In October, the TC-CCAI sponsored the always popular Oktoberfest dinner meeting at the Gasthof zur Gemütlichkeit restaurant in Northeast Minneapolis. The presentation topic was “Why Automation?”, presented by Nick Strauss, Worldwide Product Marketing Manager at Graco.

**Presentation**: Mr. Strauss shared his knowledge on the current trends and why automation applications are no longer limited to the automotive industry. Wood, Aerospace, recreational vehicles, consumer products and industrial components are some of the industries investing in automatic equipment. In 2015 Industrial robot purchases were up 15%. Rising labor costs and difficulty finding (and keeping) skilled labor are some of the reasons companies are making these investments. Improved performance, productivity and profitability are the key benefits to the transition to Automation.

Nick summarized with these key points:

- Automation is the future of manufacturing
- It has never been easier or less expensive to automate
- Have a plan…before…during…and after
- Work with experienced experts

**Dinner**: In Bavaria, Gasthof means a guest house where everyone is welcome and Gemütlichkeit is the warm, comfortable feeling one receives from pleasant surroundings and atmosphere! Hopefully that is exactly how the 23 attendees felt during this event. From the Wiener Schnitzel with Spatzle to the Sauerbraten, all was delicious and what wasn’t eaten went to a good home. Another highlight of the evening was Ron playing his new Zupan Accordion. After three weeks in Germany, he showed off his talent playing favorites such as Edelweiss and God Bless America.