



Pinebox, Texas

Pinebox is a town of 19th Century East Texas charm and 21st Century progress. Boasting a city population of over 27,000 and serving a rural population of 12,000 more, Pinebox is one of the most important economic centers in East Texas. Located in the heart of the Big Thicket in San Augustine County, Pinebox serves as a hub of commerce on Highway 96. The highway runs north and south through town. Cane Bottom road runs east all the way to Toledo Bend Reservoir and the Louisiana border, and is one of the most scenic drives in East Texas. West Church Street becomes county road #696 and connects Pinebox to the Lake Greystone communities to the west. The Tucker Rail line parallels highway 96 and runs to the Military Complex north of the city.

The South East Texas Institute provides many jobs and recreational facilities for Pinebox and it owns several of the larger buildings in the downtown area. SETI has also partnered with the local school district and offers state of the art recreational baseball, softball and football fields just north of East Church Street.

Pinebox Places of Interest:

1. City Hall- 401 Hickory Avenue- Built in 1919 of imported red granite, the city hall is an architectural wonder. It's classic plantation style front boasts 26, solid, 2-story Ionic columns and many very large and airy windows with accompanying balconies. The ornate and detailed scroll work that decorates the inside and outside of the building was completed by German craftsmen, hired after World War I by Hardy "Buck" Travis. Travis was a civic leader who helped design the building after the earlier one burned down in 1914. The Hall contains all the basic offices of a city and also includes two court rooms: the first serving the Local Justice of the Peace, Raymond Walker, and the County Court of Judge Janie Rountree. The Town Square serves as the center of the Pinebox Community Festivals and boasts several of the largest, and oldest Oak trees in East Texas. Old men gather beneath the protective boughs to play checkers, cards, or chess, just as they have since the beginning of Pinebox. The Town Square consists of three buildings on immaculate grounds. The City Hall (1), The Police Station and City Jail (2), and the City Post Office (3).

2. Police Station and City Jail- 303 Locust Avenue-This three-story building was built in 1966 and serves as the local police station and jail. The jail in on the ground floor for minor offenders and juveniles, and a basement level serves for the more serious offenders, or those awaiting transfer to state or federal courts or prisons. The upper two stories serve as offices for the police of Pinebox, with the Police Chiefs offices on the top floor. One of the most unusual aspects of the jail is that the basement level, whiled remodeled and updated, is the original jail built in 1891. There are many stories about various incidents that took place therein during he last century. The latest being that Jimmy Agorr, arrested for assaulting Officer J.D. Faust, allegedly went insane after being attacked by a ghost of a murdering gunman named Hank Flowers, who was found hanging from the same cell in 1894. Local authorities state that Jimmy was a habitual drug user and that he had a "bad trip."

3. Pinebox Post Office-301 Travis- This two-story structure serves the community of Pinebox well. The building is the oldest in town and was the home of William Greystone. Many community leaders want to restore the home and build a new, modern Post Office, but funding debates keep this issue on the table.

4. Pinebox Elementary- 610 Kidd Street- This is a relatively new, state of the art educational facility. Each classroom has Internet access, cable televisions, and a set of computers for the students. The Elementary Head Principal, Kaye Richards, and her staff have worked very hard and the community is proud of the state "Recognized" status as a high performing school.

5. Pinebox Middle School- 709 School Street- Two main buildings serve grades 5 through 8 and the staff serves the community well. Middle School Principal Wayne Lamb has worked I the district for the past twenty-eight years and is a beloved citizen, known by all.

6. Pinebox High School- 905 School Street- The Pinebox Panthers have achieved greatness both in academics and athletics. The school is nationally recognized for it's high standards and graduation rate. Pinebox High was third in the

state in 2003 for the numbers of students passing the state of Texas TAKS test. Much of the schools success is due to the dedicated work of the faculty and staff. Principal Dr. Ed Watson truly steers the ship and leads our district into the 21st Century.

7. Pinebox ISD Administration Building-1101 School Street- This two-story building serves as the Administrative headquarters of the Pinebox School District. The local school board meets here the first Tuesday night of every month, and the office of Superintendent Dr. Mark Smith is on the top floor.

8. The Sacred Order of Primus Augustulus Masonic Lodge-312 Hickory Avenue, and 402 Travis Street- Oddly, this structure has two different addresses and two different main entrances into the same building. The lodge is the second oldest building in town and members keep the ages old trust and secrets of the Society of Augustulus. The order is active in many community activities and is the driving force behind the ever-growing, annual Pinebox festival.

9. Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall-912 Highway 96- This hall serves the community and all our honorable veterans. The hall hosts dances every Friday and Saturday night with live bands and a bingo game every Tuesday evening.

10. The Wise Shepherd Baptist Church-777 West Church Street- The largest church in the area, Pastor Bob Light boasts a growing congregation of over 1100 members and is very popular with the college students and local young people. Pastor Light is very charismatic and a very popular person and speaker. The church was established in the 1860s, but has been rebuilt several times. Current plans are to build a larger sanctuary next to the Prayer Pond, just south of the current Church's location.

11. Shepherd Cemetery- The oldest and largest cemetery in Pinebox. The earliest tombstones date back to the founding of the town and the interred include some famous gunfighters, a state Senator, and the famous General Sibley of Civil War fame. The cemetery ground is kept in perfect condition and is surrounded by a brick and wrought iron fence.

12. Global Methodist Church-220 Church Street- A popular church attended by many of Pinebox's First Families. Reverend James Johnson leads services every Sunday morning and Wednesday evening. The church was built in the 1920s, and its architectural style is similar to the City Hall building, with it's ornate scroll work, columns, and large, wide windows.

13. Quiet Rest Pentecostal Church- 301 Church Street- A small, but active community church led by a young, zealous minister named David Paul. This congregation is very religiously minded and determined and often led various protests, especially concerning the Right to Life and the use of the Death Penalty.

14. Old Pines Hotel-100 Main Street- The largest building in the downtown area, this hotel has become a tourist attraction due to its opulent décor and its unique history. Built in the mid 1920s, it was bought by Dillon Franchitta of the Chicago Mob family. Mr. Franchitta used the hotel as a base of operations for the Mafia in Texas, mainly concerning the brewing of illegal alcohol in various East Texas Stills and then shipping the illegal brews to Dallas, Houston, Kansas City, New Orleans and Chicago. The hotel was the site of a famous shootout between Franchitta and the famous San Augustine Sheriff and Texas Ranger Hoyt Marshall. The hotel hides many secrets and legends regarding its heyday in the Roaring Twenties. Many famous figures have stayed in the Hotel, including many Mafia figures, movie stars, singers, and it was even visited by President Hoover in 1928.

15. Old Railroad Station/Loading Docks- No longer in service, this large warehouse served the community well for nearly a hundred years. The building is now boarded up and several community groups have discussed what to do with the property. The local Historical Commission wants to make it a Rail Road Museum, while another group wants to revamp the area and create a city zoo, and to run an old steam engine train around the perimeter.

16. McMurry's Garage- 202 San Augustine Street- Jim McMurry has owned and operated this garage since 1965. He now employs over fifteen mechanics and is the President of the local Better Business Bureau of Pinebox Texas.

17. Water Plant and Elevated Tower-502 Travis- The local water authority of Pinebox, Texas. The water tower is

massive and is painted with a Raven facing north, and a Panther facing south.

18. Ed's Supermarket-600 Highway 96- Edgar Crowley started a local market and store in 1900. His family has continually expanded the business and now owns a chain of 15 stores throughout East Texas and Louisiana. Most of Pinebox buys their groceries here and are proud of the locally begun business chain.

19. Speedy Pete's Discount Gas Station and Convenience Store- 1105 Highway 96- Pete Longley has operated this store since 1972 and has made a great success of it. Noted for his personal and friendly service, he has developed many loyal customers.

20. Crowley Strip Malls and Shopping Centers- 501 Highway 96 and 705 Highway 96-Owned by the Crowley family, this mall houses many small stores and is a popular shopping place for many college students.

21. Blue Moon Apartments-801 Old Railroad Street-Five large buildings make up this apartment complex. Apartments range from efficiencies for \$250 a month, to three bedrooms for \$600 a month. These are known for their quality and the complex is considered a nice place to live.

22. The Rose Garland Home (Now a burned out house)- 206 Austin Avenue- This old burned house was once the site of a mansion owned by Rose Garland, a local widower. Six years ago the home burned down and the elderly Rose was unable to escape and lost her life. Her two heirs, Councilman Bud Garland and his sister Alice, are contesting the will and the husk of the home remains untouched. Of course this has given rise to an urban legend among the College kids that Rose was murdered for her fortune and that she has cursed her two children never to have it.

23. Crenshaw's Woods- One of the most beautiful wooded areas of town. It contains several hiking trails and the famous Lost Pond of Eli Crenshaw. Eli was an early settler of Pinebox and reportedly during the drought of 1877, he was desperate to find water for his cattle and family. Legend states that Eli made a pact with the Devil and the next day "found" a pool of clear cool natural water in his woods. The entire area celebrated the find, but Eli was found dead exactly a year later. He drowned, and was found floating in the "Lost" pond.

24. The Lost Pond- A natural flowing spring with cool, clean water. A local site that attracts many visitors and swimmers.

25. Pinebox Medical Center- 300 pine Avenue- This large two-story building contains various Medical and Dental Offices and an emergency center.

26. Volunteer Fire Department-451 Oak Avenue- This is the main building for the city of Pinebox Fire Department. The Department is no longer "Volunteer", but many in the community still refer to it that way.

27. State Bank and Trust- 709 Travis-The largest and oldest bank in Pinebox. It was established in the 1890s, but has been rebuilt as recently as 1980.

28. City Wastewater Treatment Plant- Established in 1964, this plant recycles and supplies the city of Pinebox and surrounding communities with fresh water.

29. Old City Landfill- Used from early 1900 until 1978, this landfill is now closed.

30. Mom's Diner- 706 Main Street- This large restaurant has serviced the community since the 1960s, but has been sold several times and has undergone many renovations. Known for its good, stick-to-your-ribs, food and homemade buttermilk biscuits. Good food for a good price.

31. El Pollo Loco Mexican Restaurant- 207 Main Street- This fine establishment serves huge courses of Tex-Mex food and is known for their "Spanish Margueritas". Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night is Marguerita night, and there is always a large college crowd at the bar. A very popular restaurant.

32. Hamburger City- 801 Crockett Street- This large restaurant is famous all over East Texas for it's "Pounder" burger basket and nice dining area. Every Sunday, brisket and barbeque is served and is a local favorite.
33. Pizza Barn- 700 Highway 96- This is truly an huge, old barn that has been successfully converted into a Restaurant, Bar, and Dance Hall. Every Friday and Saturday evening, live bands play for the college crowd. It's mainly Pizza, Beer, and fun and is the most popular hangout for the college students wanting to party.
34. Suzie's Catfish Emporium- 404 Travis- A very popular seafood restaurant known for it's fried catfish and spicy hushpuppies. It boasts a large lunch buffet and is always crowded.
35. "Grinnin" Barrett McFierson's Used Cars-600 San Augustine St.- "You'll be grinning after you buy a car from me. I'm Grinnin' cause I love to serve you! I'm Barrett McFierson, and I want to sell you a car!" Barrett opened this lot in 1975, and has become a widely recognized local figure on commercials and a dedicated member of the Chamber of Commerce for Pinebox, Texas.
36. Windy Creek Trailer Park- 100 Cane Bottom Road- This large trailer park contains over 125 trailers, and many local families and college students live here. The Park is owned and operated by the Police Chief Butch Anderson. Needless to say, very little crime occurs here.
37. Indian Summer Trailer Park- 300 Old Rail Road Street- This trailer park is very run-down and is considered one of the worst areas of town.
38. Pinebox Auction House- 1600 Old Trail Road- Local Auction house for cattle buying and ranchers in the area. Owned by Zachery (Zach) Crenshaw and sons.
39. Crenshaw's Slaughter House and Meat Market- 1500 Old Trail Road- Owned and operated by Zach Crenshaw and sons, Elijah and Isaac, this meat market supplies great fresh meat to our community. Zach's famous stuffed pork chops and sage sausage are widely known as the best in the area.
40. Horners Used Book Store- 409 Pine Street-Amanda Horner began this bookstore in the 1890s from her home. Over the years, the home has become a large bookstore with books in every room. The current owners are Ray and Linda Overstreet, and they specialize in finding rare and unusual books from around the world.
41. 4-Kitup Pawn Shop- 307 Main Street- This pawnshop sells all and buys all. They have an impressive collection of stereo equipment, computers, and guns. Owned and operated by Kyle Sibley, who promises a fair deal.
42. Bonner Bail Bonds and Loans- 408 Hickory Avenue- Owned and operated by Clyde Bonner and family. Clyde is a mean, old cuss, but he is fair in his business practices. He is a member of the Chamber of Commerce and is considered by many to be a difficult man to work with. He often blocks votes on creating new business or zoning for Pinebox and is against any new taxes of any kind.
43. Big Dog Bussing Company- 501 Hickory Avenue- The local bus station. Big Dog's routes run to New Orleans, Lufkin, Houston and Dallas. With two trips a day for each run.
44. Elijah Potter's Poultry Farm- 1900 Old Trail Road- One of the largest poultry farms in East Texas. Old man Potter started the business during the Great Depression and his family still owns and operates it.
45. Kwik-E-Zippy Mart- 1907 Highway 96-A large convenience store and gas station. Sells more beer by the case with the best prices in town. A favorite of the college crowd.
46. Whiskey Creek Apartments- 2200 Highway 96- An apartment complex that serves many college students. Known for it's low rates and small apartments.
47. Billiam's Gym- 208 Frontage Avenue- Wayne Billiam was a local boy, who made it to the Olympics as a weight

lifter and won a Silver medal in 1988. He returned to Pinebox a hero and with the help of his cousin, Mayor Red McCombs, he opened this gym. There are over 800 members of the gym and various classes of yoga, dancercise and other activities are common.

48. Black Cat Spring- Deep in the woods to the North East, it is a favorite destination for hikers, backpackers, and campers. It's a very deep spring and is noted for the dark color of the catfish that are caught here.

49. The Old Swimming Hole- For the last hundred years, this has been a favorite hangout for the locals of Pinebox. There is a large sandy beach and the water is cool and refreshing.

50. S.W. Huston and Sons Feed Company Store- 800 Highway 96- This store supplies many local farmers and ranchers with their needs. They also sell farming and ranching equipment and tractors.

51. Durgenson Concrete and Gravel- 201 Old Rail Road Street- This huge concrete operation on the south side of town employs over 100 residents and supplies concrete all over East Texas.

52. Agorr Family Compound- The Agorr families has lived outside of Pinebox for the past 75 years and have gained a reputation as extremists. They, along with several other families have created a compound in the woods and fear that the government may come and try to take their guns away from them. These are serious people, who want to be left alone.