

**ENFIELD**

# First female president chosen to lead the Society for the Detection of Thieves and Robbers

By Susan Danseyar  
STAFF WRITER

ENFIELD — For the first time in the centuries-long history of the Enfield Society for the Detection of Thieves and Robbers, a woman now presides over the vigilante-turned-social group. Members met for their first 2024 meeting on Wednesday and elected Kim Quinn to head the society that was organized by a group of men more than 200 years ago to protect their neighbors and local businesses from losing horses — once a man's most valuable possession in New England farm towns.

"I've definitely caught a thief before," said Quinn, jokingly referring to her qualifications for the momentous new role she's taking on. "It wasn't a horse thief

but I did catch someone once who was breaking into rental property I owned."

That feat, and her riding experience on a pony she had while growing up in South Windsor, definitely qualifies her to be the first female president of what might be one of the oldest societies of its kind in the country, Quinn said with a laugh.

The society's original constitution, which was found in a box lying in the Enfield Historical Society, indicates the group was organized on Jan. 10, 1823, after a group of men met at a home tavern owned by Peter Field on the corner of Bridge Lane and Enfield Street. According to its historian Peter Sorenson, however, that may very well be the date Enfield split from a Warehouse Point group in East Windsor. While re-



Jim Michaud/Hearst Connecticut Media

**Peter Sorenson, member and co-historian of Enfield Society for Detection of Thieves and Robbers, goes through artifacts from the group.**

searching announcements in regional newspapers and journals, he learned the Enfield and Warehouse Point society was recorded in one article as forming in 1796.

Quinn, who moved to Enfield about 30 years ago and works as a secretary at Asnuntuck Community College, said it's an honor to have been elected as the society's



Kim Quinn/Contributed photo  
**Kim Quinn is the first woman to serve as president of the Enfield Society for the Detection of Thieves and Robbers.**

president. She joined the group in 2012 and loved becoming "a pursuer" of horses.

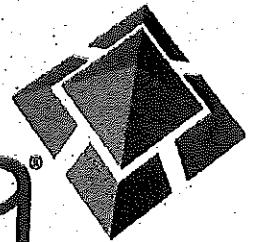
But Quinn didn't give any thought to a leadership role with the society over the last 11 years. It wasn't until a few members recently asked if she'd like to be *Thieves continues on A13*

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# THIEVES

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nominated as president for the 2024 year that she thought about what that would mean.

"I wasn't sure it was time for a woman to be elected," she said. "I remember when my friends and I thought it was funny that until 1995 we weren't even allowed to join a 'boy's club.'"

Quinn said she was surprised by the "overwhelmingly" affirmative vote for her leadership. "I feel totally comfortable with the men in the group. They're great and we work very well together," she said.

The society membership is about 60 percent male.

"Maybe the men saw a change coming," Quinn said about their enthusiasm to elect a woman as president. "There have been a lot of new beginnings over the past 12 months. We moved our annual banquet from St. Bernard's Church to the Elks Club last year, where for the first time

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we had gift baskets and a raffle that raised over \$600 for a high-school scholarship."

It was the women who came up with the idea of offering a scholarship to an Enfield High School student who plans to enter the field of criminal justice, Quinn said.

Her plans as president include growing the scholarship fund and letting more people in the community know the society exists. "I'm open to change and want to see our society remain current," she said.

Sorenson said it's remarkable that the society now has a wom-

an as its president. He's been to banquets at other vigilante societies similar to Enfield's but said they don't even allow women to be members, let alone elect them as officers. "If you think about when the society started, women didn't have the same rights as men," he said. "It will be interesting to see how men react to having a woman as president."

Sorenson predicts membership will probably rise. "I'm looking forward to an expanded, inclusive approach to this society that the women have because they are better at being civically engaged than we are."

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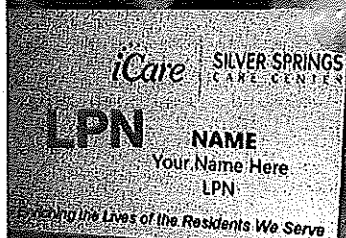
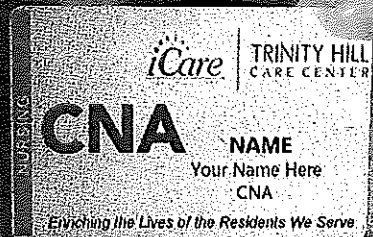
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