## *The Geyser Gazer Sput* Style Guide

Thank you for your interest in contributing an article for *The Geyser Gazer Sput.* Here are some guidelines to writing style conventions and submissions for the *Sput.* We hope you will find this helpful. If you are challenged by any of these suggestions, please let us know at **sput@gosa.org**, and we will work with you! We would rather have the article submitted and help with the style and format than have these suggestions discourage you from contributing!

**Types of articles welcomed for the Sput**
- Trip Reports to geyser areas (anywhere, like Mickey Hot Springs, OR; or Crystal Springs, UT)
- Observations of a single geyser or a group of geysers (again, anywhere!)
- Historical articles
- Photo essays (should be a cohesive group of photos on a single subject, for example, Aurora Over Old Faithful or Fountain Geyser's Seasons)
- Seeing unusual geyser activity or a rare eruption
- Articles about other related Yellowstone or other geyser-area activities, if geysers are included; for example, volunteering in the geyser basins or leading a photo tour through Firehole Lake Drive
- Related Yellowstone news and information, such as earthquake activity, Old Faithful Visitor Center changes, conventions and panel discussions that might be of interest, etc.
- Book reviews (for books that might be of interest to geyser gazers)
- Do you have something else in mind? Let us know! We're always open to new ideas!

**What we will not publish**
We will not publish any articles or photographs depicting illegal activity in Yellowstone National Park, or other worldwide thermal areas. In Yellowstone National Park, this specifically includes articles featuring thermal features that can only be seen from off/trail off-boardwalk locations, or imagery taken from off-trail/off-boardwalk locations. The exception might be historical articles, or photographs or articles taken/written by National Park Service employees or volunteers working under the auspices of the NPS. Contact the *Sput* editor for further clarification.

**Photographs**
As well as photos to accompany articles, we are always looking for photos to include with the Geyser Summary and in other parts of the *Sput*, so if you have some photos to share, please send them along. Please make sure, though, that they are at least 5 inches by 7 inches and 1 mb in size or larger (we can accept up to 20mb in one email). Small photos do not print well. If you have a lot of photos to share, send an email and ask for the Dropbox link. Also, scanned historical photos are pretty cool, too, especially if you have a story to go with them, like "My family saw Splendid Geyser erupt in 1994!"

Please see below for information on how to format and name your photos before sending them.

**General Grammar Style Reference:** The *Sput's* grammar follows most of the conventions in the recent editions of the *AP Stylebook* and *Schrunk & White*. A few exceptions:

- We use the Oxford Comma at the end of a series: *We saw steam from Riverside Geyser, Grotto Geyser, Grotto Fountain Geyser, and Rocket Geyser.*
- We use the two-letter abbreviation for states, or spell them out.
- Numbers are written as numerals rather than spelling numbers under 10. Example: *The prediction was based on a 6-hour interval, plus-or-minus 30 minutes.*

## Distance and Height Measurements

Use the American measurement system (inches, feet, etc.), but if you are submitting an article about geysers in a country that uses the metric system, keep the measurements in metric.

## Dates

Always use this convention: Month Day, Year. Abbreviate all months except April, May, June and July. *Fountain Geyser erupted at sunset on Sept. 9, 2021. Morning Geyser erupted on May 26, 2013.* If referring to a period of time, then spell out the months: *Between late September and early October 2010, there were 5 eruptions of Fan and Mortar geysers.*

## Time Measurements and Time-Measurement Abbreviations

Please spell out units of time within the article: *The eruption lasted more than 24 hours, including the steam phase.*

For charts and tables, you can use these abbreviations: d = days; h = hours; m = minutes; s = seconds. Longer time units, such as "years" and "months," are always spelled out.

**Time is always in military time;** the 24-hour clock. *Grand Geyser erupted at 2100 and was a 2-burst eruption.*

## Geyser-Specific Abbreviations

A number of additional, geyser-observation-standard abbreviations may be used in the article and in charts and graphs. These abbreviations include the following:

**I** or **i** = interval; **IBE** = interval between eruptions; **D** or **d** = duration; **ie** = observed in eruption; and the tilde (**~**) may be used to note approximate time value. Also, **ns** = near start and **wc** = webcam observation.

## Geyser Naming Conventions

Geyser names should be the same as what is used in T. Scott Bryan's *The Geysers of Yellowstone*, Fifth edition (©2018) and/or Lee Whittlesey's *Wonderland Nomenclature: A History of Place Names in Yellowstone National Park*. This means that official names are spelled out as in the book, but if the geyser's name is *casual* use, it belongs in quotes; for example, "Cinnamon Spouter" (UNNG-BSB-5). Bryan's book follows this convention, so if it is in quotes in Bryan 2018, then it should be in quotes in your article. Please also include the UNNG number with casual geyser names, if there is one. You only need to use the quotes on first reference to the geyser.

Also refer to the geyser's full name, even if gazers tend to shorten it. Example: Beehive's Indicator or (on subsequent references) Indicator but not Indy. Remember that many readers are new to geyser gazing or they may not visit the park often enough to know the colloquial references to certain geysers.

**Past Tense and Present Tense**
Please write geyser observation articles in **past tense**. Example: *Sawmill Geyser was erupting for nearly 4 hours before it stopped and Churn Geyser had two eruptions while Sawmill was quiet.* The reason for this is that it is what you saw at the time, not necessarily what the geyser is doing now.

**Footnotes**
Please do footnotes as **endnotes**. Unfortunately, the older software used to layout the *Sput* does not handle embedded footnotes well.

**Citations**
Generally follow whatever citation guide is your preference, whether it is the *Chicago Manual of Style* or some other reference. There are some examples at the end of this style guide if you need examples. Citations within articles should be in parenthesis and list author and date, Do not use a comma between the author and the date: *Many of these eruptions were noted earlier in 2008 during February and March (Bryan 2008).*

**A Few Words About Webcam Observations**
The addition of the Old Faithful Webcams, both streaming and still, has been a great help to geyser observations, especially in winter, overnight and at other times when in-person observations are not possible. That said, the webcams also have their limitations. They can only be focused on one area at a time, they cannot always distinguish exactly what geyser is erupting or how many bursts it had (especially if it is steamy or dark), and the streaming webcam is especially dependent on the volunteer operating the camera, so eruptions may be missed. Please keep this in mind when including webcam observations in your data. **On site observations are always preferred over webcam data.**

In addition, when citing webcam observations, **always use the observer's real name, NOT their webcam user name**. You can put the webcam user name in parenthesis after the real name, but use the real name in all references to that person's data recordings.

**Formatting**
You can send in *Sput* articles as:
Word documents
Google Docs
Pages (Apple Applications)
Email (generally not preferred, but if you don't have access to another program, we'll work with it)

Please **do not embed tables, charts, graphs or photographs** within the article. By embed, we mean placing the graphic or table in the same document as the article itself. **All graphic elements and charts or tables** should be submitted individually and separately. **Include captions** for those elements, and it can be helpful (but not necessary) to indicate within the article where the graphic element or photo should go in layout. For example, Place Photo GrandGeyser.8.2.2021.Smith here. We can't promise it will be exactly where you want it to be, but we will do our best to get it close.

And speaking of photos, **please name your photos with the geyser name, date taken and your name.** It can be in any order as long as all three elements are in the photo name. Phone photos, especially, have been challenging because they arrive as a string of numbers—please rename them if possible!

After you submit an article, the editor will send you a layout proof to be sure everything looks OK. You can make some minor changes at this point, but big changes, such as adding a new paragraph or deleting a graphic, become problematic. It's very helpful if your initial submission is, for the most part, finished.

We also have many geyser gazers who are willing, and actually enjoy, reading articles and offering helpful suggestions before publication. If you would like someone to read through your article, let us know and we'll reach out to someone for assistance!

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with the editor at sput@gosa.org. We are happy to help!

**Appendix: Some Reference Examples**
If you have questions, contact the *Sput* editor, we can help!

**Books**
Author(s).  Date.  *Book title.* edition.  Location: Publishing company.
Example:
Bryan, T. S.  2018.  *The Geysers of Yellowstone*.  5th ed.  Boulder: University Press of Colorado.

**Electronic References.**
Author(s)*.  Year*.  "Title."  Access date (or last modified date).  **Complete URL.** And it helps if it is a "live" link.
*In some cases, author and year may not be available.  In these cases, simply include as much information as possible.
Examples:
**Blog or online article**
Yellowstone Volcano Observatory *Taking the Temperature of Norris Geyser Basin.*
https://www.usgs.gov/volcanoes/yellowstone/taking-temperature-norris-geyser-basin
**GeyserTimes**
Beverly, Carol. "Eruption 1205539." Jul. 2020. *GeyserTimes.org.*
<https://geysertimes.org/eruption.php?id=1205539>.

**Personal E-mail**
Author.  Year.  "Subject line of posting."  Personal E-mail (date).
Example:
Eide, Steve.  2010.  "Norris."  Personal E-mail (November 14, 2010).

**Geyser Discussion Board**
Author.  Year.  "Subject line of posting."  E-mail to Geyser Discussion Board list (date).

Example:

Keller, Mike.  2018.  "Giant Geyser Report 9.8.2018."  E-mail to Geyser Discussion Board (Sept. 10, 2018).

**Personal Discussion (casual conversation)**

Person's name, "subject of discussion" personal conversation (date)

Example:

Paperiello, Rocco "Length of Sawmill Eruptions" personal conversation (June 3, 2020)