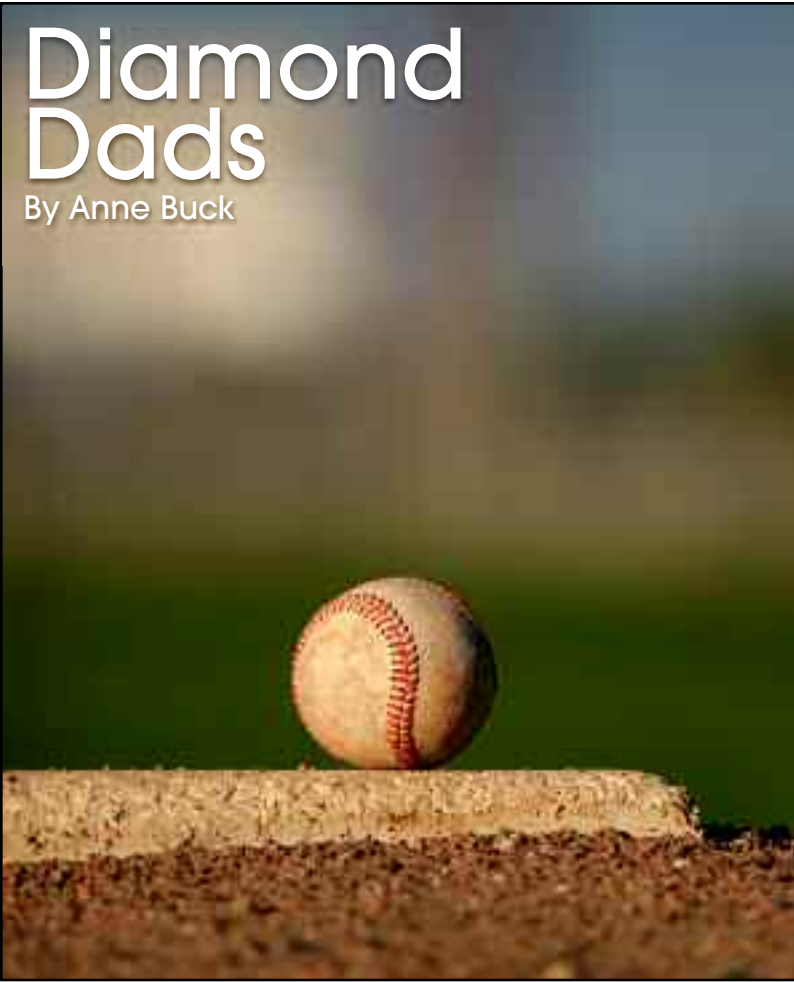


# Diamond Dads

By Anne Buck



When he was young I took my place  
Of honor near the dirt,  
Knuckle-clenched to chain link fence,  
Watching for his shirt;  
The one that bore our name  
And bound the two of us as one,  
Clean to rusty brown or green,  
It read, "He is my son."

Sweltering heat, mosquitoes, gnats,  
Mistaken umpire calls,  
Three-dollar bottled waters;  
My son was worth it all.  
"Steal or stay?"—he'd look my way,  
I'd clench the fence real tight,  
I'd lace his cleats, they'd come untied,  
But it would be alright.

The years have passed; he's older now,  
But I am here again,  
As *my* son takes his place of honor,  
Outside, peering in.  
*His* time now to pace and pray,  
"Don't let anyone get hurt!"  
While watching for his son who wears  
Our name upon his shirt.