

**ADDITIONAL MATERIAL  
REGULAR MEETING**

**APRIL 1, 2025**

**SUBMITTED AT THE REQUEST OF  
COMMISSIONER NAN H. RICH**

## BIOGRAPHY OF ELAINE G. APPEL

10/7/1924-2/1/2025



Elaine was born in Coney Island, New York. After finishing her education, she worked as a switchboard telephone operator until she decided to serve as a civilian to help the military by working on gun sights at Sperry Gyroscope during the war. She later had a successful career in the fashion industry.

Elaine moved to Florida after she retired. She immediately started volunteering with the Thumbbody program in the Broward County School System. In 1985 Elaine became a Guardian Ad Litem where she fiercely and relentlessly fought for the most abused, abandoned and neglected children. She often went into the roughest neighborhoods, bringing food and clothing to these children.

Elaine also handled the children who were severely medically challenged. Elaine volunteered for the children in Broward County for over 40 years. While a Guardian Ad Litem she was a founding member of the HANDY program. During this same period, she advised many Judges (in Dependency and child sexual abuse cases about programs available for these special children), Directors at HANDY, Directors at the Guardian Ad Litem Program, the Director of the Broward Children's Center (A skilled nursing facility and group homes for medically challenged children), Directors at DCF and Directors at Child Net. She also trained many Guardian Ad Litem over the years.

Elaine served passionately on many boards. She was on the Board of the Broward Children's Center, The HANDY board, the Sexual Assault Treatment Center Board and the Children and Family Leadership Alliance. Elaine spearheaded discussions and changes for children aging out of the Foster Care system.

Due to her selfless actions Elaine won many awards. In fact, Elaine was only 16 when she was honored with a medal by the Mayor of Brooklyn because she caught a baby that was tossed from a burning building! Later in life she was recognized for her years of volunteerism. She was given two Presidential medals for volunteerism. One from President Bill Clinton and the other from President George W. Bush. Elaine was the recipient of the Inaugural volunteer of the year award by DCF. She won Woman of the Year as well as the volunteerism award given by the State of Florida Elder Affairs, just to name a few.

Those who knew Elaine spoke frequently of her enjoyment of life, caring for others, her compassion for all children and their families. Elaine was a champion for children! She loved her family and friends dearly. She truly led an extraordinary life. It was her passion and commitment to leave the world a better place.