

BRIEFS

FSA payment deadline June 1

EAST LANSING — The Farm Service Agency announced the deadline to enroll a farm in Direct and Counter Cyclical Payments without being assessed a late-filed signup fee is June 1.

Over 50,000 farms were enrolled in 2004 DCP by mid-April 2004. To date, approximately half as many farms have been enrolled in 2005 DCP. At the current rate of enrollment, a significant number of farms eligible for 2005 DCP will not be enrolled by the June 1 deadline.

A late-filed sign-up fee of \$100 per farm is assessed by CCC for farms enrolled in 2005 DCP between June 2 and Sept. 30. The late-filed signup fee will be collected before contracts are approved. Contracts on which all required signatures are not obtained by the June 1 deadline date will not be considered timely filed. Producers wanting to enroll in the 2005 DCP program and avoid the \$100 late fee should contract their local FSA Office to make plans to enroll their farms.

Contracts for which missing signatures are obtained after June 1, but before Sept. 30, will be considered late-files. These late-filed contracts will be eligible for payment but will also be assessed a late-filed fee of \$100 per farm.

Edward Jones cited for service

HOUGHTON — The financial-services firm Edward Jones has been ranked first in J.D. Powers and Associates' annual survey of customer satisfaction among full-service investors, according to the four Copper Country Edward Jones investment representatives. The ranking, released as the 2005 Full-Service Investor Satisfaction Study, ranked Edward Jones ahead of 19 other firms.

The 2005 Full-Service Investor Satisfaction Study, conducted in January and February, was based on responses from more than 6,600 investors who primarily invest with one of the 20 firms in the study.

Six key factors were considered: integrity of the brokerage firm, information/resources, account management, cost, investment representative/advisor and customer service. Edward Jones earned industry-leading scores in the information/resources, account management and investment representative/advisor factors.

In 2002, the first year the study was conducted, Edward Jones ranked number one in a tie.

The Copper Country investment representatives include Bob Nelson in Houghton, Steve Zutter and Brent Peterson of Hancock and Dan Dalquist in Calumet.

Change of address

opusWeb.com has new brick and mortar home on Houghton waterfront

By MARK WILCOX
Gazette Writer

HOUGHTON — When the folks at opusWeb.com tell people they've recently changed their address, the most common question they get is, "which one?"

The Web development company recently moved their operations from Sheldon Avenue in downtown Houghton, to the Upper Peninsula Power Co. building on the Houghton waterfront. Their Web address, opusweb.com, with which most are familiar, will remain unchanged.

Jeffery Primeau, co-founder and director of marketing and communications, said the move was a good one.

"This is a good environment for conducting business," he said from his second floor office. "We have access to conference rooms which make it better to meet with clients. The business resources available here are very nice."

Now in its ninth year, opusWeb.com prides itself on providing clear, professional Web development.

"Many of our new customers tell us they are not online because of a previous bad experience," Primeau said. "We try to make everything clear."

He said the first step in developing a Web site is to understand the purpose of a site.

"A Web site exists to adequately reflect a company, online. We take a customer's vision and make a graphical representation, on the Internet."

To make that representation work best, it is imperative to understand the difference between a Web page and a Web site.

He said a Web page is essentially a glorified print ad placed online, where as a Web site allows people to navigate and, often, interact with the business.

"The day and age of the Web page are over. We're booking our flights online now. We can even choose the seat we want on an airplane. That's the day and age we're in and a Web site has to reflect that," Primeau said.

The world of the Internet is changing so fast that a company that's been around a mere nine years actually seems venerable.

Primeau said, for his part, it was an interest in business, rather than computers, that was the motivation.

"I was a computer nerd as a kid. I was always on computers, taking them apart, building new ones and at some point I burned out," Primeau said.

He said a "pretty good business teacher" in high school started him down his chosen career path.

While the Calumet High School graduate had a background in computers and a talent for graphic design, he knew he couldn't do everything himself.

"I hate programming with a passion. I love graphics, but hate programming. Which is why teaming up with Heath is a perfect match," Primeau said.

Heath Sundstrom opusWeb.com co-



William A. Rice/Daily Mining Gazette
Jeffery Primeau sits at his desk in his new office in the Upper Peninsula Power Co. building on Houghton's waterfront. OpusWeb.com, of which Primeau is co-founder, recently moved to this new site from Sheldon Avenue. At right is an example of one of the Web sites designed by opusWeb.com.

founder. The Houghton High School grad met Primeau, through mutual friends.

"We're opposites, which works well in business," Primeau said. "He hates graphics but loves programming. I'll come to him with an idea and he'll already know how to make it work."

Making it work is the forte of opusWeb.com.

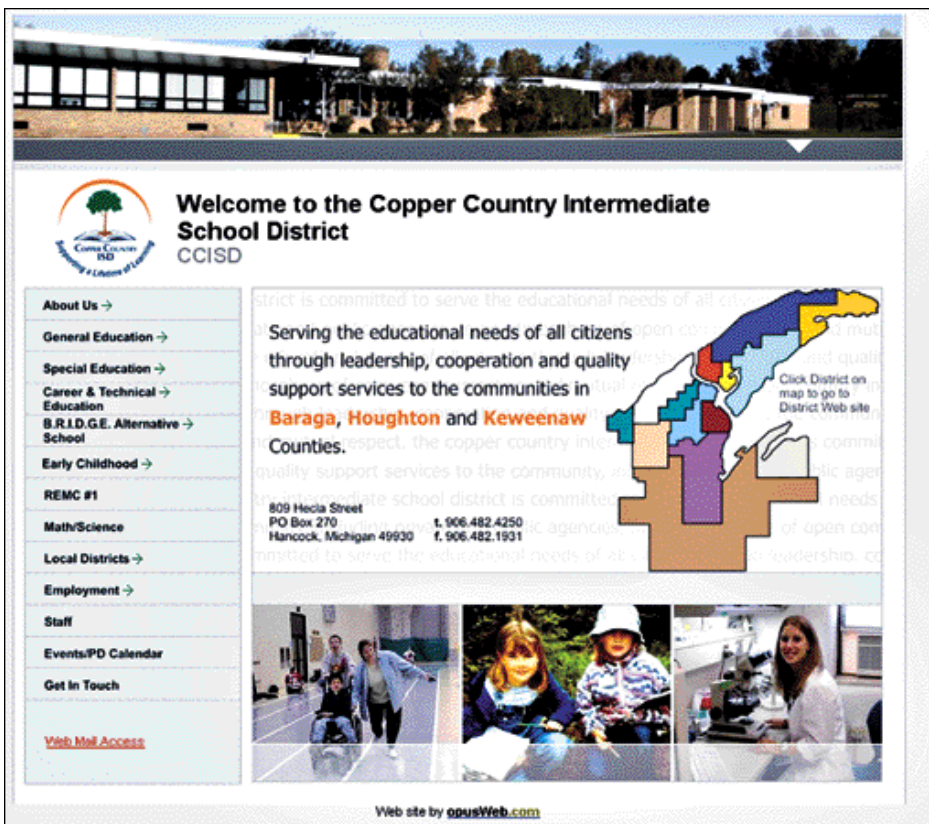
"There is so much technology out there today. There are a lot of options. Everyone is trying to get their web presence noticed. Part of what we do is let them know the best possible way to get found online," Primeau said.

Another advantage his company gives to clients is their involvement in their own Web site.

"To be successful, you have to have an updateable Web site. We give our customers the tools that allow them to be part of their own Web site," he said.

According to Primeau, you don't have to be a computer expert to be able to update your site, if it is designed by opusWeb.com.

"If you have ever bought anything online, then you can update your Web site. It is a matter of typing the infor-



mation and then clicking a box. Just like ordering online," he said.

As the saying goes, the times indeed are changing. Business people once viewed tools like Web sites to be extravagances but now see them as necessities. OpusWeb.com has the resources and expertise to allow businesses to grow with the times, and technology. OpusWeb.com is now located on the

second floor of the UPPCO building. They can be reached at 482-3235, or on the Web at www.opusweb.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This feature is part of a paid advertising package purchased by opusWeb.com. Businesses interested in being featured on the Business page may call Mary Jo Stimac at 483-2220.

Treasury secretary says now is time for China currency change

Current system puts U.S. at disadvantage in trading

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary John Snow says "now is the time" for China to change its currency system, but there is no indication that the Chinese feel the same sense of urgency.

Snow spoke to reporters after a speech in Connecticut while back in Washington a delegation from China's central bank was holding the fourth in a series of discussions to provide China with technical help in overhauling its currency system.

For the past decade, China has tightly linked its currency, the yuan, to the U.S. dollar. U.S. manufacturers contend this system has undervalued the yuan by as much as 40 percent, giving the country a tremendous competitive advantage over U.S. companies.

While the Bush administration had insisted quiet diplomacy was bearing fruit in getting China to stop linking its currency to the dollar, last month it toughened its rhetoric in the face of a soaring overall trade deficit of \$617 billion and a \$162 billion deficit with China alone, the largest ever recorded with a single country.

to listen to China's appeals that it needed more time before making the switch, U.S. officials now say China has made all the preparations necessary.

"It clearly is time for the Chinese to act," Snow told reporters following a speech in Hartford. "They've said they want to do it. They've affirmed their commitment to doing it. Now is the time."

But following a three-hour meeting of technical experts from the People's Bank of China at the Treasury, U.S. officials refused to talk about any timetable.

Tony Fratto, a Treasury spokesman, said the discussions — like the three technical meetings that preceded it — "brings us closer" to the day when China will introduce flexibility in its currency system.

The other three sessions were held in February, July and September of last year. The talks focus on such issues as central bank operations with a flexible currency and reform of the banking system.

Fratto said the administration's view that enough preparation had been done for China to move immediately to a more flexible currency was one of the issues discussed during Monday's meeting. He refused to say what the Chinese reaction was.

He also said he would not speculate on timetables for China to introduce a more flexible curren-

Baril joins staff of health department as sanitarian

HANCOCK — Western U.P. District Health Department announces the appointment of Peter D. Baril, registered environmental health specialist/registered sanitarian.

Baril is the newest staff addition to the agency's Environmental Health Division. Baril joins a team of environmental health sanitarians providing consultation, inspection and enforcement services for a broad range of environmental health programs in the five western U.P. counties. Baril will work in Houghton, Keweenaw and Baraga counties.

"Peter's varied environmental and public health background will be an asset to the programs that we administer," said Lynne Tarbuton, R.S. Director of Environmental Health.

Baril is a native of Lake Linden and a graduate of Lake Linden-Hubbell High School. He received a Bache-

lor of Science degree in environmental health from Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. Prior to coming to the Western U.P. District Health Department, Baril worked as a Type II, non-community water supply specialist for the Jackson County Health Department in Jackson, Mich. and as an Environmental Health Technician for the Chippewa County Health Department in Sault Ste. Marie while attending college. Baril lives in Hubbell with his wife Nicole and is a member of the Michigan and National Environmental Health Associations.

Western U.P. District Health Department provides public health services to residents in Houghton, Keweenaw, Baraga, Ontonagon and Gogebic counties. In addition, its Superior Home Nursing and Hospice division provides skilled nursing and hospice services in the five counties.

PROGRESS REPORT

Destrampe hired as senior accountant

HOUGHTON — Bruce Rukkila, CPA, PC, a full-service public accounting firm located in downtown Houghton, welcomes the return of Kelly Destrampe as senior accountant. Kelly's responsibilities will be planning and preparation of business and individual tax returns, business valuations and compilations.

Kelly graduated from Michigan Tech University in 1997 with a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration concentrating in public accounting. Kelly resides in Lake Linden with her husband Kevin and daughters Karli and Kaci.

Editor's note: The Progress Report notes job changes, promotions, new hires and attendance at professional functions such as seminars or forums. Please submit entries to mcancilla@mininggazette.com or call