



## from the Bookshelf

### *Home Run*

by Robert Burleigh

illustrated by Mike Wimmer, '84 B.F.A.

Harcourt Brace & Company

32 pages.

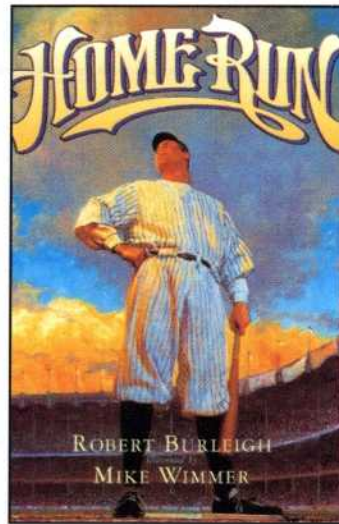
17 full-page color illustrations.

\$16 hardcover, 9-by-11-inch format.

**I**ftiming is everything, author Robert Burleigh and artist Mike Wimmer deserve the first prize for foresight. What more appropriate time could they have chosen than this, the Year of the Home Run, to publish their charmingly written, gloriously illustrated Babe Ruth-for-children?

Burleigh's storyline is a poetic account of a single at-bat—the legendary Babe standing at the plate, reflecting, preparing, executing the swing that forever changes the game he loves. For those who prefer facts to poetry, Burleigh supplies vintage-style baseball cards throughout the book recounting the storied highlights of the Babe's career.

What sets this book apart, however, are the Wimmer illustrations, full pages of dramatically expressive, Norman Rockwell-style depictions of George Herman Ruth, boy and man, and the game that swirled around him. (*Sooner Magazine* readers will remember OU alumnus Wimmer's work from the Winter 1996 cover story, "Life Doesn't Get Any Better.") You can almost feel the impact of bat on ball as the Babe connects, read the intensity of his thoughts as his eyes follow the ball's flight up and over the fence, hear the intake of breath from the fans in



that one heart-stopping moment.

The marketing pitch for *Home Run* targets children 6 to 10, but do not let family demographics prevent you from enjoying this gem. In the absence of a complimentary copy normally provided for reviewers, I bought this one myself. Fortunately there are no Little Leaguers on my Christmas list to whom I feel compelled to give it.

Another Burleigh-Wimmer collaboration highly recommended for children is *Flight: The Journey of Charles Lindbergh*, the Orbis Pictus Award winner for nonfiction. Burleigh also authored *Hoops*, honored by the *School Library Journal* as Best Book of the Year and a *Booklist* Editors' Choice. Wimmer illustrated *Train Song* by Diane Siebert, *Bully for You, Teddy Roosevelt* by Jean Fritz and this reviewer's personal favorite, *All the Places to Love* by Patricia MacLachlan.

—CAROL J. BURR

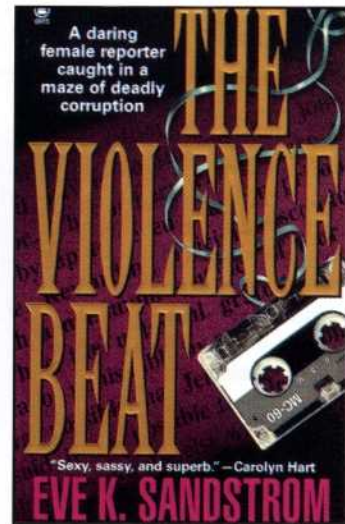
### *The Violence Beat*

by Eve K. Sandstrom, '58 B.A.

Penguin Putnam Inc.

384 pages. \$5.99 paperback.

**A**t the risk of blowing my reviewer's cover, candor requires confession. I always have liked Eve Kimbrell Sandstrom's style—as an OU student writing in



*The Oklahoma Daily* during the late '50s, in the *Lawton Constitution* over the years since, in her all-too-infrequent work for *Sooner Magazine* and in her Oklahoma-set murder mysteries. Sandstrom writes as she talks—which results in copy that is well-constructed, articulate, knowledgeable and entertaining.

In *Violence Beat*, Sandstrom's fourth published novel, she introduces a new heroine drawn from her own 25 years of Oklahoma newspaper experience as a reporter, feature writer, editor and columnist. However, no journalism school, least of all the one that trained Sandstrom, would advocate Nell Matthews' penchant for personal involvement in her stories. In no time, Nell is up to her fiery red hair in a hostage situation, conspiracy, corruption, a conflicted romance with a local cop and, of course, murder most foul.

Sandstrom's characters are well-drawn, her plotting is workmanlike and the pace action-driven. A bonus is the portrait she draws of the operation of today's newspaper—hardly recognizable as the stop-the-presses stereotype of *Front Page* fame.

Fans of the "cozy" mystery genre who enjoy *Violence Beat* can look forward to its sequel, *The Homicide Report*, and should try a couple from Sandstrom's earlier series, in paperback from Worldwide Library, *The Devil Down Home* and *The Down Home Heifer Heist*.

—CAROL J. BURR