

**Next Meeting:**

**Who:** Atlanta Chapter of the Graphic Artists Guild members and friends

**What:** 2001 Event Planning and Mac Tip-Swap

**When:** Thursday Feb. 15, 2001 at 7:00 PM

**Where:** Laura Coyle's Studio — 404-370-0680 (map at <http://www.atlanta.gag.org/events.html>)

**Why:** Swap tips, see live demos, discuss ideas for 2001 events, have fun, meet new people in the trade!

**Directions:** From I-20:

take Moreland exit, go north

pass Memorial Drive

right turn on Hosea Williams Blvd.

go 1.4 miles

left on Howard at Mrs. Winner's

right on Warlick

Kirkwood Elementary Lofts exit is on right

find "Coyle" on gatebox directory and dial Laura

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**Newsletter**

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# Atlanta Chapter Graphic Artists Guild

[www.atlanta.gag.org](http://www.atlanta.gag.org)

## Chapter President's Notes

### Website updates!

I wanted to thank everyone for sending in their current contact info last month. It is all up-to-date and up on the web site in the Membership Directory section. If you forgot or were not included in the email, please email updated info to <[guild@jaymontgomery.com](mailto:guild@jaymontgomery.com)> There is only a handful of members taking advantage of the portfolio web page within the Member Directory. This is for members that don't have a website to link to. I will create a simple page with 3-5 images of your work with contact info on it. To have your own free page, send printed samples or digital files to me at 4836 Royal Drive, Duluth, Georgia 30096 or <[guild@jaymontgomery.com](mailto:guild@jaymontgomery.com)>. We are working diligently to have a members' portfolio area geared toward people looking for graphic artists. Look out for updates to that section. Also, you may not be aware of the Local Jobs page. We have several big and small companies that post their job listings (usually fulltime positions). Please check this page out; your next big job could come from it. It is set up for you and your colleagues. Bookmark [www.atlanta.gag.org](http://www.atlanta.gag.org) and spread the word.

### Guild Events

The last few meetings have been a great success. In November we had a informal gathering at the Creative Circus and discussed upcoming event ideas and introduced the new chapter laptop. Some people brought their portfolios; it was an all-round good time. In December we decided to do something a little different. We held the meeting at the Bass Lofts in Little Five Points in Atlanta at Laura Mitchell's home/studio. The theme was "Client Grinch Stories" and other great stories which were great for everybody to hear. We had some good laughs and refreshments. Also, some people came from the Creative Club and passed out some free South South 2000 winner annuals. Laura Coyle found out that she was in it for the first time for some Flash animation she had done. Way to go, Laura! For the January meeting we decided to go with that same fun theme-oriented meeting. We had a great turnout to the "Office Party for the Self Employed." Some new and long-time members came out for the first time in a while. People came and went at their leisure for great food and company. Best of all the Guild picked up the tab for our loyal members! Also, Rob Foster, Illustrator, joined the Guild that day. Welcome Rob! The meeting for February and the following months this year are going to be more focused on education with fun and games. Our next meeting will focus on planning the events and meetings for this year. If you have an idea for a topic or event that you've been wanting the Guild to tackle, then you need to be here (even if this is your first time!). We will also highlight several short Mac demonstrations in Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash or GoLive. I hope you can attend some of our exciting events for the future.

— Jay Montgomery

By Jay Montgomery

I received an email from a fellow member, Susan Conway...

Hi Jay,

We've never met, but I hope to someday get to the big city to meet everyone. I hope the meeting Wednesday goes well.

I'm wondering if you or anyone else you know in GAG has had success with an insurance company for health insurance. I got your email message a while back, along with the newsletter message about your research. Did you ever go with one of the companies you mentioned? Is it a good company?

I'm not even eligible for the Aetna plans offered through the UAW. We're in some insurance "black hole" here. Aetna has NO DOCTORS, NO COMPANIES represented in Greenville, SC. Why? The only explanation I find is that the medical insurance market is locked up here, with very few options for people like me. Blue Cross Blue Shield, maybe a few others. But they are prohibitively priced. Maybe you know one I don't know, and it might be available here.

Thanks for the work you do on behalf of all of us. Sincerely, Susan Conway

My response:

For those of you that are self-employed, you might have already found out that good, inexpensive health insurance can be not only hard to find, but it's difficult to see the bottom line. Health insurance for the self-employed is complicated with all sorts of sub-companies and associations, but the bottom line to me and my wife, Cindi, is the service and the price. If you can look through all the details and see the big picture, you might be better off. National Benefit Services (NBS) had different plans for different individuals and couples. We wanted a plan with maternity with no waiting period, because at the time we were trying to have a baby. (Side note: Cindi is now 3 months pregnant! Yeah!) Mr. Cimino of NBS recommended Freedom Life Insurance Company of America, based out of Fort Worth, Texas. Part of the NBS plan was belonging to the Consumers' Independent Association (CIA). This is basically an association for the self-employed with member dues and discounts of all sorts. After looking at all the

details, we decided to go with Freedom Life. It has to be said that your situation and needs for health insurance may be different to ours and so will the prices. Here is what we paid so that you will have some clue in the costs. With a \$1000 deductible, we paid a one-time premium of \$148.45, a one-time Policy Administration Fee of \$15, one-time Initiation Fee of \$40, and Membership Dues of \$17.50 (which are taken out of our monthly payment) for a total of \$220.95. We pay \$180.89 monthly that is automatically deducted from our checking account. I think that is pretty good considering the coverage (which is basically major medical), and compared to the other insurance companies like AETNA, Fortis, National Association for the Self Employed, and a few others I can't remember. It seems there is sometimes the need to join yet another organization to get the benefits we need as self employed. As we all know as individuals we can't afford not to belong to organizations of other individuals to make a difference collectively. Just as the Guild has done for me and you.

Contact info and some other details: National Benefit Services <<http://www.nationalcare.com>> — 770-457-4203, Edward J. Cimino. If he can't help you in S.C., he may be able to refer you to someone in your area. Deductible — \$1000 for about \$180 a month which includes association benefits, up to \$5000 for maternity with no waiting period, \$15 co-pay doctor visits, discounts on dental, vision, and several other percentage discounts. The plan is through Freedom Life 1-800-387-9027

Consumers Independent Association (CIA), 1-800-992-8044, 1819 Clarkston Road, Suite 301, Chesterfield, MO 63017

**“I find that the medical insurance market is locked up here, with very few options for people like me.”**

## Collective Bargaining

Graphic artists have been prohibited by federal anti-trust laws from collaborating with each other in contract negotiations. When we meet, the talk often turns to how badly creators are being burned by the consolidation — and copyright buy-up — of stock agencies, large media corporations, and so on. Many of us are independent contractors who are losing ground (read: money) in the dilution of the industry, and in being forced to sign restrictive contracts such as the one “offered” by Conde Nast (see the following piece).

The Guild, in coordination with the National Writers Union and the United Auto Workers, is writing an exemption to the anti-trust code to allow creators better terms in rights contracts.

The Guild's national office is still soliciting stories from people who have had, well, less-than-favorable experiences with coercive master contracts, whether from a wage, copyright, or other perspective. If you have a contract horror story that could have been remedied by collective action with other graphic artists, the Guild would love to hear from you.

To quote from email from our New York member Claudia K. Sargent:

If you've encountered “master contract” issues like these:

- “Sign this, or never work with us again.”
- “That's our only contract. We don't negotiate with our artists.”
- “If you won't sign this, we can't pay you.”
- “You must sign this agreement by (date) in order to be paid for your work.”
- “If you haven't signed our new freelance agreement by [insert date], we will no longer keep your name and contact information in our active files.”
- “If you do not expect to do any future work for [insert name of publication], please disregard this letter.”

Would you be willing to write a short piece on how you feel master contracts have negatively affected your business?

Tell the national office your story.  
By email: <[cksargent@mindspring.com](mailto:cksargent@mindspring.com)> or <[mark@lemoncustard.com](mailto:mark@lemoncustard.com)>  
By fax: 1-212-791-0330  
By U.S. mail:  
Graphic Artists Guild, 90 John Street, Suite 403  
NY NY 10038  
ATT: TALES OF THE MASTER CONTRACT

The Atlanta Chapter of the Graphic Artists Guild has members in Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia. This is a large territory, and rather than list the roster of Senators and Representatives, I'll recommend you point your web browser to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). These sites allow you to quickly locate your elected legislators based on your Zip Code.

Representatives and Senators have labor-issues staffers who need to hear from us all on this. Write or email and let them know that this is important to you professionally, as one of their constituents.

— Peter Johnson

## Graphic Artists Guild Letter-Writing Campaign Against Conde Nast Contracts

Since its first appearance, the Graphic Artists Guild has warned its members and the public about the unfavorable conditions imposed by Conde Nast Publications through its Freelance Artist Agreement. The retroactive contract requires a grant of all rights throughout the universe, including the right to re-license works to third parties. That licensing has become a reality with the launch of the new Conde Nast Archive. The Conde Nast Archive goes beyond unpaid re-use of your images by Conde Nast itself. The Archive will re-license the images to which Conde Nast holds rights to other potential clients—without any portion of the licensing fees going to the artists and photographers who made them.

What can you do about this?

Go to [http://www.gag.org/news/news\\_2000/conde.html](http://www.gag.org/news/news_2000/conde.html) for more information about our letter-writing campaign, sample letters for you to use, to read about other actions planned by the Guild for the near future.

— the National Office