

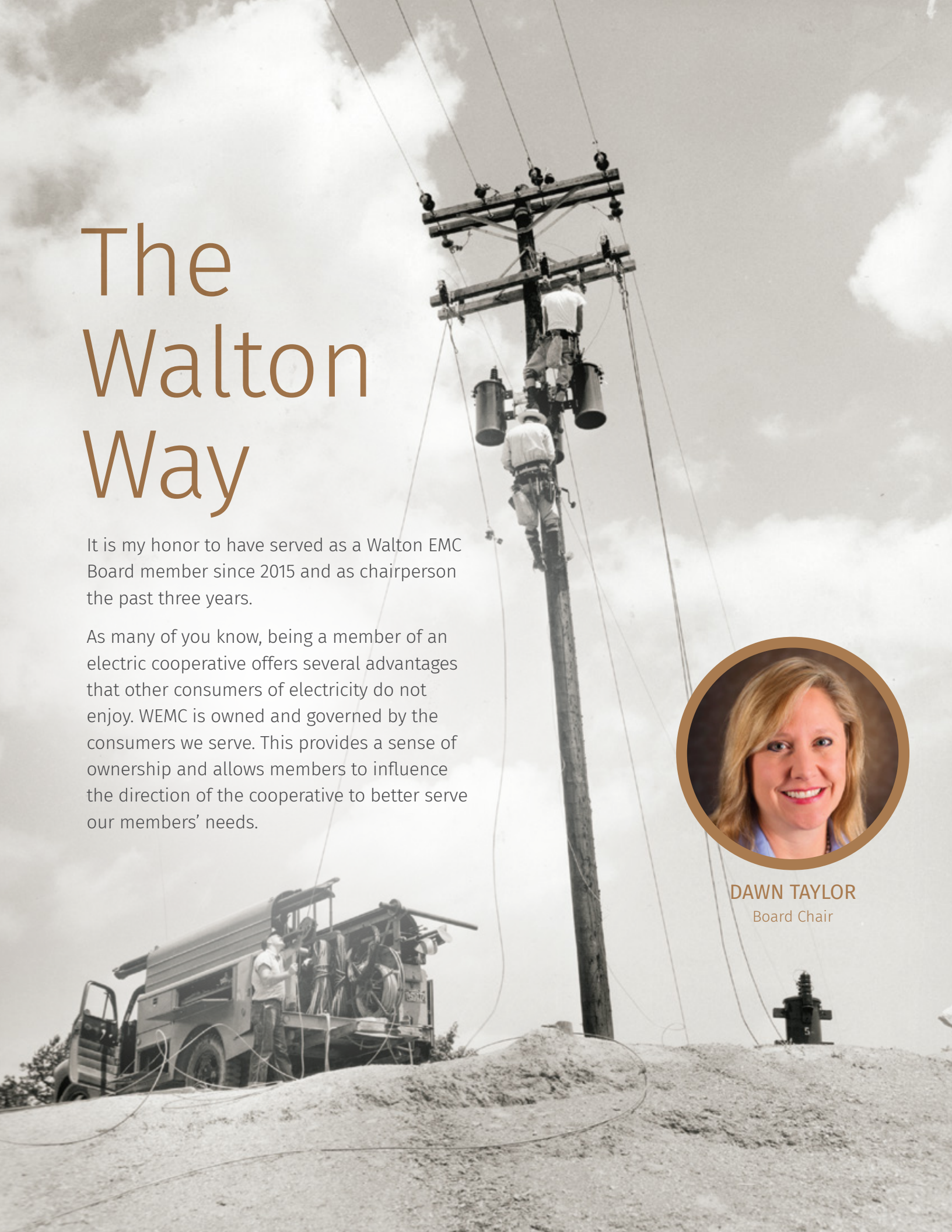
The Walton Way

It is my honor to have served as a Walton EMC Board member since 2015 and as chairperson the past three years.

As many of you know, being a member of an electric cooperative offers several advantages that other consumers of electricity do not enjoy. WEMC is owned and governed by the consumers we serve. This provides a sense of ownership and allows members to influence the direction of the cooperative to better serve our members' needs.



DAWN TAYLOR
Board Chair



The Walton Way



As a cooperative, **we prioritize community engagement**, supporting local initiatives, and contributing to the economic development of our region.

THE WAY WE CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY

One of the biggest advantages of our cooperative is that it is rooted in the communities and cities we serve. WEMC prioritizes customer service and member satisfaction. Our valuable employees are more responsive and accessible to our members than other energy suppliers are, providing personalized and community-oriented services. As a cooperative, we prioritize community engagement, supporting local initiatives, and contributing to the economic development of our region. Our employees and staff remain committed to, and focused on, providing reliable and affordable electricity to our consumer-members rather than maximizing profits.

THE WAY WE TREAT YOUR INVESTMENT

We have kept rates as low as possible while ensuring our operational costs are covered. Our margins (or profits) are reinvested back into the cooperative or for the benefit of our members through capital credits. In 2022 alone, we returned \$8 million to our member-owners, bringing the all-time total to \$122 million.

THE WAY WE BALANCE ENERGY DIVERSITY

Nationally, there have been ongoing efforts to transition toward cleaner and more sustainable energy sources, such as renewable energy. Technologies like solar and wind turbines have seen advancements in recent years. These renewable sources offer the potential for reduced greenhouse gas emissions and decreased reliance on fossil fuel resources. While wind does not present us with a great opportunity in Georgia, WEMC has led the way in solar energy production for our members.

Speaking of solar energy: Energy storage remains a significant challenge. Renewable energy sources like solar are intermittent, meaning they depend on weather conditions, resulting in variable energy output. Developing cost-effective and efficient energy storage solutions is crucial to address this issue and ensure a consistent and reliable energy supply. It is important to note that the energy industry is constantly evolving, and new challenges and breakthroughs occur literally every month in the field of renewable energy sources and storage. We have also been a leader across the state and the nation in using renewable energy sources.

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Striking a balance between affordability & sustainability

is crucial and a problem both our employees, staff and Board members strive to achieve for our members.

NEW WAYS TO SERVE YOU

What about electric vehicles (EV)? This is an exciting new frontier! The development and production of advanced battery technologies, such as higher energy density and faster-charging capabilities, are critical for the advancement of EVs. As most people are aware since it is often in the news, research and development efforts to improve battery performance, durability and affordability are ongoing. Our staff and Board will continue to stay abreast of these technologies to meet our members' EV needs. I, for one, will continue to look forward to the EV story and other exciting changes in how our energy and transportation needs develop and are met by these new technologies.

Finally, electric rate structures have certainly been on our minds as a Board and in the news around the state. WEMC and other electric cooperatives face several issues regarding rates. Ensuring fairness and equity in rate structures can be challenging. Different types of consumers, whether residential, commercial, or industrial, have varying energy demands and usage patterns. Designing rates that appropriately distribute costs among these consumer groups can be complex. While renewable energy sources contribute to a more sustainable energy system, they can potentially lead to higher rates. Striking a balance between affordability and sustainability is crucial and a problem both our employees, staff and Board members strive to achieve for our members. Ensuring our members have access to clear and transparent information about our coming rate structures is important to us now and will be into the future.

Thank you for letting me take this time and space to share the reasons I love serving our members and also to share some of the areas in energy that most occupy my mind and hold my attention. Again, I am thankful for our members, our employees, my fellow Board members and for being allowed to be a part of the best cooperative in the state and nation