

Census is for sleuths: The 1950 census release

When we complete the census, we are often thinking about how the results will impact our lives. How much has the city of Georgetown grown over the last 10 years? How will current trends impact this area?

The current census is a useful tool for communities, but historic census data is also incredibly useful for those studying societal trends or researching family history. For many people, the census may be one of the few records that exists of their lives.



Enumeration districts in 1950 for Williamson County. Courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration.

A few weeks ago, I wrote about how the census occupation records helped me uncover the potential name of an unidentified courthouse janitor in a photograph. While the exact questions on each census change depending on the year it is taken, the answers can reveal a lot about daily life. From census records you may learn the birthplace of an ancestor; their occupation, if they rented or owned their home, if they could read and write and their highest level of education. You would also learn about their neighbors, their town and its industries.

The National Archives and Records Administration is charged with pre-

BIBLIOFILES

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servicing and releasing the census. NARA follows the "rule of 72," releasing a census 72 years after it is conducted. On April 1, NARA is set to release the 1950 census. For many, this may be the first census to list themselves or their parents as it includes the beginning of the "baby boomer" generation.

Additionally, this census will capture the changes occurring in American life during the post- World War II era, including the rise of women in the workforce, movement to the suburbs and a boom in secondary education related to the GI bill. The 1950 census was the first to ask if there was a television in the home: capturing one of the biggest technological changes for American life during the 20th century.

The 1950 census is the last census where enumerators, or census takers, visited each household. Certain districts did experiment with self-enumeration, like we do today, but only a select few. As in previous years, this census will not have a searchable index when it is released. In the past, volunteers transcribed the census in a process that took months or even years. This time Ancestry will create an initial index using proprietary Artificial Intelligence handwriting recognition technology, which they expect to take only weeks to release. FamilySearch will then coordinate volunteers to review the automated index and make corrections.

This means that to start researching before the index is available, you must do some sleuthing. The census will be ordered by enumeration districts, which is generally the area a single enumerator could cover in a two-to-four-week period. To find your relative on the census, you must first look up their enumeration district, then find

What's going on in the library?

March 1-May 15: Open call for 2023 art exhibit proposals (see library.georgetown.org/art)

March 29-April 7: GISD Annual Districtwide Student Art Exhibit (first and second floors)

March 30, 4-5 p.m.: Wired Wednesday

March 30, 5-7 p.m.: Reception for GISD Art Exhibit

April 8, 7 p.m.: Adultish

April 19, 1 p.m.: Earth-Kind Gardening with Native and Adapted Plants

April 22, 10 a.m.: Love our Earthy Georgetown (registration required)

For more information about these and other library events, visit library.georgetown.org/events-calendar or call 512-930-3551.

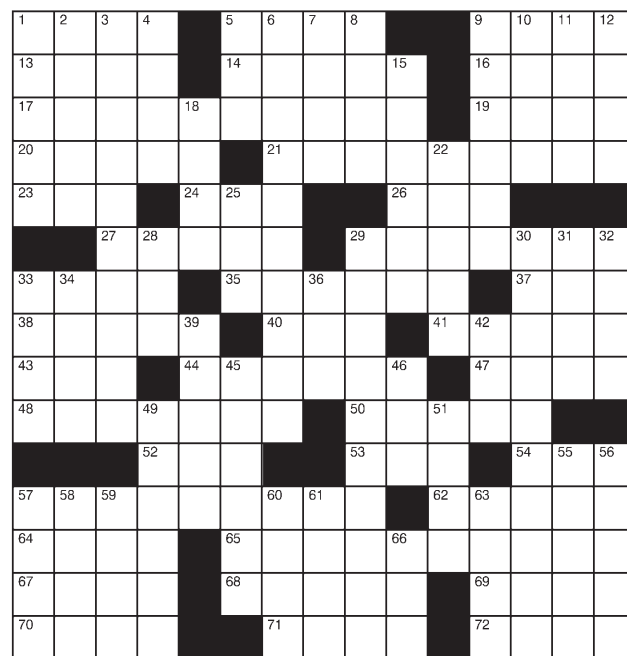
the district on the census and start digging. Enumeration district maps are available online through the National Archives catalog. The enumeration districts for Williamson County are 246-1 through 246-58.

The Georgetown Public Library has several tools for searching the census including access to Ancestry and FamilySearch affiliate records HeritageQuest is also available at home to resident and non-resident cardholders. As always, our staff are happy to assist navigating these resources if you have any questions.

See you soon at the library, and happy sleuthing!

Ann Evans is the adult services librarian at the Georgetown Public Library

LITERARY



ACROSS

- 1 "___ forgive those. . ."
- 5 Fit
- 9 Mafia chief
- 13 Air pollution
- 14 La Scala cheer
- 16 ___ Bator
- 17 Miller's salesman
- 19 Madonna's Truth or ___
- 20 Caine role
- 21 "I ___ just like . . ."
- 23 ___ Blu Dipinto Blu
- 24 Alphabet run
- 26 ___ Got a Secret
- 27 Impromptu
- 29 Mrs. Marcus, et al.
- 33 Hairstyle
- 35 Youth
- 37 Polo Grounds Mel
- 38 Erato's sisters
- 40 A Kennedy
- 41 Jay Silverheels role
- 43 Cholera
- 44 Adriatic peninsula
- 47 Marine color
- 48 Prime time soaper
- 50 Foul-up
- 52 Macon to Miami dir.
- 53 Bill
- 54 Devilkin
- 57 Channing role
- 62 912, in Rome
- 64 Four and twenty bake-in
- 65 Blackmore novel
- 67 Reached
- 68 ___ up one's sleeve
- 69 Printing direction
- 70 Fall in water
- 71 Poses
- 72 Antitoxins

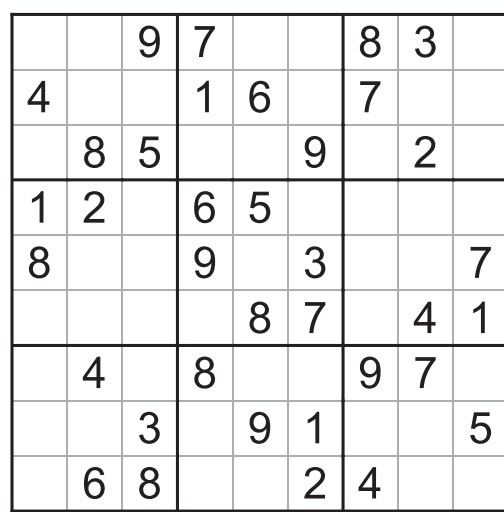
DOWN

- 1 Nasser's dam
- 2 Look happy
- 3 London hero
- 4 He, in Naples
- 5 A Lat. case
- 6 Baked dessert
- 7 With 12 Down, Ogden Nash's, The ___
- 8 Writer Hunter
- 9 Club
- 10 Tien Shan range
- 11 Young salmon
- 12 See 7 Down
- 15 Prompt
- 18 Holler
- 22 Prevent
- 25 Cambridge sch.
- 28 A deer
- 29 Blurry
- 30 La Mancha man
- 31 One of the Aleutians
- 32 Greek portico
- 33 During
- 34 Rage
- 36 Auction closer
- 39 Baby
- 42 Bumpkin
- 45 ___ Polaris
- 46 ___ for effort
- 49 Snoozing
- 51 Alphabet run
- 55 Gold digger
- 56 Ecclesiastic painting
- 57 Moist
- 58 Gemstone
- 59 Resort beach
- 60 Long times
- 61 True, in Tours
- 63 Sphagnum
- 66 Loser to DDE

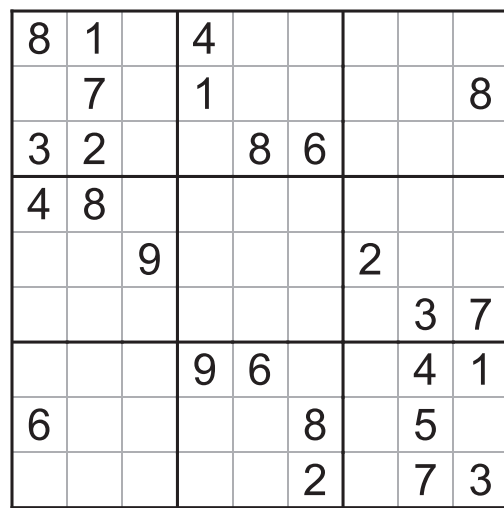
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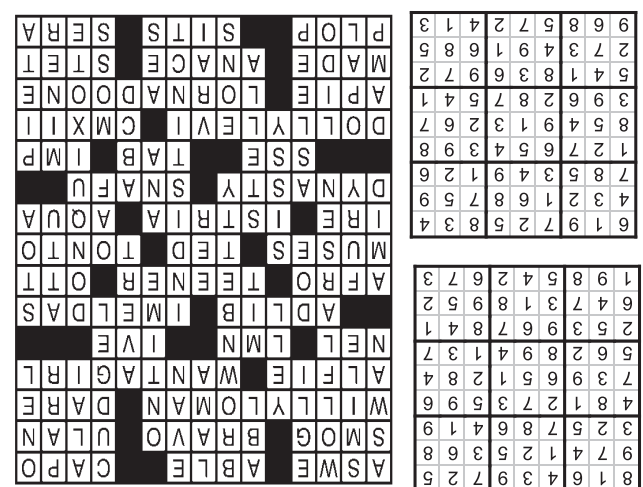
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