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## Escape to Freedom

Local receives  
Bronze Star and POW  
medal 61 years later

BY EARLINE WHITE  
Staff Writer

Brice Edward Hollowell needed an operation, and needed it soon. His infected appendix already had him doubled over in pain.

A cold wind whipped through the sparse shelter of the German prisoner-of-war camp where he was being held.

He had little to eat that day — a couple slices of raw potato and a glass of water. He was tired and weak from cutting down the trees surrounding the camp.

The only option was to operate, and the German doctor in charge was refusing to help an enemy of his country.

Hollowell's sergeant pleaded with the doctor.

Hollowell watched as the two men talked, gestured and spoke in a language he did not understand.

Finally the Polish doctor at the camp agreed to do the surgery.

Hollowell was taken from the warmth of his straw mattress to a chopping block similar to those found in slaughter houses.

"They [the doctors] gave me something to ease the pain but I was still awake for it [the surgery]," Hollowell said. He watched as the Polish doctor took the scalpel and cut into Hollowell's swollen belly.

"My heart stopped twice while they were operating," Hollowell added, "and that Polish doctor massaged it both times for it to start again."

Corp. Hollowell remained a prisoner until the end of World War II, April 1945.



Earline White/The Chowan Herald

**Corp. Edward Brice Hollowell, a native of Chowan County, was awarded the Bronze Star and Prisoner of War Medal for his heroism and merit during WWII.**

"When I first got to the camp all the Americans were huddled around a stove. And there on the back of one of their jackets read Chowan County. What are the odds," Hollowell said.

The fellow Chowanian was Issac "Ike" Voliver who had been captured

not too long before.

Voliver took Hollowell under his jacket, so to speak, and together they made it through the dreary German winter.

"I was lucky," Hollowell said, "I See HONORS, Page A2 >

### INSIDE

Veteran's Day celebrations throughout the county.  
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## Group grills Chief Bonner about gangs

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

Edenton's top cop says bona fide gangs like the Bloods and Crips aren't prowling town streets looking for new recruits.

But he's still aware of the potential for the infamous gangs to appear here.

Police chief Greg Bonner told a group of about 25 residents Monday night that signs still indicate that recent brawls between Edenton men don't validate the arrival of the crime-laden gangs. But town leaders — including uniformed officers — are keeping a close watch on the possible emergence of sign-flashing Bloods and Crips, Bonner said.

For now, the outbreak of brawls seems to stem from confrontations between local young adults, Bonner added.

Gang-like patterns of violence — including carjackings, drive-by shootings and for-profit drug rings — haven't surfaced, he said.

"To me, they're just thugs on the street," Bonner told a local discussion about group of youth arrested after a pair of fights at John A. Holmes High School and on East Church Street this fall.

But Bonner said he's not going to let his guard down just yet.

"My head is not buried in the sand," he told the group. "We're not sitting back sleeping on this thing ... I'm already concerned."

Chowan magistrate Jim Badger said gangs operate as businesses, not just social groups. And those gangs are seeking to continue spreading their operations across the country.

"This is a corporate thing," Badger said. "Just like McDonald's has a franchise, the Bloods and the Crips have franchises."

### Question and Answer

**Bonner fielded** questions for more than 90 minutes during the group's monthly session at That Fancy Cafe.

Members queried Bonner about the steps his department has taken to quell rumors of gangs being in town, and what actions it has taken to ensure that the California-based gangs don't show up here soon.

The chief said law enforcement has taken notice of a rise in the arrests of youths for fighting in recent months.

During the first six months of the year, only one juvenile was arrested for aggravated assault. Since June, there have been seven juveniles arrested on that charge, according to police statistics.

Bonner said that a rise in assault arrests is likely a reflection of modern times, as society in general becomes more violent, especially youth.

"It seems young folks have no consciousness of what they're doing," he said.

The pair of recent fights stemmed from personal — not gang-related — issues, Bonner said. The young men in both cases simply got angry over "minor issues," the chief said.

"And they seek fighting," he added. Bonner was asked if youths wearing clothing associated with gang colors — red for the Bloods, blue for the Crips — indicate that gangs have already arrived.

He replied that local clothing stores specialize in those two colors.

"They get [the clothing] cheap and that's the style that they're wearing," he said.

### Safe streets

**Bonner said** there is no reason for panic. "You are living in a safe environment," he said. See BONNER, Page A2 >

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## Trooper joins town police staff

BY SEAN JACKSON  
Staff Writer

Having a veteran state Highway Patrol trooper working alongside town cops has town officials revved up.

Veteran Trooper Kevin Briggs joined the Edenton Police Department in September, but recently began his official badge-wearing duties as an auxiliary officer. He's able to do because of a new Highway Patrol policy that allows troopers to moonlight with other state law enforcement agencies.

Police Det. Sgt. Rhonda Copeland couldn't be happier with the situation.

"I'm thrilled to have him here," Copeland said of Briggs, with whom she has been working with recently.

"And he's excited, too," Copeland said. "He's happy to be here."

After his swearing-in in late



Sean Jackson/The Chowan Herald

**Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton swears in Trooper Kevin Briggs.**

September, Briggs said he was looking forward to trading his gray trooper's uniform for the police blues from time to time.

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said that situation is fine with her.

"We are so pleased that Kevin Briggs has joined the Police Department as an auxiliary officer,"

Knighton said. "To have an officer with his years of experience and training will be a benefit to the Town. I am so impressed that this young man in addition to his work with the Highway Patrol wants to serve the citizens in another capacity. I tip my cap to him for that."

"He'll do a great job here," Copeland added about Briggs.

**Rocky Hock Opry** Friday, Dec. 1, 7:30 pm  
Saturday, Dec. 2, 7:30 pm  
E.A. Swain Auditorium  
Edenton, NC

**Tickets \$10.00 Available At**

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