

June 2, 2005

To whom it may concern:

My name is Renee Stephens, I'm 46 years old and I was born with one ear.

My mom was a very young mother, raising me and my two brothers. She had absolutely no money, yet was very concerned with my well-being growing up with this birth defect.

She always told me from day one that "God had made me special," and I grew up believing that.

At age 7 my mom took me to see a plastic surgeon. He told my mom that he could make me what he called a sylastic ear.

The next six years of my young life involved many doctor appointments, enduring thirteen surgeries with long stays in the hospital, skin grafts, missing a lot of school, going to school with my head wrapped and much much more.

By age 13 I still needed surgery to almost complete what was to look like an ear. This would be a very detailed surgery, and I was not looking forward to it; instead I told my mom "no more". Through all this I was still teased, harassed and called all kinds of hurtful names.

Even though junior high and high school were the worst years of my life, I still remained strong in my faith, still believing that God made me this

way for a reason. Not once had I ever told my mom or anybody how ugly I knew this thing was and that I absolutely hated what was done to me. Something deep down inside of me really appreciated what my mom was trying to do for me and I did not ever want her to think for one second of feeling guilty or that it was her fault. This was all done out of love and concern for me.

Last year 2004, I was watching a segment of a program about Bob Barron, how he made prosthetics for people, they showed a little boy who had a set of ears made. I was so moved by how real they looked and how happy the boy was, I cried. I wondered "could this happen for me?!". I wrote Mr. Barron a letter and then one morning sitting in a restaurant having breakfast my cell phone rang. It was Bob Barron!!

After sending pictures to him and discussing my situation, it turned out that I had to have the ear removed, the ear was not positioned right and hung to low on my head. Again more surgery.

I had my surgery in February of 2005 and then in April I met with Mr. Barron.

What an awesome man he is!! Words cannot express how wonderful, talented and artistic this one man is!!

My faith taught me to believe that God has a plan for all of us in life and I believe Bob has

found his.

I have my ear now, and its awesome and I feel awesome and complete.

My ear looks so real that people have said to me “which one is the fake?” I look in the mirror every morning and the joy that I feel in my heart is so overwhelming; and without fail I start to think of all the people who are in desperate need.

People who feel insecure of their looks because of being burned, people who feel that they don't even want to live because of the way cancer took over their face. People feel like life is over for them and there's no hope. Then I think of Bob Barron. This is a man who can change a persons whole out look on life and give them their hope back, because of his God given talent.

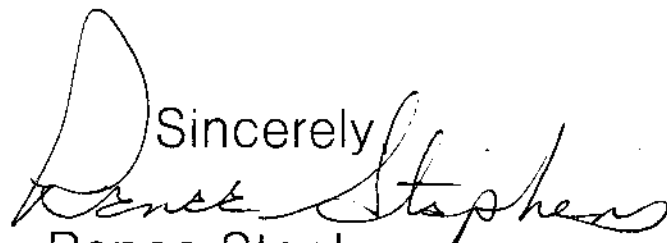
I truly believe that Mr. Barron should be recognized all over the world for his artistic and dramatic skills in prosthetics. People need to know first hand about Mr. Barron and what he can do for them. I know that if Mr. Barron was more recognized for his works, people would certainly choose to pass on having surgery.

Doctors of reconstruction surgery need to realize what kind of physical and emotional trama they put people through (especially children), when trying to reconstruct an ear. They need to face the facts and know that the ear is the

hardest part of the body to reconstruct and it is never going to look like a real human ear,! no matter how many surgeries a person go's through. I would love to see the day come when a reconstruction surgeon just hands over to his patients a business card with Bob Barron's name on it, Ha!. Believe me it's worth everything to have an ear in one week, verses going through years of agony, pain and total disappointment for something that still and always will look like a deformity.

Bob Barron has a talent. A gift that he can share with people throughout the world if we spread the word and let it be known. There is a better way.

As a patient of his, I will forever be letting people know what this wonderful man can do and what he has done for me, not just physically but emotionally and spiritually.

Sincerely

Renee Stephens