

***October 2011 General Meeting/Luncheon  
Annual Membership Campaign Meeting  
Belle Chasse Auditorium***

The October 2011 PABI General Meeting/Luncheon and Annual Membership Campaign Meeting was held at the Belle Chasse Auditorium and catered by MeMe's New Orleans Café and Catering. The keynote speaker was Mr. Michael Hecht, President and CEO of Greater New Orleans, Inc. Mr. Hecht began by thanking PABI for their continued support of GNO, Inc. A list of GNO, Inc.'s STARS (Statistics, Testimonials, Awards and Rankings) is included in the official minutes. Mr. Hecht mentioned the success of GNO, Inc. including: Louisiana being named 2011 State of the Year by *Southern Business & Development*; New Orleans (as a write in candidate) was ranked Top City for Young Entrepreneurs 2011 on a website poll on 30CEO.com; Greater New Orleans won 2011 Co-Major Market of the Year (tied with Charlotte) by *Southern Business & Development*; New Orleans MSA was ranked Top 5 in the USA for "Logistics/Distribution/Shipping Hubs" (highest ranking ever) by *Business Facilities*; and Greater New Orleans was ranked 16<sup>th</sup> out of 800 regions surveyed on list of best places to raise a family by *Parenting Magazine*. Louisiana is becoming an object lesson for other states to learn from. Mr. Hecht feels we are selling the New Orleans area the right way to encourage business. He feels that in order to continue, they can't lose good people so permanent policies need to be put in place to continue succeeding. Mr. Hecht also discussed GNO, Inc.'s business plan. They plan to focus on Energy, Shallow Water Drilling, and Trade. In addition to these foundations, Mr. Hecht mentioned other areas of interest such as Digital Media, Medical and Sustainable Industries which include waste, water and energy as well.



Photos by Zu Carpenter Photography