MOLASSES COOKIES (1st Place Winner)
Karen Obringer

3/4 cup Butter/Margarine
1 cup Sugar
1/4 cup Molasses
1 Egg
2 tsp Baking Soda
2 cup Flour
1/2 tsp Cloves
1/2 tsp Ginger
1 tsp Cinnamon
1/2 tsp Salt

Cream butter/margarine, sugar, molasses, & egg - beat well
Combine flour, soda, salt, & spices together
Add dry mixture to molasses mixture

Form tps of dough into balls and roll in sugar to coat
Place cookies on a greased cookie sheet or a non-stick cookie sheet

Bake at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes
Makes 2-3 dozen

Chocolate Malted Cookies (2nd Place Winner)
Nedra Curry

1 cup butter-flavored shortening
1-1/4 cups packed brown sugar
1/2 cup malted milk powder
2 tablespoons chocolate syrup
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 egg
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1-1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chunks
1 cup (6 ounces) milk chocolate chips

In a mixing bowl, combine shortening, brown sugar, malted milk powder, chocolate syrup and vanilla; beat for 2 minutes. Add egg. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Stir in
chocolate chunks and chips. Shape into 2-in. balls; place 3 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 12-14 minutes on pan before removing to wire racks to cool completely. Yield: about 1-1/2 dozen. (From Taste of Home; 1995)

**Ooey Gooey Butter Bars**  
Lisa Eley

Cake ingredients:
1- yellow cake mix  
1 - egg  
1/2 cup butter softened (not margarine)

Filling ingredients:
1 tsp. vanilla  
2 – eggs  
1 - 8 oz. pkg. cream cheese  
1 - 16 oz. pkg. confectioners’ sugar  
1/2 cup butter softened (not margarine)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 13 x 9 x 2 baking pan. In a bowl mix together with electric mixer cake mix, egg and butter. Pat into the bottom of prepared pan and set aside. Still using an electric mixer, beat softened cream cheese until smooth; add eggs and vanilla. Dump in confectioners’ sugar and beat well. Reduce speed of mixer and slowly pour in butter. Mix well. Pour filling onto cake mixture and spread evenly. Bake for 40-50 minutes. Let cool completely and cut into small squares - they are very rich.

**Peanut Butter Whoopie Pies**  
Penny Pereira

For the cookies:
3 ½ cups flour  
1 ½ cups unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 tablespoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 sticks (1 cup) butter, room temperature  
2 cups sugar  
2 large eggs  
2 cups buttermilk, room temperature  
2 teaspoons vanilla

For the filling:

1 1/3 cups creamy peanut butter  
1 cup (2 sticks) butter, room temperature  
1 ½ cups confectioners’ sugar  
Coarse salt optional
Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Line two rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper. Sift together flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. With an electric mixer, beat butter and sugar on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add eggs, buttermilk and vanilla. Beat until well-combined. On low speed, slowly add dry ingredients, mix until combined.

Drop 1 ½ tablespoons of batter onto prepared baking sheets, spacing 2 inches apart. Bake until set, about 8 minutes, rotating halfway through. (When the top of a cookie is gently touched, it should feel soft but not wet.) Cool completely on a wire rack.

Make filling: With an electric mixer, beat peanut butter and butter on high speed until smooth. Reduce speed to low. Add confectioners’ sugar; mix until combined. Raise speed to high, and mix until fluffy and smooth about 3 minutes. Season with salt, if desired.

Assemble cookies: Spread 1 heaping tablespoon filling on the flat side of 1 cookie. Sandwich with another cookie. Repeat with remaining cookies and filling. Cookies can be refrigerated in single layers in airtight containers up to 3 days. Bring to room temperature before serving.

**Lemon Oscar Bars (1st Place Winner)**
Maggie Hunter

Brownies:
1-1/2 cups all purpose flour  
2 cups granulated sugar  
1 tsp. salt  
1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened  
2 eggs  
2 tsp. pure lemon extract  
1 tsp. grated lemon zest

Lemon cream cheese frosting:  
1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese (softened)  
4 tbsp. softened butter  
1 (1 pound) box confectioners’ sugar  
1 tbsp. lemon zest  
1 tbsp. lemon juice

**INSTRUCTIONS:**
Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a 13X9 inch pan.

*Lemon Brownies:*
Stir together flour, granulated sugar and salt in a bowl. Add butter, eggs, lemon extract and lemon zest. Using a handheld electric mixer, beat until well blended. Pour batter into a prepared pan and bake for 20-30 minutes, or until light golden brown and set. Remove from oven, allow to cool, and pierce entire cake with a fork. Spread the lemon Cream Cheese frosting over completely cooled brownies. Cut into squares.
**Lemon Cream Cheese Frosting:**
In a large mixing bowl, whip the butter and cream cheese together with a hand held electric mixer. Gradually beat in the confectioners’ sugar until it is all combined and smooth. Beat in the lemon zest and juice.

**NOTES:** The recipe for this frosting makes twice as much as you need for a batch of brownies. Cut it in half for only one batch. Or use half and freeze the rest for another time.

When zesting a citrus fruit, like a lemon, only grate off the yellow skin, but not the white part underneath. It’s bitter and may ruin whatever you’re making. Use a microplane grater, but be careful using it, guys, as it will grate your fingers, too!

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**Perfect Apple Pie (1st Place Winner)**
Marilyn Marchionni

**Pastry:**
1-3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1-3/4 cup shortening
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup cold water
1 egg
1 tablespoon white vinegar

Mix together dry ingredients. Cut shortening into flour mixture until evenly crumbly. Beat egg with water and vinegar and mix into flour until evenly moist. Roll and cut into 4 equal lengths. Wrap and refrigerate until ready to roll.

Makes enough pastry for 2 pies.

**Filling (for one apple pie):**
4–6 tart apples (Jonathan apples work best)
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3/4–1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg or to taste
1 tablespoon butter

Peel and cut apples into thin slices. Sprinkle lemon juice on apples for added tartness and to prevent fruit from darkening. Mix remaining dry ingredients and stir into apples. Spoon fruit mixture into unbaked pie shell. Dot with butter and top with a second crust, pinching edges to seal. Cut steam slits and sprinkle top with raw sugar.
Bake in 400° oven for 50 minutes or until apples are tender and pastry is golden.

**Red Carpet Cupcakes (3rd Place Winner)**
Greg Anderson

Prep: 1 hour  
Bake: 20 minutes  
Cool: 5 minutes  
Chill: 1 hour

**Ingredients**
1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened  
1/3 cup sugar  
1 egg  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1/2 tsp. coconut extract (optional)  
1/8 tsp. salt  
1-1/2 cups flaked coconut  
a few chopped pecans--amount to your liking  
1 pkg. 2-layer-size red velvet cake mix  
Vanilla Butter Cream Frosting (recipe below)

**Directions**
1. For filling: In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar on medium speed with electric mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in egg, vanilla, coconut extract, if you like, and salt. Stir in coconut and pecans. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour or until stiff.

2. Line about thirty 2-1/2-inch muffin cups with paper bake cups (use paper baking cups with July 4th theme); set aside.

3. Prepare cake mix according to package directions for cupcakes. Fill each muffin cup with 2 tablespoons cake batter. Drop 1 tablespoon of the filling into each bake cup. Top with 1 tablespoon more batter. With a small spoon, smooth batter over filling to cover.

4. Bake in a 350 degrees F oven about 20 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted off center (in the cake part, not the filling) comes out clean. Cool cupcakes in pans on wire racks for 5 minutes. Remove cupcakes from pans; cool completely on wire racks.

5. Generously frost with Vanilla Butter Cream Frosting. Just before serving, decorate with an assortment of patriotic decorations. (Cupcakes are best the day they are frosted.) Makes about 30 cupcakes.

6. Vanilla Butter Cream Frosting: In a large mixing bowl, beat 1/2 cup butter, softened, for 30 seconds on high speed with an electric mixer. Add 4 1/2 cups sifted powdered sugar, 1/2 cup at a time, alternating with 6 tablespoons half-and-half, light cream or whole milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating well after each addition. Add 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla and 1/2 teaspoon coconut extract, if you like. Beat on high speed until smooth and creamy. If necessary, beat in enough additional half-and-half (about 1 teaspoon) to reach spreading consistency. Makes 2 3/4 cups.