

# Hometown

## Kentuck students reunited with Army Dad

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*Star-Tribune Staff Writer*

Three little girls got a big surprise during a school assembly last week.

Lorelai, 9, Taelyn, 9, and Cadence Rosenoff, 7, entered the Kentuck Elementary School cafeteria with more than 200 of their classmates for an assembly at around 1:45 p.m. on Sep. 2.

During the assembly, Kentuck Elementary Principal Bobby Shields announced the names of students with high academic achievement during the first six weeks of school.

Next, Shields announced that a magician who was scheduled to be there that day would not be able to arrive until Thursday.

After the students' collective sighs of disappointment were hushed, Shields said he had his own magic trick to perform for the students and he needed three volunteers.

But there was a catch.

They all had to be girls and they needed to be sisters.

Lorelai, Taelyn, and Cadence were asked to go to the stage where they faced the crowd of their fellow students and teachers.

Shields then asked the audience to count down, starting with the number 10.

As the countdown approached one, the blue curtains on stage were opened to reveal their father, Army Sgt. Nicholas Rosenoff, standing behind them.

Shields then asked the girls to turn around and that was when they saw their father who had been deployed to Kuwait six months ago, and who they were not expecting to see again for another six months.

The four embraced while the audience applauded and cheered the reunion.

Lorelai and Taelyn are in the fourth grade while Cadence is in the second grade.

Shields orchestrated the surprise when he spoke with the girls' mother, Mandi Rosenoff, during school registration this summer.

"She told me that [Nicholas] was currently serving in Kuwait and she was going to have to check her students out on a certain date when he was going to be coming back, to meet him at the airport, and I said 'I think I can do that up one better.' At that moment, we tried to plan to stage something that would be a really neat homecoming for [Nicholas] and a surprise for the kids," Shields said.

Keeping the surprise a secret was not particularly challenging, according to Shields.

"I told no one. The only people I told were my assistant principal and [Mandi]. We tried to keep it a secret. In the last few days, I alerted our faculty that something really neat was going to happen here," Shields said.

Mandi said even she didn't

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Bobby Allen Roach/Star-Tribune

**Army Sgt. Nicholas Rosenoff returned to the United States after spending the last six months deployed in Kuwait. He began his visit by surprising his three daughters, Kentuck Elementary School students, during what they thought was a normal school assembly.**



Bobby Allen Roach/Star-Tribune

Three sisters attending Kentuck Elementary School had an unexpected family reunion last Wednesday when their father, Army Sgt. Nicholas Rosenoff, emerged from behind the curtain on the stage in the school cafeteria. Pictured from left to right is the Rosenoff family: Taelyn, Mandi, Cadence, Nicholas, and Lorelai.

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## Surprise

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have every detail about what was going to happen beforehand.

“Mr. Shields was amazing to work with about the surprise. He even kept me in the dark about some of it. It was so hard not telling the girls. Even though this isn’t the first time Nick has been overseas, it’s been the hardest on the girls,” Mandi said.

The first-year principal said he was pleased with the event.

“It was a blazing success,” Shields said, “It was a moment, I would have to say, that very few folks here at Kentuck will forget for a very long time.”

The girls’ mother was appreciative of the

effort that went into coordinating the surprise.

“I am just grateful that our daughters attend a school that supports not only their dad, but also them,” Mandi said.

Nicholas is from Danville and graduated from Galileo Magnet High School in 2004. He has served in the Army since 2010.

Mandi is from Sutherlin and graduated from Dan River High School in 2004.

When asked how they felt after the reunion, the Rosenoff sisters replied together with a single word:

“Happy.”