

A strange type of creature has been appearing in Wenatchee recently. Apparently, it comes out when the weather gets nice. It is very tall, furry, and generally has a smile on its face. Unlike most other animals, it likes to be close to people and traffic, rather than near trees and bushes. It is also very friendly to humans, just like dogs, but instead of wagging its tail, it waves its hand. Have you guessed what these creatures are? They are the happy mascots of different businesses around town. They stand on the street corners, or just outside where they work, and they wave at the passing cars. I drove past a drive-through coffee business, and found a panda dancing around on the corner. His black and white costume caught my eye, and I suddenly heard, "Mum, please, please, can we go and hug him?" coming from the back seat. So, I pulled the car around and parked in the parking lot. We got out and hugged the silent panda, who is best at hugging, so there is no need for him to talk. My daughter was thrilled. I haven't quite figured out if she knows there is a person inside, or if she chooses to believe that this really is a special kind of creature. Then today, as I was waiting at a traffic light, I spotted another furry salesman, dancing around outside a fast food hamburger business. I don't know how much business he had encouraged, but he certainly looked happy. Cars were zooming past him, but he just kept on waving. It actually got quite hot today, and I wondered if these furry salesmen were doing okay in their very warm coats. Perhaps they had been able to have a cold diet coke or an iced latte to cool them down. I have seen mascots at ball games, and in High Schools, but it seems that more and more are getting employment in Wenatchee these days. They are obviously willing to do the work that the natives do not want to do.....

Grammar notes.

Practice of the past with related verbs: to catch someone's eye, to figure out, to spot, to zoom.

1. The colorful clown caught my eye as he walked down the street, holding a large handful of balloons.
2. My son hasn't figured out the math solution yet; it might take him some time.
3. I spotted my mother's car outside her favorite antique shop; I know what she was doing.....
4. The airplanes zoomed past our house. They seemed to be very close to our rooves!