Program stresses that skills in statistics be learned young

By Mia B. Moody

STAFF WRITER

In an effort to improve the skills of students taking tatistics courses, Texas A&M is serving as a host for the eight programs offered in the nation that will ive teachers of grades kindergarten through 12 pointrs on how to make the subject more interesting for stu-

The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundaion Summer Institute in Statistics is sponsoring the one-week workshop that began Monday.

Dr. James F. McNamara, coordinator of the program

and a professor in the educational psychology department at A&M, said, "Because of a report released by the Mathematics and Statistics Educational Board we felt ike students need to start learning the basics of statistics eginning as early as kindergarten. The workshop is ne of the measures that is being used to give teachers the skills necessary to implement the teaching of statis-tics into their curriculum."

Gail Burrill, chairman of the joint committee of stastics and mathematics teachers for the Mathematics nd Statistics Educational Board, said the program, "Eerybody Counts," was formed to bring students up to a level where they can compete with students in other

countries in statistics literacy.

'We have found that students who have graduated from high schools in America in the past generally aren't able to work with numbers at the level equivalent to students in Japan, for example," Burrill said. "We hope that by introducing students to intuitive and theoretical courses at an earlier age we will increase their competency to a level that is competitive with other

McNamara said statistics is an important part of the modern student's life because its techniques are used in determining quality control in manufacturing and food preparation, and in sampling to estimate voter and con-

Murray Siegal, site coordinator of the workshop, said he and three other teachers from across the country were chosen to direct the workshop.

"We are a group of mathematics teachers from high-schools and junior high schools who were chosen by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation Summer Institute in Statistics in order to instruct teachers on how to bring the user-friendly statistics system into the classroom," Siegal said.

Siegal said the current method in which statistics is being taught is difficult for students to grasp. The method that the workshop utilizes is simple, but power-

HPD will resume hiring officers after three years of no recruiting

HOUSTON (AP) — As Houston olice prepare to resume hiring offi-ers after a three-year lapse, several ecruiting experts say it is doubtful ne department can find enough ualified applicants for a scheduled

October cadet class.
The Houston Police Department's recruiting division, dormant since 1986, will conduct a three-day job fair this week. Recruiters expect about 1,500 people to attend—about the number of applicants needed to find 70 who qualify for admission to the Oct. 5 class.

Subsequent classes are scheduled for November, December and Jan-

selection of cadets will not be compromised for any reason.

"It's incorrect to make the accusation that we're compromising any aspect of our selection process," Brown said.

Among those skeptical of plans for the Oct. 5 class were several recruiters for other police depart-

'I don't think that they can do it and have a quality police officer," San Antonio recruiter C.E. King told the Houston Chronicle. "Sure, you can get bodies and put them in a

Police Chief Lee P. Brown vehemently denied that the department will take any shortcuts and said the class, but how many nuts are you going to get? People are going to be scared to be stopped by police."

Others pointed to new, stricter educational requirements for recruits as a potential problem in finding a pool of qualified applicants in time for the October class. The department now requires applicants to have 60 hours of college credit with

Racial tension leads to death of prisoner

MIDWAY (AP) — A Texas prison inmate died after suffering stab wounds during a racially-motivated fight among about 120 prisoners, prison officials said.

The disturbance Sunday afternoon in a dayroom at the Texas Department of Corrections Ferguson Unit erupted as a result of a dispute between black and Hispanic inmates, prison spokesman David Nunnelee said.

lethodist Church, the Rev. Floyd ick said.

The baby was taken by police to the Children's Hospital at Bracken
Donovan Fitzgerald Ingram, 24, received two stab wounds in the incident and later died at Huntsville Memorial Hospital, Nunnelee said. Ingram was serving a 10-year term for aggravated robbery with a deadly weapon from Montgomery County.

During the disturbance, inmates broke furniture and broke out windows, using the glass as a weapon, Nunnelee said.

Writer tells A&M audience what a real author's life is like

By Mia B. Moody

STAFF WRITER

All writers aren't rich graduates from Ivy League schools who wear tweed jackets and smoke pipes, Joe R. Lansdale, vice president of the Horror Writers of America, said in a Friday presentation in the Starling day presentation in the Sterling C. Evans Library.

Lansdale said he hopes that by telling of his struggle to become a successful writer he can clear up the stereotypes that many people have of writers.

Lansdale has written books and short stories that have been categorized as horror, folk-tale and mystery stories. Two titles of Lansdale's books, "A 'B' Movie with Blood and Popcorn" and "Tight Little Stitches in a Dead Man's Back," give people a sense of his

"Television is probably responsible for the image that most people have of authors," Lansdale "In movies, authors are usually graduates from schools in New York or California who drive fancy cars and live glamorous, easy lives. In reality, there are probably only four or five writers in the whole world who live like that.'

Lansdale said television shows portray writing as an easy task. He said Angela Lansbury in the television show, "Murder, She Wrote" will often say, "Well I have a free weekend so I had better try to get a story written." He said this is unrealistic.

"When I write a story I usually write only two or three pages a day and then I sometimes tear those pages up and start over," he

The other image people have of writers is the college professor who publishes one story every

five years, he said.
"I don't want to step on anybody's toes, but you all know the type of professors who I'm talking about, the kind who have stories published in college literary magazines about dogs, a bad sex life or a weird childhood," he said: "They consider everbody else hacks and themselves literary



Photo by Kathy Haveman

Joe R. Lansdale, author of horror, folktale and mystery books, speaks at the A&M library about "real life" as an author.

Lansdale doesn't fit into either stereotype. He is from East Texas and is an archaeology graduate from the University of Texas.

Lansdale said people who want to live a glamorous lifestyle should probably choose a profession other than writing.

"The average income of writers is \$4,000," Lansdale said. "I made less than that for several years and around that for a couple of years and now I make way above that.

Lansdale said that to supplement his salary as a writer, he has been a garbage collector and a

"For several years I didn't make any money from my writing," Lansdale said. "In fact, the IRS said that if I didn't start mak-

ing money soon, then I could declare writing as my hobby and not a profession. My publisher even had to go with me to the bank in order for me to get them to fi-nance my house. Eventually I did make enough money to make a career out of writing.

The best experience a writer can get is not at school, Lansdale said, but at the typewriter.

"I took a writer's course at the University of Texas, where I got my degree in archeology, and that was one the worst mistakes of my life," he said. "Professors can teach you the basics, but they can't give you ideas, and the important thing in writing is good,

Abandoned newborn boy found in Austin church

william, who is estimated to be about 2 weeks old, was found wrapped in a blanket in a pastor's study, the third baby abandoned in Austin in less than two weeks.

before 11 a.m. at the Faith United mula, Vick said. Methodist Church, the Rev. Floyd Vick said.

"We're grateful that they found the church, and glad he was brought here, instead of put in a Dumpster,"

tof

A note made from words cut out of various publications and glued to ting to be a regular thing."

AUSTIN (AP) - A baby named a sheet of paper accompanied the in-

No food was left with the baby, The infant was found Sunday just but a mother rushed out for for-

pers was placed on the sofa next to the child, Vick said. ridge, where he was admitted to receive additional nourishment, Larry BeSaw, a hospital spokesman said. "He appeared a little thin and a little dehydrated, but otherwise in good

Police Sgt. Sam Cox said, "It's get-

UH English professor, fiction writer dies at 58 after battle against cancer

pending Monday for Donald Barthelme, an award-winning modern fiction writer and Cullen Professor of English at the University of Houston, who died of cancer.

Barthelme was best-known for his wry humor and inwhich were published in The New Yorker, Atlantic and

the Paris Review. Barthelme had undergone successful surgery for throat cancer 17 months ago. But he became ill with a form of blood cancer while living in Rome this summer

and was admitted to M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston three weeks ago.

He died Sunday at the age of 58.

"He was a reigning presence in the (UH English) program," Edward Hirsch, poet and professor of English at UH said. "Donald was the kindest man I've known. He had a deep-bred Southern courtesy and a kind attitude toward life, personally and professionally.

'I've looked to him often as a mentor, teacher and

A former newspaper man, Barthelme wrote 15 books, including several novels and collections of short stories. His awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1967, National Institutes of Arts and Letters Award in 1972, National Book Award in 1972 and the Rea Award

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