Owl Post, sweets, spells: Universal's 'Harry Potter'

BY PIYA SINHA-ROY **REUTERS**

LOS ANGELES — Just as J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" stories unmask hidden magical secrets, Universal Studios' new "Wizarding World of Harry Potter, opening Thursday, has concealed little magical mysteries for fans to uncover.

Mail from Hogsmeade

Blurring the lines of reality, The Owl Post is an actual post office where visitors can have their mail branded with the Hogsmeade stamp if they buy Hogwarts stationery. Be like Hermione and stack up on parchment paper and quills, or watch a Howler scream and then shred itself in the window display.

Pro tip: Watch out for "The Monster Book of Monsters" lurking in a cage, and recall Hagrid's advice for opening it.

'Wing-gar-dium Levi-o-sa'

With the aid of an interactive wand, purchased at Ollivanders wand store for about \$50, attendees can perform spells at 11 windows throughout Hogsmeade. Just as Hermione corrects Ron's "Wingardium Leviosa" levitating spell, make sure to point the wand directly at the windows with a flick of the wrist, which will activate a reaction in the window display, such as spinning cake stands. The windows can be identified by little markers embedded in the cobblestone streets.

Pro tip: When picking a wand at Ollivanders, check out Rowling's scroll of notes by the checkout desk on what attributes each type of

Indulge your sweet tooth ... cautiously

warned Harry to be careful about Bertie Bott's Every-Flavor Beans, which range from chocolate to boogers?



A general view of "The Wizarding World of Harry Potter" attraction during a special preview opening at Universal Studios Hollywood in Universal City, California, recently.

and vomit-flavored beans at bedded Honeydukes sweet shop, which provides an assortment of treats from pumpkin pasties, chocolate frogs and the precarious jelly beans in detailed packaging, just like the films.

Pro tip: In the back of Honeydukes is Zonko's Joke Shop, where you can buy Extendable Ears, a favorite of the mischievous Weasley

Find hidden set pieces

Props from the eight "Harry Potter" films are em- films.

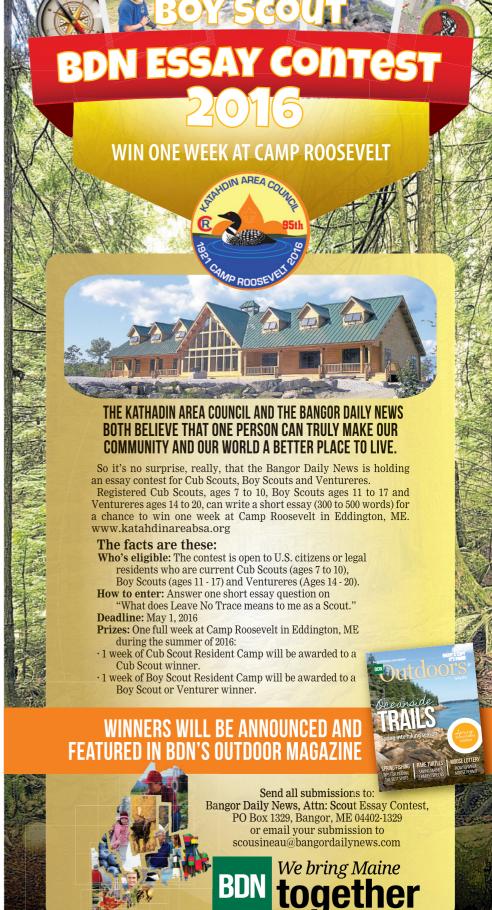
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throughout Hogsmeade. Step behind the Gladrags













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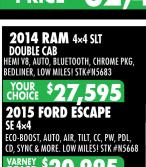
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