

# HAVE A HALLOWEEN TREAT EXTRAVAGANZA!

by Victoria Smith

*There are so many goodies to make and enjoy in the spirit of Halloween. To help choose, here are a few recipes to try out or that may even inspire a new and improved creation. Rest assured, all these treats are quick, easy and absolutely delicious-a wonderful enhancement to any Halloween party!*

## Crispy Caspers



- one 10 oz bag marshmallows
  - 1/4 cup butter
  - 6 cups crisp rice cereal
  - vanilla frosting
  - black decorating gel
- Prep/cook time: 10 min  
\*makes about 10 large ghosts
- \*To create my Crispy Caspers, melt the marshmallows and butter in a large saucepan over low heat, then stir in the cereal. Mold mixture into a baking pan and let it cool, then cut out ghost shapes, frost the tops with white icing and use candies, sprinkles or black decorating gel to make the eyes and mouths of the ghouls.

### Tips:

\*For the bars, remember to use a can of pure pumpkin and NOT pumpkin pie filling. Also, check it with a toothpick (stick into center of cake and if comes out clean, it is done baking) to make sure it is fully cooked.

\*A sturdy cookie cutter, similar to the shape of a ghost (a bell, an oval, etc.) could be used to cut out the rice crispy ghosts.

\*A fast and clean-up friendly way to crush Oreos is to put them into a Ziploc bag and crush them with a rolling pin.

\*Store-bought frosting saves time and money!

## Petrifying Pumpkin Bars



photos by Victoria Smith

- 4 eggs
  - 1 2/3 cups sugar
  - 1 cup vegetable oil
  - 15 oz. canned pumpkin
  - 2 cups sifted flour
  - 2 tsp baking powder
  - 2 tsp cinnamon
  - 1 tsp salt
  - 1 tsp baking soda
  - cream cheese frosting
- Prep time: 15 min  
Cook time: 30 min  
\*makes about 20 medium size bars

\*To make my Petrifying Pumpkin Bars, first preheat your oven to 350 degrees.

Using an electric mixer, combine eggs, sugar, oil and pumpkin, then stir together the dry ingredients and add them to the wet ones.

Mix ingredients all together with a mixer at low speed until the batter is smooth. Spread when finished into a greased 13 by 10 inch baking pan and bake for about 30 minutes (let cool entirely before cutting/ frosting and decorating with a Halloween theme- for example, drawing pumpkins, spiders, jack-o-lanterns or ghosts on top of the icing with black and orange decorator gel).

## Worm Burgers



- Vanilla wafer cookies
  - Chocolate icing
  - Gummy worms
  - Oreos
- Prep time: about 25 min for 40

\*Do not be grossed out or intimidated by my Worm Burgers. They are quite tasty and very simple to put together. You merely frost one side of two vanilla wafers with dark chocolate icing, adding crushed Oreos to one and a gummy worm to the other, and then push the frosted sides together for the "burger" effect.

### Student Responses:

-Senior Ashley Cavanaugh said the pumpkin bars were "absolutely amazing" and senior Thomas Williams said, "Tony the Tiger would say they were grrrrreat!"

-My Crispy Caspers were a triumph as well, but unfortunately they were gone before there was time to ask their consumers what they thought of them; however, a lot of "hmmmming" took place.

-Senior Catherine Cuff after eating my worm burgers said, "I loved them! The flavors actually blended really well together."

# Parkland's grading system concerns many about grade point average

by Erica Shartle

G.P.A. Many students know exactly what this is: grade point average. Some people view this as a very important number and as a key to getting accepted into a good college. Others believe it to be inefficient and corrupt. One thing is for sure: G.P.A. has become a very controversial topic lately.

The current GPA calculations are based on a four point system, but includes a weighted grade for students taking Honors or Advanced Placement (AP) level courses. While some electives are weighted classes, most are not. Many students who are involved in extracurricular activities offered as a formal class are at a disadvantage because these classes are non-weighted, and consequently, only worth a maximum of 4.0 points. "The G.P.A. system rewards students who avoid non-weighted electives, and often students will take weighted courses that they have no interest in," said junior, Alina Spiegel. In many cases, students will only take weighted courses in order to maintain a perfect 5.0 G.P.A. for college and ignore classes that are more relevant to their future plans and potential career choices. If a weighted course will not fit into their schedule, some students will elect to take

a study hall since the study hall is not graded and therefore will have no effect on their G.P.A.

As the first step in reforming the current system, the Parkland Board of School Directors has decided to eliminate

iceberg for the district. The Class Rank Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that a three-tiered system replace the current two-tiered system. In other words, they want to keep the Honors courses weighted, but give additional

G.P.A.problem? Possibly. What are the colleges really looking at when they look at high school transcripts? Is G.P.A. really all that important in getting into a good college? Dr. K. Speizio, Dean of Graduate Students at Cedar Crest College, said, "G.P.A. is a good predictor of whether a student will be successful at their college, and it shows accumulative success in high school. This is why colleges look at G.P.A. so much.

However, the system needs to be standardized throughout all the districts, otherwise it is hard to compare from one school to another." Dr. Speizio continues in suggesting the ideal G.P.A. system. "It must be standardized so that colleges can immediately recognize the number and know exactly what it means and it must be accumulative of the student's four years in high school. Basically, the standard 4.0 system is the idea and that is why it was created."

Obviously, this is not the end of the issue. Unfortunately, most students feel that G.P.A. is the real problem and the board's decision to eliminate class rank will not fix this problem. A better solution is needed. All students can do is wait and see what direction the Board of Directors ultimately decides to take. Stay tuned... it looks like life at Parkland is about to change.



photo by Erica Shartle

Juniors Alina Spiegel and Camille Houferak sit and study intensely.

public reporting of class rank starting with the class of 2013. Also with this class, the board plans for the district to cease recognizing a valedictorian and a salutatorian.

However, this is only the tip of the

weight to AP courses. This would possibly mean that an "A" in an AP class would be 5.0 points, an "A" in an honors class would be 4.5 points, and an "A" in a GHP or CP class would remain 4.0. Is this the ultimate answer to Parkland's