

By VINCE ALFONSO JR.

Out of the mouths of babes? Buzzzzzz!!! Too Slow! Guess what? I don't know either. In fact, I don't think anybody knows when, where or by whom this wonderful old cliché was first uttered.

But, I do know who said, "Kids say the darnedest things"... Art Linkletter (way back in the TV land that time forgot).

It was Saturday morning and I had to open The Rail (my old course). My daughter, Liza, was seven years old at the time and had come to work with Dad. We were looking forward to a great day together. Never would I have guessed the lesson I was about to learn.

I assigned Liza the job of handing me the small range baskets from the floor behind the counter (pre-range-servant days). She caught on quickly and was beginning to talk about turning professional when the Bean brothers (Tom, Jim and Bob) showed up for their weekly Saturday morning tee time. Bob Bean leaned over the counter and said, "Who's the new assistant pro?"

Before I could introduce Liza, the other two Bean brothers leaned over the counter to hear my reply. I put my arm around Liza, looked up at the Bean brothers as they craned their necks over the counter, and said, "This is my new assistant, Liza. She is seven and thinking about turning professional."

Then I turned to Liza and said, "Liza, meet the Bean brothers."

Tom said, "Hi Liza, pleased to meet you."

Jim said, "Hi Liza, pleased to meet you."

And Bob said, "Hi Liza, pleased to meet you."

Then almost as if rehearsed, they said in unison, "We're the Bean brothers."

I started to ring up their greens fees, but Liza kept tugging on my pant leg trying to tell me something.

"What, Liza?" I asked, almost annoyed.

"Daddy, the Bean brothers look like the three Musketeers!" she said.

Well, when the Bean brothers heard that, their chests swelled out and they grinned from ear to ear. They started mumbling things like, "Isn't she cute;" "What a sweetheart;" and "That girl's gonna go a long way."

And you know what? They kept it up all day. When they came in to get a soda at the turn, they

checked in with their little sweet-heart and again before they left for the day.

Early in the afternoon and shortly after the Bean brothers had left, I got a call from my wife, Sally. Of course, she was inquiring about Liza and how things were going. I could hardly wait

to tell her how Liza had charmed the Bean Brothers with her Musketeer comparison.

No sooner had the words rolled off my tongue, when Sally burst into uncontrollable laughter.

I kept asking, "What's so dadgum funny?"

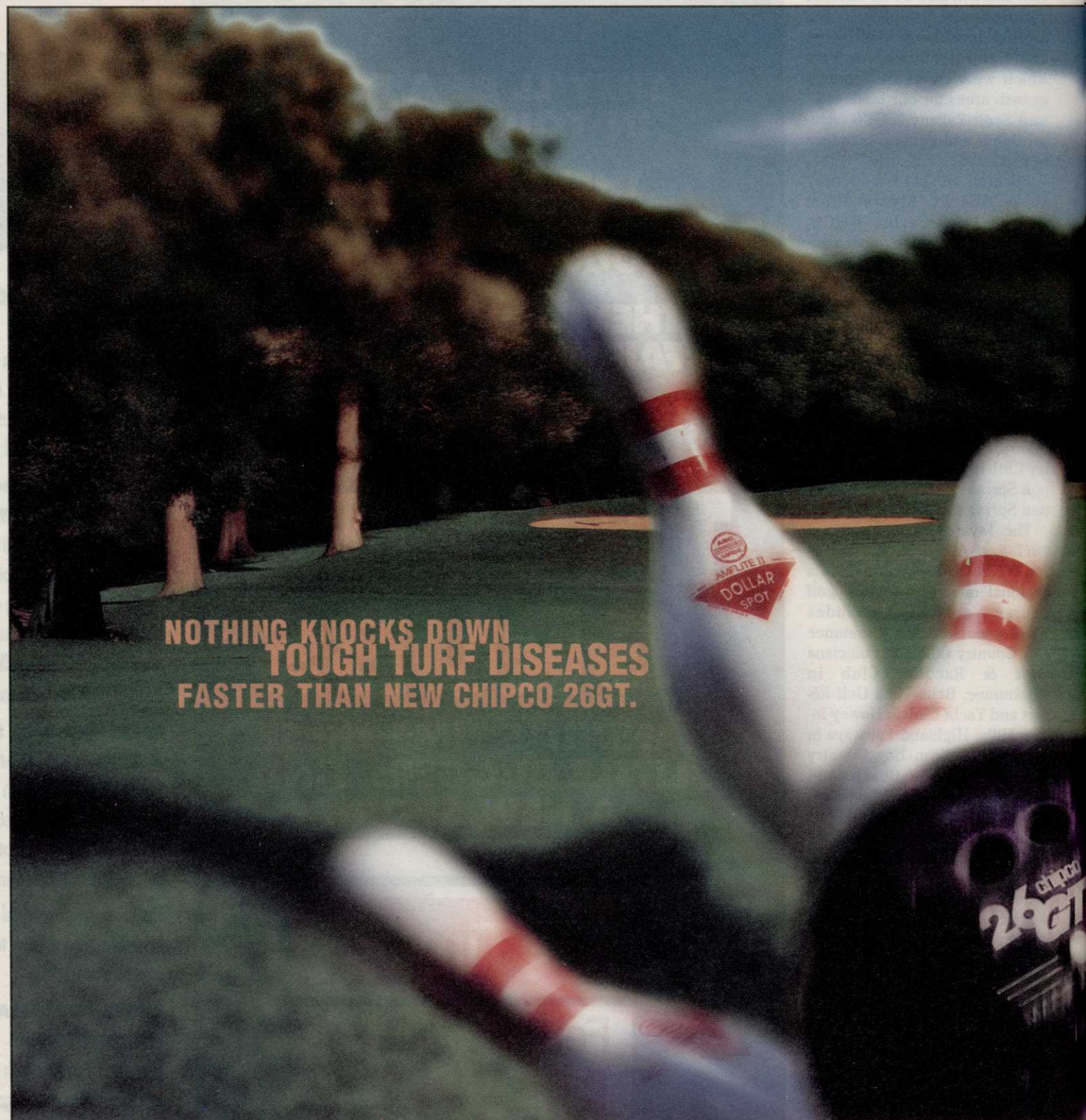
She couldn't speak for laughing so hard. Finally, she blurted out, "Vince! Liza thinks the Three Stooges are the Three Musketeers!"

Luckily, the Bean brothers never found out what Liza was really trying to say. The truth is, however, Liza really liked the

Three Stooges and thought they were funny. So, from her perspective, she was complimenting them, even though it would have taken another 7-year-old to understand.

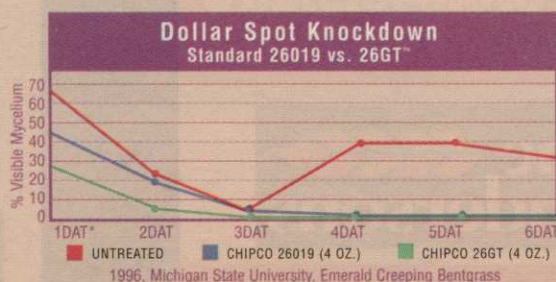
But the good was done. Those very flattering words of Liza's had done the trick. The Bean brothers were no longer just customers. They were very

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Vince Alfonso Jr. is a 40-year golf-industry veteran, president of Alfonso Creative Enterprises Inc., and owner of Kimberling Golf Course near Branson, Mo. He can be reached at 417-739-4370.

Greenwell joins Troon Golf as sales/marketing chief

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Troon Golf, a Scottsdale-based golf development and management company, has added a long-time member of the Arizona golf scene to its corporate management team.

Timothy J. Greenwell has been named the firm's new director of sales and marketing. Prior to

joining Troon Golf, Greenwell worked in several key golf-industry positions including the past six years as Tournament & Marketing Director for the Southwest Section PGA. He also spent five years as Assistant Executive Director for the Arizona Golf Association and four years as Executive Director of the Jun-

ior Golf Association of Arizona.

Troon Golf President and Chief Executive Officer, Dana Garmany, commented on Greenwell's hiring, "Tim has a wealth of golf knowledge and strong marketing background. His respect for the history and tradition of the game will bring to Troon Golf a perspective that

we believe will better serve all of our clients."

Troon Golf's current list of golf courses include Troon North Golf Club and Legend Trail Golf Club in Scottsdale, the Golf Club at Vistoso at La Paloma Country Club in Tucson, Ariz., and Primm Valley Golf Club in Las Vegas. Scheduled to open in 1997 are The Ridge Course at Castle Pines North in Denver and Talking

Stick Golf Club in Scottsdale.

Born in Chicago, the 40-year old Greenwell is a 1979 graduate of Arizona State University's College of Business.

His list of playing achievements include being selected Most Valuable Player of Scottsdale Community College's 1975 golf team, a two-time representative of Arizona's Pacific Coast Amateur Team and a participant in three USGA Championships.

He also served as a panelist for *GOLF Magazine's* course rating committee. His wife of 12 years, Jeane, also works in the golf industry as a Golf Shop Merchandiser.

Granite to build new Texas links

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Newly capitalized Granite Golf Group Inc. (see story page 3) has signed a preliminary agreement with the Industrial Development Corp. of Universal City, Texas, to design, build and operate a \$5.5 million golf facility.

In addition to designing and building the 18-hole course, Granite will develop state-of-the-art training and practice facilities and a driving range.

It will also supervise the design and construction of a clubhouse, community conference center and banquet facilities.

Total projected costs are in the \$5.5 million range.

Alfonso comment

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happy customers.

I certainly don't want you to think for a minute that I'm advocating that you trump up some bogus positive comment just to woo a customer.

That would be the farthest thing from the truth.

No, I think Liza's Musketeer mistake teaches us to look for ways to compliment our customers at every turn.

It's like my Daddy once said, "Son, you'll catch more flies with honey, than you'll ever catch with sour pickles."

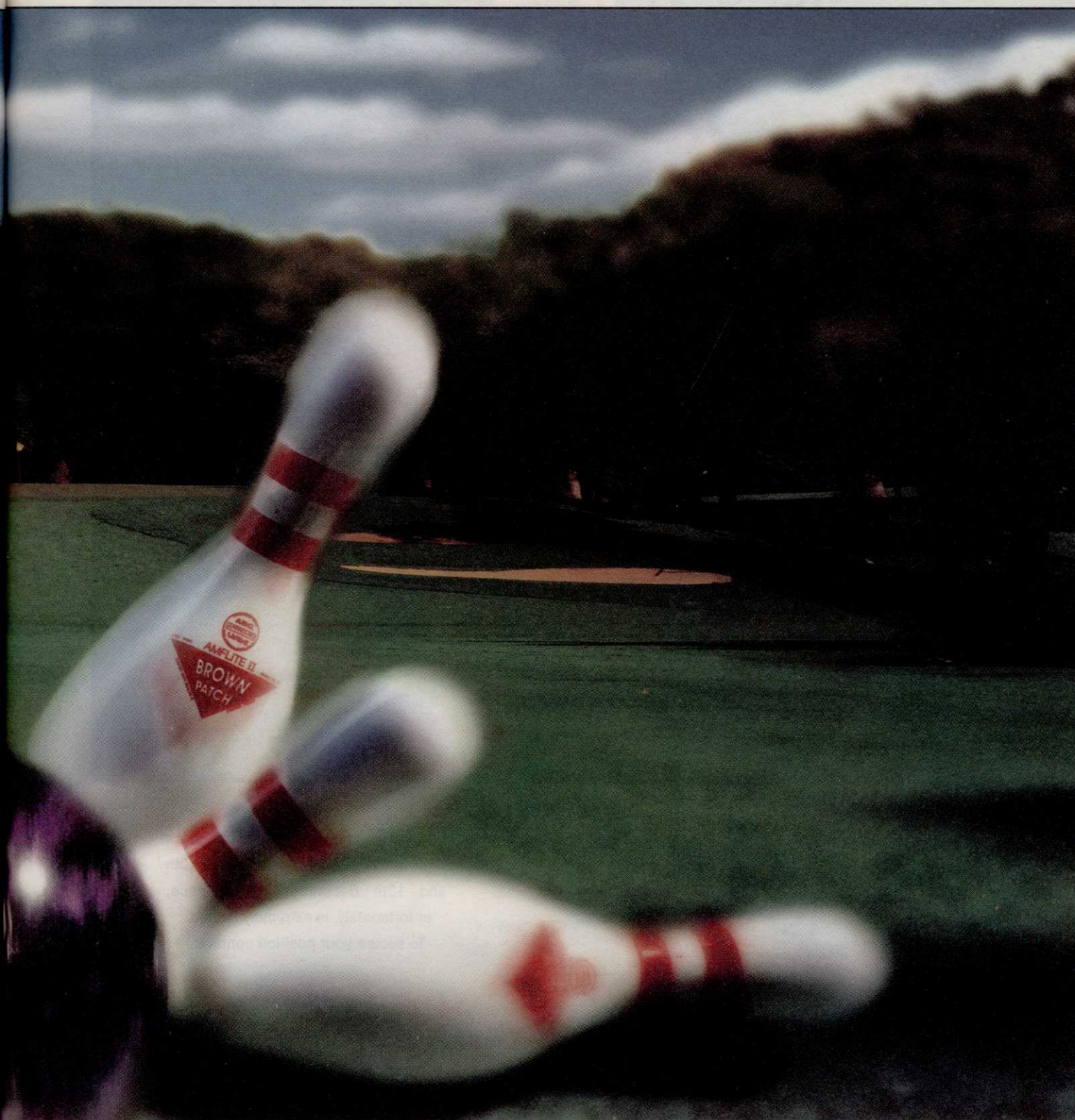
Wait a minute. Was it my dad who said that or was it Erma Bombeck?

Whatever.

The truth is, it works. Customers, employees, spouses and children: everybody likes to hear something nice said about them.

Why don't we all work on it this month? What do you say? We might just be surprised at just how far a few kind words can take us.

How about it? Let's look for the good in others. It can be life changing.



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