

## NAGC Member Spotlight: Peter Clarke

Imagine getting paid for what you love to do. Peter Clarke doesn't have to imagine, he works at his dream job every day.

Self-described video storyteller, Peter Clarke, public relations officer, photographer, and filmmaker with Seattle City Light, a municipal utilities company, loves his job. Peter has been a member of NAGC for the past four years. He was fortunate to have one of those forward thinking bosses who made sure everyone in his office was a member of NAGC. Peter is also a 2008 Gold Screen Award winner in the Webcast category.



Peter began his career in Albuquerque, New Mexico, as a photographer, then reporter for a local television station. With a move to Colorado Springs, he worked as a News Director for a television station. During a stint in the Navy, he worked as a Public Affairs Officer, then came back to managing television news. In Seattle, he dabbled in politics for a bit, working on policy for a member of the city council.

That's where he got interested in utilities, which led to his current job with Seattle City Light. He was particularly drawn to the rich history of City Light that stretches back to 1905. When asked about his historic company and the Seattle Underground, Peter said, "The Seattle fire that destroyed the city in 1889 was really the genesis for City Light. In part, the city burned because it didn't have an adequate water system, so city leaders set about building one. Once built, they began to think about what else they could do with the water and they hit upon the idea of using the water system to make electricity."

Even today, the century-old company is still employing this idea, Peter explains, "City Light relies on snow pack in the mountains for replenishing our hydroelectric reservoirs. Several times a year a team flies into the high mountains to take snow measurements. I've been fortunate to go along a few times over the years to take video and photos of the process."

Besides the photography and video, Peter is an enthusiastic fan of new technology, especially the increasing use of social media to reach City Light customers and stakeholders. He regularly uses Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, and the company has developed a policy on social media. Recently during a power outage, City Light used Twitter to refer people to their Blog for more information. Operating social media is a 24-hour-a-day job, so Peter and his colleagues take turns sharing the responsibility so the company will always be ready to communicate during an emergency.

Even Peter's vacation time is spent pursuing more knowledge about his job and his passion—photography, technology and film. In March, at his own expense, he is attending an editor's retreat in New Orleans, where he will learn about new technology for video and film editing. In April, he will pursue similar knowledge at the National Association of Broadcasters Conference.

In addition to making a living doing what he loves, Peter lives in a houseboat moored along the shores of the city. "When I first came to Seattle, I had dinner on a 'floating home' and thought to myself I'd like to live like this someday." Six years ago, with his son, Devin, grown and off on his own, and with no financial restraints, Peter decided to make his long ago dream of living on a houseboat come true.

By the way, Devin, like his dad, has made movies and storytelling his life's work. In fact, a film Devin worked on, "The Details," starring Tobey Maguire, recently premiered at the Sundance Film Festival.

Sleepless in Seattle? Hardly! Peter is fully awake and loving life—and his dream job!