

February 2021 Edition

HOUSTON LAKER



Neighborhood Series no.2

Taken in 2001 By Bill and Joyce Harlen

February 2021 Community Calendar Events

Feb. 2nd - Recycling and Trash pickup day

Feb. 8th - City Council Meeting - 7:30pm, We will plan on the February meeting being a zoom meeting unless otherwise posted, public is welcome to attend, to obtain the zoom link please email: cityclerk@houstonlake.net . Public comments will be received via email, please email all public comments to: cityclerk@houstonlake.net by Friday February 5th, 2021 at 5:00pm.

Feb. 14th - ♥ *Happy Valentines Day* ♥

Homes Association Annual Assessment: The Homes Association dues statements were mailed Jan. 30, 2021. Annual dues are \$450.00, and they will become delinquent March 2, 2021. Past due amounts are charged a 10% penalty each year. Payments can be mailed to City Hall or delivered to City Hall. If mailed please mail it to: Venetian Gardens Homes Association, 5417 NW Adrian, Houston Lake, Mo. 64151. If delivered, please put your payment in the HOA mailbox on the front porch of city hall. If you have any questions

call	Secretary/Treasurer Susan Hodges 816.786.2377 or email her at hodges.susan@outlook.com , Thank you
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There will be **NO** Venetian Gardens Homes Association meeting in February. Our next virtual meeting will be in March 2021.



**“Houston Lake Ice”, is not
thick enough to skate on.**



Please do not get out on the ice

Cover Art Needed

We'd like you to contribute photos of our neighborhood or of your art for 2021 Laker issues. If you are interested, please email arts.circle@houstonlake.net or Mary Head @ editor@houstonlake.net. If you have any questions please call Mary @ 816-741-5639. Don't miss this opportunity to publish your artwork or photo! Volunteer today!

Absentee Voting begins Feb. 23rd, 2021 for the April 6, 2021 General Municipal Election.

Would you like to have the Houston Laker newspaper delivered to your house every month? If yes please notify me. And if you decide later you want the paper call or email me.

Call me 816-741-5639

Email me maryjewel40@gmail.com

Or put this questionnaire in the mail slot that is on the front door of City Hall, a simple yes or no will do.

Thank You Mary Head, Editor

Mary Head – Editor of the Houston Laker

Please put your address down if you say yes, so we make sure you get the Houston Laker Newspaper.

YES _____ address optional _____

NO _____ address optional _____

The Houston Laker Paper is posted online = www.houstonlake.net

You name optional _____

Your Email optional _____

Mask

Call to Artists



Art, Life & Folks Houston Lake Arts Circle

Registration Dates: May thru July
Art Delivery Date: August 7, 2 - 4pm
Exhibit: August 14, 1 - 4pm

Houston Lake Arts Circle is honored to announce a call for entries to our 7th Annual Art Show **Mask**

This is a call to residents for their handmade creations in any medium. Let your art be inspired by the theme, **Mask**. Whether your art is modern, traditional, still or kinetic.

Entry Guidelines

Open to all Houston Lake Residents. All works must be made by the artist. Floor works must be firmly stable and less than 3 sq ft. Wall mounted pieces are limited to 20 lbs, and must be ready to hang. Limit 2 entries per artist.

Exhibit

Performance works performed only at the exhibit opening.

Physical art remains on display after the opening. Selected pieces displayed Aug - Feb, remaining pieces displayed March - July.

Mask Registration Form (due 7/31/2021)

Please print clearly

Artist:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Art Work

Title:

Approximate size:

Medium (watercolor, yarn, etc):

May we post you and your works on Facebook / Instagram? Yes/No:

The Arts Circle will care for your art, however we aren't responsible if damaged

Mask Artwork Form (attach to back of art)

Artist:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Art Work

Title:

Medium (watercolor, yarn, etc):

The Arts Circle will care for your art, however we aren't responsible if damaged

Venetian Gardens Home Owners Association asks City of Houston Lake to Update Municipal Code to Prohibit Short Term Rentals

On January 27, 2021, the Board of Directors for Venetian Gardens Home Owners Association sent the following letter to the Mayor and Board of Alderman.

Madam Mayor and Board of Alderman,

As a partner in the health, safety, and prosperity of our Houston Lake community, we, the Venetian Gardens Home Owners Association (HOA) Board of Directors, look to the authority of the City Council for assistance against a critical threat. Short Term Rentals (STRs) pose a danger to HOA property, lake ecology, and community wellbeing and we request an update to the zoning codes to strictly prohibit Short Term Rentals within the City of Houston Lake.

STRs are *lightly* regulated home-sharing businesses that let almost anyone list accommodations for rent to almost anyone else. Regulating STRs locally through HOA Restrictions or by City Permitting, which could require security standards, restrict guest access to HOA amenities, set occupancy standards, establish violation protocols, etc. is simply not feasible. The resources of both Boards are too limited and could not sustain the complexity of such a robust responsibility. Outright prohibition is the only viable option.

As it stands, STRs in our community are under no obligation to restrict use of HOA property from their guests. A STR owner can supply their guests with wrist bands and rules. By the design of the STR operation, the owner would likely leave and not provide any supervision of their guests' activities.

Some of the most common problems reported of STRs are anything from excessive noise, increased neighborhood traffic, vandalism, and even small things such as leaving trash around community areas. Although these problems may not seem big, they add up. Indeed, our current STR has already had a guest feeding the geese and a different guest use the adjacent neighbor's driveway as a turn-around. This STR owner claims to have the highest standards and strictest rules. What happens if someone of lesser vigilance and care launches a STR? What other problems will arise beyond animal maltreatment and trespassing?

We are also concerned about STRs guest usage of the lake. How will STR owners, for instance, ensure a boat contaminated with zebra mussels will not be launched into our waters? We are already working hard to resolve the vegetation problem. We do not need to also address a Zebra Mussel invasion, brought on by a random guest of a property-owner leaching off our lake.

A property owner can use their home as a STR with no regard for who their guests are or what they do, leaving it to the HOA, the community residents, and the City to police their activity while the property owner makes a profit. And while our current STR owner claims to have the strongest rules allowed, she is under no obligation to maintain these standards. She could change her standards at any time, without

notice to the community. There is little regulation of home-sharing and we cannot rely on the good faith of property-owners who are balancing community interests against their own profits.

The HOA does not want the responsibility of policing strangers in our community for the profit of absent homeowners. The HOA does not want to risk its property, the health of the lake, nor the degradation of our community for the profit of absent homeowners.

What is more, of the four northland lake communities, Houston Lake is the only one that still allows STRs.

- The lake management group of Weatherby Lake made a similar request to their City Council, asking them to prohibit STRs for the safety of their lake. As a result, in March 2019, a new city ordinance went into effect, strictly prohibiting short-term rentals within the City of Weatherby Lake. Their code can be found here: <https://www.ecode360.com/WE3472/laws/LF1082983.pdf>
- A year prior, in July 2018, the City of Waukomis Lake updated their zoning code to strictly and explicitly prohibit short term rentals. Their code can be found here: <https://www.ecode360.com/28342391>
- Riss Lake is located within the City of Parkville. Parkville allows short-term rentals, at the discretion of the community's HOA. Their code can be found here: https://parkvillemo.gov/download/TextAmendment3_Section405.040.pdf
The Riss Lake Community Association strictly prohibits short term rentals. Their Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions can be obtained by emailing Christine Lentz at christine.lentz@fsresidential.com.

Houston Lake zoning codes have not been updated since 1962. It is understandable our Municipal Code does not address STRs; it was not a threat back then. But the threat is here, now.

Seeing we are the only lake community in the northland that still allows STRs along with our relatively affordable property values, our proximity to some of Kansas City's most popular tourist attractions, and the easy drive from the airport, we are a prime location for STRs. We need to act quickly before more STRs pop up in our city, threatening our property, the health of our lake, and our community well-being.

In one voice, we, the Board of Directors for the Venetian Gardens Home Owners Association, requests the City of Houston Lake updates the zoning codes to prohibit Short Term Rentals.

Respectfully,

Kerry Hallowell, President
Jeff Lister, Vice President
Susan Hodges, Secretary/Treasurer
Mary Head, Member
Joseph Briones, Member

Please join your HOA Board at the City Council meeting on Monday, February 8, 2021 at 7pm to voice your support. Email cityclerk@houstonlake.net for the Zoom link.

Important Ballot Issue! Please vote on April 6, 2021

On the ballot April 6, 2021 the voters of the City of Houston Lake, Missouri will be asked to continue the existing special tax levy of 78¢ for fire suppression services for the City of Houston Lake.

This levy has expired and must be readopted by the voters to extend it for an additional four-year period. This levy provides the funding necessary to provide the City of Houston Lake with fire suppression services. If the voters do not choose to continue this levy, it could be devastating to the City's ability to provide fire suppression services.

This levy is not a new tax; it is a continuation of the existing special tax levy. It is important for the voters to understand that this will not increase their levy, but only continue it at the same rate it is today.

The existing special tax levy of 78¢ expired at the end of 2020. By state law this issue must be brought back to the voters every four (4) years in order for it to continue.

The ballot language will read: "Shall the City of Houston Lake continue the existing special tax levy of seventy eight cents (\$.78) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed valuation for an additional period of four (4) years for fire suppression services?"

Yes

No

This issue must be passed by the voters in order for the City to maintain fire suppression services for the City.

If you have any questions regarding the special levy, please contact:

Houston Lake City Council

Pam Freese, Mayor, mayor@houstonlake.net or 816.726.4455

Chuck Stone, Alderman, nw2-alderman@houstonlake.net

Sarah Farsace, Alderman, sw1-alderman@houstonlake.net

Evonne Briones, Alderman, sw2-alderman@houstonlake.net

**City of Houston Lake
As of December 31, 2020**

Income - Period Covered July 1 - December 31, 2020

General Fund	40,018.19	
Road Fund	5,099.48	
Grinder Pump Fund	7.32	
Fire Protection Fund	9.64	
Total		\$ 45,134.63

Expenses - Period Covered July 1 - December 31, 2020

General Fund	53,291.50	
Road Fund	1,720.66	
Grinder Pump Fund	7,578.12	
Fire Protection Fund	9,499.98	
Total		\$ 72,090.26

**Total Funds as of December
31, 2020**

General Fund	80,243.67	
Road Fund	26,023.51	
Grinder Pump Fund	11,673.80	
Fire Protection Fund	13,787.11	
Municipal Court Account	1,468.01	
Municipal Court Bond Account	519.75	
Transportation Sales Tax Receipts	45,816.94	
General Fund CD	24,035.99	
General Fund CD	26,650.67	
Sewer Fund CD	5,095.91	
Sewer Fund CD	10,459.28	
Mill and Overlay CD	16,276.51	
Total		\$ 262,051.15

City Council Meeting
December 14, 2020
Held Via Zoom due to Covid-19 Restrictions

The Council of the City of Houston Lake met in regular session on December 14, 2020 at 7:30pm via Zoom

Opening Session: Mayor Freese called the meeting to order at 7:32pm

The following members were present: Alderman Evonne Briones, Alderman Sarah Farsace, Alderman Phil Otte, Alderman Chuck Stone, Mayor Pam Freese

Public Discussion – Lisa Shepard – During the summer, brush comes up over the guard rail and is growing over the fire hydrant.

Minutes 11.09.2020-

Motion to approve minutes to 11.09.2020 and approve tonight's amended agenda made by Alderman Briones, Second by Alderman Stone.

Yes: Otte, Stone, Farsace, Briones

No: None

Motion carries.

Burning Permits –

- a. JN 5448 NW Venetian Dr – Motion pending inspection to approve made by Alderman Otte, Second by Alderman Stone. Roll call vote taken, motion passed pending inspection from Alderman Otte.

- b. **Edgewood Cir** – Motion to approve, Second by Alderman Farsace. Roll Call vote taken, motion passes.

Building Permit -

DW – 5452 NW Venetian Dr

Pending until January Meeting – inspection by Alderman and interview with neighbors

Note: Please submit all applications for burn permit or building permit to City Hall 10 days prior to the meeting for consideration. Those applications not received 10 days prior to a meeting will not be considered until the following months City Council Meeting. Applications can be deposited in the mailbox at the front of the building.

Treasurer's Report

Motion to accept treasurer's report for December 14, 2020 made by Alderman Farsace, second by Alderman Stone.

Yes: Otte, Stone, Briones, Farsace

No: None

Motion carries

Collectors Report

City Collectors report is included with the official packet.

Paybills – Resolution 12.14.20

Motion to approve Resolution 12.14.2020 made by Alderman Otte, second by Alderman Farsace

Yes: Briones, Stone, Farsace, Otte

Motion carries

Emergency Management

Fire Department – Assistant Fire Chief Jeff Taylor – Report included with the packet, presentation given.

Riverside Fire on a Santa Truck is coming to Houston Lake. It will be different this year as Santa will not be able to stop and visit with the kids. Thursday 12-17-20 – follow along on Twitter and come out to wave to Santa!

Sheriff's Department – Deputy not present- report included with packet.

City Council Meeting

December 14, 2020

Held Via Zoom due to Covid-19 Restrictions

Codes Report – November 2020 – 0 violations month of November. Worked on address letters, mailed those. These are just notifications; they are not violations. There is not a fine attached to this. Most improved is 3509 Edgewater Trail, he has started working on his shed now, the property looks beautiful.

Venetian Garden Homes Association Report – No Update

Old Business – None

New Business –

- **Sheriff Rates** are increasing, looking into a relationship with Riverside to help lower response times.
- **Sunshine Laws** – Electronic communication between city officials' reminders.
 - Reminder that anything brought up in public discussion that is new information must be answered at the following meeting.
- **Air BnB** – Discussion regarding the Air Bnb on Houston Lake.

Alderman Reports

Alderman Otte – Bridge work happening on I29 – would like to see the HOA test the water prior to the work starting.

A cistern was exposed during some brush clean up on Venetian. It has been covered with a piece of metal.

5530 NW Adrian – has spoken with resident at this location. They are in Houston Lake, they are paying both KC and Houston Lake taxes and have our trash cans. If they opt out of Houston Lake Taxes, then we need to collect our trashcans.

Alderman Farsace – Was contacted by resident about stocking trout, directed to the HOA as the lake is their area. Love all the lights around the lake! Excited to see Santa later this week and will miss cookies with Santa.

Alderman Briones – Enjoying the Christmas lights on the lake, especially on Wagon Trail.

Will continue to work through the short-term rentals discussion.

Excited to see us on Zoom to keep us Covid safe.

Alderman Stone – Will check into clearing brush around the city to be compliant with Riverside Firetruck requirements.

Mayors Report –

Signed a contract with Barkley, will come patch Adrian as soon as they have a good day, will last us through winter and end of March, early April we will get our roads fixed around the RED areas of the lake – this is the areas that need it most.

Thank you to the City Officials for their work

Election Candidate Filing starts December 15, 2020 at 8am and closes January 19, 2020. Please reach out to the city clerk to schedule a time to file paperwork if you would like to be included on the ballot for elections. There will be one (1) open Alderman for the North Side and one (1) open position for the south side of the lake. Also, the Mayor position will be included on this ballot.

Adjournment -

Alderman Otte motioned to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Farsace second.

Yes: Briones, Farsace, Otte, Stone

Motion Carries.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm by Mayor Freese.

Next Meeting will be held Monday January 11, 2021 at 7:30pm at City Hall unless posted otherwise

A short announcement from Houston Lake Alderman Chuck Stone:

Since Mayor Freese has announced that she will not run for reelection, I will be on the April 6th ballot for Mayor of Houston Lake. I plan to pick-up on some of the road improvement projects that Mayor Freese has planned for this spring.

I've been a Houston Lake Alderman for over three years. I take pride in some of the projects that our City Council has accomplished together: improved roads, participated in derelict property clean-up, made small fixes to roads, bridges, and changed detour signage to minimize the damage done by diverted construction traffic.

I purchased the house that I am now renting in the spring of 1994. At the time I was a commercial airline pilot. Now I am retired and have a part-time job. I hope to make being Mayor my full-time job.

REQUEST FOR MISSOURI ABSENTEE BALLOT

I, _____, do hereby request an absentee ballot for the
Printed name

_____ Election.
Election Date

For identification purposes, the last four digits of my social security number are: _____.

If this is a primary election, please print the name of the political party ballot you wish to receive: _____.

Reason for requesting an absentee ballot:

- _____ Absence on Election Day from the jurisdiction of the election authority in which I am registered
- _____ Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability, including caring for a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability
- _____ Religious belief or practice
- _____ Employment as an election authority or by an election authority at a location other than my polling place
- _____ Incarceration, although I have retained all the necessary qualifications for voting
- _____ Certified participation in the address confidentiality program established under sections 589.660 to 589.681 because of safety concerns.

Address where I am registered to vote:

(Street Address)

(City, State, Zip Code)

Address where ballot is to be mailed:

(Street Address or PO Box)

(City, State, Zip Code)

Telephone number: _____
(Include Area Code)

I do solemnly swear that all statements made on this application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Registered Voter

Date

Mail this completed form to your local election authority. Addresses can be found [on the Missouri Secretary of State's website](#). Missouri law requires that requests for absentee ballots must be received by 5:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday prior to Election Day if the ballot is mailed. The deadline for absentee voting in person in the office of the election authority is 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election. If you registered by mail and this is your first time voting, you must provide a copy of either: (1) an ID issued by the Federal Government, state of Missouri, or a local election authority; (2) ID issued by a Missouri institution (public or private) of higher education; or (3) a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check or other government document that contains your name and address.

MISSOURI VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

Use this application to:

1. Register to vote in any election in Missouri.
2. Register to vote when you move from one jurisdiction (St. Louis City, Kansas City, or any county) to another jurisdiction (St. Louis City, Kansas City, or any county) within Missouri.
3. Change the address on a current voter registration when you move within a jurisdiction.
4. Change the name on a current voter registration.

Other information:

1. You must be 18 years of age by the day of a particular election to be eligible to vote in that election.
2. If mailed, this form must be postmarked by the 4th Wednesday preceding an election to be eligible to vote in that election. If delivered in person, it must be received in the office of the election authority by the 4th Wednesday preceding an election. (See reverse for election calendar.)
3. Submitting this application to an individual other than the election authority does not insure timely voter registration.
4. After the election authority receives your voter registration application, you will be sent confirmation within 7 business days. If you do not receive confirmation, contact the election authority.
5. If you wish to serve as an election judge on election day please contact your local election authority and mark the box at the bottom of this form.
6. Optional—If registering by mail for the first time, please submit a copy of one of the following forms of identification: current or valid photo ID, current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document that shows your name and address, birth certificate, Native American tribal document or other proof of United States citizenship. (You will be required to present identification when you vote.)

Completing this form (All information is required unless indicated as optional):

Boxes 1 and 2 -- Citizen and Age Requirements

Federal Law requires voter registration applicants to answer these two questions.

Box 3 -- Type of Application

Check appropriate box if this is a new registration or if you are changing a name or address on your current voter registration.

Box 4 -- Name

Put in this box your full name (Last, First, Middle). DO NOT use nicknames or initials. For name changes, Box 12 should contain your old name.

Box 5 -- Home Address

List your home address. DO NOT put your mailing address if it differs from your home address.

Box 6 -- Mailing Address

If you get your mail at an address other than your home address in Box 5, put that address here in this box.

Box 7 -- Driver's License Number

Required for registration unless you do not have a Driver's License. (§115.158, RSMo.) If you do not have a Driver's License, leave blank.

Box 8 -- Last Four Digits of Social Security Number

Required for registration unless you do not have a Social Security Number. (§115.155, RSMo, §115.158, RSMo.) If you do not have a Social Security Number, leave blank.

Box 9 -- Date of Birth

Place your date of birth in this box (Month, Day, Year). DO NOT USE TODAY'S DATE!

Box 10 -- Place of Birth (Optional)

List your place of birth (city/county/state).

Box 11 -- Daytime Phone Number (Optional)

Please list a number at which the election authority may contact you for clarification of information.

Box 12 -- Last Voter Registration Information

If you are currently registered, please list the name and address of your last registration including county and state.

Box 13 -- Signature

Review the information. If you meet the requirements and all is correct, sign your full name or make your mark and print today's date.

Box 14 -- Rural Voters

If you live in a rural area without a street address, please supply information which may help in placing you in the proper voting district.

YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE CONFIRMED BY MAIL WITHIN SEVEN (7) BUSINESS DAYS OF ITS RECEIPT BY THE ELECTION AUTHORITY. PLEASE CONTACT THE ELECTION AUTHORITY IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE NOTIFICATION.

(DETACH HERE - KEEP TOP PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS) This card is not proof of registration.



MISSOURI VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

USE PEN - PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

1 ARE YOU A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		2 WILL YOU BE 18 YEARS OF AGE ON OR BEFORE ELECTION DAY? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
If you checked no in response to either of the above questions, do not complete this form.			
3 <input type="checkbox"/> NEW REGISTRATION <input type="checkbox"/> ADDRESS CHANGE <input type="checkbox"/> NAME CHANGE		FOR OFFICE USE ONLY REGISTRATION NO.	
4 LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	SUFFIX (JR, II, ETC.) <input type="checkbox"/> MALE <input type="checkbox"/> FEMALE
5 ADDRESS WHERE YOU LIVE (HOUSE NO., STREET, APT. NO. OR RURAL ROUTE AND BOX - NO PO BOXES)		CITY	COUNTY
6 ADDRESS WHERE YOU GET YOUR MAIL (REQUIRED IF DIFFERENT FROM #5 ABOVE)		CITY	STATE
7 DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A DRIVER'S LICENSE, PLEASE LEAVE BLANK.		8 LAST 4 DIGITS OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER* IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, PLEASE LEAVE BLANK.	
9 DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YYYY)	10 PLACE OF BIRTH (OPTIONAL)	11 DAYTIME PHONE NO. (OPTIONAL)	
12 NAME AND ADDRESS ON LAST VOTER REGISTRATION NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTY _____ If currently registered in another state or county please complete this box.		13 I hereby certify that I am a citizen of the United States and a resident of the state of Missouri. I am at least seventeen and one half years of age. I have not been adjudged incapacitated by any court of law. If I have been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor connected with the right of suffrage, I have had the voting disabilities resulting from such conviction removed pursuant to law. I swear under penalty of perjury that all statements made on this card are true to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that if I register to vote knowing that I am not legally entitled to register, I am committing a class one election offense and may be punished by imprisonment of not more than five years or by a fine of between two thousand five hundred dollars and ten thousand dollars or by both such imprisonment and fine. Date _____ Signature _____	
14 RURAL VOTERS: COMPLETE THIS SECTION IF YOU LIVE OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS OF ANY CITY. I live _____ miles _____ (N S E or W) of _____ (landmark or junction). Section, Township and range _____. My neighbors are _____.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if you are interested in working as an Election Judge Warning: Conviction for making a false statement may result in imprisonment for up to five years and/or a fine up to \$10,000.			

Place
Postage
Here

FOLD HERE

Mailing Instructions

1. Sign the form.
2. Fold this sheet with address showing.
3. Fold and insert completed voter application.
4. Tape edges.
5. Apply postage.
6. Mail.

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Have you signed the form?

T A P E

THE WORKS by MARLENE

a licensed Style Salon

816-587-1550

by appointment only

In Houston Lake!

Over 35 years of experience

Convenient hours

Haircuts Uniquely for You

Specializing in Haircolor

Color Correction

Grey Coverage

Enhancing the Grey

Brow Shaping

Best wishes to you,
Marlene