



Honorable Mentions:

- ★ **Western Credit Union** for their site in English and Spanish
- ★ **Fox Communities** for their Refer a Friend Program

### 2nd Principle: Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and co-operatives at other levels are also organized in a democratic manner.

*We looked for evidence that the credit union actively promotes election of officers and hosts an annual meeting or some form of public demonstration of support for member involvement in elections.*

Honorable Mentions:

- ★ **Fox Communities** for their absentee ballot and free transportation
- ★ **Northern Hills** for their invitation on their website to run for a board position, volunteer for the supervisory committee, and their online ballot

### 3rd Principle: Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

*When members join the credit union, they fund their ownership with a small deposit. At its discretion, the credit union could reward members with a patronage dividend. Or the credit union could*

*provide a systematic method for members to donate to charities when their dividends are posted.*

*This was a tough call because we were looking for patronage dividends. They might not broadcast this publically even though they paid one.*

Honorable Mentions:

- ★ **Western Credit Union** for their provision of share insurance above the NCUA \$250,000
- ★ **Vacationland** for their provision of double the share insurance above the NCUA to cover deposits at \$500,000

### 4th Principle: Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

*For this principle we used things like AD&D Insurance, Discounts through 3<sup>rd</sup> parties such as Sprint and Dell, and investments in products such as MoneyDesktop and Financial Planners*

Honorable Mentions:

- ★ **Heartland (Madison)** for Invest in America programs, Debt in Focus, MoneyDesktop, and Sprint Discount
- ★ **Ohio Catholic** for Tuition Loan Forgiveness, High School Awareness Campaigns, Member Appreciation Month winners, Trip discounts, and family friendly event discounts

### 5th Principle: Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

*How does the credit union contribute to the financial acumen of their members? We searched through the credit union website to find links to*

online education or ads for financial classes offered through the credit union.

Honorable Mentions:

- ★ **Ohio Catholic** for their instructor led classes, Smart Money newsletter, clubs for financial management, and resourceful links
- ★ **Service 1** for educational articles written by their own staff
- ★ **Northern Hills** for their instructor led classes and online education services
- ★ **Fox Communities** instructor led classes, in-school educational programs, online resources
- ★ **Day Air** for recurring seminars and producing podcasts
- ★ **Sioux Empire** for hosting Financial Literacy classroom events

### 6th Principle: Cooperation among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

*What activities visibly promoted by the credit union are related to support of established organizations such as schools, civil offices, or a form of User Group where employees and members can participate? One example is hosting a blood bank or immunization clinic.*

Honorable Mentions:

- ★ **TBA** for supporting and recognizing employees who volunteer in the community
- ★ For Scholarships: **River Valley, First Trust, Fox Communities, Community CU, Services Center, Heartland (Springfield), Kent County, San Antonio Citizens (totaling \$10,000), and Harris County**

### 7th Principle: Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

*Much like the 6<sup>th</sup> principle, although Concern for Community might be less structured. Does the credit union promote volunteerism or participate in activities that directly benefit citizens of that*

*community? We looked for community events posted on the credit union website or advertised in their newsletter.*

*Our credit unions exhibit definite concern for the citizens of their communities. Extending beyond the lines of their membership, many of our credit unions reach out in an amazing number of ways to show compassion and take care of the needs in their region. This was a difficult measurement as a result.*

Honorable Mentions:

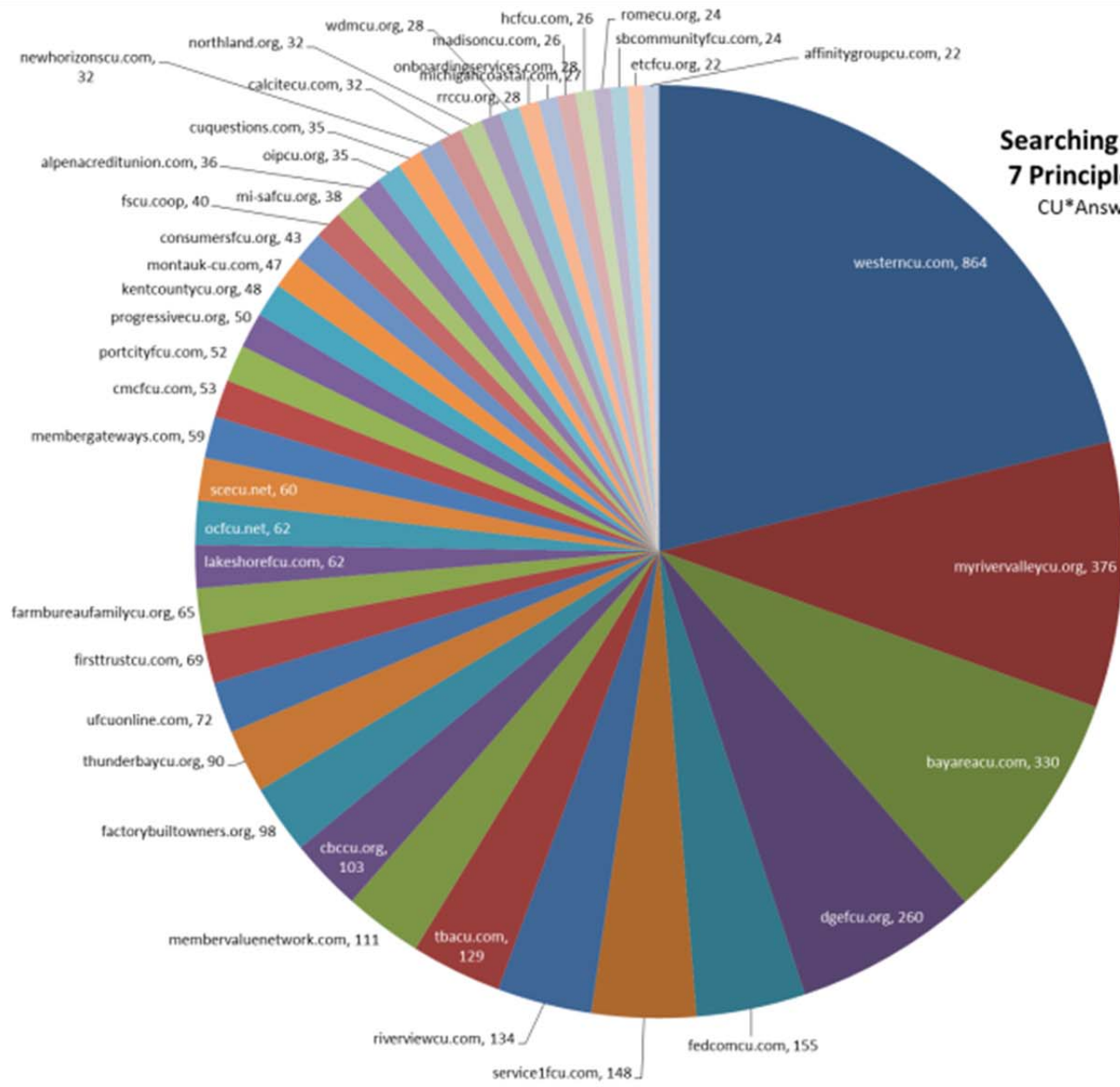
- ★ **Service 1** for their variety of participations in Walk for Diabetes, Food Drives, United Way day of Caring, Run for Sight, and Bike Safety
- ★ **Heartland (Springfield)** for their exhaustive list of charitable giving – Blood bank, Children’s Miracle Network, St. Jude’s Hospital, Ronald McDonald House, Brother James Court, Friends & Neighbors Radio Program
- ★ **Alpena Alcona Area** for DARE Program, Baby Pantry, School Food Programs, Civil Celebration, United Way, Toys for Kids, Donations for Troops, The Caring Place
- ★ **Highmark** for their \$30,000 donation to Western Dakota Tech
- ★ **North Central Area** for MASH Mentoring, Assisting, Supporting, Helping volunteer programs, Relay for Life, Red Cross, United Way, Kiwanis, Firemen’s Fund, Arenac Eastern and more local charities
- ★ **Isabella Community** for supporting 4-H, Junior Achievement, and ICCU in the Classroom as well as managing a Student Run Credit Union
- ★ **Northern Hills** for a full page listed online of charities they support

*CU\*Answers is actively designing a new suite of services, web-based tools, and other products that will help promote and monitor this new style of performance index. If you have ideas about ways to recognize what it means to be a cooperative organization today, please join the conversation! Contact Randy Karnes, CU\*Answers CEO, at [rkarnes@cuanswers.com](mailto:rkarnes@cuanswers.com).*



## Searching for Activists on the 7 Principles of Cooperatives

CU\*Answers Hosted Websites  
May, 2012



- Cooperative principle-related **keywords** used in the website search:
- ★ rates
  - ★ Vision
  - ★ Membership
  - ★ Contact
  - ★ Community
  - ★ Board
  - ★ Owner
  - ★ newsletter
  - ★ Election
  - ★ Board of Directors
  - ★ Cooperative
  - ★ Annual Meeting
  - ★ Ownership
  - ★ Decision
  - ★ Board Members
  - ★ Contest
  - ★ Vote
  - ★ Cooperation
  - ★ Field of Membership
  - ★ Blog
  - ★ Consumer Education
  - ★ Financial Education
  - ★ Officers
  - ★ Member Ed
  - ★ Community Service
  - ★ Autonomy
  - ★ Collaborative
  - ★ Collaboration
  - ★ Shared Vision