

# Sticks & Stones Didn't Break Area Man's Bones, Words Did

**BIRMINGHAM, AL** - Local Ralph Merriam is one lucky man. Thanks to his medical team and over six hours of emergent surgery, Merriam is now recovering at Birmingham Medical Center after an altercation and subsequent traumatic injury sustained last night outside a Golden Corral. After deeming his surgery “a tremendous success,” trauma surgeon Beth Lexicon claimed that “sticks and stones didn't break this man's [bones](#), words did.”



You poo-poo head!

According to the Birmingham Police Department, 45-year-old Merriam was exiting Golden Corral after a delicious 2 for \$20 meal when he accidentally bumped into the shoulder of entering customer 43-year-old Michael Webster, who was getting ready to “help himself with happiness.” A few dirty looks were exchanged just outside the restaurant entrance, which then quickly escalated.

“Mr. Webster called Mr. Merriam a poopyhead,” said police officer Eric Thesaurus. “It spiraled out of control from there.”

An enraged Merriam stuck out his tongue, prompting Webster to say “loser” while putting the loser “L” hand gesture on his forehead, taunting Merriam some more.

Merriam responded confidently, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.”

Without hesitation, Webster began throwing a conveniently placed pile of sticks and stones at Merriam. Despite being hit numerous times, Merriam laughed, completely unphased or uninjured. Left with no other recourse, Webster called Merriam an “idiot.” Stunned, Merriam began to clutch his sternum.

Sensing a fatal flaw, Webster moved fast, calling Merriam “stupid” and “smelly.” Merriam felt his right femur buckle and snap, causing him to fall to the ground in agony, unable to take any more piercing verbal blows. Just as Webster was about to deliver an aggressive oral put-down, police arrived on scene to push Webster back, separating the two grown men.

Unfortunately for Merriam, the unthinkable happened: the giant “Golden” from the “Golden Corral Buffet & Grill” sign fell and landed on him, not only knocking him unconscious, but also causing tremendous thoracic and abdominal injuries including multiple rib fractures, bilateral pneumothoraces, and a lacerated spleen. The word “Buffet” collapsed seconds later, piercing Merriam’s abdomen. “Corral” fell shortly after, but just missed the unconscious Merriam.

“One more word and he wouldn’t have survived,” commented Lexicon.

An [ambulance](#) rushed the verbally injured Merriam to Birmingham Medical Center, where he was immediately taken for surgery. Merriam required over six hours of surgery, with nearly four of those hours dedicated to removing the “Buffet” from his colon.

Merriam is in [intensive care](#) in stable but critical condition. He is under strict word precautions for now. Speech Therapy has been consulted.

“Webster used some pretty heavy words,” explained intensivist John Glossary. “Merriam’s osteoporotic bones didn’t stand a chance against ‘stupid’ and ‘smelly,’ let alone the word ‘Golden.’ I mean, that word must weigh *at least* a few hundred pounds.”

This has been a rough week for Birmingham residents.

Robert McDonough was involved in a drive-by insult, with the word “ugly” leaving him with a perforated appendix. Tim Thornton suffered a pulmonary embolism when his mother called him “a little chubby since we last saw you.” Harry Quinn developed a bad cellulitis when the word “peace” was tattooed on his right

shoulder. Finally, Esther McKay was severely injured when a large Target sign ironically fell on her while leaving the store.

Conversely, Birmingham Medical Center reports only one case of stick or stone-related injury in 2014, and that was merely a case of nephrolithiasis back in February.