

Michael Murphy

Hazelwood, MO Branch 5847



A little girl screaming, “Someone help my mommy!” alerted Hazelwood, MO Branch 5847 member **Michael Murphy** as he walked out of a bread company after delivering its mail on Oct. 28, 2014.

“I wasn’t sure what was going on,” he said. He noticed two people on cell phones talking to police, and then he saw a man acting strangely.

“He was going back and forth, grabbing car doors,” Murphy said. The carrier watched from his LLV to try to fully grasp the situation. He found out that the man had attacked the girl’s mother’s van, hitting it and apparently trying to snatch her purse.

The man walked out of Murphy’s sight, then reappeared. “He had some type of cinderblock or brick in his hand,” Murphy said. As an SUV pulled up, the man started hitting one of its windows, though it didn’t break.

There were three women inside the SUV; one woman fell to the ground from the passenger’s side as she tried to flee the attacker. The driver came around to try to help her, and was herself attacked by the man.

“He swung, attempted to hit her and missed,” the carrier said. “He was yelling, cussing and trying to carjack them. He really frightened them.”

Bakery employees started coming out of the store to see what the commotion was.

Then, the man “raised the brick to hit the lady on the ground,” Murphy said, and that’s when the carrier knew he needed to jump into action. He ran across the street.

Murphy, a 27-year member of the Marine Corps and the Navy Reserves, said, “I then grabbed him by his arm and picked him up by his legs and slammed him to the ground.”

Once down, “we tussled for a little bit,” the carrier said.

A passerby helped Murphy turn the attacker on his stomach, face-down. “I secured him and held him down until police came,” the carrier said, adding, “It all happened so fast.”

Police put handcuffs on the man and thanked Murphy for his help. An officer later told Murphy that the man had a record as a repeat violent offender.

Murphy said his military training helped in the situation. “It was a natural thing for me,” he said. “All I’ve known is service and sacrifice. We run toward the fight, not away from it. I was just doing what I was trained to do.”

Judges cited Murphy’s courage when naming him the 2016 Central Region Hero of the Year. “There’s a whole lot that makes this guy a hero,” they said. “He knew these people were human and needed help, and he put himself in imminent danger.”

The 18-year postal veteran says that receiving this honor is “humbling,” but he doesn’t think of himself as a hero. “When I saw this, I just thought about my mom and sister,” Murphy said. “If you are conscious and mindful, then you help someone.”

Michael Murphy
with a patron

