

Places and Points of  
Interest in the  
St. Croix River  
Valley of...

[Minnesota](#)

&

[Wisconsin](#)

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## [Chisago County Minnesota](#)

In 1851, the northern section of [Washington County](#) was split off to form Chisago County. The name is derived from the Ojibwe words for what was the largest lake in the county (Chisago Lake) which the Ojibwe referred to as ki-chi saga or large & lovely (or fair).

### **Chisago County Seat:**

Taylors Falls 1851-1865, Chisago City 1865-1875, Center City 1875-present.

### **County Maps:**

[Chisago County Map](#) (pdf)

[Washington County Map](#) (pdf)

[Washington County City maps](#) (pdf)

### **County Historical Societies:**

[Chisago County](#) – [Washington County](#)

## **Chisago Lakes Area**

Comprising the cities along Highway 8 in Minnesota

[Chisago Lake](#) was a large horseshoe shaped body of water as federally surveyed in 1848 and designated "Big Lake" also known locally at the time as "Swede Lake". When the drought of the late 1920s & 1930s occurred, the lake was renamed into the six separate lakes, as it exists today: Chisago, [South Lindstrom](#), [North Lindstrom](#), Bull, [North Center](#) and [South Center](#).

### **Highway 8/Lake Boulevard** (originally Hwy 46):

**Designated as Moberg Trail** by the state of Minnesota in 1996.

**Named "Nicholas Patrick Spehar Memorial Highway"** In 2014 a segment of Highway 8 from the southwestern border of Chisago City to the eastern border of Center City, was designated to be named in honor of Navy SEAL Special Operator Second Class Nicholas Patrick Spehar who was a lifelong resident of Minnesota. He was killed in action on August 6, 2011, in the Wardak Province of Afghanistan. He was 24 years old.

[Swedish Immigrant Trail](#) (video: [ENGLISH](#) – [SWEDISH](#)) is a 22 mile multi-use trail that will go from Taylors Falls to Wyoming Minnesota when completed. This trail will join with the [Gateway-Browns Creek Trail](#) on the east end and the [Sunrise Prairie Trail](#) / [Hardwood Creek Trail](#) on the west end completing a loop to St. Paul.

**Monumental outdoor sculpture** has become somewhat commonplace in the Chisago Lakes Area with examples appearing in Chisago City, Lindstrom, the Franconia Sculpture Park, and St. Croix Falls, WI. In her 1997 article for the Minnesota Historical Society "[Worthy of Their Own](#)" (pdf), [Moirra Harris](#) writes about monumental sculpture in Minnesota while reflecting on the pride that communities, including the Chisago Lakes Area, have in their heritage, in their sons and daughters, and those who write about them.

# Chisago City

Established 1855

Sister-City to Alqutsboda, Sweden

Name taken from both the Ojibwe word for the largest local lake and the county.

**Town Celebration** –Ki-Chi-Saga Days held in August.

**Chamber of Commerce** – [Chisago Lakes Chamber](#)

## **Monuments & Statues**

**Vilhelm Moberg Statue** (1996 Ian Dudley, sculptor) on the corner of Isabel St. & Highway 8 in Vilhelm Moberg Park – During the summer of 1948 Swedish author Vilhelm Moberg stayed in Chisago City while researching Swedish immigration and collecting personal stories. His four famous [Emigrant novels](#) describe Karl Oskar and Kristina Nilsson and their journey from Sweden to the Chisago Lakes Area. In 1996, in conjunction with the [150<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of Swedish mass migration to America](#), the [Chisago City Heritage Association](#) commissioned Mr. Dudley to create a bronze statue in Moberg’s likeness. The dedication ceremony was held on September 7, 1996 and Chisago City was proud to have in attendance for the ceremony Moberg’s daughters Birgitta Råd and Marianne Forssell. On September 13, 1996, Sweden’s [King Carl XVI Gustaf](#) & [Queen Silvia](#) unveiled the park’s new name in honor of the man whose sculpture sits on its NW corner: Vilhelm Moberg Park.

**Veterans Memorial** (Memorial Day 1964 rebuilt in 2014) on the corner of Old Towne Rd. & Railroad Ave in Vilhelm Moberg Park – Originally designed as a quiet place to sit under flowering crabapple trees, relax & get a little water from the fountain while honoring the deceased veterans of all wars, on 5/29/1989 a flagpole was added to the corner. On September 21, 2014 half of a completely remodeled memorial was dedicated to [Nicholas Spehar](#) (10/19/1986-8/16/2011), a 2005 graduate of Chisago Lakes High School, and the 29 other Americans who lost their lives while responding to a call for help in the Wardak Province of Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. The loss of the Chinook CH-47D, call sign [Extortion 17](#), and the 30 Americans, a U.S. military working dog, and 8 Afghans is considered the [worst loss of U.S. Military life](#) in a single incident in the Afghanistan campaign. The other half of the memorial, honoring the veterans of all the branches of the military, will be finished at a future date.

[Nelly Gustafson Statue](#), (2013 Ian Dudley, sculptor) 11754 302<sup>nd</sup> St. – was dedicated July 11, 2013 and is outside the [Chisago Lakes Library](#). Gustafson (1851-1934) was a Swedish immigrant & a midwife around 1900. She lived at the Fridhem house in Lindström.

## **Buildings & Structures**

**Caboose** SW corner of Moberg Park – is a reminder of the days when the railroad was vital to the commerce and tourism of the area. Between 1880 and 1948, a spur of St. Paul / Duluth line ran from Wyoming to Taylors Falls. From Chisago City to Taylors Falls it ran along what is now Highway 8.

**Dahl House Pillars** Old Towne Road at Dahl Place – is the only remnant left of the famous [Dahl House Hotel and Resort](#) 1891-1940, which was founded by Frank Dahl (an immigrant from Sweden). The pillars were restored in 2008 as one of Minnesota's Sesquicentennial 1858-2008 celebrations.

**Melander House** 29225 Old Towne Road – was Vilhelm Moberg's residence during the summer of 1948. He stayed here researching stories of local Swedish immigrants for his [Emigrant Novels](#). The house has served as a private residence, an assisted living facility and as the Green Lake Hotel.

[ECUMEN Parmly LifePoints](#) 28210 Old Towne Road – is the current version of the Bethesda Old Peoples Home or Ålderdomshemmet as it was originally known. The land was acquired by the Tabitha Society of Minnesota (1880) in 1904, the charitable arm of the Swedish Lutheran Minnesota Conference, whose mission was to care for the sick and aged in their first Old Peoples Home. The site, 23 acres in size and purchased for \$15,000, included a farm that supported the home. Since its founding, the facility has gone through three buildings, many updates and has expanded its services.

## **Churches:**

[Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church](#) (1874) 28005 Old Towne Road – Was organized as the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church. In 1933, the congregation voted to provide services in English only.

[Maranatha Assembly of God](#) () 10963 Lake Blvd. –

[Chisago Lakes Baptist](#) (04/22/1962) 9387 Wyoming Trail –  
[Lord of Lakes Lutheran](#) () 25402 Itasca Ave. –

## **Historical Society / Markers**

### [Chisago City Heritage Association](#)

**First Schoolhouse Site** (1857) corner of Old Towne Road & 282<sup>nd</sup> St.

– Chisago City’s first school was located here. Designated as District 8 in 1900, the building was moved to the corner of Old Towne Rd. & Stinson Ave. When it was replaced by a larger building (demolished in 1996), the original building was moved & remodeled into the house on Old Towne Road & Lake Ave.

**Chisago County Courthouse Site** (1865-1875) off 279<sup>th</sup> St. behind Zion Lutheran Church – After a countywide election in 1864 Chisago City became the second city to be the county seat. It retained that honor for 10 years when another election chose Center City, the current site, as the county’s center of government.

## **Natural Features**

**Dotted With Lakes:** [Sam](#), [White Stone](#), [Big Green](#) (public access), Little Green (public access) [Ellen](#), [Emily](#), [Martha](#), [Swamp](#), [School](#), [Mattson](#), [Wallmark](#), and [Chisago](#) (public access), [South Lindstrom](#) (public access), as well as several unnamed lakes and creeks.

## **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[Sven Comfort Shoes](#) (1974) 10000 Lake Blvd. – is a world famous maker of handmade Sven Clogs.

[Winehaven Winery](#) (1995) 9757 292<sup>nd</sup> St. – Chisago County’s first estate winery and its wines have become top award winners in the Upper Midwest.

**Soderlund Chainsaw Art & Custom Sculpture** 1067 South Ave. –

**Town Clock** (2001) Triangle Park Main St, Old Towne Rd. & Stinson Ave. – was donated by the Lundquist family in honor of Barton Lundquist, a businessman and a lifelong resident.

[Ojikota Regional Park](#) (2008) 27500 Kirby Ave. – The name can be translated as “sweetness of life” and is a large (about 70 acres) multipurpose park. The land was acquired by Chisago City in 2008. The property served as the Camp Fire camp of the same name between 1926 and 2008.

**Tunnel Mural** (2007 Matt Gustafson, artist) on the east and west walls of the tunnel under Highway 8 (connects North Ave. / Swedish Immigrant Trail with Chuckie Lundquist Park) – Spanning the entire length of the tunnel, it is painted in graffiti-style art. The west side of the tunnel deals with Chisago City’s name and the east side portrays Vilhelm Moberg.

[Swedish Immigrant Trail](#) – is a 22-mile multi-use trail that will go from Taylors Falls to Wyoming, Minnesota when completed.

[Mike Siemsen's School of Woodworking](#) 9912 Green Lake Trail – teaches restoration woodworking and grandfather clock construction.

**Cemeteries** – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)

**West Green Lake** (1878) – About ½ mile west of Highway 8 on Wyoming Trail (Chisago County 22) across from the Baptist Church & school.

**South Green Lake** (1872) – About 4 miles south of Chisago City on Green Lake Trail (Chisago County 23.)

**Chisago Memorial Park** (1948) – On Old Towne Road across from Zion Lutheran.



# **Chisago Lakes Township**

Organized 1858

Named after the county and the lake, which it surrounded.

## **Buildings & Structures**

[Nya Duvemåla](#) (1996) 29601 Glader Blvd. – In [Ki-Chi Saga Park](#) about 2 miles east of Olinda Trail – The restored house has period furniture and is open for tours. During the summer of 1948 when [Vilhelm Moberg](#) was in the area doing research for his [Emigrant novels](#), he looked upon this house as a place where his fictional characters Karl Oskar and Kristina Nilsson would have lived. The name translates as New Little Dove’s Nest but could be also read as New Duvemåla. (Moberg’s use of the town of Duvemåla, Sweden was likely because it was the birthplace of his grandmother). This house was moved east from its original site on Glader Blvd to the current location in 1995 to help mark the [150<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of Swedish mass migration to America](#) in 1996. Originally, just a log house, it was the home of Carl Linn in the 1850s and was added on to several times. By the time the house was moved, the log house portion had deteriorated beyond repair leaving only the later additions.

**Moody Round Barn** (1915) 24301 Lofton Ave. – is one of only about a dozen round barns remaining in the state, it is listed on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (pdf).

### **Churches:**

Kingdom Hall () 32325 Lofton Ave.

## **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[Ironhorse Railroad Park](#) 24880 Morgan Ave. – includes Iron Horse Central Museum, a wide variety of rolling stock including: engines (steam & diesel) passenger cars, work cars, and caboose cars. The park has open spaces and hosts various private and public events throughout the summer including Hobo Days in September.

## **Cemeteries – [findagrave.com](#)**

**Glader Cemetery** (1855) – is the oldest Lutheran cemetery in Minnesota, it is located on South Center Lake about 1,000 ft. east of Nya Duvemåla.

# Franconia Township

Organized 1858

Named after either the first settler Ansel Smith's son (Francis) or the town he moved from in New Hampshire.

## **Monuments & Statues**

**Old Settlers Memorial** – In Franconia Town site on Summer St.

**Veterans Memorial** – In Franconia cemetery.

## **Buildings & Structures**

[Hazelden](#) (1949) 15251 Pleasant Valley Rd. – is an internationally recognized leader in addiction treatment, helping residents from every state & over 40 countries. This is the original, and one of the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation's 12 current US locations. 2014 saw the Hazelden Foundation and Betty Ford Clinic consolidate their efforts to form the new foundation.

**Franconia Town Site** Franconia Trail & Summer St. (about 2,000 ft. from Highway 95) – offers a quaint view of a small community comprised of many old homes with all of the commercial buildings gone.

### **Churches:**

[St Francis Xavier Church](#) (1884) 25267 Redwing Ave. –

## **Natural Features**

### [St. Croix River](#)

Franconia Landing – Summer St.

Osceola Landing – Osceola Rd. at the St. Croix Bridge

## **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[Franconia Sculpture Park](#) 29836 St. Croix Trail – is a 25-acre outdoor park displaying the works of local & international artists in residence. While there are permanent works, many of the pieces of monumental art change with the artists in residence.

[Pleasant Valley Orchard](#) 17325 Pleasant Valley Rd. – offers seasonal availability of apples, strawberries and pumpkins.

[Franconia Bluffs](#) SNA (Scientific & natural areas) Two areas located east of Hwy 95 and west of Franconia Trail on the high scenic bluffs along the St. Croix River, it protects upland bluffs and forested plant communities while the National Park Service lands adjacent to the south protects floodplain marshes and forests.

**Cemeteries** – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)

**Franconia Cemetery** (1896) – About 1,000 ft. west of Lawrence Creek Rd. on 297<sup>th</sup> St.

**Panola Cemetery** (1874) – About 1,000 ft. north of Quiet Valley Rd. on Quinlan Ave.

**Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Cemetery** (1879) – 25267 Redwing Ave.

## Lindström

Founded 1880

Sister-City to Tingsryd, Sweden

Named after Daniel Lindström, a pioneer farmer who sold his land in 1878 for what was to become the village site.

**Town Celebration** – Karl Oskar Days held in July.

**Chamber of Commerce** – [Chisago Lakes Chamber](#)

### **Monuments & Statues**

**Karl Oskar & Kristina Nilsson Statue** (1969 Roger Davis, sculptor) Highway 8 & Linden St. – was commissioned by business owners of the time including Willard Smith and Jim Hoy. It is made of fiberglass and polyurethane and was sculpted from a model of the Axel Olsson [Emigrant Monument](#) (pdf) sculpture of Karl Oskar and Kristina Nilsson in [Karlshamn](#), Sweden. Originally used on a float for the town's yearly celebration, Karl Oskar Days, the statue was installed in its present location in 1970. Karl Oskar and Kristina Nilsson are the main characters in the series of four [Emigrant novels](#) by [Vilhelm Moberg](#).

**Per Andersson, Daniel Lindström & Erik Norelius Statues** (2013-2014 Ian Dudley, Sculptor) Highway 8 & Linden St. – are on [James L. Oberstar](#) Plaza. The plaza dedication recognizes Jim Oberstar (1934-2014), former 8<sup>th</sup> District Congressman, for his crucial support for Highway 8 safety improvements over many years.

**Per Andersson** – was one of the first Swedish settlers & a half-brother to Daniel Lindström and a cousin to Eric Norelius. Per and his story likely formed the basis for the Karl Oskar Nilsson character created by Vilhelm Moberg for his novels.

**Daniel Lindström** (1825-1896) – owned a farm on the West side of the city and is the city's namesake.

[Eric Norelius](#) (1833-1916) – holds a very [special place](#) in Minnesota, as a leader in the early Swedish community, a spiritual leader in the Lutheran Church, and a groundbreaking educator. While still a divinity student in Ohio, he traveled to Minnesota and became the first preacher at Chisago Lakes Lutheran in Center City in 1854. He was one of the founders of the [Augustana Synod](#) in 1860 and twice their president. He was also one of the incorporators of the Tabitha Society in 1880, the charitable arm of the Swedish Lutheran Minnesota Conference. In May of 1862, as a [pastor in Red Wing](#), he was given \$20 to start a parochial school for his church. It was with the encouragement of the Minnesota Conference of the Augustana Synod that he started what was to become [Gustavus Adolphus College](#) (now in St. Peter). The college opened with just 1 “older” student, Jonus Magny (Magnuson), who traveled from the Chisago Lakes Swedish community in late September 1862 & stayed with Eric & his wife [Inga Charlotta](#) at their home. [His papers, dating from 1851-1916, are stored at Augustana College.](#)

**Veteran’s Memorial** – Highway 8 & Linden St. –

## **Buildings & Structures**

**Frank A. Larson House** ([Fridhem](#)) (1895) 12625 Newell Ave. – is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (pdf).

**Charles A. Victor House** (1905) 30495 Park St. – is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (pdf).

[Water Tower](#) (1908) 12859 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. N. – was modified & painted to look like a Swedish Coffee Pot in 1992.

**Gustaf Anderson House History Museum** (1890) 13045 Lake Blvd. – is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (pdf).

[Chisago County History Center](#) 13112 3rd Ave. N. –

### **Churches:**

[Trinity Lutheran](#) (7/11/1901) – 13025 Newell Ave.

[St. Bridget of Sweden](#) (1940s) – 13060 Lake Blvd.

[First United Methodist](#) ([1858](#)) – 30828 Irene Ave.

[Lakes Free](#) () – 29620 Olinda Trail.

## **Historical Society / Markers**

[Ingrid Bergman](#) (1915-1982) **Plaque** 2720 Lake Blvd. – In 1943 movie star Ingrid Bergman came to the area as narrator of a documentary which was nominated for an Oscar in 1944. It was the first in a series called "The American Scene" by the Office of War Information Overseas Branch, titled "Swedes in America."

## **Natural Features**

Access to many lakes including: [South Lindstrom](#) (public access), [North Lindstrom](#), Bull, [North Center](#), [South Center](#) (public access), [Kroon](#).

## **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[Chisago County Press](#) 12615 Lake Blvd. – Publishing the local paper since the early 1900s and has on display the desk that Vilhelm Moberg used while here.

[Chisago Lakes Chamber of Commerce](#) 30525 Linden St. – [Allemansrätt Wilderness and Swedish Heritage Park](#) (2012) 31316 N. Olinda Trail – About 90 acres.

[Lindström Walking Tour](#)

Cemeteries – [findagrave.com](#)

**Fairview Cemetery** (established at its original location in 1897) Akerson & Lake Blvd. – The cemetery was moved to current site after WWI.

## Center City

**Founded as Centre City in 1851**

[Sister-City](#) to [Hassela](#), Sweden

Named for its place between Chisago City and Taylors Falls.

**Town Celebration** – Center City Days held in June.

**Chamber of Commerce** – [Chisago Lakes Chamber](#)

### **Monuments & Statues**

**City Founding Monument** 280 Andrews Ave. – Swedish Village Mall parking lot

### **Buildings & Structures**

[Chisago County Government Center](#) (1990) 313 N. Main St. – County Courthouse and government offices.

[Summit Avenue Historical District](#) – goes from Chisago Lake Lutheran to the commercial district.

#### **Churches:**

[Chisago Lake Lutheran](#) (5/12/1854 original building, 1882) 1 Summit Ave. – is the second Swedish church congregation founded in the Minnesota Conference of the former Augustana Lutheran Church. The marriage scene in the movie "[Grumpy Old Men](#)" was filmed here. Is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (pdf).

### **Historical Society / Markers**

### **Natural Features**

**Many Lakes including** [South Center](#), [North Center](#) (public access) [Pioneer](#).

## **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[Center City Historic District](#) (pdf) – Is on the National Register of Historic Places. Concentration of late-19th- and early-20th-century frame houses built largely by a local carpenter for prosperous residents.

[A.B. Holm House](#) – 228 Summit Ave.

[A.P. Stolberg House](#) – 200 Summit Ave.

[Alfred B. Slattengren House](#) – 216 Summit Ave.

[Andrew Holtman House](#) – 112 Summit Ave.

[C.J. Wahlstrom House](#) – 224 Summit Ave.

[Dr. A.N. Gunz House](#) – 208 Summit Ave.

[Elof Peterson House](#) – 108 Summit Ave.

[Frank G. Lorens House](#) – 100 Summit Ave.

[Fred Benson House](#) – 116 Summit Ave.

[J.E. Melin House](#) – 128 Summit Ave.

[Lilly Lorens House](#) – 212 Summit Ave.

[Mary Andrews House](#) – 120 Summit Ave.

[Oberg House](#) (moved from Upper Town ca. 1900) – 136 Summit Ave.

[Peter S. Carlson House](#) – 124 Summit Ave.

[S.J. Johnson House](#) – 102 Summit Ave.

[Solomon Peterson House](#) – 104 Summit Ave.

[V.L. Johnson House](#) – 204 Summit Ave.

[Wennerberg House](#) – 132 Summit Ave.

[William Carlson House](#) – 220 Summit Ave.

## **Cemeteries – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)**

**Chisago Lake Cemetery** (1854) – Oasis Rd. & 310<sup>th</sup> St.

**Chisago Lake Hillside Cemetery** (1958) – Oasis Rd. & 310<sup>th</sup> St.

**Methodist Cemetery** (1870) – Crescent Rd.



# **Shafer**

Founded 1881

[Sister-City](#) to [Nöbbele](#), Sweden

Named after Jacob Shafer, a farmer of the time.

**Town Celebration** – Shafer Days held in October.

**Chamber of Commerce** – [Chisago Lakes Chamber](#)

**Monuments & Statues**

**Buildings & Structures**

**Churches:**

**Historical Society / Markers**

**Natural Features**

**Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[Fichtens Market & Café](#) 16440 Lake Blvd. – are known for their handcrafted Gouda, Artisanal cheeses, their bison herd & their bison meat.

[Swedish Circle Tours](#)

**Cemeteries** – [findagrave.com](#)

## Taylors Falls

Originally called both Baker's Falls and Taylor Place  
Founded as Taylor's Falls in 1850-51  
[Sister-City](#) to [Åseda](#), Sweden

Named after the many Taylors that resided here especially Jesse Taylor (settled 1838) who is recognized as the first permanent settler. Also, though not related, Joshua Lovejoy Taylor (1816-1901), and Nathan C.D. Taylor (1810-1887) in 1851 the city's first postmaster while still a part of Washington County and was also a member of the Territorial House of Representatives from Taylors Falls (1854).

**Town Celebration** – [Wannigan Days](#) held jointly with St. Croix Falls WI in June.

**Chamber of Commerce** – [Falls Chamber of Commerce](#)

### **Monuments & Statues**

**Veterans Memorial** – In cemetery.

### **Buildings & Structures**

[W.H.C. Folsom House](#) (1855) 272 W. Government St. – William Henry Carman Folsom (1817-1900) a Canadian by birth, left his home and family in Maine at age 15, while working his way westward as a farm laborer, logger and lumber camp cook, and dam builder. He is best known as a lumber baron in the St. Croix River Valley but also served as County Treasurer, State Representative, and State Senator. He was involved in the navigational development of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers, railway building, the Wisconsin boundary dispute, and the design of the State Seal. In Taylors Falls, he was a member of the cemetery association, the Methodist church and built the Chisago Seminary a 28' x40' 2 story structure in 1857 as a public school where higher branches of education were taught until 1864. [The Taylors Falls Historical Society](#) operates out of the Folsom House.

[Old Jail](#) (1884) 349 Government St. – Now is a B&B.

**Town House School** (1852) 331 Government St. – is the oldest existing Minnesota school building and still hosts pioneer school sessions during the summer.

[Railroad Depot](#) (1902) 312 Government St. – was the fourth depot to serve the spur line of the St. Paul Duluth Railroad that was finished in 1880. The building recalls the historical importance of the rail line that linked Taylors Falls with points west and south and served as an important transportation component benefiting local commerce and agriculture, as well as the tourist industry in the

Dalles area. The building now serves as the Taylors Falls' Community Center.

### **Churches:**

[Taylors Falls United Methodist](#) (1859) 290 W. Government St. – 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest Methodist church in continuous use in Minnesota.

[St Joseph Catholic](#) (1868) 409 Bench St. –

[First Baptist](#) ( ) 661 West St. –

[First Evangelical Lutheran](#) (1860) 561 Chestnut St. –

### **Historical Society / Markers**

[Taylors Falls Historical Society](#)

**Taylors Falls Settlement marker** 1976 – Unknown location.

**Site of Historic Log Jams marker** 1976 – Unknown location.

**Geology of the Taylors Falls Region marker** – Off of Highway 8 about 1,500 feet south of the intersection with Highway 95.

**Glacial Pothole marker** – In Interstate Park.

### **Natural Features**

**Dalles of the St. Croix River** – defined:

In *voyageur* French, it came to mean a rapids or narrows on a river. This area has also been referred to using the English word Dells instead of Dalles as in the Wisconsin Dells. In both cases, you can find a scenic, glacially formed gorge that features striking sandstone formations along the banks.

[Interstate Park-MN](#) (1895) 293 acres with the entrance on south side of Highway 8 just before the St. Croix Bridge – Lobbying for the creation of the park was an idea that began in 1890 by George Hazzard of Taylors Falls. The park in Minnesota was established in 1895 and in a joint venture with Wisconsin (1900), created the first interstate park in the nation. Minnesota Interstate State Park's most outstanding resource may be the immense holes that formed in the bedrock (ancient lava flows). The park offers potholes, cliff views, rock climbing, a seasonal waterfall, and hiking trails (three trails extending almost 4 miles, excluding the pothole trails).

[St. Croix River](#) – is approximately 169 miles long and, named in 1689 after a French fort near the headwater, it is one of the first [National Scenic Riverways](#). It was in the year 1848, along its banks in the town of Stillwater, the state of [Minnesota was born](#). On August 26, 1848, a gathering was held at John McKusick's store in Stillwater MN. This "Stillwater Convention" elected Henry Sibley to represent them in Congress with the primary goal being the establishment of the Minnesota Territory. [Historically](#) the river was a vital link in the settlement and commerce of the area. A video showing the history of the river and the asset it is appreciated for today, "[St. Croix: A Northwoods Journey](#)" has been produced by the National Park Service.

[Dalles of the St. Croix](#) (pdf) (~10,000 years ago) – is a gorge carved in basalt (volcanic flow) which is part of the North Shore Volcanic Group and is comprised of 7 to 10 flows at the highest cliff along the St. Croix River rising 50 to 150 feet above the water. This area also formed the northernmost boundary of a preglacial sea. The sandstone deposits of that period contain both fossils of crustaceans and trilobites.

[Glacial Potholes](#) (also called glacial kettles ~10,000 years ago) – At the end of the last Ice Age the natural drainage of the Lake Superior basin was blocked by a lobe of the continent wide glacier to the east by Lake Michigan. The flow into the Lake Superior basin was augmented by a melting glacial Lake Agassiz which was draining west, south and east. As melting occurred, water filled the basin and formed what is known as Glacial Lake Duluth, which eventually achieved an elevation around 500ft higher than today and overflowed down the Brule & St. Croix Rivers. The flow continued until the glacial melt could leave by its natural eastern route. This extended torrent of water that rushed through the valley carved out The Dalles of the St. Croix. Giant whirlpools formed at the sides of the river, with the silt and sand in the water eroding the basalt at its weakest spots. Eventually holes were created and larger and larger rocks were flung against the sides, enlarging the holes to what are known today as glacial potholes. Interstate State Park MN contains more glacial potholes (about 80) in a smaller area than any other location in the world. With a depth of over 60 feet, the world's deepest explored glacial pothole is the Bottomless Pit. On the Wisconsin side of the St. Croix, there are similar potholes, but they are smaller in both size and number and at a higher elevation.

**Curtain Falls** – is just northwest of the southern entrance to Interstate Park on what was called the Curtain Falls Trail, but is now known as the Sandstone Bluffs Trail, and is on the bluff above Highway 8 (flow dependent on season & precipitation).

## **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

**Taylor's Falls River Walk** – The path is a feature under development and its path will follow the St. Croix River starting at the Highway 8 Bridge and then head north.

**Scenic Overlook** – is about 1.2 miles north of Highway 8 on St. Croix Trail (Highway 95)

**St. Croix River Bridge - view of the St. Croix Dam/Xcel Hydro Generating Station**

- In 1856, the first bridge across the St. Croix was constructed connecting Taylors Falls & St. Croix Falls. Joseph S. Sewell designed the 150ft wooden toll bridge (he had also designed the St. Paul bridge that preceded the current Wabasha Bridge). In 1909 a concrete bridge replacement costing \$14,000 was proposed but in 1910 bridge #48 (a 146ft long 21ft wide steel arch bridge) was constructed for around \$11,000. The current bridge, #6566, was built in 1955. This time the bridge was raised, widened to 48ft, the span lengthened to 160ft, and the total length increased to 405ft including approaches. The last major work was done in 2012 at a cost 1.1million.

**Logging** existed as a major activity on the river from the opening of the land by the 1837 Treaty of St. Peters until 1914. An example of this activity according to the Taylors Falls Reporter: "In 1872 3,500 men, 1,600 horses and 250 oxen logged off 35,000 acres cutting some 200 million board feet of logs. In 1883 the Boom in Stillwater, Minnesota, which collected logs coming down the St. Croix River, reported 1,397,417 logs for 217,045,647 board feet."

Largest logjam (pdf) - Logjams on the St. Croix were frequent. The papers of W.H.C. Folsom, held at the Minnesota Historical Society, document an unfulfilled vision he had of digging a channel from Lake Superior to the headwaters of the St. Croix to increase the flow of the river and thereby increase the number of logs able to go down the river while also reducing the number of logjams. On June 13, 1886, the largest logjam in Minnesota and Wisconsin history (possibly in the world) occurred on the St. Croix River. Starting between the cliffs of the Dalles at Angle Rock (a sharp bend in the river about 1,100 ft. south of the Highway 8 bridge) the jam was reputed to contain between 125 & 150 million feet of logs (or between 23,700 to 28,500 miles - enough to circle the earth) and stretched 2 miles up the river. The jam went from river bottom to almost 50 feet above the water. It took the efforts of the 100 owners of the logs until July 7 and \$75,000 to clear the jam and start the logs moving down the St. Croix, and it took them until September to finish getting all the logs back into the river. In response to this crisis in getting the logs down to the boom at Stillwater during low water times, the St. Croix Dam & Boom Company was formed. In 1889 they built Nevers Dam (pdf) (about 10 miles north of the Hwy 8 bridge) to control the water flow and the number of logs going through The Dalles, which reduced the number and severity of the logjams. Nevers Dam was possibly the largest wood pile-driven dam in the world and was last used for logging in 1912. After the floods of 1954 damaged the structure, it was removed in 1955.

[Riverboat excursions](#) – provides scenic boat tours on the St. Croix River.

[Canoe rental](#) – Canoe and kayak rentals.

[Wild Mountain](#) – recreation area providing summer waterslides & winter skiing.

[Taylors Falls Walking Tour](#)

## National Register of Historic Places

[Angels' Hill Historic District](#) <sup>(pdf)</sup> – is the vicinity of W. Plateau and Government St. and Military Rd., Taylors Falls. Homogenous group of mid-19th-century Greek revival frame residences, public buildings, and church in hills above business district.

Property that has a separate Nomination Document is designated by \*.

[1852 Town House School](#) – 331 Government St.

[Artig-Wilcox House](#) – 361 W. Government St.

[August Anderson Garage](#) – 32X Basil St.

[barn](#) – 360 Plateau St.

[barn](#) – 360 Plateau St.

[Berquist/Lindquist House](#) – 401 Military Rd.

\* [Daubney, John, House](#) <sup>(pdf)</sup> – Italianate frame house (ca. 1870) acquired as retirement residence by early settler and farmer.

[Dresser/Murdock House](#) – 343 Basil St.

[E. W. Murphy House](#) – 424 Folsom St.

[Evelyn Noleen House](#) – 300 Basil St.

[First Methodist Church](#) – 290 W. Government St.

[George DeAttly House](#) – 243 Basil St.

[Godfrey-Clendening House](#) – 348 Plateau St.

[Helen Humphrey House](#) – 307 Basil St.

[Hodgkinson House \(razed\)](#) – Hill St.

[Holman-Hobbs House](#) – 325 Basil St.

[house](#)

[house](#)

[house](#)

[house](#)

[house](#) – 348 Plateau St.

[house](#)

[Hovey House \(razed - 1980s\)](#)

[John Whitney House](#) – 347 W. Government St.

[Johnson-Nevers House](#) – 361 Plateau House

[Kenyon/Gray House](#) – 320 West St.

[Levi Folsom House](#) – 212 Basil St.

[Lucius Snell House](#) – 360 Plateau St.

[McKusick House](#) – 343 Plateau St.

[Merrill-Mosher House](#) – 366 Colby St.

[Methodist Parsonage](#) – 366 Military St.

\* [Munch-Roos House](#) <sup>(pdf)</sup> – Greek revival frame dwelling built in 1853 by Munch brothers as residence/carpenter shop, later occupied by Swedish banker/politician.

[Ole Nelson House](#) – 396 Colby St.

[Patrick Fox House](#) – 297 West St.

[Platt Walker House](#) – 213 Basil St.  
[School Bus Barn House](#) – 391 Ravine St.  
[Schottmuller Brewery](#) – 100 W. Government Rd.  
[Sidney Swanson House](#) – 330 West Government St.  
[site of Chisago Seminary](#)  
[site of Taylors Falls School](#)  
[Smith, John H., House](#) – 361 Military Rd.  
[Smith, John H., House](#) – 381 Military Rd.  
[Soap House](#)  
[\\* Taylors Falls Public Library \\*](#) (pdf) 473 Bench St. – Frame residence and tailor shop built in 1854; later acquired for use as town library.  
[Thomas Lacey House](#) – 313 Basil St.  
[Village Jail](#) – 102 W. Government Rd.  
[W.H.C. Folsom House](#) – 272 W. Government St.  
[wellhead](#) – 272 W. Government St.  
[William Dobney House](#) – 366 Plateau St.  
[Winslow House](#) – 347 W. Government Rd.

## **Cemeteries** – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)

**Kahbakong Cemetery** (1854) – St. Croix Trail & Mulberry St.



# **Almelund**

Founded in 1887

The name translates as elm grove in Swedish and it also complements the village's first postmaster John Almqvist (elm twig/branch).

**Town Celebration** – [Apple Festival](#) held in September.

## **Monuments & Statues**

## **Buildings & Structures**

### **Churches:**

[Immanuel Lutheran](#) (1887) 37515 Park Trail –

## **Historical Society / Markers**

## **Natural Features**

## **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

**First school** (1890) at the intersection of Maple Street and County 12 – wood frame building now serves as the Amador Town Hall.

[Amador Heritage Center](#) (1910) Park Trail & Maple Lane – The museum was established in 1978 after the North Branch School District sold the land and buildings to the township for \$1.

**Swedish Immigrant Log Farm** adjacent to the Heritage Center – has 1850's to 1880 structures including several log homes and a log granary.

### **Rural Almelund:**

[Threshing Show](#) (1955) 17760 St. Croix Trail (Hwy 95) – held the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in August.

[Clover Blossom School house](#) (1880s) 17760 St. Croix Trail (Hwy 95) – a one-room schoolhouse museum moved to the Threshing Show site in 2001.

[Chisago County Courthouse](#) (1876) 17760 St. Croix Trail (Hwy 95) – is the original Center City Chisago County Courthouse moved to the Threshing Show site in 1990.

[Hay Days](#) (1967) 38400 Oriole Ave. – [Started by the Sno Barons](#) snowmobile club, it is a unique and large event held in September. It is the world's largest grass snowmobile drag races & swap meet (over 1,200 booths). Previously held in Columbus Township, Anoka County, they moved to their current site in 2010.

## **Cemeteries** – [findagrave.com](#)

**Almelund** (1887) – 15870 Church Lane.

# Scandia

Founded as New Scandia Township in 1850  
Washington County

Named for the region of Europe from which many settlers emigrated.

**Town Celebration** – [Taco Daze](#) held in September.

## **Buildings & Structures**

[Gammelgården Museum](#) (1972) 20880 Olinda Trail N. – is the only open-air museum devoted to Swedish immigration in the United States. The property has various buildings of the mid 1800's representing the different aspects of Swedish life and includes a gift/interpretive center. **Celebration** – [Midsommer Dag](#) held in June.

[Hay Lake School](#) (1896) 14020 195<sup>th</sup> St. N. – school district #2 was established in 1855 in Washington County. Is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (pdf).

[Johannes Erickson Log House Museum](#) (1868) 14020 195<sup>th</sup> St. N. – was moved to the current site in 1974. Is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#) (pdf).

### **Churches:**

[Elim Lutheran](#) (5/19/1854) 20971 Scandia Trail N. – Third Swedish church congregation founded in the Minnesota Conference of the former Augustana Lutheran Church.

## **Historical Society / Markers**

### **Natural Features**

[St. Croix River](#)

### **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[William O'Brien State Park](#) 16821 O'Brien Trail North – provides [hiking and camping](#) (pdf).

[Falls Creek](#) SNA (Scientific & natural area) On the east side of Hwy 95 just north of Pilar Rd. Falls Creek is one of the most diverse natural areas remaining in Washington County. Folded and faulted rocks at this site show the largest displacement of any known Paleozoic rocks in Minnesota, revealing Decorah, Platteville, Glenwood, and St. Peter formations. Steep ravines line the intermittently active stream beds.

**Cemeteries** – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)

**Elim Lutheran North** – Olinda Trail N. & Oakhill Rd N.

**Elim Lutheran South** – Olinda Trail N. & 205<sup>th</sup> St. N.

# St. Croix Falls, WI

Founded 1837

Named for the river on which it resides.

**Town Celebration** – [Wannigan Days](#) held jointly with Taylors Falls MN in June.

**Chamber of Commerce** – [Falls Chamber of Commerce](#)

## **Monuments & Statues**

[River Spirit Statue](#) (2007 Julie Ann Stage, sculptor) across from 210 N. Washington St. (Auditorium Theater (1917)) – [Another statue link](#)

## **Buildings & Structures**

[Dam/Xcel Hydro Generating Station](#) (1907) at the same location as River Spirit Statue – Second dam on the St. Croix River. The first was [Nevers Dam](#) <sup>(pdf)</sup> (1889-1954) about 10 miles north of Taylors Falls/St. Croix Falls. It was the largest wood pile-driven dam in the world with largest sluice gate at 80 feet.

### **Churches:**

[First Presbyterian](#) () 719 Nevada St. –  
[United Methodist](#) () 300 N. Adams St. –  
[Redeemer Lutheran](#) () 200 N. Adams St. –  
[Shepherd of the Valley](#) () 140 S. Madison St. –  
[Calvary Church of the Nazarene](#) () 510 Vincent St. –  
[Alliance Church of the Valley](#) () 1259 State Hwy 35 –

## **Historical Society / Markers**

[Battle of St. Croix Falls](#) marker – is in Lions Park about 1.7 miles north of Highway 8 on Washington St.

[State Park Movement in Wisconsin](#) marker – is in Interstate Park.

## **Natural Features**

**Dalles of the St. Croix River** – defined:

In *voyageur* French, it came to mean a rapids or narrows on a river. This area has also been referred to using the English word Dells instead of Dalles as in the Wisconsin Dells. In both cases, you can find a scenic, glacially formed gorge that features striking sandstone formations along the banks.

[St. Croix River](#) – Approximately 169 miles long was named in 1689 after a French fort near the headwater and was one of the first [National Scenic Riverways](#). [Historically](#) the river was a vital link in the settlement and commerce of the area. A video showing the history of the river and the asset it is appreciated for today, "[St. Croix: A Northwoods Journey](#)", has been produced by the National Park Service.

[Ice Age Scientific Reserve](#) (1964) – Established to protect the glacial landforms and landscapes in Wisconsin, it is composed of nine separate areas, the [St. Croix Dalles at Interstate Park](#) being one.

[Interstate Park – WI](#) <sup>(pdf)</sup> (1900) 1,300 acres is 3/4 mile east of the bridge on Hwy 8 then .3 mile south on Hwy 35 – [The 1979 Master Plan](#) <sup>(pdf)</sup> includes the following: "In 1890, Mr. George H. Hazzard of Taylor's Falls began lobbying for a park on the Minnesota side of the St. Croix Dalles. With the Minnesota project well underway, Mr. Hazzard contacted leaders of St. Croix Falls to arouse interest in making the park a joint venture between Minnesota and Wisconsin, thus incorporating the scenic lands of both sides of The Dalles of the St. Croix into a single park. His work, and that of Wisconsinites interested in establishing a park, was successful. In 1900 Wisconsin's first state park was founded on this site." The park offers potholes, cliff views, waterfall, hiking trails (12 trails almost 9 miles), a swimming beach on Lake of the Dalles, and many campsites.

Sites that are part of the Wisconsin Natural Areas Program:

[Centennial Bedrock Glade](#) area accessed from within Interstate Park – Centennial Bedrock Glade features an example of an acid bedrock glade, a rare natural community in Wisconsin.

[Interstate Lowland Forest](#) area accessed from within Interstate Park – The forest area features a mature southern wet forest community on what is periodically an island in the St. Croix River.

**Silverbrook Falls / copper mine trail** – is a 1.2mi trail in Interstate Park. The trail goes past remnants of a copper mining operation and ends at an 18ft waterfall. According to the [Wisconsin Outdoor Journal \(May 1995\)](#): "To the southwest in Polk County lies another outcrop that forms the picturesque dalles at St. Croix Falls. Another belt of these copper-bearing lavas known simply as "the copper range" runs from near Bad River in Ashland County eastward across Iron County where it exits the state on the Montreal River. These formations make for a rugged and picturesque landscape abounding in waterfalls, gorges, and rocky bluffs. And while the Wisconsin copper ranges never supported a major mining industry, native copper was found, sometimes in encouraging amounts, and abandoned prospects dot the landscape. These are historical sites from the early Euro-American settlement period." In [The Geology of Minnesota Vol. 2 \(1888\)](#), there are areas on the St. Croix River marked as having copper bearing trap & conglomerate from above the falls down to Franconia but the largest indication is at St. Croix Falls. It is unclear if copper was significant in the area's economy but in any case was dwarfed by the importance of logging.

### **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historic**

[St. Croix River Visitor Center](#) 401 N. Hamilton St. – St. Croix Riverway headquarters, it has a 500-gallon freshwater aquarium and a large-scale aerial photo of the Riverway. The photo shows the river from north of Grantsburg to its confluence with the Mississippi.

[Fawn-Doe-Rosa Wildlife Educational Park](#) 2131 US Hwy 8 (130<sup>th</sup> Ave.) – Founded in 1963, has a selection of animals from deer to farm animals & pony rides.

[Ice Age Trail](#) – A 1,000 mile primarily hiking National Scenic Trail going through 30 Wisconsin counties before ending up at Sturgeon Bay.

[Gandy Dancer Trail](#) (southern segment) – A 47 mile section running north to Danbury before crossing a 520ft trestle over the St. Croix into Minnesota.

**Cushing Land Agency Building** (1882) 106 S. Washington St. – Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Dalles Bluff Site** (1000-500 AD) – Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

[St. Croix Falls Auditorium](#) (1917) 201 N. Washington St. – is home to the St. Croix Festival Theatre (1990). Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Thomas Henry Thompson House** (1882) 205 S. Adams St. – Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Luhrs/Bjornson Artworks** 241 N. Washington St. (at the corner of Maryland) – locally produced pottery, glass and paintings.

[Eric's Canoe](#) 1289 S Vincent St. – Kayak & canoe rentals.

**In the Township:**

[Lamar Community Center](#) (1905) 1488 200th St. – Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

[Dancing Dragonfly Winery](#) (2010) 2013 120<sup>th</sup> Ave. –

**Cemeteries** – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)

**St. Croix Falls Cemetery** Maple Dr. –

## **Dresser, WI**

Founded as Valley Junction in 1880

Shortly thereafter renamed to Dresser Junction after farmer Sam Dresser who had donated land to the railroad to speed transport of his produce. The name was shortened to Dresser in 1940.

### **Town Celebration –**

### **Monuments & Statues**

### **Buildings & Structures**

#### **Churches:**

[Peace Lutheran](#) () 2355 Clark Rd. –

[St Peters Community Church](#) () 223 E. Estate St. –

### **Historical Society / Markers**

### **Natural Features**

**Lava deposits**, known locally as trap rock, are used both as a natural and commercial asset of the area. The Dresser trap rock deposit remains the hardest concentration of this basalt-type rock in America; so hard, that Dresser Trap Rock boulders were utilized by NASA for testing drills employed on the moon probe.

[Osceola Bedrock Glade](#) on River Road (County S) – Part of the Wisconsin Natural Areas Program, the area is a large complex of rocky basalt bedrock exposures and one of only four well developed acid bedrock glades in Wisconsin.

### **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historical**

Railroad depot (1887) W. State St. at Central Ave. S. –

[Dresser Trap Rock Quarry](#) (1914) –

[Trollhaugen](#) Outdoor Recreation Area (1950) 2232 100<sup>th</sup> Ave. – provides both summer and winter recreation opportunities.

### **Cemeteries – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)**



# Osceola, WI

Founded 1853

Originally named LeRoy after LeRoy Hauble, in 1859 it was renamed after Seminole Chief Osceola.

**Town Celebration** – [Wheels and Wings](#) held in September.

**Chamber of Commerce** – [Main Street / Chamber of Commerce](#)

**Monuments & Statues**

**Buildings & Structures**

**Osceola Commercial Historic District** (earliest 1850 and spanning later years) along Cascade St. from First Ave. to Third Ave. – Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**First Baptist Church** (1910) 201 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. – Is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is the location of the [Osceola Chamber of Commerce](#).

**Geiger Building/Old Polk County Courthouse** (1880) 201 Cascade St. – Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Alvah Heald House** (1879) 202 Sixth Ave. – Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Osceola Bridge** (1953 at least 2 prior) Is a steel truss deck design. The prior bridge was much lower and had a swing element on the Wisconsin side. Around 1930 the fixed portion on the Minnesota side was struck and suffered a collapse.

**Churches:**

[Grace Church](#) (1890s) 722 Seminole Ave. –

[Osceola Community Church](#) ( ) 2492 Education Dr. –

[Hope Evangelical Free](#) (2000) 933 248<sup>th</sup> St. –

[Trinity Evangelical Lutheran](#) (1913) 300 Seminole Ave. –

[Osceola United Methodist](#) ( ) 306 River St. –

[St Joseph Catholic](#) (1915) 255 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. E. –

**Historical Society / Markers**

[Osceola Historical Society](#)

**Natural Features**

[St Croix River](#)

**Cascade Falls** are 300 ft. north of the intersection of Osceola Rd. & N. Cascade St. – Is the outfall of the Osceola Creek. Starting at the statue of Chief Osceola, a set of stairs leads down into the gorge and the base of the falls. A trail follows the creek to the shores of the St. Croix. The falls drop 100 feet between town and the river. The falls were the reason for the founding of the village, once supporting a mill, and a brewery. Some ruins of the old industry remain above the falls. There is also a second small falls, Geiger Falls, where an even smaller creek falls into the Osceola just above the main falls and was named for the brewer.

### **Other Points of Interest – Physical & Historical**

[Birthplace of Gustav Stoekel](#) (3/9/1858-4/21/1942) – Stoekel, better known as Gustav Stickley, at 18 moved with his family to Pennsylvania to work in his uncle's chair factory. In 1883, moving to New York he became known as a national furniture manufacturer, design leader, publisher and the chief proselytizer for the American Craftsman style movement.

[American Bronze Casting](#) (1991) 728 Prospect Ave. – Owned by artist [Wally Shoop](#). This foundry cast all of the Chisago City/Lindstrom statues.

[Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway](#) (1916) 114 Depot Rd. (also known as the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Saint Marie Railroad Depot) – Regular sightseeing excursions depart from the depot traveling from Osceola to Marine on St. Croix. Is on the National Register of Historic Places.

[Riverwood Canoe](#) 305 River St. – Canoe and kayak rentals.

### **Cemeteries – [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com)**

**Pleasant Prairie** (1866) – Corner of Simmon Dr. & 75<sup>th</sup> Ave.

## **St. Croix Valley and Beyond**

There are many places beyond the South Chisago County area that are also of cultural and historical interest.

### **American Swedish Institute**

2600 Park Avenue Minneapolis

**ASI** while primarily focused on Swedish culture, also celebrates all of Scandinavia through its library, museum, exhibits and cultural events.

The Minneapolis-based Consulate General of Sweden's office is located at the American Swedish Institute. Consular services can be provided by appointment only.

The American Swedish Institute is a vibrant arts and cultural organization that engages locally and connects globally. From the Turnblad Mansion and Nelson Cultural Center, ASI seeks to be a community asset through its **mission**:

The American Swedish Institute is a gathering place for all people to share experiences around themes of culture, migration, the environment and the arts, informed by enduring links to Sweden. With its **vision**:

The American Swedish Institute will be a leading museum and cultural center of international reputation which invites all people to gather to connect their pasts to their shared future, to understand their heritage in relation to others, and to discover their role as neighbors and global citizens. Vibrant, ongoing ties to Sweden will illuminate and inspire all these endeavors.

The history of several neighboring communities is worth mentioning:

**Hudson WI** (1840) was originally called Willow River. Judge Joel Foster later called the town Buena Vista after returning from the **Battle of Buena Vista**. In 1852 it was renamed Hudson by its first mayor after the Hudson Valley in New York where he was from. Hudson is also a town full of history and beautiful houses. The St. Croix County Historical Society, in Hudson, is located in the **Octagon House Museum Complex**. Just outside of the city is **Willow River State Park** with Willow River Falls, the largest and most active falls within a 50-mile radius.

[Stillwater MN](#) (1840) was the capital of the Minnesota Territory and is [historic](#) in every sense of the word. Oddly, the city started out as the county seat of St. Croix County, Wisconsin Territory. Stillwater was platted in 1848, and was a town of about 600 people, nearly all lumbermen. When Wisconsin entered the union that year, leaving lands now in Minnesota without a government, delegates from the area met in Stillwater. The Stillwater Convention appointed Henry Sibley to petition Congress for the early organization of Minnesota Territory. Minnesota became a Territory on March 3, 1849. The first Minnesota Territorial Legislature named the county Washington and confirmed Stillwater as its county seat. On March 4, 1854, Stillwater was incorporated as a city. John McKusick, the man who had named the community for Stillwater, Maine, was elected Stillwater's first Mayor. Stillwater boasts many shops, locations, and museums that are worth visiting. The St. Croix River widens enough here to form what is called Lake St. Croix; residents and visitors can enjoy it while boating or on cruises. The soon to be replaced and repurposed [Stillwater lift bridge](#), that crosses the St. Croix River, is unique and has a history of its own. The [Washington County Historical Society](#) is located in the old [Stillwater State Prison warden's house](#), which is also a museum.

[Marine on St. Croix](#) (1838) Site of the first sawmill in Minnesota, [Marine Mills](#) was founded in 1838 when Lewis F. Judd and David Hone, on behalf of a contingent of 13 men from Marine, Illinois, were sent to the newly available land in search of a good spot for a lumber mill. During that first winter, 800,000 feet of timber were cut. Also during that winter, Orange Walker opened the first drygoods store. The settlement, first known as Judd's Mills, was platted as Marine Mills in 1853. A passable road from Stillwater to Marine was opened in 1841. The first government road, which ran from Point Douglas to Superior City on Lake Superior, was completed from Stillwater through Marine in 1853.

[Forest Lake](#) (1868) has a population today of over 15,000 and is a regional center. The growth of the community accelerated with the construction of Interstate 35 in 1969 and the annexation of Forest Lake Township in 2001. [Forest Lake Village](#) got its start as a fuel stop for the Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad, which opened in 1868 from St. Paul to Wyoming, and soon ran from St. Paul to Duluth (as the Duluth & St. Paul Railroad – later the Northern Pacific). The village was platted in 1868 beside the railroad. The Marsh House (1868), named after its owner Captain Michael Marsh, a native of Germany, was a famous resort, entertaining guests from all over the world. Presidents McKinley and Cleveland were visitors, but wealthy St. Paul residents were the chief patrons. Chicago gangsters were also known to hang out around Forest Lake. The infamous “Ma” Barker and her gang were said to have occupied one of the cottages behind the Forest Theatre. More history can be found in the article “[Lake, community inextricable through history](#)” from the February 26, 2014 Forest Lake Times, which presents a brief history of the community.

# [St. Croix Scenic Byway](#)

Going from [Point Douglas](#) (confluence of the [St. Croix River](#) and [Mississippi](#) rivers) to [Askov](#) following the [Point Douglas Superior Military Road](#) (pdf)

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## [Byway Areas](#)

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