



Ripley's
Believe It
or Not!
SPECIAL EDITION
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Making Faces

Robert Barron's basement is now a laboratory where he spends a lot of time making prosthetic devices, such as ears, noses, and even full faces out of soft, durable materials. Barron's painstaking attention to detail, painting the tiny veins found in ears, the freckles on noses, and the minute striations found on hands, results in replicas that look almost as good as the originals.

Barron (right) had a lot of practice altering identities in his 24-year career as an advanced disguise expert with the CIA. But since 1993, Barron has had a second career. Working closely with physicians, Barron mixes art and science to help people who have been disfigured by accident or illness.

Phoenix police officer Jason Schechterle is one of those survivors. Schechterle was severely burned when his patrol car burst into flames after being hit by a cab. He

recovered, but the resulting scars not only caused stares, but affected his vision, hearing, and speech. Barron's work has changed all that. Schechterle's new nose will keep the mucous membranes from drying out and improve his speech. Ears improve his hearing by 20 percent, as well as allow him to wear glasses. Between his own indomitable spirit and Barron's artistry, Schechterle is able to lead a very fulfilling life.

