

# Will Boekel, Geyser Gazer

## Story

It's 12:10 P.M., and the placard next to the reception desk in the Old Faithful Inn says that the next eruption of its namesake geyser will occur in five minutes. The crowd has moved out to the boardwalks behind the inn in front of a steaming, burbling, mostly flat area that looks like the surface of a planet far out in space, except for the grove of lodgepole pine in the background. Visitors have gathered on this spot since at least 1870 when the Washburn expedition noted the size, frequency, and regularity of this spurt of steam and water shooting as high as 184 feet in the air from a cone-shaped mound of earth, and decided it was worthy of the name Old Faithful.

Close to 12:15 P.M., the crowd buzzes as the first sign of life from below the earth appears. After five minutes of 10-foot spurts and steam, an onlooker asks with disappointment, "Is that it?" Fortunately Will Boekel, geyser expert, is standing nearby. Just as he says, "Give her another minute." Whoosh! A column of white, frothy, hot water shoots up, climbing first 50 feet, and then on up to what Will estimates to be about 150 feet for two-and-a-half minutes. The crowd goes wild. Just as quickly, the geyser retreats back to bubbles on the surface of the earth, and most viewers head back to the gift shop-except for Will. He has work to do. He's entering all that he has observed into his smart phone for transmission to the Geyser Observation and Study Association, a nonprofit organization that serves as a repository for the many avid volunteer observers to record their observations of geysers and other geothermal phenomena.

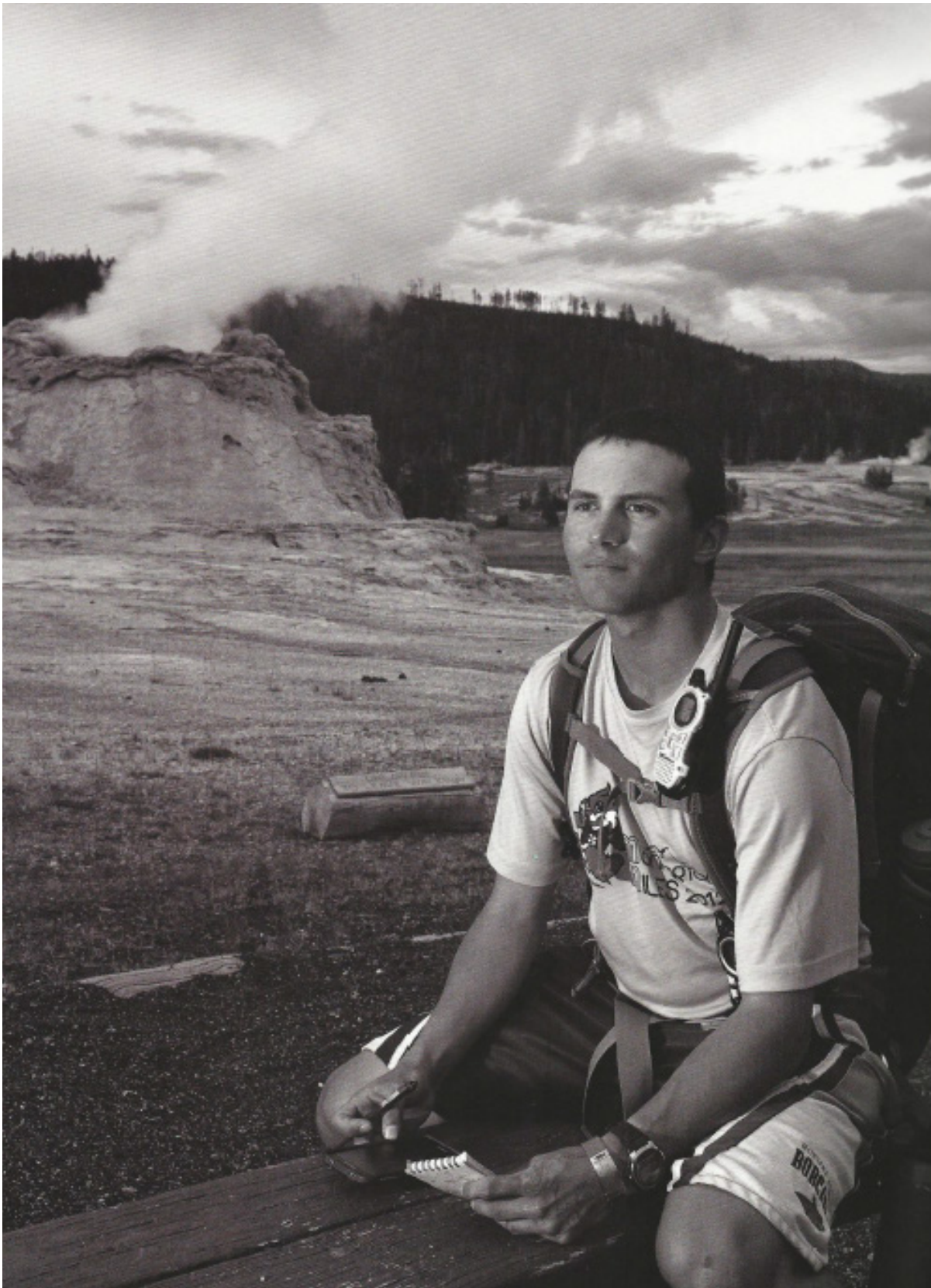
Will, who also works at the front desk of the inn, comes prepared for long hours of observation with a backpack containing water and food, a jacket in case of rain, watches, a two-way radio to communicate with other "geyser gazers," and a smart phone to post eruptions to the online data base. He discovered geyser gazing and the organization in 2011, and has been hooked ever since.

"I've met fascinating people from around the world, and we are like a family."

Originally, gazers wrote their observations in private logs and shared as much as they could. Today, they report over radio networks, and write in a public, online notebook. Will, a student in mechanical engineering, hopes that someday he will find work related to geysers. For now, he is just happy waiting and watching.







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**Will Boekel**  
**Geyser gazer, student**

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## Month/Visitors Sort

Draw a line to match the month with the number of visitors to Yellowstone National Park.

January	630,345
February	32,446
March	743,361
April	21,440
May	822,021
June	189,674
July	41,395
August	922,018
September	27,941
October	19,433
November	370,724
December	13,787

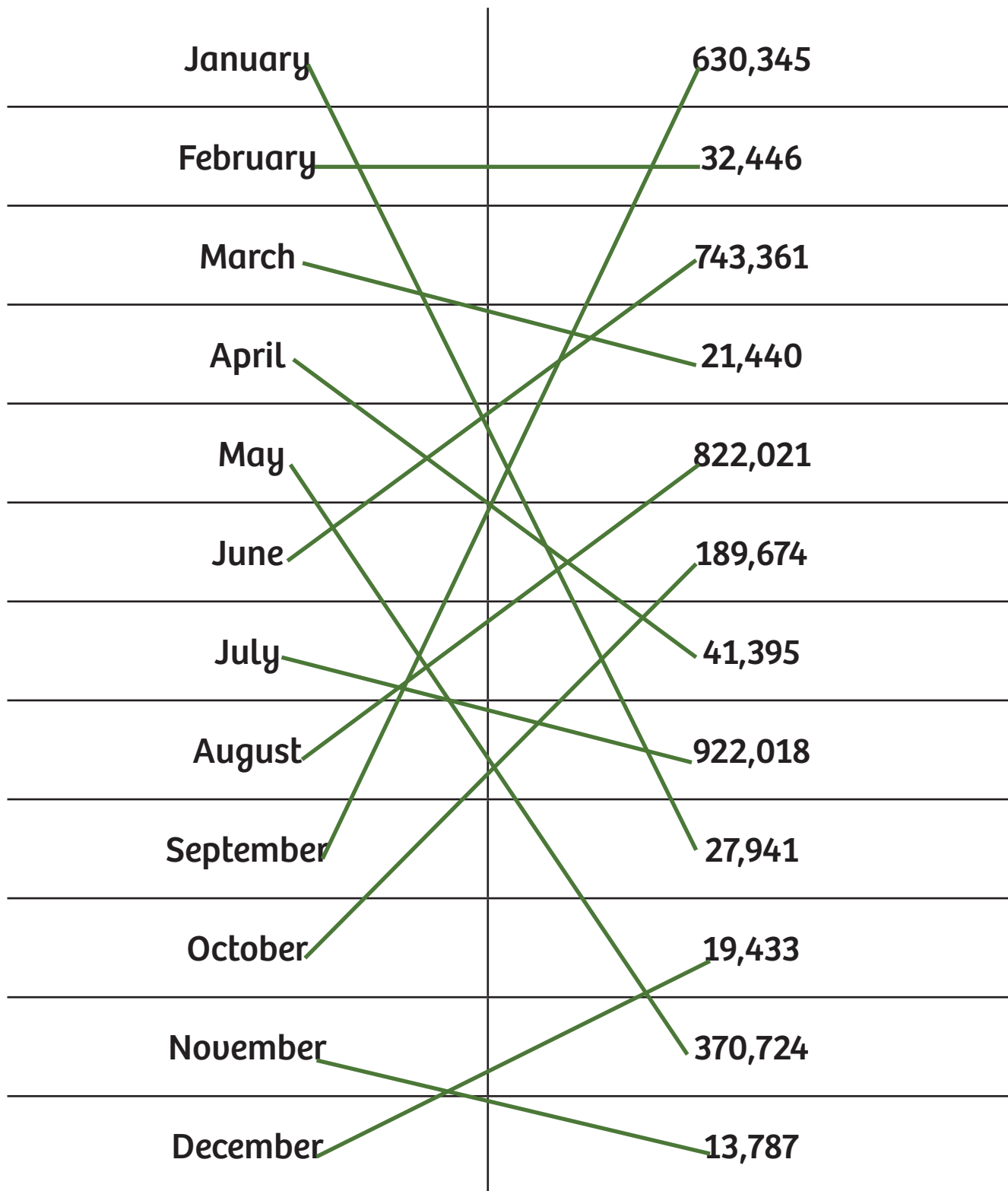




# Month/Visitors Sort

## Key

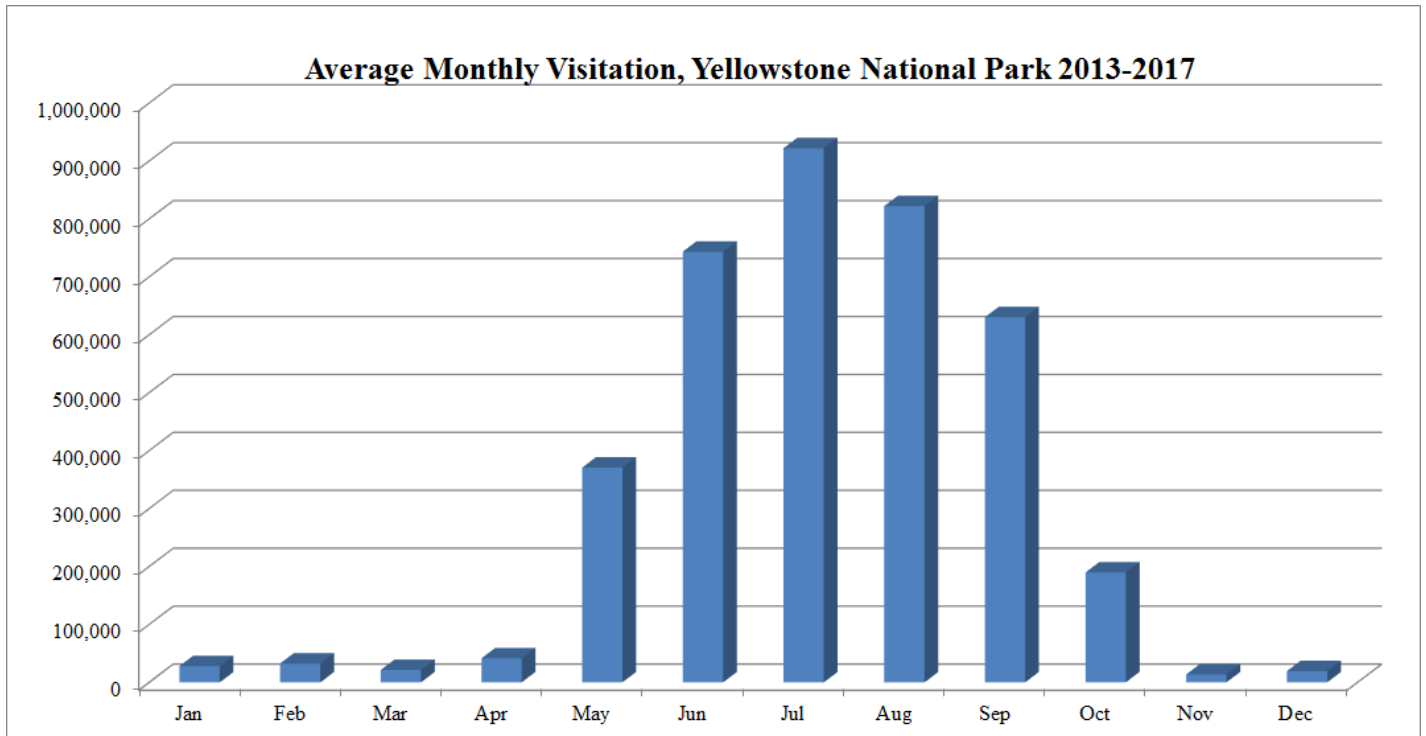
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# Yellowstone Visitation Statistics



The average visitation to Yellowstone per month from 2012-2017. Raw numbers are included in the table below.  
NPS / Peggy Olliff

Month	Average # of Visits (2012-2017)	% of Average Annual Visits
January	27,941	0.73%
February	32,446	0.85%
March	21,440	0.56%
April	41,395	1.08%
May	370,724	9.67%
June	743,361	19.39%
July	922,018	24.04%
August	822,021	21.44%
September	630,345	16.44%
October	189,674	4.95%
November	13,787	0.36%
December	19,433	0.51%





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# Stewardship Postcard

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photo by: Stephanie Russell



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# Stewardship Postcard

A large rectangular box for drawing a postcard. Inside the box, there is a horizontal line near the top, a small square in the top right corner, and three horizontal lines in the bottom right corner.

