



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on March 3, 2014

Kid Cupcake Creator Back in Business Thanks to Generous Donations

A month after her home cupcake business was needlessly shuttered by the local health department, an 11-year-old Illinois girl is getting her dream kitchen — one that will enable her to reopen her business without running afoul of the bureaucracy.



Until January 26, Chloe Stirling of Troy, Illinois, had been selling her homemade cupcakes to friends and family members and even donating some for fundraisers. On that day, the *Belleville News-Democrat* ran a story on Chloe's business, *Hey, Cupcake!* The orders poured in.

The next day, the Madison County Health Department called the Stirlings and informed them that *Hey, Cupcake!* would be no more. No one had complained that Chloe's cupcakes had made him sick; in fact, the glowing newspaper article and subsequent orders suggested just the opposite. But Chloe had failed to jump through the health department's hoops by getting a permit and working out of a separate, commercial kitchen rather than her family's kitchen, and so she was put out of business.

Chloe's story received nationwide attention, including coverage by [The New American](#).

"The support that she's gotten from everywhere, all over the country, has been amazing," Chloe's mother, Heather Stirling, told the *News-Democrat* February 27.

On that day, at an assembly at Triad Middle School, Chloe, her parents, and her fellow students watched Chloe's appearance on *Rachael Ray*. The show had been taped in New York three days earlier, with Chloe and her parents meeting not just Ray but also Buddy Valastro of TLC's *Cake Boss*. Ray and Valastro presented Chloe with "a full suite of GE kitchen appliances," the paper reported.

Now the only problem was where to put all the new appliances. Fortunately, Chloe's father's employer came to the rescue. At the assembly, Jason Spengler, owner of Spengler Plumbing and Cooling in O'Fallon, announced that, with the help of donations, his company will "lead the charge" to build the kitchen Chloe needs to get back in business.

"Everyone at Spengler considers Chloe part of our family," Spengler said. "Her dad, Ched, has worked as one of our top plumbers for the past seven years. And we have enjoyed many of Chloe's cupcake creations. So when we heard that she was put out of business, we stepped into high gear to get her back baking again."

Spengler and crew even brought along "an 8-by-4-foot image of the commercial kitchen," wrote the *News-Democrat*. "They also gave the school a \$500 donation in Chloe's name as a way to honor her fellow students, who created and sold hundreds of 'Hey Cupcake' T-shirts to show their support."

The company is accepting donations toward "Chloe's Cupcake Kitchen" at its website, www.spenglerco.com, where updates on the progress of the kitchen will also be posted. The kitchen is



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expected to be completed by mid-May, according to the [Associated Press](#).

It is, however, worth recalling that while Hey, Cupcake! will soon be up and running again, countless Americans find their dreams stymied by bureaucracy every day but aren't fortunate enough to get the kind of outpouring of public sympathy that Chloe received. Thus, though Chloe's victory over red tape is worthy of celebration, Americans should not lose sight of the fact that such obstacles to entrepreneurship need to be removed or at least greatly reduced so that surmounting them does not require a nationwide media campaign.

For now, though, let us raise a cupcake to Chloe Stirling's entrepreneurial spirit — she has a pet-sitting business, too — and the many people who are helping her to achieve her dreams.

"It's been really crazy," Chloe said at the assembly, "but it's been really fun."



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