the enclosed membership envelope. Please considering making a tax deductible donation and joining the Foundation today.

Thank you again.

Mission: To preserve the history and educational significance of Elmwood Cemetery and those laid to rest in the cemetery; and to develop social, cultural, and educational programs to benefit the community.

MONUMENT AND MARKER MEMORIAL CLEANING SERVICE

Elmwood Cemetery is pleased to offer memorial cleaning.

- Individual markers $120 each
- Companion markers $200 each
- Monuments $100 per linear foot of base

Large monuments or family mausoleums need to be quoted individually. Please contact Mike Shukwit to make arrangements or download the memorial cleaning form from our website.
DISCOVER MORE about Elmwood! Visit www.elmwoodhistoriccemetery.org

DID YOU KNOW?
Memorial art is used to honor a loved one and create a lasting legacy. There are hundreds of variations in memorial design. Those at the Cemetery that signify a military career include the eagle, sword, shield, stars, a laurel wreath, roping, and crossed swords indicating death in battle.

• April 15
  Summer Floral Beds Available!
  Please return the enclosed order form, visit our website or contact the office.

• April 27
  Arbor Day Celebration
  10 a.m., Gatehouse
  Join our grounds crew as we plant a weeping willow tree along the creek.

• May – October
  Regular Guided Tours Begin

• May 1
  Summer Hours Begin
  Extended hours for grounds access through September, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

• May 6
  Mother's Day
  Remember to contact our office by May 2nd to purchase a large floral arrangement or flower bed for your mother's site! Our office also will sell small bouquets for $10 on Friday and Saturday, May 4 and 5. You may drop in or call and ask us to place the bouquet at your loved one's site. Quantities are limited.

• May 22
  Annual Flower Planting
  9 a.m., Gatehouse, weather permitting. Join our staff and volunteers as we plant flowers in beds throughout the cemetery.

• May 25 – 28
  Memorial Weekend
  Our office will sell small red, white and blue bouquets for $10. You may drop in or call and ask us to place the bouquet at your loved one's site. Quantities are limited.

• May 28
  Memorial Day Celebration
  Detroit Firefighters will be honored at 10 a.m. More information will be provided on our website and in local newspapers.

• June 14
  Flag Day
  10 a.m., Civil War Lot.

• June 17
  Father's Day
  Our office staff will help you honor your father with a floral arrangement, if ordered by June 13th. Our office also will sell small bouquets for $10 on Friday and Saturday, June 15 and 16. You may come into the office or call and ask us to place the bouquet at your loved one's site. Quantities are limited.

• October – April
  Grounds access from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily.

• November 2
  All Souls’ Day, Chapel
  Please join us in the Chapel for an All Souls’ service. Our office also will sell small bouquets for $10 on November 1 and 2. You may drop in or call and ask us to place the bouquet at your loved one's site. Quantities are limited.

• November 11
  Veterans’ Day
  10 a.m., Civil War Lot
  Our veterans will be honored at a ceremony sponsored with the Detroit Historic Civil War Society. Our office will sell small red, white and blue bouquets for $10. You may drop in or call and ask us to place the bouquet at your loved one's site. Quantities are limited.

• December 3
  Tree Lighting Ceremony
  6 p.m., Gatehouse
  Please join us as we honor those who passed away during 2012 with our tree lighting ceremony. Refreshments and holiday cookies are served.
Elmwood Cemetery has prime lots available for individuals and families. In addition, the Cemetery working with the Historic Elmwood Foundation has designated nine large family lots available for purchase. The lots are located throughout the property and range in size from 20’ x 20’ to 20’ x 30’. They are the perfect size for your family mausoleum or large memorial. These special lots are only available through the Foundation and include a donation to the Foundation. Please contact the office staff if you are interested in viewing any of our prime individual or family lots.

Michael Shukwit, Elmwood Cemetery Director of Operations, has over 20 years of experience in the cemetery business. Mr. Shukwit is responsible for managing the outside operations, buildings, capital improvements, grounds, memorial/monument cleaning, arboretum, gardens, and working with the Foundation on its restoration and education plans.

Bonita Smith, Director of Administration, has 20 years of experience in the industry. Her responsibilities include managing the overall administration of Elmwood including record keeping, banking, and accounts receivable and payable. In addition, Ms. Smith provides guidance to customers on lot selection, mausoleums, and all other burial matters.

Ciara Green-Lowe, Elmwood Cemetery Memorial Advisor, has over 10 years customer service and sales experience. She counsels customers on all burial matters including selection of lots and niches, memorials, and tributes as well as preplanning needs.

Joan Frear Capuano, Historic Elmwood Foundation Executive Director. She directs all Foundation projects, community outreach, tours, events and programs. In addition, she is responsible for communications, grant seeking, and the Annual Fund Drive.

Please contact our staff whenever the need arises by calling (313) 567-3453.

Perennial Splits?
Elmwood is hoping to add beautiful perennials throughout the cemetery. If you are splitting the perennials in your garden, please consider donating your splits to the Cemetery. We will find a spot where they will be appreciated by our many visitors. Please drop your splits off at the Cemetery garage, across from the gatehouse. While you are here, take a moment to say hello to the office staff or drive through the grounds to check our progress! If you are unable to bring your splits to Elmwood, please contact the office and we will make arrangements to pick them up. Thank you!

Request For Updated Contact Information
It is important that we know how to reach our lot owners and friends. We know you want to be kept informed on rule changes or development issues that affect your lot as well as information about cemetery activities. If you have a new address, phone number or e-mail address, please let us know by phone, mail or e-mail.