May 23, 2012 was a beautiful sunny day and it marked the Chicago Section’s first section meeting of the year. The meeting was hosted by Baxter Healthcare located at their Round Lake Illinois facility and attracted a total of 42 people.

The section coordinator, Jim Salsbury, Mitutoyo America Corp., began the day with introductions and logistics. He was soon followed by Tom Waltrich, Baxter Healthcare, who detailed the many actions performed by Baxter and their metrology department.

Filling in last minute for a scheduled speaker who had to cancel, Jim Salsbury gave the first presentation “Uncertainty Management versus Risk Management in Calibration.” This presentation was an informative excerpt from a tutorial Jim presents at the NCSLI Workshop & Symposium. The goal was to inform the audience of how to decide on appropriate conformance decision rules for various types of measurements.

Carole Crowe, Agilent Technologies, then provided a great presentation on “Analytical Instrument Qualification, Regulatory and Compliance.” This topic was of particular interest to those in attendance from Baxter Healthcare, Abbott Laboratory, and other pharmaceutical companies. Carole outlined changes in the industry and hidden costs and opportunities in AIQ. Many thoughtful questions were asked during and after her presentation.

The final technical presentation of the day was presented by Joe Peterson, Abbott Laboratories, “Calibration Point Selection – Who makes the call?” His presentation outlined key considerations for selecting calibration test points, discussed the appropriateness of single point calibrations, explained why calibration point selection is a form of sampling, and described some best practices for using a team approach to define calibration points. This presentation drew many thoughtful questions from real world applications, leaving some desiring to be more involved within the metrology standards industry.

Jim Salsbury gave a short presentation on current and future NCSLI affairs. This included promoting this year’s conference, opportunities for involvement, and major activities which occurred during last year’s conference.

A short shuttle ride across the campus allowed those attending to get an in-depth tour of one of Baxter’s metrology labs. All who attended were appreciative to have the rare opportunity to get such an exclusive visit. Tour guides included Tom Waltrich and Lynn Thomas, with help from other Baxter employees.

A special thanks goes out to all those of the host company, Baxter Healthcare, especially André Brodsky and Tom Waltrich, for allowing NCSLI to utilize their facilities, providing lunch, other refreshments, and an outstanding lab tour. The Chicago Section has tentatively scheduled its next meeting for November 8, 2012 in Elk Grove Village, Illinois.