

# Fans swarm Cleveland stadium hoping for a shot as an extra on 'Drew Carey'

By Amy Beth Graves  
The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — A line snakes around Cleveland Browns Stadium as helicopters buzz overhead. Bored fans, dressed in their favorite orange-and-brown apparel, toss footballs and read the newspaper as they wait to get inside.

Suddenly there is a break in the monotony.

"There he is!" screams an excited fan. People dart out of line for a glimpse of their hometown hero. The crowd starts chanting his name: "Drew, Drew, Drew."

Who has the crowds cheering?

It isn't a sports superstar.

The fans have turned out for Drew Carey, star of ABC's top-rated "The Drew Carey Show." Carey is a Cleveland native and a big sports fan.

About a month ago, a crowd estimated at 10,000 showed up at the stadium to be unpaid extras for the show.

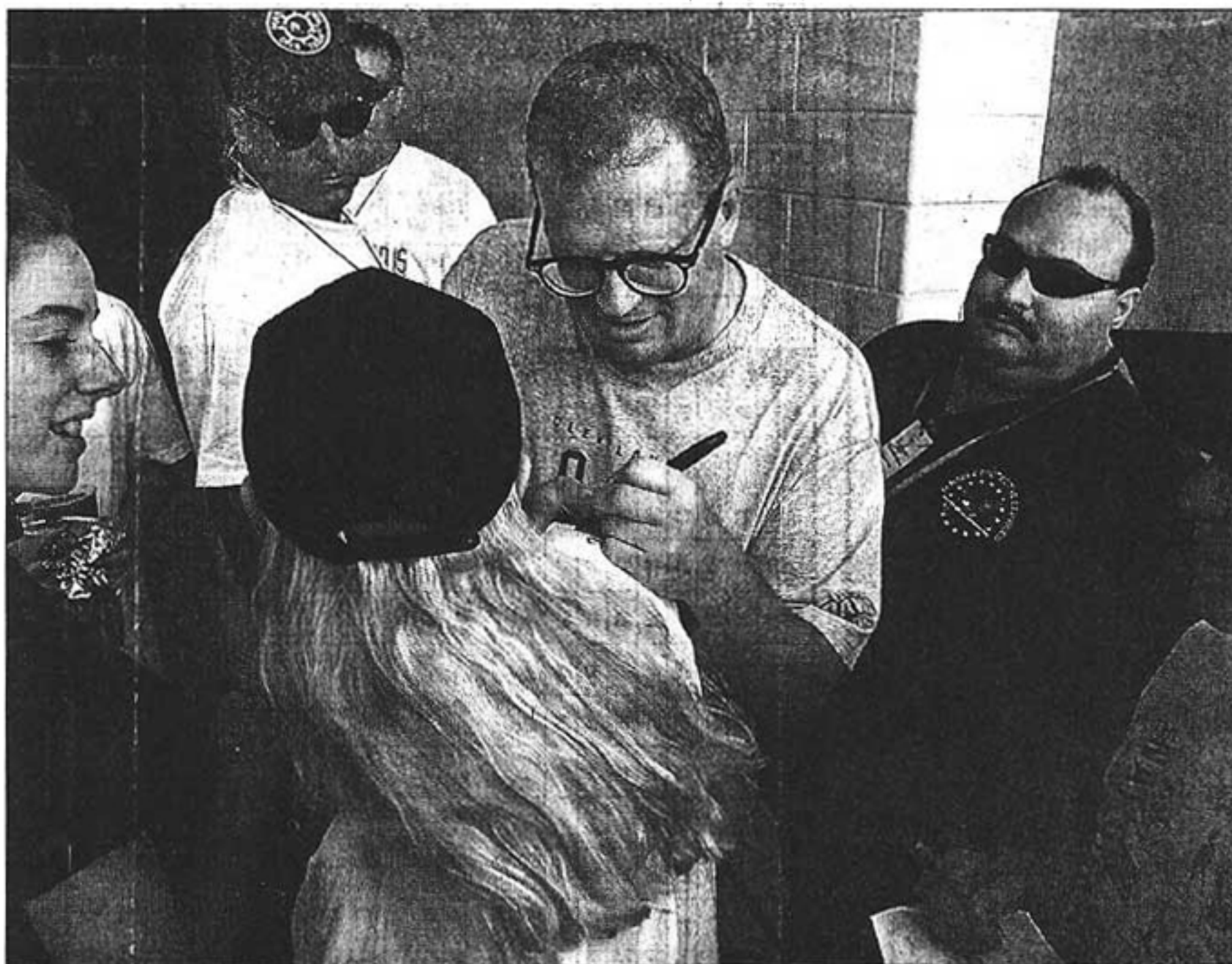
Scenes were shot for Tuesday's episode that focuses on the return of Carey's beloved Cleveland Browns to the National Football League after a three-season absence.

"It's really a humble experience," Carey said. "Every time I come here, all this response, it totally overwhelms me."

Local businesses donated truckloads of water and thousands of sandwiches, doughnuts and oranges to feed the extras, who played Browns fans.

"People in L.A. love the show, but they don't show up with trucks of stuff," said Kim Thorpe, who was in charge of food and drink for the show.

When she arrived at 5:45 a.m., she was amazed to find 200 people waiting to get into the stadium. The doors



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**Cleveland rocks:** A recent taping of "Drew Carey," above, brought fans out of the woodwork for a chance to see Carey during a break in the action. Top right: Co-star Ryan Stiles tries to hide from the heat under a Cleveland Browns styrofoam finger.

wouldn't be opened for another two hours.

"It's unusual to have so many people show up to do a TV show," said Tina Kerry, who was in charge of casting the extras. She received more

than 10,000 photos of Cleveland residents who hoped for a bit part.

Bob Parker, 46, of suburban Maple Heights, got a plum assignment. He was Carey's stand-in. "It's been interesting meeting everybody and seeing

how the show is made," said Parker, whose friends now call him "Drew Bob."

"Drew is just like he is on TV," Parker said. "He's sort of like an ordinary guy."