

By JOEL MILLS of the Tribune The Lewiston Tribune | [0 comments](#)

MOSCOW - On paper, "The Mr. Hoffmann Show" is a typical independent radio offering of eclectic music interspersed with movie and product reviews, stories and even a few jokes.

But on air, listeners will instantly discern the atypical: The DJ's voice emanates from the mouth of an 8-year-old kid.

"A long time ago, my mom had a radio show, and sometimes I would listen to it on the air," Moscow's Oscar Hoffmann said of his inspiration to get behind a microphone.

The excitable youngster's mom, Leeanne Hoffmann, was a sometime-DJ on Radio Free Moscow (KRFP 92.5 FM) when it first went on the air almost seven years ago. His dad, Bob Hoffmann, was one of the community members who helped raise the money to found the station and get it organized.

Oscar's radio pedigree goes deeper. It could even be said that Oscar exists because of radio.

In the mid-1990s, Leeanne volunteered as a DJ at KUOI - the University of Idaho student station - just so she could get a free email address and correspond with Bob when he lived in Ohio.

That electronic connection helped perpetuate their love, leading to marriage, and eventually to Oscar.

So, with that background, it would seem "The Mr. Hoffmann Show" was destined to be. But that doesn't mean it's been easy getting it produced on time every week, and executed cleanly.

"Trust me," Oscar said, "you don't want a radio show if you're a little, little kid. It's really tough."

Leeanne said Oscar was initially enthusiastic when he first signed up for the hour-long Tuesday slot that begins at 3 p.m.

"Then I kinda didn't want to do it," he said of the intimidation he felt, "but I had to."

"We were committed," Leeanne added with a knowing laugh.

To make things easier, Oscar and his parents prerecord most of the show at home. For example, Tuesday's show featured the second part of his recorded review of the LegoLand theme park in Chicago, which the family visited during its recent summer vacation.

Mom's organizational skills have played a big role in keeping Oscar on track. She keeps a bright orange sheet of paper clamped to a clipboard in the master-control room. It lists the timing of each song, segment and station identification so her son doesn't get lost.

Leeanne sits behind Oscar and the sound board during the show, acting as conductor and lending an extra pair of arms to the complex ballet of button pushing, disc changing and microphone adjusting.

Oscar does do some parts of his show live, like the jokes. Before he went on the air Tuesday, he recited a couple of zingers from previous shows.

"What's black and white and green all over? A moldy zebra."

And this golden oldie: "What's red and green and goes 60 miles per hour? A frog in a blender."

Once he brought sidekick and friend Avery Caudill into the studio to help with some of the jokes.

In between segments during Tuesday's show, Oscar said his goal is to one day be famous, and radio is his first step in that direction.

Speaking of fame, he then went back on the air to introduce Johnny Cash singing his renowned live rendition of "Folsom Prison Blues."

"Is he dead?" Oscar asked his mom after turning off the mic.

"Mmm hmm," replied Leeanne.

"I knew it!" he exclaimed, exasperated.

"All the greats are dead," Leeanne lamented.

"Except for me!" Oscar said, and gave his mom a big, smiling hug.

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